

31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

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Headteacher  
Michael Cater

Executive Headteacher  
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Dear Parents/Carers

### **NEWSLETTER – TERM 4 2023**

I am pleased to say it has been another highly productive and exciting term at the school with a great run of sporting, academic and extra-curricular success.

Most importantly we now enter the examinations period for our Year 11 and 13's. Thank you to all of the parents who have continued to support the school in all of the interventions, information evenings and action planning sessions. We know that this support is vital to each student's success and we look forward to continuing this strong partnership as we approach the final stretch.

It continues to be a pleasure to work with you all and to watch the students at the school grow and succeed.

I would like to wish you all a calm, relaxing and enjoyable Easter Break and look forward to sharing more great news with you next term.

Kind regards



Mr M Cater  
Headteacher

## Year 7 Applications

We have seen a huge demand this year in applications for places at the school with more families putting us as their clear first choice in their applications. We are incredibly thankful for this clear and significant endorsement of the work we do and what we stand for. We look forward to meeting you and building these important relationships moving forward.

We also know that, with a long waiting list, there are many local families left disappointed that they were not able to get a place at Wrotham School. We will continue to support them in our appeals process and do our best to accommodate every child that wants to study with us.

## Sporting Success

Our success in local championships and tournaments continues to grow and our success continues to make ripples locally as we rise to the very highest standards in a variety of disciplines.

### **Basketball:**

The local basketball tournament has taken place on Mondays throughout the term at The Malling School as part of the Maidstone Schools Basketball tournament.

Our teams have shown incredible levels of success, particularly considering that this is a new and emerging sport at the school. Our Years 8 and 9 came in third place in their respective tournaments; our Years 10 and 11 team achieved an excellent 2<sup>nd</sup> place overall and most impressively our Year 7 team won their tournament and stand as champions in this age group having won every game they played. We can rightly expect a very exciting future for these teams next year as their game continues to develop.

### **Boys Football:**

We have seen incredible success with football this year with a consistent level of very strong teams emerging. Considering the high level of competition locally, often from single sex schools with larger selection cohorts, the consistency of success our teams have achieved is exceptional and should not be underestimated.

Year 8 - On Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March our Year 8 team played in the Kent Cup Final – whilst we lost 5-1 to Tunbridge Wells Boys Grammar School in a tough game at the Gallagher Stadium, the boys played exceptionally well and with the highest level of sportsmanship. This is the first team from Wrotham to ever get to the final of this competition.

Year 8 – Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March – Maidstone Schools Premiership Semi Final – 1 -0 win Vs Maidstone Grammar School – Progress to the final at The Gallagher Stadium.

Year 7 – Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March - Maidstone Schools Premiership – 5-0 win Vs Oakwood Park Grammar School – Progress to the Semi Final Vs Aylesford.

### **Girls Football:**

On Thursdays throughout the term, our girls football team have been competing at a high local level in tournaments across the county with incredible levels of success, this included our Year 7 team competing in their first ever tournament since joining us last September.

Year 7 and 8 girls made it through to the final of the Maidstone Schools Football Tournament with three 2-1 wins against Valley Park, St Simon Stock and Invicta Girls Grammar school. A huge congratulations to the following students.

- Elsie S
- Lacey T
- Eva C
- Vivienne S
- Trinity A
- Sadie S
- Etty W
- Ella B

Yet another football final at the Gallagher stadium Maidstone for Wrotham teams, if this continues we will need our own stand!

### **Netball:**

On Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March our lower school netball team won the Maidstone Schools Tournament – winning every game including victories against MGGS and Invicta Grammar School.



## Student Success:

We also like to celebrate the success of students who compete outside of school in their own disciplines. Grace D in Year 9 represented England in Short Mat bowling. She was recently in Solihull to represent England against Wales.

England beat Wales and the picture shows Grace holding the shield with her England Team mates. This is the third time she has represented her country, having started playing short mat bowls only three years ago. Well done Grace!



## Year 11 and 13

If you are a parent of a GCSE or sixth form student, you will already know just how hard everyone has been working on preparing for the final coursework and exams submissions.

