

HEADTEACHERS NEWSLETTER

12th September 2016



Dear Parents/Carers

I am pleased to update you on the many interesting and exciting things that have been going on since we started back last week.

Thank you for all the parents that completed our parent views survey in term 6, more details of the outcomes can be found below. One thing that was clear from your responses was the value you place in communication from the school and in particular the Headteacher's newsletter; starting with this one, I will do my very best to provide you with more regular updates of what has been going on in and around the school and to keep you up to date with useful information and key dates from our busy calendar.

Welcome Back

We warmly welcomed old and new students this week as they returned from their summer break. What a pleasure it was to see such a bright, polite and enthusiastic group of young people focussing themselves straight back into their learning and progress. Although other schools nationally may have quite publically struggled with their uniform and dress code, we had no such issues and all of our students returned immaculately presented in full school uniform. Thank you to all of our parents, carers and students for ensuring this happens and taking pride in our school ethos, reputation and high expectations. It has certainly been a great week to start my role as Headteacher at Wrotham School.

Exam Success

We welcome back many students back as they ride on the wave of incredible GCSE results. Once again proving that our students can and will achieve the very highest outcomes at GCSE and A level. As you will have seen in our press release and in the local papers, we celebrated some of our best results ever, I have included some of the highlights below.

At GCSE, Iffah Raayma achieved 9 x A-A*; Rebecca Kayes achieved 7 x A-A*; Alejandro Garcia Del Valle achieved 6 x A-A*; Antonia Fallis achieved 9 x A-A*; Thomas Gadd achieved 5 x A-A*; and Katya Ness 9 x A*-B grades. Emily Bamber achieved all A-B grades with 4 x A-A*; Bertie Birtles achieved 4 x A-A*; Isabella Shaw achieved 5 x A-A*; Rebecca May 4 x A-A* and 4 x B grades; Christina Pithouse 3 x A-A*; Katherine Stevens 3 x A-A*; Emily Walker 3 x A-A*; and Harry Davis 3 x A-A*.

This year saw the majority of our Year 13 students receive offers from universities around the country in a variety of subject areas. Amongst the many students who will be celebrating are: Henry Brown who is going to read Games Programming at Bournemouth; Joshua Bye who is going to read History at Bournemouth; Alys Horsfall who will be reading Interactive Media Design at Hertfordshire; Kala Lewis who will be reading Sociology at Nottingham Trent; Lauren Sparshott who will read Computer and Cyber Forensics at Gloucestershire; Megan Storey who will read English Literature and Social History at Brighton; and William Wall who will be reading Software Engineering at Greenwich.

As a particularly special achievement, Nisha Wiseman in year 10 sat her AS level Maths early and achieved an A* scoring incredibly high marks in her final paper. This is an exceptional achievement from Nisha who once again shows that there is no limit on how well the young people at Wrotham School can achieve at all stages.

We still have limited space in our 6th form and welcome applications from those who wish to continue their academic career at Wrotham in our 6th form that is celebrating its best results ever.

Parent Views Survey

Thank you for completing our parent views survey. Your views are very important to us and we listen carefully to how we can improve now and in the future.

It is clear from your responses that we do very well at keeping children safe and providing excellent teaching so that students make progress. It is also clear that we are running the school well with clear vision and focus.

We also value your views on what we need to improve and these areas include communication with a particular focus on the wider publicising of our website and other sources of information to ensure you are kept up to date and aware of what is going on at school and your students educational career.

We also need to improve some areas from good to outstanding and these include how we deal with bullying and extending our extra curricular clubs and activities.

We will use the data from this survey in our planning and will keep you updated on how this makes an impact on the school.

I have copied a summary of the response data below indicating where we have scored well and where we have noted we need to improve.

