



Wimbledon College

Head Master's Half Term Letter to Parents

Friday 23rd October 2015

Dear Parents

We have come rapidly to the end of a busy and successful term for the whole school. It is very pleasing to see the boy's positive approach to all aspects of school life. This is reflected by the new members of the school both in Figures and on an individual basis in other years. I hope that all of the boys have a good break over half term and come back with the same attitude and determination in November.

Our **Sixth Form open evening** takes place on Wednesday 11th November from 4.30pm until 7.30pm. It is a joint evening with the Ursuline High School and this year it is being held at the High School. I would encourage all Syntax boys and their parents to attend the evening as it will provide invaluable information about the College Sixth Form.

As well as this there is a full calendar of forthcoming events on the College website and I would encourage you to check this on a regular basis. I would also ask that you regularly check the Year specific pages that will contain current information relevant to your son.

Schoolgateway

As you are aware we have launched a Wimbledon College *Schoolgateway* portal. On it you can access information relating to your son's progress, behaviour and attendance. For further details please see the table at the end of my letter.

Over half term we are also transferring all of our parental financial payments from *ParentPay* to *Schoolgateway*.

We are replacing the school's payment Service *ParentPay* with a new service available within *Schoolgateway* during half term break. You will no longer be able to top up your son's lunch account through Parent Pay after Tuesday 27th October. Your son's lunch balance will be transferred. All future top ups may be made through your *Schoolgateway* account from 2nd November. We have asked parents to register on *Schoolgateway* and thank you to the 500 parents who have already done so. You can appreciate that it will be important for everyone to be signed up so that you can monitor your son's progress and also be in a position to top up your son's lunch account.

To activate your *Schoolgateway* account you will need to enter the email address and mobile number that school holds on record for you. If you have a smartphone, please download the app: *Schoolgateway* from your app store (Android and iPhone). Or visit the website: www.schoolgateway.com and click on 'New User'. You'll receive a text message with a PIN number. Use this PIN to log into *Schoolgateway*. If you're having trouble logging in please contact your son's PSA.

Lower Line Lunch payments

I would like to remind you that it is expected that boys in Lower Line pay for their food in the refectory via their lunch account only. They should not be using cash as it causes delays at the tills, which has led to boys not being able to buy food in time. Boys in Lower Line are not allowed to use money to 'top up' their daily limit with cash so I would encourage you to check with your sons that their daily limit is set at an appropriate level. Boys in Higher Line and Sixth form may use cash however I would encourage you to continue to use *Schoolgateway* as it helps to speed up the process of going through the refectory.

Contact information

Thank you to all parents who have returned the data collection sheets with current mobile numbers and email addresses. We will be following up with those parents who have not yet returned the forms. This is obviously linked with our use of *Schoolgateway* and it does enable us to contact all parents more efficiently.

Grade Card

Your son's report card is being given to him today (for years 7 -11). It is in a slightly different format this year. On it you will see the average grade for each of his subjects for this half term. We are using the College's new levels of progress for boys at KS3 [a detailed explanation of this is contained in the Parent Briefing available on the College website]. At GCSE we are using GCSE grades and for boys in Grammar that means they are getting a number grade for English and Mathematics [again this is explained in the Grammar Parents' Briefing]. Individual grades are available to you on the *Schoolgateway*.

When comparing your son's grades with his target grade please bear in mind that the target is where he should be at the end of the academic year. At the beginning of the year, grades may be slightly below target grades but as the year progresses assessments should generally meet or exceed target grades. We have returned to colour coding this year and this is explained on the grade card. If you have any concerns about your son's target grades, or about his progress in general, please do not hesitate to get in touch with his Head of Line.

The Examen

This year we are introducing the boys to the traditional Jesuit prayer *The Examen*. The examen is prayer that St Ignatius encourages people to pray as a way of reviewing their day and helping them to see God at work in their ordinary everyday lives. We are using it to help the boys to reflect on their past half-term, the highs and the lows. This kind of prayerful reflection helps you to become more in touch with your own emotions, to gain a healthy perspective on the events of your life, and to discern God's guidance in your life. Boys in Years 7-11 will have reflected on this half term during period 6 today and will have used their grade cards as one focus point.

You can find out more about the examen, including guided audio versions here

<http://www.jesuit.org.uk/blog/examen>

Parent Governors Election for the College's Governing Body

You should already have received information and ballot papers relating to the current election of four parent governors to the College's Governing Body. We have restructured our Governing Body in line with Government's instructions. As a consequence our parent governors had to stand down from their positions and you have to elect parents to the new Governing Body.

Please take the time to read the statements of the parents who are standing for election and to cast your vote. I must point out that the deadline for votes to be received is 3.00pm on Monday 2nd November. That day is an Inset day and would therefore request that if you have not already sent in your ballot papers that you send them in by post or hand deliver them to reception.