Students and staff have been working every day and night, during and after school, in extra lessons, intervention sessions, small group revision catch ups and at our parent information and progress evenings, to ensure that no stone is left unturned in the pursuit of each child's full potential. The recent PPE (mock) grades have shown just how much impact this hard work has had with students moving 2 grades forwards, on average, when compared to their November exam results. This is incredible progress and testament to the commitment everyone has shown.

It is not long now until the final exams start and this work will continue. We wish all students the best for this period of hard work and commitment and look forward to celebrating with them all this summer.

## History Trips

The history department have led a number of large and highly successful day trips this last term.

On Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March and Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March the History Department took 130 Year 7 students to Hampton Court Palace. Students took a tour of the palace, including Henry VIII's personal apartments, and kept track of signs of his power but also how he had fun. Students saw Henry's huge dining hall, the meeting room for his Privy Council, where they sat in the very seats and heard real conversations had in this room, and also were able to walk through Henry's private chapel. They looked out for as many Tudor roses as they could on the way. Students also tried to beat their friends out of the maze and enjoyed the beautiful gardens at the palace.

On Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March 60 Year 9 students visited the Imperial War Museum to attend a Holocaust learning session.

As you will see below, Mrs Kingston has asked our students to sum up their experiences below, although I am not convinced that coercion or bribery has not played a hand in their reports.

*Leo C reported back saying that: 'On the trip to the Imperial War Museum, we saw a video of what happened to the Jews in a concentration camp, and that they were starved. We learnt a lot, such as the death marches at the end of the war. Miss Kingston is the best for taking us on the trip.'*

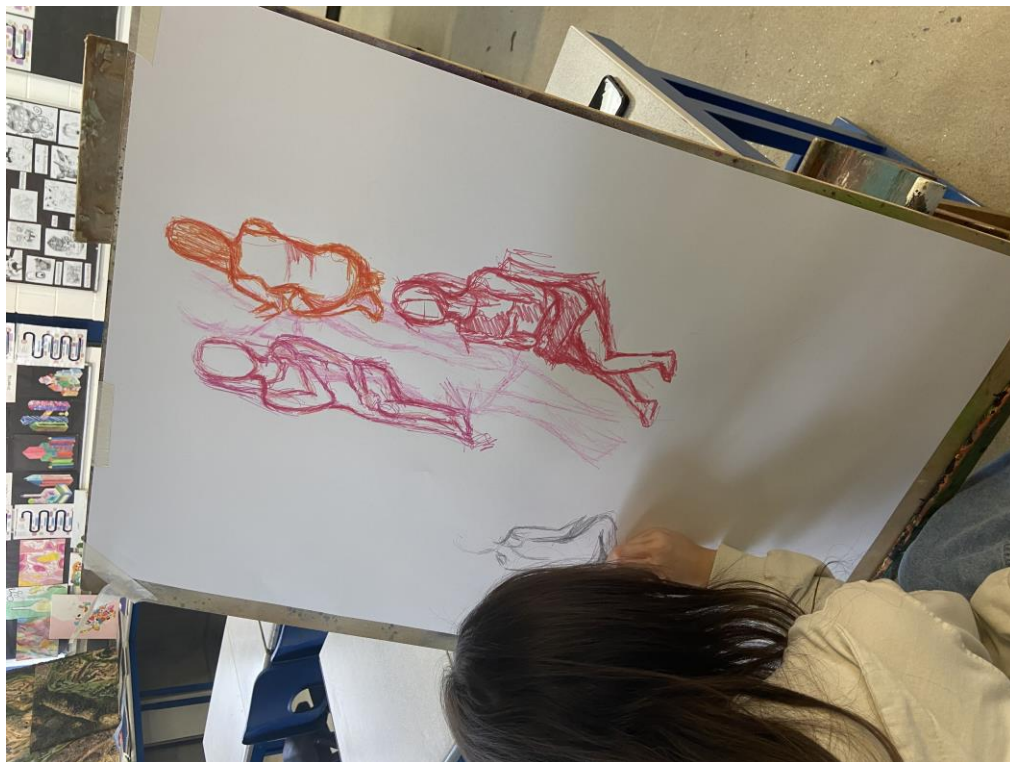
*Billy F said: 'We walked around the museum, and we also went into the WW1 and WW2 exhibits. There's a lot of interesting things in the museum, like rifles, uniforms, old flags, artillery, tanks and planes. My favourite planes were the Spitfire and the Harrier they had hanging down from the ceiling. Miss Kingston is the best and it was a great trip!'*

## Art Trips

Our Year 12 and 13 art and photography sixth form classes enjoyed a trip to the Tate Modern on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March. Our students took photographs on the journey up to the gallery for their coursework and exam projects. Our students had a great time exploring the gallery and the collection of works at the Tate modern and for some this was their first experience of visiting a gallery. This was a great research trip for their own projects for back in school.

