

Our Ref: DWt/LPu

11th November 2022

Dear Parent/Carers,

I hope this letter finds you well as we move into an incredibly poignant time of year with it being 11th November and Armistice Day today. We will be observing the silence just before 11.00am with all our Year 7 youngsters in the atrium and the rest of the school in classrooms, observing the Last Post and taking some time to reflect on those who fought and died, so that we can be free. Gone but definitely not forgotten.

Next week is Anti-bullying Week and there will be a number of activities to raise awareness and to support local anti-bullying charities. We are starting next week with Odd Socks Monday for just a small donation, just something a little different, because we all are.

First Bus Student Travel Club

Woodlands School is now a member of the Student Travel Club. What this means is that youngsters from Woodlands School can get discounts on bus travel, well worth a look:

<https://www.firstbus.co.uk/essex/student-travel-club>

Please contact finance@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk for the discount codes.

DEAR time – Mrs Handford

A reminder that DEAR time will be taking place on Tuesday, period 4 this week. Please could all pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 bring their reading book with them so they can enjoy the session. If any pupils need support with finding a reading book, please ask them to see Mrs Handford.

Mrs Heseltine – Assistant Head Teacher - Cultural Capital

Post 16 – Mrs Robertson

The majority of 6th Form Open Evenings have now taken place and any pupils wishing to apply should now do so. A note that the closing date for Appleton applications is the 6th December. The colleges will continue to run open events into the New Year and pupils are encouraged to attend these to get a feel for what college life is like.

Reminder: if any references need to be completed, please pass to myself or Miss Wilmott.

Should you require any further help, please do not hesitate to contact me via email on kro@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk

Work Experience – Mrs Robertson

We have been fortunate this week to have the Department for Work and Pensions working with Year 10 pupils supporting them in finding suitable placements for their work experience.

A reminder that the earlier placements are found the better. Can all self-placement forms go to the admin office once completed.

Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me via email on kro@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk

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

What an impressive start to the year! 75% of our Pupil Leadership Roles have been filled. This is an amazing achievement by our pupils, whom will this week receive their first ePraise salary for their support and contribution to their role. Next week all pupil who participated in an extra-curricular club in the first half term will also receive ePraise points.

It's not too late to get involved in the Pupil Leadership Roles or an extra-curricular club, please use the link below:

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

ePraise Top Achievers Shout Out – Mrs Robertson

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

Aspiration

- River Year 7
- Sofia Year 8
- Nathan Year 8
- Cody Year 8

Resilience

- Tahseen Year 8
- Edward Year 8
- Andrew Year 8
- Harri Year 8

Opportunity

- Sree Year 8
- Emilia Year 10
- Lindsay Year 9
- Isabella Year 7
- Jayla Year 9

Excellence

- Adam Year 7
- Tahseen Year 8
- Frankie Year 7
- Floyd Year 8

Well done all and keep it up!

The House System at Woodlands – Mrs Robertson

We are still looking to fill the remaining roles for House Captain and Deputy House Captain. This is an exciting leadership opportunity for pupils as they will not only represent their House for their year group but also the of the year groups.

House Captains and Deputy's will be part of the driving force of promoting and developing the House system.

If pupils would like to apply please send me an email or write a letter saying why you think you would be suitable for the role.

[House Captain Job Description](#)

AROE Curriculum Lessons – Mrs Ash

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 contact me via email on has@woodlandsschool.essex.sch.uk should you have any queries or concerns.

Assemblies – Mrs Heseltine

Pupils in Years 7-10 participated in Miss Hope's interactive remote assembly based around National Parliament week which takes place next week (14th-20th November). National Parliament week aims to raise awareness, particularly amongst youngsters, of the importance of parliament and what it does. For more information, please click on the link: [About | UK Parliament Week](#)

Ahead of their PPE exams next week our Year 11 pupils attended their second PPE preparation assembly delivered by Miss Jordan and Mr Roberts; this was aimed at supporting our pupils during this time, in addition to sharing the arrangements, timings, schedule and expectations.

National Anti-Bullying week takes place next week, in addition to the plans Mr Druce has shared with you about this, the assemblies for Years 7-10 centres around the theme of 'Reach Out' as part of the national program. During PPE's assemblies will not take place for Year 11 pupils.

[Anti-Bullying Week 2022: Reach Out \(anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk\)](#)

[Assembly Schedule 2022.23](#)

Dates for your diary – Mrs Heseltine

On Thursday 17th November we have the first of our Preparing for Success events with our Year 7 pupils, parents and carers. The event will start at 5.00pm and run until 6.00pm. To support with seating, please ensure you have let us know by today whether you intend to attend or not using the link to the MS Forms survey below.

[MSForms: Year 7 Preparing for Success Event Attendance Indicator](#)

There will be presentations on:

- What your child learns (Curriculum)
- Assessments and Reports
- Study Skills and Revision Strategies
- Parental Support
- Literacy
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Pupils who attend will receive a Learner Support pack, and Head of Subjects will be available during the evening to answer any subject specific questions.

Moving forward

I know that earlier on in the week our Chair of Governors Karen Lay wrote to you all about the financial pressures each school across the country is facing at present, I am meeting with our MP Stephen Metcalfe this morning and will be sure to raise it again with him. Not quite what our meeting is for but I feel sure he will welcome a discussion on behalf of his constituents. I am grateful to those of you who have made contact with us to support the raising of the issue of financial constraints in education at present. We are far from alone and many are struggling, but we are talking about the future of young people here.

All we want is to be able to deliver what we said we would do, move our youngsters forward with high Aspirations, provide the skills and tools needed to be Resilient, keep offering a huge number of Opportunities and ensuring Excellence. I will make that clear because without investing in the future you are just ensuring problems are kicked down the road for the next generation to pick up. In my opinion the last thing you do is limit opportunities for who comes next.

With this in mind two of the biggest teaching unions have balloted their members on industrial action at the end of January. I am not a fan of disrupting the education of our young people but I do think we have to be realistic, there will inevitably be some as schools cannot continue to work with less funding and a lack of strategic planning longer term to secure our children's and our country's future. The industrial action is not about teachers wanting more money it is about the mishandling and short-sighted approach of those who lead us all. I will try to prioritise Year 11 and our most vulnerable, but if we don't have enough staff to stay open and deliver something meaningful, then we won't.

Best wishes,



Mr David Wright
Head Teacher