

December 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

The festive season is well and truly upon us, so let me first take this opportunity to wish you all a very merry and restful Christmas.

Parent and carer communication forum

Since I last wrote to you, we have had two parent and carer communication forum meetings, the most recent was this week and enabled me to introduce our new communications manager Mr Dorian. He has been reviewing the processes that we have in place at school for communication and looking into ways that we can improve. I hope you will already have noticed the new look to our Facebook page. If you have any comments or suggestions for him, do please drop him an email at gdoorrian@wealdgs.org, I know that he is very keen to hear your views.

As you would expect, the November meeting was dominated by questions about the possible boys' annex at Sevenoaks. The consultation closed on 6 December, and we await the outcomes from that. Many of you also attended the consultation evening held at our Sevenoaks campus and shared your views with the team from Kent County Council and Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys. Whilst we do not yet have any specific outcomes from the planning meetings, I do know that the concerns raised about shared space are being taken into account by the planning team. Everyone involved is committed to ensuring that if the additional annex does go ahead, it is done in a way that will protect the students already on site at Sevenoaks. Additionally, the education team from Kent have committed to sharing specific concerns about the travel to and from the site with the relevant members of KCC. In the meantime, do please continue to share any issues that your children face on the buses to and from either campus with the bus companies and KCC. It would be helpful if you could copy Mr Love, clove@wealdgs.org, into any concerns that you raise, so that we can maintain our records and raise concerns from a school point of view. I will, of course, share more specific information when I am able to do so, but please be assured that the needs of the Weald students are not being ignored in this process.

There were some questions about clubs and the parity between the Tonbridge and Sevenoaks. I was able to confirm that we do operate the same clubs across the whole school, however there are occasions where we are trialling a new opportunity before rolling it out across the school. For example, the musical theatre club that is being run by students at Tonbridge and the fencing club which is launching at Sevenoaks in January. If they are popular, both will be offered at both campus sites. I am also able to confirm that there is no planned musical production in the calendar. The school has put on productions in the past and we will certainly look at this when we plan the whole school events in future.

Lunchtime access to form rooms was raised by parents and carers. I am pleased to confirm that students now have permission to use their form rooms at lunch and break. The only caveat is that if the room is mistreated or students take food into classrooms that particular room will be locked. So far, students have responded in a really positive way to this change as we would expect from our lovely young people.

Headteacher: Mrs E Bone BA (Hons), MA
Tudeley Lane, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 2JP

Tel: 01732 373 500

Email: school@wealdgs.org
wealdgs.org

Weald of Kent Grammar School Academy Trust

Charity, incorporated in England and Wales
Registration Number 7451660, Limited by Guarantee

When to contact the school and when not to come up in the most recent meeting. If you have any news to share with us or have any questions or concerns, please do make contact. You can do this using the contact us section on the website, or by sending in an email.

X2 and the new science building

I know that you will have read the message from Mr Dorrian about our science ceiling collapse in X2 at the Tonbridge campus. Now that we have had confirmation that there is no asbestos in the building, we are moving forwards with our plans to replace the hut with a purpose built, two storey science building to house physics labs. Our plans are currently with the council planning authority, so we are hopeful to be able to get started as soon as possible, provided that we gain the necessary consents. We will be making use of the very generous donations made to the Weald Development Trust to aid the financing of the building, and there will be opportunities for you to support this in the new year! Watch this space for updates and fund-raising opportunities. In the meantime, do have a look at our plans.



Space day

Our second off curriculum day of the year was a huge hit, with the highlight being the arrival of some actual rocks from the moon! Students were treated to a talk from a member of the European Space Agency, learned some Russian, journeyed on a musical space odyssey, launched rockets and produced some amazing art work to explore our connections with the universe beyond our atmosphere.



Awards ceremony



We were treated to a very moving speech from one of our most high-profile alumni members, Nina Ridge, at the upper school awards ceremony. This is always a highlight of the school year as we have the chance to reflect upon, and celebrate, the successes of our wonderful students. It also allows us to share the onward journeys of some of our young people who are heading out in the world to make their mark. These included Jia 3A*s studying Medicine at Manchester; Tessa 3 A*s and an A* in the EPQ, studying Economics at Bath; Holly 2A*s and an A and an A in the EPQ going to study English at Exeter in 2020; Jess 2A*s and an A studying Psychology at Durham; Catherine 2A*s and an A studying Liberal Arts at Birmingham; Rachel 2A*s and an A studying Chemistry at Durham; Lucy 1A* 2As and a B studying Drama and Theatre Arts at Birmingham; Sophie 1A* and 2As and an A* in the EPQ studying Behavioural Sciences at Cambridge; Lyric 1A* 2As and an A in the EPQ studying Media at Goldsmith's; Abianne

1 A* and 2As studying Bio Chemistry at Bath; Abigail 1A* and 2As who is undertaking a higher level apprenticeship with PWC; Alicia 1A* and 2As studying Economics at York; Stephanie 1A* and 2As and an A in the EPQ studying History at Durham; Theo 1A* and 2As studying History at Leeds. As you can see, an astonishing array of achievements that we rightly congratulate the students for.

