

The Arnewood School  
**Summer School 2022 – Review**

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From August 24<sup>th</sup> to August 30<sup>th</sup>, The Arnewood School hosted a Summer School Programme. Thirty students from our feeder schools signed up, including: New Milton Junior School, Ashley Junior School, Milford-on-Sea Primary School and Tiptoe. Notably, twenty students were on the reserve list. The students were recommended to the programme to enable not only their transition into secondary education but also to improve skills which were hindered by the pandemic. Students were involved in a range of team building activities which allowed them to build their communication skills and strategic thinking. For example, students spent bank holiday Monday at Hoburne, Bashley, participating in Bushcraft activities such as building dens, navigating a path blindfolded and making fires.

The students enjoyed a range of internal and external activities. On the school site, students took part in a wonderful story-telling workshop delivered by Chloe Anderson, a food technology lesson delivered by Maea Craft and an exciting science demonstration delivered by Maggie Watson, our Science Technician. One of the students' favourite activities was testing the aerodynamics of their straw rockets along the science corridor! Furthermore, the students engaged in a mindfulness session delivered by New Milton Town Council and a clinical psychologist. Students engaged well with this and understood the link between their physical health and their wellbeing.

Alongside Bushcraft, students got to experience Dorset Adventure Park and the Forest Arts Centre in New Milton, the former being the favourite of students and staff.

By the end of the week, students were noticeably happier and more confident about their Arnewood journey. This can be illustrated by parental responses such as:

***"I just wanted to say thank you for having him over the last few days, he has really enjoyed it and will hopefully help him when he starts next week."***

***"Thank you very much for those few days Lucas was joining in. He had a great time! Especially the water park!"***

Additionally, students completed a questionnaire at the beginning of the programme and were given the same questionnaire at the end of the programme. 19 results are comparable as some students did not attend on the last day or were added in as a reserve during the week. Notable results are as follows:

- 68% felt less nervous about starting the Arnewood School by the end of the week,
- 74% stated that they felt more prepared for their Arnewood journey,
- 68% were less worried about making new friends, and
- 63% stated that they were more likely to try again after making a mistake.

The programme aimed to increase student resilience and independence as well as alleviate anxiety. It is worth mentioning that last year, the programme ran when students did not participate in transition days due to the pandemic. This year, students had their transition experience. This means that their starting point was different and it meant that some started the week having had their anxiety lessened in July. Nevertheless, it was a thrilling week filled with new experiences, friendships and an important lesson in perseverance.



Above: Students at Dorset Adventure Park



Above: Students creating straw rockets in Science.



Above: Students creating costumes for their drama performance at Forest Arts Centre, New Milton



Above: Students enjoying marshmallows next to their fire at Hoburne, Bashley