During our Year 12 art lessons this term we have been teaching the lessons in a University/Studio style way of learning. Students have created a series of life drawings in a variety of different materials. This has loosened the students up, developing new and different ways of drawing. Students have produced excellent outcomes on a much larger scale. Students have really enjoyed getting out their sketchbook and learning in a new way.





### Art Therapy Group

On the 21<sup>st</sup> March our lower school art therapy group visited the National Trust site at Oldbury Hill Ightham. Students walked the 2-mile woodland trail and engaged in site specific sketching & mindfulness exercises en route. The work also included some excellent opportunities for photography. It was great to run the session outdoors & experience the wonders of nature locally.

If your child feels they would benefit from Art therapy, particularly if they suffer with anxiety or stress, please contact our Art Therapy Lead – Mrs Drew ([ndrew@wrotham.kent.sch.uk](mailto:ndrew@wrotham.kent.sch.uk)) or Collette Lambert our School Psychotherapist ([clambert@wrotham.kent.sch.uk](mailto:clambert@wrotham.kent.sch.uk))



## Careers and Careers Fair

As I hope you will have seen, careers education has been a huge drive for us this year to address the needs of our students in every year group to get high quality access to the very best in careers advice, coaching and information. If you haven't seen already, our dedicated careers website has a huge amount of high quality resources for you to use to support your child and you will also find a map of what they can expect each year in school. Currently, all of our Year 11's and 13's have had careers interviews with a specialist trained provider as well as specific access to one to one support, where needed from external practitioners.

The highlight of this terms provision was the careers fair held in early March. This fair saw representatives from a variety of education/apprenticeship providers and industry leaders. The fair was visited by all students and the feedback was highly positive.

As a parent/professional, if you feel there is something you could contribute to our provision and support our students in supporting this work, please contact [ahollinshead@wrotham.kent.sch.uk](mailto:ahollinshead@wrotham.kent.sch.uk) to discuss further. We are always looking for professional mentors and representatives from a variety of careers, industries and professions and welcome any level of support you are able to provide.

Below is some of the highlights of this term's careers work.

## National Apprenticeship Week

Years 9-14 had an activity-packed week to celebrate apprenticeships in the last week of term 3. As one of the important and increasingly popular options for our students at post-16 and post-18, our careers team do a lot of work to give them opportunities to find out more about it. Every year, this week is a key part of helping us to achieve the aim of ensuring our students get impartial advice about the full range of options available to them.

As well as a full week of progress time sessions and activities in their lessons, we had a number of external speakers and workshops through the week. Year 11 were visited by Runway Training, an apprenticeship and training provider who are based in Tonbridge and have been mentoring a small group of our students. They delivered an assembly giving our students an overview of what apprenticeships are, what they might expect if they were to choose that path, and how they would look for one.

ASK Apprenticeships and CXK came to speak to our sixth form about apprenticeships at post-18, the different levels, how they compare with going to university, and what is available in the local area. They then ran two workshops with some of our Year 13 students who are considering that route – one was about CVs and the other was about assessment centres and the kind of tasks they might be expected to undertake on interview days.

Mrs Hollinshead, our Careers Leader, then ran a workshop with our Year 14 students about apprenticeship routes since they had not had the opportunity to find out about this option when they were studying at their previous post-16 providers.



### The BBC visit Wrotham School

We were very lucky to have the BBC visit Wrotham School and host a show for some Year 7, all of Year 9, Year 10 media studies, Year 11 and Sixth Form students. As part of the BBC centenary celebrations, they created a tour focused on careers education with specialist careers panels. Our students heard from successful people in the creative industries who all live and work in the local area, showing how rich opportunities in this industry are in Kent. We would like to thank the following for their contributions:

- Alex Mansuroglu – Radio Presenter and DJ for Kiss FM, who grew up locally in Meopham.
- Yasmin Kavanci – a freelance transmission operator and illustrator who lives in Gillingham and currently works for Sky Kids TV.
- Leo Ulph – Radio Presenter of Upload on BBC Radio Kent, a show that promotes literacy and creativity across the county.
- Josephine Clark – Commercial Director at Maidstone Studios with 20 years' experience in the production of sports (including coverage of the Euros 2020), documentaries for National Geographic, children's TV, music and so much more.
- The whole BBC tour crew and administration team for sharing this opportunity with our students.

