

Dear Parents/Carers

Kimberley College - Pastoral Tutoring [Mr Detheridge]

Strong pastoral support has always been a strength of the Wootton Academy Trust and is integral to the Kimberley experience. It is an essential contributory factor to the success and wellbeing of our students and continues to be an improvement priority for the Trust. To meet the demands of the increasing numbers and diversity of our student body, this year has seen the appointment of four specialist pastoral tutors and an introduction of a new pastoral tutoring system at Kimberley College.

Pastoral tutors monitor attendance, progress and well-being whilst also delivering the pastoral support programme driven by the Trust improvement priorities. They are the first point of contact for staff and parents if there are any well-being concerns and are also a friendly face for students to approach should they have any concerns. This dedicated team meet with their tutor groups once a week and will arrange 1:1 support meetings with students each term. Students have one timetabled pastoral AM or PM block each week. The registered group sessions will take place during one of the three periods within this block. During the other two periods students are working on next steps research, Unifrog, UCAS or other activities directed by the Pastoral Tutor. Occasionally, all three sessions within the block will be used for extended PSHCE and visiting speakers. This week, students attended a talk from Project Trust during their pastoral block, who gave them an insight into the fantastic opportunities available to them during a Gap Year. Project Trust organises voluntary placements in Africa, Asia and Latin America for young people, providing training and support to maximise both the educational value of their experience and the positive impact they have. The new pastoral block therefore, gives ample opportunity to provide students with information and guidance into the many options available to them when they leave College, inspiring them to set goals and strive to achieve them.

What's on at Kimberley... [Mr Detheridge]

Friday 20 September see's the return of Jeans for Genes day, to support and raise awareness for children with genetic disorders. Students are encouraged to wear jeans to college on Friday and donate and spare change they can for a good cause. Last year, the College raised just over £100, let's see if we can beat that this year!

We will be starting a student-run Physics clinic at Kimberley College from Thursday 26 September for Y12 and Y13 physicists who want extra practice or support. The clinic is completely student-led and a great way for students to not only support each other's learning, but also develop their own understanding of the topics.

Y12 students have been busy completing their Kimberley Passport in the first few weeks of term. This has been designed to ensure students have the best support to fully engage in their curriculum and begin a successful transformation into an independent learner.



Year 13 Parents Evening [Mr Detheridge]

All parents/carers of students in Year 13 should have received information about the Year 13 Consultation Event which the College is hosting on Wednesday 02 October starting at 4 pm until 8pm. Information about this event has already been circulated to parents and lots of appointments have already been booked with staff. If you have not received information please contact Mrs D Ashpole dashpole@wootton.beds.sch.uk who is point of contact for this event.

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Wootton Upper School - Open Evening Thursday 26 September 5pm – 8 pm [Mrs McMorn]

A final reminder that our annual Open Evening takes place next week for children in Year 8.

We would be very grateful if you could forward details of the event to any of your friends with children who are in Year 8, especially those not at Marston Vale and Holywell who we have already invited. Thank you. There will be talks from the Senior Team and Senior Students in the Theatre Hall at 6 pm and 6.30pm. May we also offer our thanks to all parents who are making arrangements for their children who are already at Wootton to help at the event and to meet all of our visitors. Your support is really appreciated. Thank you.

Be More Chill [Mr Gleeson]

We know that Mr Stewart has written separately to those families who generously hosted a student from Bremen earlier this week as part of the launch of our project with our partner school in Bremen, *Schulzentrum Utbremen*. Our German guests had a wonderful few days with you and in school before leaving for London for the second part of their visit on Wednesday. The German staff leading the visit asked us to pass on their thanks to you too. Rehearsals for the show are now underway and there is already a great air of excitement. A rehearsal by the company is taking place at our Open Evening next Thursday. The three performances in England will be on Monday 04, Tuesday 05 and Thursday 07 November, prior to the production going to Bremen for four more performances in a professional theatre in Bremen. This is the twenty third year of our partnership with *Schulzentrum Utbremen* and one of the very special links Wootton Academy Trust has with European schools and colleges.

Singing Lessons with Mrs England start on Wednesday 24 September

The timetable is on the noticeboard in the music corridor. We very much look forward to welcoming Mrs England to Wootton next week and know she will enjoy working with Wootton Academy Trust pupils.

