



WOODBIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

Pride In Achievement

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Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope this letter finds you well. I write with some updates as we reach the end of this half term.

World Day for Cultural Diversity

I am so grateful to staff and students for coming together to celebrate our school's cultural diversity on Friday, ahead of World Day for Cultural Diversity on 21st May. Students brought artefacts, wore costumes, and explained their cultural and heritage to other students and staff. Lots of staff dressed up in clothing from their cultural heritage. It was a lovely celebration and reinforced how important our diversity is to Woodbridge. It is our strength and our power, and I would want to work nowhere else.

Parent Survey

Thank you for completing the parent survey over the last week. There were over 400 responses. I am pleased to confirm the outcomes as overwhelmingly positive for Woodbridge. Here are some highlights:

- 95% of parents said their child is happy at Woodbridge
- 95% of parents said that their child feels safe at Woodbridge
- 91 % of parents said Woodbridge makes sure students are well behaved
- 96% of parents would recommend Woodbridge to another parent

These figures are a superb endorsement of our work and our community, and I am proud of what our students and staff have achieved. There were also very many positive free-text comments for which I thank you wholeheartedly. Please see [HERE](#) a document which sets out the full outcomes of the survey for your information.

Where concerns have been raised, I have asked members of the senior leadership team to review these and contact parents to discuss them where we are able to do so. Thank you for your constructive feedback where you have been able to give it.

National Thank-a-Teacher Day

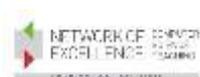
This year, Thank-a-Teacher Day is 26th May. I know you will agree that Woodbridge staff are doing a brilliant job, and deserve our thanks. If you want to thank school staff on this day, you can do so by visiting the website [here](#) where you can send a free thank-you e-card to any member of staff working in a school.

Year 10 Careers Event

You will have received a letter recently from our Careers Co-ordinator, Kat Pinnell. She is looking for parents / carers who may be able to support a careers event for Year 10 students on 8th July, by conducting mock interviews with students, or perhaps speaking to a larger group about your career. Please do let Kat know if you are able to help with this event.

Firefly

From after half term, we will be replacing Satchel (Show My Homework) with a new platform called 'Firefly'. Students will be introduced to the platform at school and given instructions on how to log on, and parents will receive their instructions very soon. This platform offers a wider and better range of features, and will, over time, allow us to streamline communications with parents to reduce the number of emails that you receive from the school.



Staffing News

Our senior caretaker, Stase Valiuniene, leaves us this week to join her family in Lithuania. Stase has worked for the school for many years, and has given outstanding service for our students and staff. She cares deeply about the school and our community, and we will miss her greatly. She leaves with our sincere thanks and best wishes.

We also say goodbye to Althea Greenidge, Zaira Bashir and Claire Coomber this week. Althea has been covering in Modern Languages since January, Zaira has been working as a Learning Support Assistant since September, and Claire has been supporting in the Sixth Form since March. We thank them for their service and send them our best wishes.

After half term, we welcome Esther Vernon as a Learning Support Assistant, to join Jessica Prior and Melina Martin who joined the Inclusion Department recently. We have also recently been joined by Hazel Afford as Sixth Form Administrator, and Phoebe Fern and Mehrun Khan as Admin Assistants. I am also very pleased to announce that we have made some excellent new appointments for September to join the teaching and support staff. I will set out full details of these colleagues for you in due course.

We Need Learning Support Assistants!

We are looking for brilliant people to join us as Learning Support Assistants! This is a full or part-time position, up to 31.25 hours per week term-time only, with full days (08:30 – 15:30) but not necessarily working every day. It is a rewarding and fulfilling career in itself, can be the stepping stone back into work, or an opportunity to experience work in education before undertaking teacher training. Take a look at our website [here](#) if you are interested, and please spread the word!