Answer Options	Strongly agree/ Agree
My child is happy at this school'	86%
My child feels safe at this school'	92%
My child makes good progress at this school'	85%
My child is well looked after at this school'	86%
My child is taught well at this school'	84%
The school communicates effectively with me - via email, letter, SMS, telephone call and its website'	87%
My child receives appropriate homework for their age'	76%
This school makes sure its pupils are well behaved'	86%
This school deals effectively with bullying (Bullying includes persistent name calling, cyber-bullying, racist and homophobic bullying)	69%
This school is well led and managed'	87%
This school responds well to any concerns I raise'	76%
I receive valuable information from the school about my child's progress'	89%
I am aware of the changes to GCSE grades from next year and understand how they will apply to my child'	75%
I use the school website regularly'	87%
I use the School Facebook page regularly'	36%
I find the School website informative'	86%
I find the school website easy and intuitive to navigate'	86%
I use parent portal regularly to check on the progress of my child'	95%
I am aware of Wrotham School's success and popularity in the local area'	89%
I find subject evenings informative'	71%
Teachers provide useful feedback and support to help my child make progress'	71%
The school keeps me up to date with news regarding the school'	90%
The school provides good quality opportunities for extra curricular sport participation'	62%
The school provides good quality opportunities for extra curricular arts participation including music and drama'	58%

I am kept up to date and aware of improvements to Wrotham 6th form provision'	35%
I use show my homework regularly with my child to support their learning'	81%
Wrotham School challenges students through high expectations'	90%
I would recommend this school to another parent'	85%
The school runs a range of educational trips that accommodate all students'	80%
The school runs trips that are enjoyable and worthwhile experiences for my child'	86%
I am aware of the EBACC pathway and what this means for my child'	34%
I understand the setting process for ability groups in years 7-11'	59%
I am aware of the school's parent voice group and know when and where to attend'	42%
I understand the role of the governing body and how to contact them'	61%
I feel the school is governed well'	65%
I understand the school's curriculum structure'	76%
I understand the schools assessment structure'	71%
I know how my child can access their school computer area from home'	81%
I have used the revision support and learning zone on the school website to support my child'	42%
I am aware of the school's careers and work experience revision for years 7-13'	30%
My child receives good careers advice to help them plan for the future'	29%
I understand the school's behaviour policy and how it works to sanction poor behaviour'	87%
I have read the schools most recent Ofsted report (May - 2015)'	78%
I understand the passport system and support its values'	83%
The school communicates well with parents'	79%
I know who to call to discuss my child's progress or welfare'	72%
I know who the Headteacher and the leadership team are and feel confident in contacting them to discuss any issues I may have.	88%

It is also clear from your responses that when it comes to reporting and learning about your child's progress you value face to face meetings with staff most highly. The vast majority of parents value this over written reports, so we have made some changes for this year that we hope will please you. I have written about these further on in the newsletter.

Transport Update

Following issues with the buses in the first week of term, I have been in contact with KCC, who have in turn liaised with the service providers, and are now able to ensure that bus provision and capacity is now adequate for all students to travel to and from school safely.

At my request, we were visited by a KCC bus inspector who has reviewed the situation and since then KCC have written to me in regards to this situation assuring me that an additional bus on the 407/408/418 route will now be provided. Their explanation for this was increased passengers on the route due to an increase in our student numbers and another local school cancelling one of their bus services, forcing their students onto the route our young people use. Due to the work required to add these buses, final allocations will be in place by the end of September at the latest. For now, an additional bus is already being provided and we will ensure that all students get home safely.

This change means that all students will now be able to travel to school and home safely and on a bus that is not over crowded.

It has taken us a long time to get this capacity increased and I would like to thank the parents and students who have voiced their concerns to KCC and the bus companies to ensure that they receive a good service and value for money. We will continue to monitor this service and will always make sure we fight our corner for the best interests of our students and parents.

Changes to Reporting and Parent Evenings

From your clear and informative feedback in your responses to our recent parent survey, we have made some changes to the way we report back to you on your child's progress. The aim of these changes is to ensure that the information we feedback is relevant, focussed and specific to your child.

You will now receive a more detailed termly data report that clearly shows progress in all subjects as well as an enhanced data report on attitude to learning, homework and passport success.

