

15<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Wrotham School  
Borough Green Road  
Wrotham, Sevenoaks  
Kent TN15 7RD

office@wrotham.kent.sch.uk  
03000 658320

Headteacher  
Michael Cater

Executive Headteacher  
Matthew Wright

Dear Parent/Carer

## End of Year Letter to Parents

### INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to be able to write to you with my final update for the academic year and with hope that in September we can start a new year that looks very different to the one just passed. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all sincerely for your support this year and hope we have met your expectations at a challenging time in all of our lives.

In term 5 and 6 we are proud to have been able to return to as many of our “normal” activities as possible and hope that the students have enjoyed being able to get back to doing the things they love, whether that be in lesson or in their extra-curricular provision.

I would also like to welcome our new Year 6 students and their parents; we look forward to meeting you all properly in September to start your exciting journey at Wrotham School.

This year has provided a good opportunity for reflection and change and has allowed us to evaluate our work at the school and take the opportunity to make some important changes and improvements that will continue to build on our previous success.

It is an exciting time to be part of our community and to join a school that is moving from strength to strength. Throughout the pandemic, we have been keen to take positive steps forward into the future and to focus on preparing generations of young people for success and happiness in life.

This update will focus on these changes, what we hope to achieve and what impact this will have on your child and your family.

I have a lot to cover in this letter, but hopefully this gives you all of the information you need for the new school year.

**If you don't have the stamina to read through all of this, I have also attached a summary sheet with just the key information.**

HIGH EXPECTATIONS  
CHALLENGE  
OPPORTUNITY

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## **LAST DAY OF SUMMER TERM**

As is customary on the last day of the summer term, Friday 23/7/2021, the school day will finish at 12:00 (midday). The buses will leave at **12:15**.

This day will be an own clothes day and as with last time, we ask students to make a £1 donation to the school; any money raised will be spent on improving facilities for students. The last 2 own clothes day donations have allowed us to buy new benches for the playground and tables for the canteen and have made a huge difference to the students comfort at break and lunch.

## **LESSON LENGTH**

Following our move to 90 minute lessons last September (from 60 minutes) we have seen a huge impact on the quality of learning generated by these extended sessions. We are also aware that in some subjects and for some students, these were slightly too long. From our review and evaluation of lesson length we hope we have managed to find a balance which is manageable for all and still affords us a longer lesson that encourages deeper learning and broader experiences.

Therefore, from September the school day will consist of **4 x 75 minute lessons** in all year groups. This will be particularly beneficial for practical subjects such as PE and Technology/Art but will also allow teachers to plan for extended learning and a more in depth curriculum coverage in every subject. Unlike this year, students will not have full/half days of one subject and their lessons will be spread evenly across the week.

Curriculum coverage and time spent in each subject will not change and will retain the same broad and balanced approach as before.

## **STAGGERED DAY**

Originally introduced to support “bubbles”, our staggered days have also provided many unforeseen benefits, most obviously it has allowed students more comfortable access to facilities at break and lunch, more space to play and has allowed us to prevent significant traffic build ups around the school at the start and end of the day.

We have been able to keep some of this staggering to allow these benefits to continue. We have also been able to reduce spacing of the stagger so that the gaps between the “stagers” are smaller.

Below is an outline of our timings of the school day from September.

	LOWER SCHOOL				UPPER SCHOOL		
PERIOD	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	PERIOD	Year 10	Year 11	6th Form
<b>REG</b>	08:25	08:35	08:40	<b>REG</b>	08:30	08:30	08:30
<b>P1</b>	09:00	09:00	09:00	<b>P1</b>	09:00	09:00	09:00
<b>BREAK</b>	10:15	10:15	10:15	<b>P2</b>	10:15	10:15	10:15
<b>P2</b>	10:30	10:30	10:30	<b>BREAK</b>	11:30	11:30	11:30
<b>LUNCH</b>	11:45	11:45	11:45	<b>P3</b>	11:45	11:45	11:45
<b>P3</b>	12:30	12:30	12:30	<b>LUNCH</b>	13:00	13:00	13:00
<b>P4</b>	13:45	13:45	13:45	<b>P4</b>	13:45	13:45	13:45
<b>END</b>	14:55	15:05	15:05	<b>BREAK</b>	15:00	15:00	15:00
				<b>INTERVENTION</b>	15:15	15:15	15:15
				<b>END</b>	16:15	16:15	16:15

This allows lower school and upper school more space and less queueing in the canteen for lunch and provides structure to upper school interventions that already run throughout years 10 and 11.

### UPPER SCHOOL/LOWER SCHOOL

As the school continues to soar in popularity and student numbers rise, it is important to us that we retain the high quality pastoral support that your child has received. To achieve this we have added capacity to our teams and have restructured our groups to ensure that this is led and managed to a high standard.