Catering Contractor

I am pleased to announce to parents that we will have a new catering contractor from September. A company called *Innovate* (part of the *Impact Food Group*) will take over the catering contract from our current provider, *Harrisons*, and have undertaken to provide substantial service and quality improvements, as well as refurbishment of the catering outlets. *Innovate* have been able to improve service in several other local schools in recent years, and we look forward to working with them. We will let you have more information about changes your child will see in due course.

New PE Kit and School Uniform

You should recently have received a letter from Dominic Smith, Head of PE, which sets out the new Woodbridge PE kit from September. The new kit is smarter, better quality and cheaper than the previous PE polo shirt and branded shorts / tracksuit.

However, I am conscious of the cost to families of buying new items if they are not yet needed, and so we have planned to allow a full year for transition to the new kit. All students will need to have the new kit in place by September 2023. If your child's old PE top still fits, they can wear it until then, and replace it when you need to with the new kit.

The new kit will be available only from www.schoolsports4u.co.uk. The website will be live shortly with Woodbridge items to purchase, with initials embroidered free of charge to help you keep track of items belonging to different siblings!

If you are in financial difficulty around buying kit or school uniform for September, we can help. Let us know, and we can either provide items such as PE kit, blazers, trousers and skirts at a reduced cost, or free in some circumstances, or help you out in some other way.

Exams

Congratulations to students in years 7-10 and 12 who have now completed or are just about to complete their end-of-year exams. They have given an excellent account of themselves. I have been so proud of how they have got down to work and focused on doing their best. Brilliant kids.

Exam papers are currently being marked and moderated by teachers. Students and parents will receive exams results for year 7,8 and 9 on the 1st July. Students will receive a copy of their exam results in school during form time in an envelope. Parents will be receiving exam results with the latest Progress Check in the usual way. Self-reflection work will take place in form time once students have received their results in order to prepare for next academic year.

Year 10 and 12 students will receive their exam grades with their usual progress checks towards the end of the academic year, and will also work on their exam papers in lessons in the same way as for KS3.

Year 11 and 13 have now started their formal public exams for GCSEs and A Levels. This is the first time we have run these for three years, and the kids have been superb. It is a tough time for them, and as a community I know you will join me in sending them our very best 'good luck' wishes.

And Finally

I am conscious I haven't sent you a letter for a couple of weeks, and so perhaps you are missing my attempts at motivational encouragement that I sometimes put at the end... I'll do my best to make up for that with three stories about the values of our lovely community.

The first is about the buzz of excellence that I could feel when year 11 students came out of their first big exam on Tuesday. They all had Biology in the morning, and at the end, so many of them were talking excitedly about how well it had gone, how well they had been prepared by their teachers, and how they felt confident with what they knew. That confidence in what we do as a school is so important. One student said to me, "Sir, that exam was brilliant. I feel so good about myself." Our Science Department is the best that it has ever been, and they have worked extremely hard to get our students to this point. We thank them for their excellence.

The second is an individual story of kindness, our key value. Two of our students, one of whom we haven't yet identified, stopped on the way to school to help a lady who had fallen and injured herself badly. The lady's husband contacted me to see if we could identify the students so that we could thank them. He made a point of mentioning how they had represented Woodbridge so positively. The fact is that I know so many of our students act in ways like this every single day. We thank those students for their kindness, and the way in which they represented our community.

The third story is about the beautiful respect that our students demonstrated when they showed candidates who came for jobs around this week. In the interviews, I often ask candidates what they think about the school and our students. This week one candidate said, "The kids here are amazing. I have never seen a school where the students have some much love and respect for the place, the staff and for each other." I can't lie that I filled with pride at that moment. I thank all our students for being them.

As half term rapidly approaches, we are tired, and the students are tired. We scrape the bottoms of our energy barrels to get us through the week. But we remember how much we have achieved and how far we have come. Thank you for all your love, kindness and support that helps to remind us of that. It means the world to me.

I send best wishes for the break, and for the Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend if you are celebrating.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Hogan', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Steven Hogan
Headteacher