Celebration of Christmas



This year was Mr Crowhurst's first Weald Christmas as our new head of Music, and what a debut. The quality of performance from everyone who participated was astonishing. I do want to make special mention of our soloists who stepped up to the challenge with Harry opening the celebration with his vocal skills, Emily beautifully singing the solo verse of Once in Royal David's City, Henry tugging at our heartstrings on the violin and Lara giving a masterful performance on cello accompanied with skill and sensitivity by Lucy on the piano, Olivia and accompanied by Fin bringing a significant amount of Christmas cheer in their performance. Not to be outdone, our youngest instrumental soloist, Ellen gave a stunning performance, I am not sure there was a dry eye in the house at the end of her piece. Thank you to all of the performers, both staff and students and to the music team for treating

us to the perfect start of the festive season.

Dance Show

We marked the end of term with our annual Dance show. Once again, I find myself lost for words to share the talents of our wonderful students. The show also allowed us to publicly recognise the impact and commitment of Ms Lenton, who is the driving force behind dance at Weald, as we share the news that she was awarded the Once Dance UK Secondary Dance teacher of the Year award. Very well-deserved recognition of the positive impact that she has had on so many students. Thank you, Ms Lenton.



Cutlery in the dining rooms

We have been looking at ways to be more environmentally conscious as a school. The eco-club are looking at the best designs for recycling bins to reduce the amount of general waste that goes into them meaning that they end up in refill. We have also stopped buying plastic disposable cutlery for the dining room, instead when students wish to take food away from the dining room, we now have wooden alternatives that are fully compostable. In addition to this, we have asked a contractor to look at options for installing more water fountains across the school campuses so that we can reduce the need for single use plastic bottles. Some of you might have seen the metal drinks bottles that we included with our prospectus pack this year, we are planning to make these available to all students at cost price.

Farewells

At the end of this term we are bidding a fond farewell to the following staff:

Mrs Glendinning who is leaving the English Department at the end of term. Mrs Beasley, our new Assistant Headteacher, will teach Mrs Glendinning's English lessons from January.

Mr Cook has left the Mathematics team, Mr Kemp is already taking his classes. Mr Kemp is an experienced Maths teacher who joined us during the school year.

Mrs Dhaliwal is leaving us for a promoted position as Assistant Headteacher. Mrs Hosier will be acting SENCO from January. Mrs Craig and Mrs Georgiades will be taking her Sociology lessons

We wish them all well in their next adventures, and thank them for all they have done for the Weald community.

Welcome

There are also some new members of staff who have recently, or will very soon be joining the team:

Mrs Brown who is new senior cover supervisor. She will be covering lessons as well as organising the cover in school.

Mrs Clelland who is our new part-time cover supervisor. She will be covering lessons on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays

Ms Thornhill is our new DT technician. She is already expertly supporting the DT team in the array of practical lessons offered to students.

Mr Kemp who has joined the maths departments as a teacher of mathematics. He has a proven track record of delivering high quality mathematics teaching in Kent grammar schools.

Mrs Beasley will be joining us in January as our new Assistant Headteacher (Quality of Education). Mrs Beasley is a Drama and English specialist and an exceptional practitioner. We have stolen her away from her current school where she is known for her kind, but rigorous approach to student support.

Mr Dorrian who is our new Communications manager. Some of you will already have met Mr Dorrian at our communications forum meeting. He is an expert in the field of communications, and we are already starting to see the impact of his presence.

Mrs Leadbetter who is our new Assistant to the Heads of year 7, 8 and 9 (Tonbridge). Mrs Leadbetter's background is in health services, and she brings with her that care for the individual to this role.

Ms Waul is our Family Liaison Manager. This is a new role at Weald and is designed to allow us to better signpost families to additional care and support outside of school, as well as offering practical help when needed. As a qualified social worker, she will now be our senior school safeguarding lead and brings a wealth of experience to this role.

We are delighted to have been able to recruit such an array of talent to the staff team, and look forward to the positive impact that we know they will have.

News you may have missed

We have had a really busy term, with some exciting and inspirational news from with our wonderful school community. To have a look and read through these stories, please click on the link below to be redirected to the news and events section of our website.

<https://www.wealdofkent.kent.sch.uk/news-and-events/latest-news>

All that remains is for me to wish you a happy new year. We look forward to 2020 and all the challenges it will bring.

Mrs Bone

Parents and Carers Bulletin and Upcoming Events – Term 3, Week commencing Monday 6 January 2020

This week:

- **6 – 17 January** – Year 13 PPEs

Coming up:

- **Friday 17 January** - Year 8 HPV Vaccinations at the Sevenoaks Campus
- **Monday 20 January** – Year 8 HPV Vaccinations at the Tonbridge Campus

2021-2022 Admissions Policy Consultation

In accordance with the Department for Education's School Admissions Code, we are currently consulting with parents and carers, the Local Authority and other interested parties regarding proposed changes to the Weald of Kent Grammar School Admission Arrangements for entry to the school in September 2021.

Please click [here](#) to view our Policy with the proposed changes.

The main change to note is that we have increased our Published Admission Number for students in Year 7 from 265 to 270 in order for each form group to have 30 students allocated on offer day. In addition, we have made some changes to our Sixth Form Oversubscription criteria (please see page 9 of the Admissions policy).

The consultation opens on Friday, 13 December 2019 and will close on Friday, 31 January 2020.

If you would like to comment on this policy or if you have any questions please email the Clerk to the Trustees at clerk@wealdgs.org.

Term dates:

Monday 6 January	First day of Term 3
Friday 14 February	Last day of Term 3
Monday 24 February	First day of Term 4
Friday 3 April	Last day of Term 4 (own clothes day – suggested voluntary donation £2) early finish – students will be offsite by 12:30