



## **WROTHAM SCHOOL NEWSLETTER**

### **Term 6 – 2024/2025**

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we come to the end of the year I am writing to look back on all of the wonderful experiences and achievements we have delivered at the school in terms 5 and 6.

It has been a great year at the school which started with great results and a great Ofsted and then ended with a parliamentary visit and some wonderful end of year celebrations and experiences.

In the background has been the new build rising out of its foundations. We are almost there and are confident that by this time next year we will be in or moving into our incredible new buildings. Exciting times.

We have also been excited to announce lots of updates and changes as we grow and continue to improve our work. Mrs Abbott will be headteacher from September and will straight away start building from where I have left of. As many of you who already know Mrs Abbott, the school will continue to go from strength under her guidance and passion.

We have also had a sad and reflective month, following the loss of Mr Oluwale our much loved and respected Maths teacher. Thank you for all of the incredibly moving and kind emails you have sent to us following his passing. We will ensure that his family get copies of all of these wonderful tributes so they can see what a huge impact he had on the lives of children at Wrotham School.

I hope you and your families have a wonderful break and I look forward to catching up with you all next years in my new role and continuing to celebrate our wonderful community.

### **Term Dates for 2025/2026**

Planning ahead is key to a successful academic year. Please find below the term dates for the 2025/2026 academic session:

<https://www.wrothamschool.com/updated-term-dates-25-26/>

### **BMW Mini Car Plant**



In June, a group of students on our DT GCSE visited the Oxford BMW factory to see Mini's being made on the production line as well as informative talks and a museum visit. An incredible opportunity that was both educational and enjoyable.

### Visit from the Red Cross



At the start of June, the British Red Cross visited Young Carers, they learnt all about First Aid, lifesaving skills as well as Coping with Challenges and building resilience. The pupils all received a certificate for First Aid. They all did so well and were brilliantly behaved. The British Red Cross team were so impressed with their engagement and excellent behaviour. (See Photos)

## Football Success – Year 8

Huge congratulations to our Year 8 football team after they defended their Maidstone Premiership title in stunning fashion beating Oakwood Park Grammar School 4-1 at the Gallagher Stadium on 20/5/2025. They showed outstanding character and represented the school brilliantly and this was described by the staff at the stadium as “quality and class”

Special mention goes to our player of the match Tony B who scored a fantastic hat trick.

### The Winning Team



## KS3 Dance workshop- Cascade Dance



This week at Wrotham School - Sophie Fuller, PE organised a dance workshop for year 7, 8 and 9 students. Cascade Dance in Tonbridge Wells come in to deliver a fun one-off session to help encourage dance into the curriculum for next year. We had 40+ students attend over their lunchtime. It was a massive success!

## Young Carers



Our young carers have been busy working on their new garden, and it's really starting to take shape! They've been learning valuable skills in gardening, from planting to maintaining their green space and we're so proud of their hard work and dedication.

We'd like to say a heartfelt thank you to the parent who generously donated to help us get started, as well as to everyone who has kindly donated tools and supplies. Your support has made a big difference.

We're also incredibly grateful to Hillcrest Plumbing Ltd for treating our young carers to a Summer Picnic, your generosity means so much to us.

A kind parent donated a £500 gardening voucher to our Young Carers gardening project this week – it was a wonderfully kind donation which will go a long way to bringing comfort and fun to our young carers work at the school and reflect the great work done so far with this group.

There's plenty more planned for our young carers in the new school year, so stay tuned, exciting things are ahead!

## Uniform

Uniform rules will return to standard in September, and full school uniform will be expected from day one. This will include school shoes – no trainers. As always, if you are struggling or would like to purchase previously owned garments, please contact the school for support with this; we are always happy to help.



## Creative Arts Exhibition



This year we have had the pleasure of celebrating incredible art, technology, photography and food work at both schools. These areas are emerging as real strengths in our curriculum offer and this year's creative arts exhibition at Wrotham kept that standard high.

Parents and staff were treated to some excellent work that showed incredible levels of skill and detail. The photos speak for themselves.

## Geography Field trip to Whitstable



Year 10 went on their field trip to Whitstable where they undertook data collection for their Fieldwork section for the Paper 3 exam next year.

The students were all fully engaged and learned a lot about making data collection accurate and reliable and saw for themselves why it's increasingly important to defend the coasts line from

marine processes and rising sea levels. They also got a deeper understanding of how tourism can sometimes have negative impacts of an environment. If you want to see that in action yourself, visit in the Oyster festival weekend. It's packed!

