



Our Ref: DWt/LPu

5th January 2024

Dear Parent/Carers,

The very warmest of welcomes back to Woodlands. I hope you have all had time to spend with family and friends and that all our youngsters are back and raring to go what promises to be yet another jam-packed term full of first-class learning. A shorter letter this week given that we only returned yesterday.

New term same expectations

As we embark on our new term I will be sharing once again next week with all staff and youngsters the importance of doing the basics right and being consistent.

The basics for all are that our Woodlands Way is followed. This is simply the way we do things here at our school which I have shared before.

The 5 golden rules for our young people are:

1. Attend every day and every lesson on time.
2. Look smart and wear your uniform with pride.
3. Be polite and respectful to all.
4. Work hard and always try your best in all aspects of school life.
5. Always be equipped for learning, every day, every lesson.

Staff are to teach the best lessons they can every hour:

1. Provide a chance to review previous learning at the start of each lesson with our RAW (Retrieval At Woodlands) knowledge starters.
2. Ensure all can access the learning with a high level of challenge.
3. Ensure the learning is pupil led – youngsters should be working harder than the staff in class.
4. Literacy, Oracy, Numeracy and Grammatical (LONG) skills are to be developed.
5. Regular progress checks for all so that every young person is making progress every lesson.
6. Feedback (Marking) that allows everyone to make progress as a result.

You as parents and carers are expected to play a huge role as well:

1. We are first and foremost a place of learning – that is our core purpose. You are expected to support this.
2. We expect you to support our school and our AROE ethos – you did choose us.
3. To treat all staff with respect and be courteous.
4. Know that we won't get everything right – and that taking to social media to tell everyone isn't helpful.
5. Remember that we only come to work to change the lives of our youngsters.
6. Stick to the uniform code. Your youngster will feel more comfortable from day one.
7. Support them to stay on top of home learning and show an active interest.
8. Discuss the many clubs and teams they can join and encourage them to join one.



9. If they are having any problems, social or educational, please contact the tutor in the first instance, then relevant teacher or Head of Year
10. Help us to provide them with the tools to solve their own problems.

Supporting teaching and learning:

- **Flipped learning:** if you know what they are going to be learning in the upcoming term, which is all available on our website, encourage them to research online.
- **Recall:** ask them about what they have been learning. Be specific about subjects! *'So, tell me what The Tempest is about.'*
- **Regular reflection:** ask them what they are finding is going well and what they could improve on. Again, be specific where you can! *'I know you've been learning about data handling in Computer Science. How are you finding it? Have you found anything particularly difficult? Why do you think that is?'*
- **Marginal gains:** ensure they know about good habits for learning.
 - Turn up with the correct equipment.
 - Carry water with you.
 - Get enough sleep (no screen time before).
 - Eat a good breakfast.
 - Stay well ahead with home learning deadlines (check Satchel One).
 - Check your timetable and pack your bag the night before.
 - E-mail teachers for help and support if needed.
 - Asking questions in class and trying to contribute to discussions.

*'While subject knowledge is a major barrier for many parents during their child's secondary years, the evidence suggests this is by no means a pre-requisite for engagement – **all that is needed is a genuine interest in their child's education, experiences and aspirations, and the provision of ongoing support and encouragement.***

(OECD, 2012; EEF, 2018)

Punctuality

A reminder of our procedures regarding punctuality to lessons. As you are already aware and as stated already in this letter *'Attend every day and every lesson on time'* is one of our five key expectations and part of our *'Woodlands Way'*. Undoubtedly, punctuality plays a huge part in academic success. When youngsters are late to lesson it breaks the continuity of their own learning and the learning of others and presents them with the unnecessary challenge of having to catch up on missed work.

Given that we have adapted the timings of our school day, giving all additional time to get to their next lesson, any youngster who has more than one late mark in a day, will receive a next day 30 minute detention. This will be set on SatchelOne, where our youngsters and you as parents and carers can also view late marks, but please do email sanctionsqueries@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk if you have any questions.

Thank you in advance for supporting us in ensuring that all realise that punctuality is an important life skill crucial for success not only at Woodlands, but also in later life.



WOODLANDS SCHOOL

ASPIRATION, RESILIENCE, OPPORTUNITY, EXCELLENCE

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Moving forward

As ever, a great deal coming up and a reminder:

Year 8 Options Meeting (virtual) – Thursday 11th January 6.00pm to 7.00pm.

Year 8 Consultation Evening – Thursday 18th January 18th 4.00pm to 7.00pm.

Year 11 Preparation for Success Evening – Thursday 25th January 6.00pm to 7.00pm.

Year 11 Mock Modern Foreign Languages Speaking Exams – Week beginning 29th January.

Year 10 Consultation Evening – Thursday 1st February 4.00pm to 7.00pm.

May I take this opportunity once again to thank you all for your continued support. I am really looking forward to a positive 2024.

Best wishes,

Mr David Wright
Head Teacher

