

Our Ref: DWt/LPu

25<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Dear Parent/Carers,

As part of our ongoing process of reaching out to external experts to see how we can improve our school even further across all areas we had Tom Bennett OBE spend the day with us on Wednesday. This follows on from the P.E review we had the week before where we are looking to increase the breadth of our curriculum as well as inclusivity. This was led by Damien Lee who is Regional Director of Education for the Academies Enterprise Trust, one of the largest multi-academy trusts in the country. He was also a P.E lead when he taught so brings a wealth of experience across many areas.

Tom Bennett has worked with schools, trusts, education departments, universities, and charities, individuals across the UK and throughout the world. The Department for Education, The National Union of Teachers, Association of School and College Leaders, National Association of Head Teachers, Wellington College, the BBC, Teach First, 10 Downing Street, Harris Academies, Ark Academies, the Inspiration Trust, Uncommon Schools (New York), International English Schools (Sweden), the Times Educational Supplement, and many more.

Both brought a fresh set of eyes to what we are trying to achieve here and gave our staff some practical ways forward. We are constantly seeing how we can improve the way we are doing things and to ensure that all have the best training who work here.

#### **Mr Amran – Reminder**

Could I please ask that all have the appropriate warm clothing in addition to our uniform. Coats would be ideal as hoodies don't tend to keep the warmth in and with hoods up it is difficult to tell who people are. **A reminder that there are to be no coats in the building, this includes when in the queues at break and lunch and when sitting down to eat. When finished eating please leave the area tidy and make your way outside.** The usual mobile phone rule applies at break and lunch when in the building – 'Not seen or Not heard = Not taken'.

There has been a growing trend lately for wearing side bags, these are the small bags worn across the body, usually by boys, which are far too small to even fit a pencil case in. These are impractical and not permitted in school.

#### **Mrs Handford – DEAR time**

A reminder to Year 7, 8 and 9 parents that DEAR time is on Wednesday, period 1. Many thanks to all parents who are encouraging their children to bring in their books. Daily reading at home is also incredibly important and will have a significant impact on your child's literacy, so please do encourage this where you can too.

#### **Mrs Heseltine – Assistant Head Teacher - Cultural Capital**

We have a slight issue with our supplier at the moment and badges have been ordered. Please let the youngsters know that they are coming and Mr Wright will be awarding them as soon as they arrive.

### **Mrs Robertson – Post 16**

Well done to the 24 pupils who were invited to attend a Post-16 taster afternoon the prestigious Anglo European School's 6<sup>th</sup> Form. The Anglo European offers a unique and much sought-after post-16 curriculum, being one of the only providers in Essex to offer free entry onto the International Baccalaureate qualification. Our pupils were excellent role models for our school and made a very positive impression.

**Now the PPEs have finished Year 11 must resume their applying to Post-16 providers. As previously said, the deadline for most 6<sup>th</sup> Forms is before Christmas.**

Connexions meetings resume on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, pupils scheduled to attend these meetings must attend them. We will also have the Department for Work and Pensions in next week to support some of our Year 11 pupils in applying for colleges.

If you require any further help, please do not hesitate to contact me via email on [kro@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk](mailto:kro@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk)

### **Mrs Robertson – Work Experience**

An encouraging week where more pupils have been able to secure placements for their Work Experience in the summer. Any pupils who have yet to do this must spend time over the next few weeks contacting companies. The sooner the better as placements will go quickly.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to me via email on [kro@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk](mailto:kro@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk)

### **Mrs Heseltine – Enrichment Opportunities: Extra-Curricular Activities & Pupil Leadership Roles**

This week over 450 of our pupils who consistently participated in an extra-curricular club last half term received their 40 ePraise Opportunity points for their dedication. Pupils who have been participating this half term will receive theirs at the start of January. It is still not too late to sign up to a club, please use the link below to see what is available. There have been some slight changes to the timetable for clubs in Athletic Performance, and a new addition on the last page has been included; these are our drop in facilities which pupils can use without invitation across lunchtimes.

[Enrichment Opportunities: Extra-Curricular Clubs](#)

We have had some exciting news this week from Mrs Reay, she will be launching a new Pupil Leadership Role in January, and more information on this is to follow. You can access the current roles and how to apply using the links below. All Pupil Leadership Roles have a 'salary' attached to them which is paid at the end of the half term.

As the year moves on, there are more opportunities for pupils to take part in trips/visits/workshops. Please see what is on offer, financial support will be made available for those who require it.

Mr Meeheelall will also be in touch in December with some exciting news about the 'Merry Mathsmas' that the department are getting involved in.