The students conducted themselves so well and completed all tasks set, however, were not impressed by oysters. Perhaps next year they will be braver and try some

## Year 7 Camping



Our 12th Year 7 annual campout took place in the scorching hot weather. We had a great time enjoying the outdoors and trying new experiences. Over 150 students stayed the night, building shelters, lighting fires and cooking their own breakfast. It was the usual fantastic atmosphere and a great way to celebrate the end of year 7.

A particular thank you to our amazing year 12 helpers and all the staff who joined in – without you in could not happen each year. Your commitment to no sleep is much appreciated.

Year 12 helpers: Finn C, Jacob N, Joseph F, Ted B, Jack M, Caydence W, Ella H, Ashlea G, Sadie S.

## Biology Field Trip



The A level Biology field trip to Lullingstone Country Park was on Thursday 10th July. The field trip was an opportunity for students to develop their practical and analytical skills, and it is tailor made to cover the AQA specification for the A level fieldwork module. The main concepts covered in the course were investigated with students visiting a site of ecological interest and sampling the life found along different sections of the river. The group of students were amazing and worked tirelessly on a very hot and sunny day.

## Work Experience



On Friday, we had 45 students in school while others were on placement. They completed activities that helped them to develop their employability skills, character, and learn more about the construction sector.

The day was planned by BAM so that the students would design a sustainable school, but when the lead couldn't make it in to us, the teaching staff at Wrotham really stepped up! It was a very different way of teaching with BAM joining us virtually and the staff taking on different roles to help it run. Special mention to Ben Fuller, Emily Greigg and others for rearranging one of the sessions, but still making sure teams demonstrated the right skills, and were assessed to earn points.

Today, the winning teams got to visit the new school. Angeline and Steve heard them saying 'I'm so excited!' to each other and the questions were brilliant. That's another 9 work experience placements right there, including for some young carers and students with SEND.



## Year 7 Engineering Competition

We are so proud of Year 7 and how they approached our annual engineering competition, judged by MEP Ltd. MEP are an aerospace, mechanical and medical engineering company based in Aylesford. Every year, they set our students an engineering challenge and then they judge the finalists. This year's challenge was to propose an innovative way to move an aircraft if all fuels were banned.

Owen is a projects engineer at MEP, and he gave this feedback to our runners up and winner, who went home with a physics set that will help him to further develop that engineering mindset!

### **Runner-Up: Danica D and Scarlett J from 7X4**

This entry was really detailed, and the students considered all areas of the plane to determine potential improvements that could be made, including key areas, such as aerodynamics and propulsion. I was particularly impressed by the ideas around the adaptive wings which had sensors to determine the optimum wing shape.

### **Winner: Alfie P**

This entry was very detailed, and very well researched. The student considered and presented a lot of information around the propulsion of the aircraft, a very key feature in aerospace engineering in the current climate. The attention to detail on the information, such as details about the recharging of the batteries, the motors being used, and even the potential range, shows that the student considered the impact of the improvements being suggested. Furthermore, the clear illustrations of the ideas provided clarity to the ideas being proposed, using clear Engineering drawings, such as cross-sectional views.

## Summer Music Concert



On Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup> of July, we were entertained by our most talented music students at the annual summer concert. Those of you who have been in the past will know what an incredible event this is with over 2 hours of exceptional music performances alongside a BBQ and “festival “vibe”.



This year was no exception with an incredible diversity of styles and performances that reminded us all how important music is at Wrotham School and in the lives of our students.

Thank you to everyone who organized this and gave their time and effort to perform.

## Football Commendation



Earlier this week we received this commendation for one of our talented students from her local football club. A refreshing and positive message regarding a student who fully embodies our values as a school and a trust.

*All too often, we read of the negatives of the "younger" generation, so its amazing to be able to write of some positives.*

*Jess really demonstrates your motto raising and setting High Expectations for herself and the club, Challenging herself whilst keeping her grades high, and taking all the Opportunities offered to her.*

*Jess truly is a credit to her family and to Wrotham school and I felt we should let you know you have a great asset. Jess was awarded a massive range of awards in recognition of her great work and I attach a photo of these, she received her participation trophy, goal of the season, the league winners medal for her own team performances.*

*The two that she should be exceptionally proud of are the ones which go above and beyond just the playing of football. Jess picked up the Colin Dalglish award for her team and the whole club. This award is given to the individual in each team who demonstrates sportsmanship, leading by example and being a role model. The chairman and others on the committee then visit each team watching the nominations and select one to be the overall sportsman of the club which was Jess!*

*The final award was chosen by our sponsors, this award the F and D tech outstanding contributions goes to someone who goes above and beyond to contribute, it could have been a coach, a parent, someone on the committee or in this case a player who also goes that extra mile. In the sponsors words, Jess is everywhere giving her time her expertise and thoroughly contributing across the board and she was a deserving winner.*

## **Celebrating Women in Maths**

Read the article here to be inspired by the personal journeys of our own incredible Maths teachers and School leaders.