Mathematics [Mr Frazer]

Over the summer the Mathematics block at Wootton was refurbished; very little money had been spent on the block since it was opened in 1998. The block now has a brand-new entrance, new carpets, re-decorated with a modern colour scheme and the acoustics are much better. The pupils at Wootton tell us how much better it is and therefore, we would like to thank Mr Hance our Estates Manager for overseeing the project, his team of decorators, especially Mr Malciw who did much of the painting, and other members of his team who have made a real difference to the learning environment for pupils. Every member of our team plays a part in enabling students to get great outcomes here.

We have a really strong team of Mathematics teachers at Wootton Academy Trust, which explains why we have five A level Maths classes in Year 12 at Kimberley College. Thank you Mr McTernan and the wonderful team of teachers who support you in giving so many opportunities to Wootton Academy Trust children.

Design Technology [Mr Frazer]

Ms McCracken and Mr Lang's work in Design Technology continues to move this area of our provision forward. Mr Lang spent a lot of his own time during the summer improving the learning environment in the Project Area and DT5 – this included re-decoration and new modern display boards; there is a real buzz in the department and we are excited by the direction of travel that both Ms McCracken and Mr Land are leading us along. On everybody's behalf I should like to thank them for their hard work.

Stagecoach buses [Mrs McMorn]

We have provided a letter to some pupils in assembly at Wootton this week regarding the need for them to have a photographic ID card to show alongside their bus passes.

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This requirement only applies to:

- Children/students travelling on Stagecoach buses – most probably in our case route 53 or 53a:
- Children/students travelling on Stagecoach buses with a Stagecoach *termrider* bus pass

Children/students with daily or weekly ticket will not need photographic ID.

We understand that *Stagecoachbus* has changed its policy because in some parts of its East of England region, *termrider* passes are being shared amongst groups of students. There is more information on how to apply for the required photographic ID card using the link:

<https://www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/east/student-discounted-bus-passes>

Scroll down the webpage and select '*my school does not issue student ID card, what can I do?*' which will take you to the form you need to send to Stagecoachbus Head Office.

Small changes, Big Differences [Mrs Enser]

Martyn Lee from Bedford Borough Council's Early Help Team has contacted us to let us know that the Early Help Service Team will be holding a series of one-off Triple P discussion groups at Wootton Upper School on a variety of issues commonly faced by parents.

These discussion group sessions explore common problems parents face and some of the reasons why they happen. They will then offer strategies and advice on how parents may be able to manage these problems before they occur. The informal discussion groups are being hosted by Wootton Upper School but are open to all parents of children aged 12 years and over.

- Thursday 10th October, 7pm-9pm
"Building Teenage Survival Skills"
- Thursday 7th November, 7pm-9pm
"Reducing Family Conflict"
- Thursday 5th December, 7pm-9pm
"Coping with Teenage Emotions"

GCSE Results Update [Mr Frazer]

We are now receiving updates from the examination boards following our requests for re-marks. This year, a smaller proportion are coming back with the grades improved, however, every improvement is a reason to celebrate for the pupil concerned.

In addition to the grade changes, we also wish to congratulate Nathan Hyde on his excellent results in the summer. Nathan achieved more than five 9-7 grades and should have been on the list we included in our first newsletter this year.

GCSE and A level examinations in 2020 [Mrs Gray]

A small number of parents – who only have children in Year 11 or Year 13 - contact us each year to ask for the date of their sons'/daughters' final GCSE or A Level examination so they can book holidays. Whilst parents may look at the examination board websites to work out the likely last date for their children's examinations, assuming they look at the relevant examination board, parents need to be aware that the final date for examinations could easily change.

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The reason for this is that each examination board is now obliged to set a contingency date when any examination which is prevented from taking place on the published date, for whatever reason will be rescheduled. The contingency date may be needed in a number of circumstances including for example in a situation where an examination is prevented from taking place due to a deliberate attempt to disrupt the timetable [for example a few years ago many schools were contacted on the morning of an examination with claims that a bomb had been planted on their sites.

More likely, sadly, is that a decision is taken to cancel an examination because there has been a leak of the paper in advance of the examination being taken. There are clearly other reasons why an examination board may need to change the date of an examination.

Therefore, the only guidance we can give to parents is that the final day for public examinations in 2020 is **Wednesday 24 June 2020**. If a parent risks booking a holiday before the contingency date, then your child's hard work over the previous two-years is at risk of being lost.

Yours sincerely

Wootton Academy Trust