[Enrichment Opportunities Page \(Clubs, Pupil Leadership Roles, Trips/Visits links\)](#)

## Mrs Robertson – ePraise Top Achievers Shout Out

The pupils receiving the most AROE ePraise points this last week are:

### Aspiration

- Kai Year 8
- Hannah-Louise Year 10
- Ericka Year 10
- Macey Year 10
- Scarlett Year 10
- Lucas Year 10
- Stanley Year 10
- Leland Year 10
- Shannon Year 10

### Resilience

- Harrison Year 10
- Frankie Year 7
- Harry Year 7
- Callum Year 8
- Lexie Year 9

### Opportunity

- Ethan Year 8
- Tahseen Year 8
- Olayemi Year 8
- Josie Year 9

### Excellence

- Patric Year 7
- Archie Year 10
- Olivia Year 10
- Ollie Year 8

Well done all and keep it up!

An additional shout out to Sree in Year 8 not only a winner of the Jack Petchey Award, but a poetry competition. Tilly in Year 8 also won a poetry competition this week. Such a fantastic achievement for both pupils, each will receive Aspiration ePraise points.

## Mrs Robertson – The House System at Woodlands

There are still a few House Captain and Deputy House captain spaces to be filled, particularly in Year 9. If anyone is interested in leading their House in their Year group, please email me with your interest and reasons why you would be suitable for the role before the end of next week (2<sup>nd</sup> December), my email address is [kro@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk](mailto:kro@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk).

### Miss Ash – AROE Curriculum Lessons

Please ensure that you have checked the AROE lesson Parental Communication Calendar for the next half term to familiarise yourselves with the topics due to be covered:

[AROE Curriculum Autumn Term 1B \(Parental Communication Calendar\)](#)

Please do not hesitate to contact me via email on [has@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk](mailto:has@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk) should you have any queries/concerns.

County Lines is an ongoing issue in Essex, affecting lots of young people. Essex Police have created a violence and vulnerability unit, to help tackle the issue and support the community. Please see the link below which provides information on specialist organisations that offer support with exploitation and knife crime.

[Useful links - Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit \(essexvvu.co.uk\)](http://essexvvu.co.uk)

### Mrs Heseltine – Assemblies

Pupils in Years 7-10 took part in Mr Amran's thought-provoking assembly based on 'International Men's Day' this week. Next week all year groups will have an assembly based on the theme of consent in healthy relationships; this will link to Healthy Relationships units taught in their AROE lessons and be age appropriate for each year group.

[Assembly Schedule 2022.23](#)

### Dates for your diary

In December we will be holding our annual parent/carer/staff review of the school's RSHE policy, the date time and time of this event will be emailed out to all parents/carers and staff next week with a copy of our current policy.

The review meeting will give an outline of our policy, how and what is taught in AROE lessons and gives all stake holders the opportunity to ask questions, raise any concerns and share thoughts on our curriculum. You will be asked to confirm attendance in order to support with seating arrangements.

### Moving forward

I have also included in today's letter another attachment which is our Safeguarding Ofsted report; this will also go on our website and please do feel free to have a read. Whilst I wasn't especially pleased about an unannounced visit I am always happy to receive any feedback on what we are doing as a school.

We are very open and I like to think, quite approachable and this is why emails come straight to me and not some convoluted system where you do not receive a response. I will respond or get the right member of staff to do so to ensure we can work together to support and try our best to resolve any issues there might be. We also ask for feedback at each Consultation Evening and analyse that to improve further. Key staff email addresses are on the website and, unlike doctor's surgeries, solicitors and just about every other institution, we are available if you just turn up, maybe not



immediately but we are here.

Sadly, there are some that take to social media or have set up various groups to post disparaging comments and threats about our school. Whilst it is always positive to discuss goings on here I would ask that if you are unhappy with our school that you make contact so we are able to listen and find a way forward. After all you have all signed up to what we stand for and I have been quite clear what we are about from day one. This is not something I am happy writing about and I thank the overwhelming majority who are supportive.

We are all at Woodlands for one reason, to change the lives of all we serve for the better. I do not have all the answers but I know what I want for our school, and yes, mistakes will be made along the way as we are not perfect. I want all to go forward with huge Aspirations, instilling as much Resilience as possible, creating a wealth of Opportunities both inside and out of the classroom, and ensuring all either find their Excellence with us or are on the right path to achieving it. We will continue to reach out to educational experts beyond our school so that our youngsters get the best.

Thank you again to all of you who play your part in pushing us forward.

Best wishes,

Mr David Wright  
**Head Teacher**