We will continue to have a Head of Year assigned to each year group but they will be overseen by a Head of School for each area. This person will be responsible for consistency, standards and for leading the key moments in your child's school career such as options, transition to year 7 and sixth form, GCSE, A level, careers, extra-curricular activities, rewards and celebrations.

As a student or parent, this will offer improved consistency from year to year, more capacity to join up the work of each key phase and ensure that progress and wellbeing is tracked and managed over time.

Below is a simple to understand guide to the new structure.

<b>LOWER SCHOOL - Years 7/8/9</b>		<b>UPPER SCHOOL - Years 10/11/12/13</b>	
<b>LOWER SCHOOL ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER</b> Mr Williams		<b>UPPER SCHOOL ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER</b> Mr Zamblera	
<b>HEAD OF LOWER SCHOOL</b> Miss Flannery		<b>HEAD OF UPPER SCHOOL</b> Miss Elliott	
<b>TRANSITION</b> (Year 6)	Mrs Sanders	<b>SIXTH FORM TEAM</b>	Mrs Hollinshead Mrs Parry Miss Moore Mrs Cheval
<b>HEAD OF YEAR 7</b>	Mr McCracken	<b>HEAD OF YEAR 11</b>	Miss Williams
<b>HEAD OF YEAR 8</b>	Mrs Paul Dhas	<b>HEAD OF YEAR 10</b>	Miss Allen
<b>HEAD OF YEAR 9</b>	Mr Scott	<b>UPPER SCHOOL SUPPORT</b>	Miss Fuller and Mr Allum
<b>LOWER SCHOOL SUPPORT</b>	Mr Pickles and Mrs Drew		

### **ONE WAY SYSTEM – collection and drop off**

As we phase back into normal travel to and from school, we expect to see more students returning to the school bus services and travelling by train. We are currently working with the bus companies and KCC to predict the capacity on these routes. We also expect to see a general overall increase in car/road traffic to and from school. Therefore we will be making the school drop off/pick up one way system a permanent part of our site by installing permanent fencing, speed bumps and crossings for the students.

I should be clear that there is no “perfect” system for managing the levels of traffic we experience as a semi-rural school in a busy local area. It is a constant best fit process that all secondary schools have to manage and always involves compromise somewhere in the process. Therefore, whilst picking up and dropping off your child to school will always be a congested process, we think we now have a “best fit” system in place that will at least minimise this whilst keeping the roads around the school safe and flowing.

### **This will work as follows:**

- The one way system will now be a permanent route for pick up/drop off.
- Increased safety measures will be in place to keep students safe.
- Staggered days will continue to allow staggered collection and drop off periods.
- Outside of these periods traffic can enter/exit as required.

**I have detailed the collection and pick up times below:**

- All parents can continue to pick up freely, without restriction from 07:30-8:00 and from 15:20 onwards.
- Siblings should be collected at the latest time provided to avoid waiting and slowing traffic through the site.
- Parents arriving before the window stated will be asked to move on and re-join the one way system to keep traffic flowing.
- Although the staggered times are narrow, it is important to stick to these windows or to plan an early/late journey and to reduce congestion on site.
- Please drive carefully when on site to ensure the safety of students.
- Please expect and plan for car pickups and drop offs to take 15-30 minutes on average.

<b>Year Group</b>	<b>School Start Times</b>	<b>Drop Off Times</b>	<b>School Finish Times</b>	<b>Pick Up Times</b>
<b>7</b>	08:25	08:00 - 08:20	14:55	14:40 - 14:55
<b>8</b>	08:35	08:00 - 08:25	15:05	14:55 - 15:05
<b>9</b>	08:40	08:00 - 08:35	15:05	14:55 - 15:05
<b>10</b>	08:30	08:00 – 08:25	15:15 / 16:15	15:05 onwards
<b>11</b>	08:30	08:00 – 08:25	15:15 / 16:15	15:05 onwards
<b>12 and 13</b>	08:30	08:00 – 08:25	15:15 / 16:15	15:05 onwards

**TERM DATES – STAGGERED START DUE TO COVID TESTING**

Following the governments newly announced requirement for all students to be tested twice in school before returning, we have had to make adjustments to the start of term dates. More detail can be found in my separate letter outlining these changes.