Sixth Form Sleepout

Our annual Sixth Form Sleepout took place overnight on the 9th/10th of October and was extremely well supported by the boys and staff. The boys listen to speakers from the Merton Faith in Action Homelessness Project as well as a talk from a homeless person. As well as gaining a greater appreciation for the difficulties that people who are homeless face the boys raise funds for Merton Faith in Action. If you would like to contribute to their efforts Here is a link to the Just Giving page for Merton Faith in Action Homelessness project: <https://www.justgiving.com/CollegeSleepOut2015MFIA/>

There is also an article about the sleepout on the following webpage:
<http://www.wimbledoncollege.org.uk/blog/?pid=38&nid=5&storyid=65>

Fireworks -FOWC

On the 7th of November we have the Wimbledon College and Ursuline High School Fireworks. This event is the highlight of the Friends calendar and we welcome all families from both schools to join us for what will be our biggest and best fireworks display ever! Get your tickets now on ParentPay/ Schoolgateway. Gates open at 5.30pm. For further information please see the College website.

A request for help - The Friends need volunteers to help with the running of the event. I believe that all parents have received a request for help already and if you can help in any way I know it will be greatly appreciated by FOWC.

FOWC are also asking for volunteers to help serve refreshments at the annual Christmas carol service on Monday evening the 14th of December. Again, if you can assist us, please email us at - friendsofwimbledoncollege@gmail.com.

Drama

This December the school production is a pantomime - "Snow White and the Seven Frackers", written by Mr S. Potter. It is being performed on Thursday, December 10th and Friday, December 11th at 7.30 in the College Hall. This original and quirky comic pantomime features pupils from Rhetoric (Year 13) to Figures (Year 7). *It is the tale of Lucretia D'Arcy Prune, Wicked Queen, who sets out with Spike Huntsman of M16 to murder her step-daughter, Snow White. Snow, in the Sixth Form at St Tabitha's, is a member of Friends of the Earth, and goes to a fracking operation in Ashdown Forest, Sussex to protest against it. There she meets Prince Sporrán of Scotland, an environmental sociology student from*

Stirling University, and seven frackers who live in a mobile home on site ...any more information would spoil the plot! The production is suitable for children and audience participation will be welcomed. Tickets £3 [Adults] and £2[Concessions] will be available from the College Secretary and on-line.

International Paralympic old boy

I am very pleased to inform you that Toby Gold, a former pupil, is representing Great Britain in the T33 100M at the Doha IPC World Championships that are currently underway. I believe his event is on the 28th October. Toby who is a student at St Mary's University, Strawberry Hill is also hoping to be selected for the Paralympics in Brazil next year. We wish him well.

Rugby

We have had a very successful half term on the rugby field, with 63 wins and 4 draws from 110 matches played. Three teams, our U13A, U13B and U15A all remain unbeaten and there have been some very encouraging performances from all of our teams including our U12 teams, who are making their mark.

Our U15A's are playing Latymer Upper in the fourth round of the Nat West Cup on Tuesday 10th November and our U13A's, who beat London Oratory 46 - 10 this week, face Dulwich Prep in the 3rd Round of the National Cup on Wednesday 4th November. We wish both teams well.

Football - Spring Term

Mr Barnes is in the process of finalising fixtures and arrangements for our football teams in the New Year. He is making a request for any parents who would be interested in supporting their son's teams by assisting with Saturday morning refreshments to contact him. If you are interested would you please email him on his school email - barry.barnes@wimbledoncollege.org.uk

Carol Service

Our annual joint carol service with the Ursuline High School takes place this year on Monday 14th December at 8.00pm in Sacred Heart Church. The event is well attended and provides us with a spiritual dimension to our preparation for and celebration of Christmas. May I take this opportunity to invite you and your family to the service.

I hope that you all have an enjoyable half term break.

Yours sincerely,



Adrian Laing,
Head Master

APPENDIX 1- Schoolgateway Information is on the next page.

Appendix 1

Schoolgateway Information

Once you have logged into your Homepage you will see icons for the following categories:

Category	Features
Attendance	<p>This gives you access your son's attendance figures and includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall attendance • Explained absences (as a percentage) and Unexplained absences (as a percentage) • Requests for reasons for any unexplained absence – these will be sent automatically to the PSA in order to update your sons' attendance record • Future absence – you can inform us in advance of any absences (e.g. medical appointment). This will be sent automatically to the PSA
Timetable	This will show your son's current timetable
Payments	Once the transfer from ParentPay has been made this will show current balances (e.g. Refectory account) and allow you to make payments
Behaviour	This gives a list of your son's Behaviour referrals (reason, date & number of behaviour points)
Achievements	This gives a list of your son's Achievements (reason, date & number of House points)
Assessments	<p>This gives you access to your son's assessment record for each subject studied. By clicking on each subject marksheet you can see the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your son's Target Grade which appears below the subheading 'Tg' • Your son's assessment grades which appear below each of the assessment headings (e.g 'A1' is Assessment 1, 'A2' is Assessment 2 etc...) • Your son's Average Grade for the term ('Aut Avg' is the average for the Autumn Term)