<https://www.wrothamschool.com/celebrating-women-in-maths-leading-by-numbers/>

## **Inspiring Parent Stories:**

Earlier this year I asked parents to share their own stories to overcoming difficulties and challenges to achieve success in their careers and lives.

Here are some of the responses that reinforce that success comes in a variety of different ways and that our journeys through life are never straightforward:

### **A Proud Family story**

*My dad moved to Spain at 9 years old for his family to have a new start, to help out our dad started working from 14 years old, renting out jet skis from the beach. After a few years he knew he wanted to do more, he was born to be an engineer. He met my mum and when they got pregnant with me, he built us a home with his own two hands to have a roof over our heads, it was perfect! After a year they moved back to England with close to nothing but with everything to come. My dad worked 7 days a week 10 hours a day to chase and work for everything we could ever need. 20 years on and he is a hard working, successful self employed heating engineer. He is at the top of his field with people calling him every hour of the day asking for his help. We are so proud of him and for working to give us the life we could only dream of! Hard work does pay off! His hard work, pays for our dream home, food on the table every night, holidays every year such as Dubai, Spain, Greece and many more, this just shows you can come from nothing to everything!*

### **Growing up I really didn't have a lot.**

*My mum practically bought me up single handed from the age of about 8 years old and at one point we were almost homeless but then was housed in a small 2 bedroom flat which had no bathroom and an outdoor toilet. (Yes they did exist still in the early 80s) This was where now stands the big shopping centre in Tunbridge Wells.*

*2 years later we were moved to our first proper house on a not so nice housing estate but I started a paper round when I was 11 and then I did an egg round when I was 14 just to have my own money*

*and independence. At 15 I performed at the Edinburgh Festival with an amateur dramatics group and left school just before I was 17 with a few GCSES although all in the Cs and Ds. At 20 I became a Bluecoat and then a Redcoat at Butlins and I then worked my way up to become an entertainments manager. Growing up I always wanted to be a police officer but I also enjoyed entertaining.*

*At 29, I applied to be a police officer with Kent police and succeeded and within 2 years became a detective. Sadly 16 years later my health deteriorated and I had to medically retire but I am now a manager in a GP surgery. Morale of the story is, if you work hard you can become anything you want even if you don't have a lot to begin with.*

## Year 6 Transition Days and Parent Evenings



Year 6 transition days were underway in term 6 with our new students experiencing their first lessons in Science, PE and Tech.

The Year 7 Transition Evening went incredibly well with excellent presentations from our student ambassadors and head students. There was excellent feedback received from parents.

With one parent writing in to tell us:

*"I would like to say how impressed I was with yesterday's parent and pupil transition evening. As a family who's 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> choice was not offered, we had not viewed the school previously and were unfamiliar with quite a lot of what was said, therefore the meeting was very helpful to us. Mrs Abbott was extremely excited and passionate about the new year ahead which instilled confidence in us".*

## The Excellence Pathway at Wrotham School



### ***Stretching our strongest students, subject by subject***

At Wrotham, we know that high performance doesn't always look the same. We've never believed in so-called "grammar streams" as a gimmick. Instead, we invest in what works: quality teaching, deep subject knowledge, and recognising talent wherever it appears. We've always believed that great teaching in a truly comprehensive setting is what helps students thrive.

That's why, from 2026, we're introducing the Excellence Pathway — a way to make sure our highest-performing students in each subject get the pace, challenge, and support they need to reach their full potential.

#### *What will this look like:*

- In every subject, there will be a class of around 30 students following an accelerated pathway to stretch them further.
- Students will be selected by subject leaders based on performance — if they're in the top 15% in that subject, they'll be offered a place.
- It's not one-size-fits-all: a student might be in the pathway for English, but not for Maths — it's all about individual strengths.
- The content is the same, but it's taught with greater depth and pace, helping students aim for the top grades at GCSE and A level.
- And importantly — it's not fixed. Students can move in as they grow, and we'll be keeping an eye on potential, not just early results.



