



Our Ref: DWt/LPu

17th January 2025

Dear Parent/Carers,

Another week with lots of questions and answers and a wealth of information shared across many areas. Thank you to all who joined the virtual live Q&A on Wednesday evening to go through our proposal for a two-week October half term for the academic year 2026-2027. Lots of thoughtful questions and I do hope Miss White and I were able to provide the answers needed. As we have said, the main driver for this is that the first term is simply far too long. This is both from a learner and teacher/support point of view. We need all youngsters and staff alike to be fresh so able to ensure that all are given the greatest chance of being successful.

The main issue we had to resolve was to ensure that learning time was not negatively impacted. We have been able to do this with just two hours of teaching throughout the whole academic year coming off. Going into a term whereby 42% of the academic year is completed by the end of it straight after a six-week break just makes no sense at all. As you know, we are still at the proposal stage so please do keep your feedback coming. **A reminder that the consultation ends on Friday 31st January at 3.00pm.**

Thank you to all Year 8 parents and carers who attended last night's Parents' Evening. A positive turnout with lots of conversations about how to choose the right Option for study at the next stage. Huge support is being offered over the coming weeks through assemblies on subjects they can take but have perhaps not even heard of sociology and citizenship spring to mind, to the lunchtime taster sessions and assessments that can be taken to get a real flavour of what could be studied. Every Year 8 had the chance to explore where each Option choice could take them yesterday when the Department for Work and Pensions were in taking them through their potential careers. A real hive of activity in the Opportunities Hub. All that needs to take place now are decisions that are made that aren't based on what their friends are taking or who they have as a teacher right now. Their interests should be followed with a clear eye on what they would like to be in the future. We are all here to support and guide.

Key dates for your diary:

Tuesday 21st January

Year 11 Hospitality and Catering Exam

Thursday 23rd January

Year 11 Preparing for Success Evening – 6.00pm

Monday 27th January to Friday 31st January

Year 11 Mock MFL Speaking Exams/Walking Talking Mocks

Thursday 30th January

Year 10 Parent/Carer Evening – 4.10pm – 7.00pm

Monday 3rd February to Friday 14th February

Year 11 PPEs

Wednesday 12th February

Jack Petchey Speak Out Final – 4.00pm – 5.30pm

Friday 14th February – Monday 17th February

Year 11 GCSE German Trip

Monday 17th February – Friday 21st February

Year 11 Holiday Intervention

Monday 17th February – Friday 21st February

Half Term

Friday 24th January

Year 8 Options Forms sent to parents/carers via email

Thursday 6th February

Deadline for final Year 8 Options to be submitted (via Microsoft Forms)

Monday 24th February - Monday 3rd March

Year 8 Options Assessments (for specific subjects)

Thursday 27th March

Year 8 Options choices confirmed to pupils and parents/carers.

Arbor Communication

As you know from time to time, we send out emails and text messages using Groupcall. From Monday 20th January we will no longer be using Groupcall to send emails/text messages as we are moving over to Arbor. When you receive a text message from us it will come up as the following number +447520 660248 so you may wish to save this as a contact in your phones as Woodlands School. At the end of the text message, it does say Woodlands School but just in case you don't get that far. There will be no changes to the way you receive emails from us.

Mrs Heseltine - Assistant Head Teacher - Cultural Capital

Reminder: Year 11 Preparing for Success Event - Thursday 23rd January from 6.00pm to 7.00pm

Please can you complete the MSForms Survey link below to let us know if you can or can't make the Year 11 Preparing for Success Event on Thursday 23rd January. Thank you to parents and carers who have already completed this so far:

[Reply Slip & Seat Reservation for The Y11 Preparing for Success Event](#)

The event covers:

- How to support your child before and the during exams
- Effective revision practices and methods
- Key exam information, practices, and regulations
- Key post-16 information, application guidance, and updates
- Exam Stress Support - Mental Wellbeing during the exam period

There will also be an opportunity to meet with Heads of Department and Faculties should you have any subject specific questions, all pupils who attend the event will receive a reward, and there will be light refreshments provided.

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Reminder: Year 10 Application for Prefect Deadline

The deadline is fast approaching for all Year 10 pupils who wish to be considered for the position of Prefect. All application forms need to be completed and handed back to myself by **Tuesday 4th February**, after this date applications will not be accepted.

The job description for the role of Prefect, and the application form can be found in the school website's Pupil Leadership Roles tab (click on the links in the table) here:

[Pupil Leadership Roles](#)



[Woodlands School - Pupil Leadership Roles](#)

PUPIL LEADERSHIP ROLES. At Woodlands we are passionate about developing leadership skills in all our pupils. We want to ensure that they can grow their Cultural Capital, being confident to stand out from their peers with pride when they leave our school
www.woodlandsschool.org



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DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) time this half-term:

Please find below a reminder of the DEAR timetable:

- Thursday 23rd January - Period 1
- Thursday 30th January - Period 2
- Thursday 6th February - Period 3
- Thursday 13th February - Period 4

Moving forward

We are very much a school that is outward facing and no doubt on many occasions you have had discussions at home about one guest or another being in classes asking questions about their learning. The reason for this is that we are constantly trying to improve what we are doing so that all here get the very best education. We know the areas of strength and those that need developing as our School Improvement Plan shows, but having external experts come in regularly and support us on our journey really does make sure we are going along on the right track and in the right way.

This week saw the second part of our review of the science faculty. They are making great strides into getting all where they need to be in a very interesting and academically challenging group of subjects. Some real positives, and as ever so areas to keep working on. English will be next to be reviewed and then maths, we will not rest until all are overachieving and getting the best both in and beyond the classroom. As ever, I was incredibly proud of our youngsters as they always speak so well about the school and are nothing if not honest. All guests say they receive a tremendous welcome from our young people who are keen to talk about how they are getting on and what they feel could be improved.

Best wishes,



Mr David Wright
Head Teacher