For quick reference please find the test dates and school start dates for each year group below:

<b>Year Group</b>	<b>Test One</b>	<b>Test Two</b>	<b>School Term Start Day</b>
<b>7</b>	2/9/2021 (Thursday)	6/9/2021 (Monday)	7/9/2021 (Tuesday)
<b>8</b>	3/9/2021 (Friday)	8/9/2021 (Wednesday)	9/9/2021 (Thursday)
<b>9</b>	3/9/2021 (Friday)	8/9/2021 (Wednesday)	9/9/2021 (Thursday)
<b>10</b>	7/9/2021 (Tuesday)	9/9/2021 (Thursday)	10/9/2021 (Friday)
<b>11</b>	7/9/2021 (Tuesday)	9/9/2021 (Thursday)	10/9/2021 (Friday)
<b>12</b>	2/9/2021 (Thursday)	6/9/2021 (Monday)	7/9/2021 (Tuesday)
<b>13</b>	7/9/2021 (Tuesday)	9/9/2021 (Thursday)	10/9/2021 (Friday)

As promised – we have ensured that the new year 7 have 2 days in school as part of their transition process, ahead of other year groups returning.

## NEW SCHOOL LOGO

I am pleased to share the new school logo.



This will start to be added to our signage, marketing materials and communications. This accompanies our newly redesigned and much improved website that is due to go online during the summer holidays. This brings a much welcome update to our branding and better represents us as a modern, thriving school.

We are not planning to add this badge or colour scheme to the uniform until we have conducted a full review and consultation and I would like to reassure parents that we will not introduce any major uniform changes without a phased approach that ensures no additional cost to you as a parent.

## CURRICULUM

At Wrotham School we offer a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to have high expectations of all of our students whilst offering significant challenge to achieve the highest levels of attainment. Our latest curriculum model can be found here: <http://www.wrothamschool.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Curriculum-and-Assessment-Policy-2021-2022.pdf>

This includes the addition of a subject called “life and society” and will be an opportunity for students to participate in a range of learning that includes the mandatory sex and relationships curriculum. Our curriculum continues to offer a range of subjects all of the way up to year 10 with “subject taster lessons” in year 9 to ensure students are confident in making their options choices for GCSE.

This year the curriculum will be closely linked to our work on character to ensure learning is linked to real life skills that will support the development of student’s wider skills that enhance their “employability”.

## **CHARACTER**

As you will know, our school is a leader in character education and this year we are pleased to have appointed Mr Boudreau (History) to lead this in his new role as Assistant Headteacher. His work will be focussed on ensuring that we exhaust all opportunities for students to work on and develop their character strengths and are rewarded for these characteristics.

## **INCLUSION**

We are also pleased to announce the permanent appointment of Mrs S Morris as Assistant Headteacher in charge of inclusion. She will work to ensure that students are given the support they need to close any gaps in their progress, to engage with their learning, improve attendance, as required and will work with Looked After Children.

A copy of our new behaviour policy which will come into effect in September, will be focussed on character, reward and inclusion.

## **EXAM RESULTS DAYS**

This year results days for year 11 and 13 are slightly different to normal and we will be opening the school for collection as follows:

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> August – A level results day – 8.30 – 11.00 am**

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> August – GCSE results day – 9.00 – 11.30 am**

All sixth form careers interviews have already been conducted but opportunity to book in a further discussion with the staff team will be available on the day if extra support is needed for UCAS, college or school 6<sup>th</sup> form applications.

## **SUMMER BREAK**

The school site will be fully closed over the summer break except for Summer School and results days. During this period the school will not be able to receive visitors or respond to communications from parents or students until 1/9/2021.

From the last day of term 6, the school will no longer be responsible for contact tracing for Covid-19 cases and this will be now done through the NHS track and trace provision. Parents will still be responsible for notifying the school, via our attendance officer, of any positive cases or isolation prior to return.

Despite the disruption to this year and school closure in January; it is important to remember that for our students and staff the incredible effort and focus on their work has been unbroken. Throughout the pandemic our students have worked tirelessly to adapt to online working and have shown resilience in coping with these changes. We hear a lot in the press about missed schooling but the vast majority of our students did not stop, miss out on their lessons; nor did the school close in any way other than on its physical site.

It is often glossed over, but the summer break is very important for young people as it allows them to spend time with their friends and family, to take a break, to enjoy themselves and to start to feel “normal” again especially as freedoms open up in our wider society.

## **PARENT GOVERNORS**

I am pleased to announce the election of our new parent governors to the Wrotham School Local Governing Body. Mrs Rachel O’ Neill and Mrs Lorna Stewart have now been appointed to the LGB and I thank them for this voluntary service and support of our school.

## **AND FINALLY**

Thank you for taking the time to read this rather long update from me but I hope it has been informative and given you the information you need about the exciting updates at the school and on our work with your child. As you will know our goal is to provide an outstanding education for all students and to keep pushing our high expectations in order to achieve this.

This has been a tough year for all of us and we hope school will feel a lot more normal come September. We remain positive and look forward to a fresh start with new opportunities for the students and our community.

I hope you all have a great, well deserved summer break and thank you again for your incredible support.

Yours sincerely



Mr M Cater  
Headteacher