We're really proud to offer this opportunity — not as a headline or a hollow promise, but as a real, thoughtful way to support students who are ready for more, in the subjects they love most.

**This is now open for parents to sign up to a coffee morning/ meet the Headteacher to find out more.**

## Year 11 Prom



Year 11 celebrated the end of their GCSE's at their Prom at local venue The Moat. Some photos of the ever-creative arrivals by truck, car and horseback. A great evening- thank you to all the staff who helped organise and joined them to celebrate.



## The Chancellor and Education Secretary visit Wrotham School



**19 June 2025**

It was an exciting morning at Wrotham School today – with a visit from **Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves** and the **Secretary of State for Education, Bridget Phillipson**.

The Ministers and their teams from the Treasury and the Department for Education came to make a national announcement about new funding for a range of infrastructure projects across the country – including investment to rebuild hundreds of schools.

Wrotham School was chosen as the location for the announcement due to our own £49 million rebuilding project. These new buildings will be ready next year and will greatly benefit our pupils and staff.

The Ministers were given a tour of our construction site to see progress being made. They then met with a group of pupils from different year groups, who had the opportunity to put some questions directly to them. These included queries about the other schools the Ministers had visited, why they chose to come to Wrotham and what stage of education is their priority.

The Chancellor explained that her and her team are keen to visit different sorts of schools all around the country. The Education Secretary then explained how committed her and her colleagues are to ensuring all children, from all backgrounds, can access excellent education – and this includes making sure they have high quality buildings to learn in.

**Headteacher Mike Cater** was interviewed by both the BBC and a national newspaper, as well as featuring in footage for Department for Education's social media channels. He spoke about the exciting building project and the importance of it, not just for the school, but for the wider community.

**He said:**

*"We were delighted to welcome The Chancellor and the Education Secretary to Wrotham School today. It was an excellent opportunity for us to showcase the many benefits that our new building will bring to pupils, staff and our local community."*

*“While we already deliver excellent education, the new build will enhance this and enable us to broaden our curriculum – particularly in performing arts, with new dance studios and a theatre.*

*“This will be fantastic for pupils and staff, both now and in the future. It will provide much-needed new space, giving our young people the learning environment they need and deserve – as well as providing our wider community with some fantastic facilities.”*

Four pupils were also interviewed by the BBC – Maisy, Cory, Olivia and Gideon. They were asked about their thoughts on the Ministers’ visit and the benefits that the new build will have for Wrotham pupils.

Maisy (Year 9) said: *“I am really excited about the new dance studios as we’ve never been able to study dance here and now we will be able to. I thought the two Ministers seemed like really nice people and had good answers to all our questions!”*

Cory (Year 10) added: *“I thought it was really good and I was pleased to hear that the Government is getting more teachers and giving them pay rises!”*

Talking about the new build and attending the visit, **Sheila Smith, Chair of Character Education Trust** (of which Wrotham School is part), added:

*“I’ve been involved in this project since the planning stages, so it is great to see it going up.*

*“Children deserve really good facilities to learn in – and this new build will provide specialist spaces that we just haven’t had before. Subjects like dance and drama increase confidence and help to build character – which is exactly what we stand for as a Trust.”*

Staff and students were a credit to the school throughout the visit, showcasing the hard work that takes place every single day. Many thanks to everyone involved!

## Wrotham Walk





As is yearly tradition, on Tuesday 23/7/2025 over 600 students took part in our annual Wrotham Walk across the North Downs. Whilst we were initially worried about the weather the cooler temperatures made it much more bearable. A great time was had by all enjoying our beautiful local surroundings.

## St Andrews Lake Trip

On Thursday 2/7 a large group of students took part in an outdoor/ water sport activities day at St Andrews Lake. Despite the drizzle the weather remained cooler than previous days and a great time was had by all. Behaviour was impeccable and even Mr Boudreau showed off his paddle boarding skills.



## New Build Update

The new build is moving at pace on the Wrotham School site with the first run of bricks going in on the main building and all cladding and glazing in place on the second building.



The build is well on track to be completed on or ahead of schedule meaning that we are now in the final year of the project and will likely be moving in sooner than planned.



