

Our Ref: DWt/LPu

21st January 2022

Dear Parent/Carers,

Yet another week has come and gone and thank you as ever for all your support for what we are trying to do here. As I emailed on Wednesday from yesterday face coverings were no longer advised for youngsters, staff and visitors in classrooms. **It has now been confirmed that from 27th January, face coverings are also no longer advised for youngsters, staff and visitors in communal areas.** Should anyone still wish to carry on wearing plain face coverings either in class or in the communal areas that is absolutely fine. There are certain areas and schools where face coverings are set to continue given the number of positive cases, this could well be us if we get a significant increase in cases.

COVID-19 Update

We have had a total of 47 positive pupil cases, 2 staff cases.

A letter was sent on Wednesday 19th January advising that the **School Immunisation Team will be coming to us on Thursday 3rd February to administer the second dose of the vaccine.** They are also offering our youngsters the opportunity to receive their 1st dose as well should you wish for them to now have the vaccine. Please ensure you have completed the consent form by Tuesday 1st February by clicking on the following link:-

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=sITDN7CF9Ueylge0jXdO4x0StxVq6pZLv8DcG60awnJURVI3QlIKWko4NjhERUY1SVpQRkkxUk1LSyQIQCNOPWcu>

Year 11 Preparing for Success Evening

On Wednesday 2nd February we will be having a Preparing for Success evening with our Year 11 parents and carers, our Year 11 youngsters are also welcome to attend. It will be a 6.00pm start and will be held in the Performance Hall. We would encourage all to wear a face covering and we will spread out as much as we can, some events are just better in person. The purpose of the event is for us to give as much detail as we can on what you as parents and carers can do to support your youngster, as well as explaining what we have been going through in school to ensure they have every chance of success.

Year 8 Options

It's been an exciting two weeks for our Year 8 youngsters, who have begun to explore the range of Options available to them at Year 9 and beyond. For two weeks, we have held a number of Options Assemblies and Taster Sessions, providing all with an insight into the wide variety of subjects available.

For a pre-recorded briefing on all of the important information regarding the Options process, please click here:

<https://youtu.be/zv8XJ-8D8rA>

For a recording of the recent virtual parent/carer Q+A session on Options, please click here:

https://youtu.be/a49mu3tt_SM

The deadline for the Options Form to be completed is the **Friday 11th February**. The link to the relevant form has been sent to you all. We recommend, however, that all read through the Options Booklet and consider all Options carefully before making a final decision and submit the online Options Form. Our youngsters will be studying these subjects for three years and will carry these qualifications with them for the rest of their lives – so it is important that they make the right decision!

If parents and carers have any further questions or queries, please contact Mr Roberts, Deputy Head Teacher at: ero@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk

Year 10 Current Grades

Year 10 current grades will be available on PAM from Friday 28th January. If you are unable to access PAM for whatever reason please do email Miss Jordan, Assistant Head Teacher at: ejo@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk

Miss White - Associate Deputy Head Teacher and Head of the Humanities Faculty

My name is Miss White and whilst many of you may know me in my role as Associate Deputy Head Teacher, I also have the privilege of leading the Humanities faculty. Comprising of History, Geography, Citizenship, Philosophy and Sociology, the study of Humanities aims to broaden pupils' horizons by looking at a range of historic and contemporary issues that have shaped and continue to shape the world in which we live.

Within lessons pupils are encouraged to develop their natural curiosity and ask questions about a number of key issues. They will learn about key historical events from the past 1000 years, study a range of global and local environmental issues, engage in philosophical debates, discuss current affairs and study social change, and the social causes and consequences of human behaviour.

The study of Humanities will also embed within pupils, key transferable skills important for success not only at Woodlands, but also in the wider world. They will develop their ability to conduct research and critically evaluate their findings to arrive at well justified conclusions which they will present in a range of different ways, providing them the opportunity to improve their communication skills. Some of the topics they learn about will be sensitive allowing them develop empathy and understanding thus making them well rounded individuals.

I am proud to lead the team and we welcome parents and carers to be actively involved in their child's learning. Please do therefore feel free to contact us if you have any questions about the subjects we teach and the progress your child is making in Humanities.

Why not join us?

We have a great many parents working at the school in a host of roles, many even came here themselves as youngsters, now send their children here and also work at Woodlands, one of the many reasons that makes us so special.



In order to offer a first class provision at Woodlands, we are always looking to recruit new staff not only to fulfil teaching roles, but also to fulfil support and administrative roles. One of our key aims at Woodlands is to develop all stakeholders. Most obviously, we focus on the academic progress of our youngsters but of equal importance is the professional development of our staff, and we consequently have a comprehensive induction and training programme. We currently have a number of exciting career opportunities at Woodlands, details of which can be found using the following link: <https://www.woodlandsschool.org/vacancies>

Please contact us if you would like any more information and feel free to share with anyone you feel would be interested. It really is a great place to work, and the boss is great!

Moving Forward

Even though I am cautiously optimistic with what was announced on Wednesday, we still need to all play our part and continue to look after each other. Our contingency plan, which has been shared in the last few letters will remain an option for as long as there is potential for large numbers of staff to be absent with COVID-19. Our common sense approach will always be there and we all want to just get on with why we are all here.

We plan to go back to face-to-face assemblies the week beginning Monday 7th February as it is important that we can get our year groups together to share with them different experiences. With regard to classrooms they will still continue to be properly ventilated as we must continue to remain cautious.

The break and lunch arrangements will continue as they have been for some time now as they work. There is no congestion in the building and the virus is still with us so free time outside is still safer.

My fear is that we do too much too soon and we end up having more youngsters and staff off ill. We have to be sensible, look after each other and make decisions that will not cause any more disruption.

Best wishes,

Mr David Wright
Head Teacher