The shows themselves were very engaging, with the presenter and guests sharing their experiences including meeting celebrities such as Beyonce, Taylor Swift and so many more, what they'd studied at school and beyond, how their GCSE subjects had helped them in their careers, what it is like to be self-employed or work freelance, and all sorts of exciting insights. It was fantastic for our students to hear that these opportunities and careers are wide open to people in this area and to get such an exciting insight into how the character strengths we work on in school are relevant and desirable for employers. The questions from our students were insightful and showed how engaged they were with the speakers and their stories.





### Wrotham Careers Fair 2023

Wrotham School's Careers Fair has gone from strength to strength, building on our relationships with local and national employers, apprenticeship providers, colleges and universities. The fair featured specialised activities to support our Year 9, 10, 11 and Sixth Form students to make informed decisions about the important transitions they face.

This year, we welcomed Year 10 and 11 students from our neighbouring Grange Park School to join our careers fair. Grange Park is a specialist school for children and young people with autism spectrum condition (ASC) from 9-19 and they were given a quiet half-hour to speak to the exhibitors along with some of our own students with SEN, sensory and mobility needs who benefited from not having too many people around them.

We would like to thank our exhibitors: Kent Police, LawTech Group Ltd, CalfordSeaden, BAM Construction, Hadlow and North Kent College, Sports Connect UK, Runway Training, The Royal Air Force, H&MV Engineering, Xonetic IT consultancy, The British Army, Rob Horswell Training, KCC Adult Social Care and Health (Occupational Health and Nursing Associates), Eden Ivy Care, Charlton Athletic, Milk Visual Effects, Vivid Pixel, Goldsmiths University of London, and the University for the Creative Arts.

We were especially excited to have contributions from two Wrotham Alumni: Sandro representing Charlton Athletic FC and talking about his role as a nutritionist and what an internship is, and Holly representing LawTech Group Ltd, part of a fantastic representation from the construction industry and keen to break down barriers of women working in that sector. We also welcomed one of our parents, Nick from Xonetic, who was a fantastic advocate of the opportunities offered through working in the tech industry.

**Our students were very appreciative of all of the exhibitors, and our feedback comments have included:**

- *'I liked how they told us what GCSEs they picked' – Seden in Year 9*
- *'I have learned how helpful every GCSE can be in places you wouldn't realise' – Aiden in Year 9*
- *'The individuals that came were very knowledgeable and helped to give a better understanding of specific job roles' – Madison in Year 10*

- *'I learned a lot of new skills and ways to enter a certain field, university or apprenticeship. I also learned what different companies are involved with' – Gabriel in Year 10*
- *'I liked one to one personal advice, getting to speak with a variety of companies, universities and colleges, interactive activities stationed at the careers stalls' – David in Year 11*
- *'I learned how different industries of work have different requirements and different daily routines and activities' – Eva in Year 11*
- *'I liked that it had a different range of jobs that I wouldn't have thought to have spoken to before' – Joseph in the Sixth Form*
- *'It was nice to go and talk to people that are in fields and jobs that you are interested in' – Alexa in the Sixth Form.*

The visitors themselves were very complimentary about the organisation and the support from the careers team, but especially about the students that they got to meet. We would like to share how proud we are of how our students engaged with the guests and the activities on offer, showing good character in their communication, confidence, and open-mindedness.

In addition to the careers team for arranging the event, we would like to thank our site team for all of their hard work and the sport department for allowing us to have the sports hall as our venue.



## The Apprenticeship Academy

A number of our Year 13 students will soon complete the last session in a programme of online workshops to help them in their pursuit of apprenticeships. Each week, they have moved from understanding how to choose an apprenticeship that's right for them, to pulling their CVs together, and what to expect in interviews. Each week, they not only attended the session, but also had the chance to ask questions from apprentices who have successfully applied for competitive schemes, as well as employers who could talk about their programmes.