We will be replacing the yearly written progress tutor reports with an additional parent consultation day and evening that will run later in the year and, using one of our INSET days, will provide a whole day and evening for you to visit the school to meet your child's progress tutors and discuss their progress in depth.

We will continue to run our extensive parents evenings for each year group and will be trialling a new system whereby you leave each appointment with a written report that summarises key successes and areas for improvement in each subject. Year 11 will continue to have two of these evenings in a year.

Please see our calendar for dates and information regarding these sessions.

Reports will continue to be published on parent portal, if you wish to opt in to receiving a paper based report then please contact the school. Publishing reports online saves the school thousands of pounds each year in printing costs so we appreciate your use of parent portal in supporting us to become a paperless school.

The Grammar Alternative

Much has been discussed in the press this week in regard to Grammar Schools and their merit. Having worked in comprehensive schools for many years I can confidently say that students do well in good and outstanding schools whether they are Grammar Schools or not. Our results this year are testament to this fact with students achieving A-A* grades in many of their subjects. These grades are achieved in genuine GCSE subjects and match the attainment of the best students in grammar education. We certainly don't support the grammar school myth that is so popular and widespread in Kent and every year we accept students onto our role who have left grammar schools to join us, praising the significantly higher quality of teaching and support they receive at Wrotham.

As has been recently reported in local newspapers, we are the serious alternative to grammar education in Kent and will continuously improve our provision in the future.

Connect

For news and updates, as well as useful resources and supporting information for you and your child, please visit our website and facebook page.

www.wrothamschool.com

www.facebook.com/wrothamschool

Open Events

It is that time of year again when we will be opening our doors to prospective parents and students for our year 7 and our 6th form.

Please share the dates with friends or come and visit yourselves.



WROTHAM SCHOOL OPEN EVENTS 2016

OPEN EVENING: THURSDAY 22/9/2016 - 17.30 UNTIL 20.00
HEADTEACHER TALKS AT 18.00 AND 19.30

OPEN MORNINGS: 27/9/2016 and 14/10/2016- 09:00- 11:00
HEADTEACHER TALKS AT 09:00 and 10:30

CONSISTENTLY THE BEST PERFORMING COMPREHENSIVE IN THE LOCAL AREA

TEL: 01732 884207
WWW.WROTHAMSCHOOL.COM

The banner features the school crest on the left, a QR code, and three circular inset photos: a student in a school uniform, a teacher in a white coat, and a student in a school uniform.

Key Dates and Events

Please find below a list of key dates and events for Term 1

EVENT	DATE
Year 11 Parent Information Evening	12/9/2016 – 6.00-7.00
Year 7 Meet the Tutors	14/9/2016 – 3.30-4.30
Year 10 PPE Week (Exams)	19-24/9/2016
Year 11 Mountain Biking – Bedgebury Trip	20/9/2016 – All Day
Year 12 IB trip to London	23/9/2016 – All Day
Year 11 Trip to Ashdown Forest	30/9/2016 - All Day
Year 12 Driver Education Courses	6/10/2016
Year 10/11 Theatre Trip 1984	12/10/2016 – 5:00-11:00
Whole School Term 1 Reports Published	12/10/2016
Year 11 Parents Evening	13/10/2016 – 3.30- 7.30
Term One Ends	14/10/2016

Clubs and Activities

We host a diverse range of clubs and activities at the school details of which can be found here:

<http://www.wrothamschool.com/extra-curricular-clubs-and-activities/>

Please note that student may stay after school and work, Monday to Thursday until 4.30, in a supervised environment using the school computer rooms to complete work. They must sign in at reception at the end of school and sign out when they leave.

Homework clubs run every lunchtime – in M7. In addition to this, there is also a fully supervised homework club from 3.15 – 4.00 after school on Monday and Tuesday each week in M7.

I hope you have enjoyed the newsletter and I look forward to updating you soon as we move through the academic year.



Mr M Cater
Headteacher