

17 December 2020

Dear parents and carers,

As we reach the end of 2020, I wanted to take a moment to reflect upon the year that we have just had, and most particularly the incredible way Weald students have adapted, shown kindness and delved into their resilience stores to make this most challenging of times also a positive one. This is the year where we have created rainbows, clapped for the NHS, baked like we have never baked before, been creative, got to know our families better than ever and still learned new skills and ideas. I am in awe of the way that the young people have risen to this challenge, supported by their families and by the staff in school.

I have received many thoughtful messages from parents and carers over this period, thanking staff for all they have done, and I would like to echo those thanks. The staff at Weald have been extraordinary. Every single member of the team has gone above and beyond to ensure COVID does not have a negative impact on the students. They have learned to be creative, developed new Teams skills and delivered lessons from home, stayed in their boxes, supported classes with virtual teachers and come together, without actually being able to gather as a collective staff body. What is incredible is they have done all of this despite the concern for their own health and risk to their own families. Thank you is a very small thing to say, but even more so this year, means an awful lot.

There are some colleagues leaving us for pastures new in 2021, I know you will want to join us in wishing them well.

Mrs Denny	Moving away from the area to be closer to her family
Mrs Jennings	Taking up a promoted position at another school
Mrs Leadbetter	Taking a career break to spend time with her family
Mr O'Flynn	Taking a break from teaching
Mr Sharpin	Moving to another school
Miss Santome-Parada	Moving back to Spain to be with her family
Mrs Taylor-Singfield	Retiring from Weald
Mr Waldron	Leaving teaching

Changes to subject groups and departments from January:

Sevenoaks	
Mr Murray	Food Technology
Mr James	Maths, working with Miss Turner's classes
Mr Chenu	MFL
Miss Willis	English and Drama
Miss Majumdar	Art

Tonbridge	
Miss Watford	MFL
Ms Earl	Science
Mr Imbert-Alverson	Art
Mr Wilson	Business Studies

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Weald of Kent Grammar School Academy Trust

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

Changes to form groups from January:

Sevenoaks	
7H	Mrs Partridge
9I	Mr Chenu
10G	Mr Murray

Tonbridge	
7A	Mrs Creavin and Miss Soan
9A	Mrs Ganguli
10C	Mr Imbert-Alverson
13E	Miss Watford

Certificate presentation and the opening of our new science block

We had planned to hold both of these events at the end of this term, however COVID intervened so we have postponed them to the new year. We are looking forward to both, as they offer the opportunity to reflect and celebrate success and endeavour. We will share details with you once the new plans are confirmed.

COVID arrangements over Christmas and in the New Year

We do hope you are able to enjoy a restful and COVID-free break over Christmas, however I do need to confirm details with you in the event of a positive test. The school has been asked to undertake track and trace for any students or staff who test positive or develop symptoms (leading to a positive test) for the two days after we break up for the holidays, so Saturday and Sunday this week. If this does happen, please email school@wealdgs.org so that we can inform any close contacts. When you do email in, could you please let us know when your child first developed symptoms, the date of the positive test, which form group they are in, whether they used the school food collection area and any other close contacts you are aware of from within the school. We will be checking the school email address once a day up to, and including, Christmas Eve, after which date the national tracing system should be used.

If your child develops COVID or needs to self-isolate at the start of the New Year, please email attendance@wealdgs.org as usual.

Mass testing

You will have received a letter from KCC this week detailing the way in which families can access testing across Kent at the moment. The Government also announced a testing plan for use in schools from January. As I write we are not in possession of any further guidance on this, what it will mean in school or how it will be administered. We will review any further information that comes out in January and of course share the details with you as soon as we are able. The Trustees and I remain committed to keeping the school open, but also to mitigating the risks to students and staff as best we can moving forward, so any action we take will be with this in mind.

Clubs and activities from January

We are hoping to be able to offer a limited number of lunchtime clubs to students when we return from the holiday, subject to COVID restrictions. We will confirm arrangements in the New Year. In the meantime, do take a look at the booklet created by staff which contains a whole array of activities that you can all get involved in over the break.

Coming up next term

We have a busy term planned when we return with the following events and activities taking place (on-line).

- Year 9 options process: Our Year 9 students will make their GCSE choices having attended our virtual options events. A letter will be sent detailing the full process in the New Year.
- Year 8 dual linguist groups confirmed: The MFL team will be in contact with students who have been identified as gifted linguists to offer them the opportunity to study a second language in Year 9.
- A Level options process: Our Year 11 students will make their A-Level subject choices, having already attended the online options event.
- UCAS deadline: Year 13 students will have completed their UCAS applications by the end of the first week of term, Mrs Paddington has already been in contact about this.
- PPE programme confirmed: OfQUAL are due to share with schools, full details of the revised GCSE and A-Level examinations this year, meaning we can plan our PPE programme to take this into account.
- School reports: We will be publishing reports for Years 13, 11 and 9 next term, all other year groups will receive a report in March.

Finally, from me, I would like to offer you my thanks for your ongoing support. I have said it before but it is the combination of school and home working openly and supportively together that enables our young people to be the astonishing human beings they are. I wish you all a safe, restful and enjoyable Christmas, and here's to 2021.

With season's greetings and very best wishes.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs E Bone
Headteacher