Employers who have spoken about their apprenticeship schemes include HSBC, Bloomberg, Dixon Wilson, Solus Accident Repair Centres, and the Science and Technology Facilities Council, part of UK Research and Innovation.

An exciting piece of news is that the Apprenticeship Academy will also be available later this year for our Year 12 students who are sure that they want to follow this route. This should be especially helpful for those who are looking at degree apprenticeships since some of those schemes will open for applications from November in Year 13. Details will follow at our post-18 information evening on 26<sup>th</sup> April 5-6pm.

### Clip and Climb

On Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March we spent the afternoon with a small group of year 9s and year 10s at Clip 'n Climb in Tonbridge. All of the students involved showed excellent Resilience and Team work when set challenges on this climbing experience!





## Community Work - Jumble Sale

Thank you to all that attended our community Jumble Sale as organised by Lisa Young and our staff team. This event raised a significant amount of money (over £700) for our young carers. Items not sold have been sorted and distributed to local charities. Several parents, students and staff are involved in these events and we thank them for their hard work, commitment and contribution to the local community. This is important work.

## Connections to Local Schools

As well as our trust partnerships with Aylesford School, we also continue to work with multiple schools for the benefit of all local young people. Recently we have been welcomed to Hillview School, The Malling School and Knole Academy where our leaders have been able to work on cross school projects relating to inclusion, quality of teaching and long-term planning. As well as offering opportunity to discuss the challenges we are all facing post pandemic, this work will continue to inform and enrich the work across all these schools and develops deeper partnerships in our local area.

## Maths Challenge

Year 11 students took part in a maths challenge on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January hosted by Invicta Grammar School in Maidstone. The students did extremely well to represent Wrotham School as they placed fourth out of eight schools. Even though they did not advance to the next round they did themselves proud by their success with challenging questions and finishing ahead of a grammar school.

- Nicholas B
- Toby E
- Ben J
- David G



## New School Building

We are very excited about the new building and we are now moving through the phases of planning and development to get to the first stage of construction that will likely start before the end of the year. Once I have some more visual plans to send you, I will share these so you can join us in our anticipation of the incredible facilities that will add to our community.

You may have read some rather misleading headlines in the local papers this month regarding our new school buildings. Some of them referred to the growth of our school population as part of the new build. Whilst correct on news that we will be undertaking our £39,000,000 new school build in the coming months/years, it is not correct that we will see any further growth in numbers.

The reason for this is that most of the growth they have described in the articles has already happened. Over the last 5 years we have seen steady growth of the school as we have expanded to meet local demand. Being highly oversubscribed has meant we have been able to manage this growth slowly over time. This has seen our intake rise by a form group each year. Once our current Year 10's have finished and Year 11 our numbers will have stabilised.

Therefore, to reassure you, there will not be further growth of school numbers much above where we currently are. To put it simply, the growth had already happened.

There has also been some speculation from the usual suspects about links with this project and what is known locally as the "Borough Green Garden City" proposals. I can categorically say that this is completely untrue. The building has been funded by the DFE as part of their schools rebuilding programme because we are long overdue this work. We have been left behind other schools in recent years who have all received rebuilds and refurnishing of facilities. Our students and staff have deserved a replacement for our seriously outdated accommodation for many years now and this development is simply part of that investment in schools with no link to local development plans or otherwise.

### Music Department News

Miss Bullock and Mr Thompson welcome students to audition for our highly successful School band and vocal groups.





## BOX CLEVER

On Thursday the 30<sup>th</sup> March we were visited by the Theatre Group “Box Clever” who came into school to perform Macbeth to our Year 9 and 10 students across 2 performances. The performances by the group were aimed at bringing the work of Shakespeare to life and giving the texts the appropriate levels of excitement and rhythm. As always the performances were excellent and the students loved seeing the work come to life in front of them.

## Coming Up...

Next term the focus will be on Year 11 and 13 final examinations, planning more exciting trips, visits and experiences to ensure that all students are able to get involved and participate. Then planning for our usual end of year celebrations in term 6, when we look forward to our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary Year 7 camping, the School music festival and of course the Wrotham Walk.