## Character Day



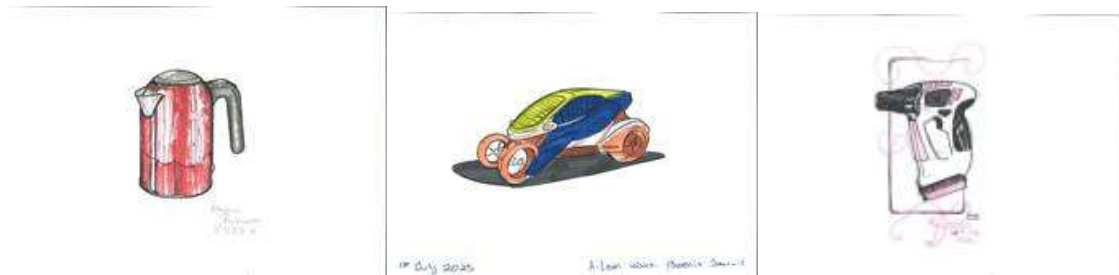
Our second Character Day of the year was an *incredible celebration* of growth, courage, and creativity across Wrotham School. Students had the chance to take part in an exciting range of activities — from off-site fishing and golf, to aerial silks and hoop, paper crafts, board games, movies, and a high-energy Colour Run football tournament.

Every activity was designed to encourage students to step out of their comfort zones, try something new, and develop key character strengths like resilience, teamwork, self-belief, and compassion. Whether casting a fishing line for the first time or learning to hang upside-down on a hoop, students pushed their limits and supported one another throughout the day.

Character Day reminds us that education is about more than just academics — it's about becoming the best version of ourselves. We're so proud of our students for embracing the day with such positivity and passion. Here's to more unforgettable days like this!

## 6<sup>th</sup> form taster sessions

Our new 6<sup>th</sup> form cohort took part in their induction and taster sessions in the new chosen subject areas. Some photos below of the Product Design taster session work produced by some of the students. The task was to use a sketch marker rendering technique to render a drawing of a chosen product. Not bad considering they've never used this technique before!



## Carrotty Wood



During the week beginning 23rd June, 120 Year 8 students in total descended on Carrotty Wood Outdoor Centre near Tonbridge.

The visit began with an enduring 8 mile (4 hour) walk in blistering heat, followed by an array of activities including 'high ropes', 'low ropes assault course', 'BMX biking', 'raft building/sailing', 'swimming' and lots of other sporting and problem solving events. The weather was kind although a little on the hot side and students were in good spirits and well behaved throughout.

There were numerous opportunities to develop the 10 key characters we pride ourselves on as a school - the visit was a huge success.

I would like to thank all the staff that made the visit possible which includes those directly involved at camp but also those back at school.

# Summer Communications and Opening

## Results Days

Due to the extensive work on the school building over the summer, the school will be fully closed for most of the break to allow this to happen, with some key dates of opening.

**The school is open for results days as follows:**

- 14/8/2025 from 08:30 for Year 12 and 13 Level 3 results (A levels)
- 21/8/2025 from 08:30 for Year 11 GCSE results

Staff will be available throughout these days to support students and families as required.

General enquiries and communications during the summer break will be responded to when the school returns on 1/9/2025. Some communications may be responded to as staff begin work for the new term, and staff will be available for Year 11/12/13 on results days.

While staff may be available for contact at certain times during the break, it is also important that this period is protected to allow staff to take time away from work over the summer. Therefore, staff emails may be switched off and replies delayed. The Christmas break and the first three weeks of the summer break are the only times in the year that the school is fully shut. Thank you for your understanding of this.

## Safeguarding

Our [safeguarding@wrotham.kent.sch.uk](mailto:safeguarding@wrotham.kent.sch.uk) email address is monitored 24/7, 365 days per year. However, during holiday periods, the school will only respond to urgent safeguarding concerns that relate to the school, the immediate safety of our students, and can be resolved by the school while closed.

All emails received by the safeguarding team will be triaged by trained professionals, and only urgent school-related concerns will be responded to as appropriate. A rotation of staff remains in place to ensure any external agency/strategic group meetings are attended as required.

If you have concerns about the safety of a child during the school holiday period, the resources below should be helpful:

If a child is at immediate risk of harm, call the police using '999' for emergencies and '101' to report a crime.

If you have general worries about a child, follow this link to raise them:

<https://www.kscmp.org.uk/guidance/worried-about-a-child>

Have a wonderful summer break

Kind regards

**Mr Cater**

**Headteacher**

**Wrotham School**