



Wimbledon College

Headteacher's Letter to Parents

Thursday 28 March 2024

Dear Parents

It has been great to see so many extra-curricular opportunities taking place for pupils over the last few weeks and indeed that will take place over Easter.

We welcomed back our Year 9 pupils from their French Exchange on Wednesday and on the same day our Sixth Form Business and Economics trip departed for New York. Tomorrow our Rudiments skiers depart for Austria and during the holidays our rugby players depart for their tour to Canada. We also had the pleasure of welcoming one of the Canadian schools as part of their tour over last weekend. The boys were hosted by our pupils and played against the College teams in two hard fought games on Saturday.

This brought the end to the rugby season following a range of sevens tournaments involving pupils from all year groups. The Football season has also come to a close. Thank you to all parents who have supported the College through hosting visiting players, helping out at home fixtures and by ensuring that your children get to all of their fixtures.

Term ended today with our Tenebrae services where we reflected on the forthcoming events of the Triduum and the sacrifice and death of Christ. Despite the atrocious weather as boys walked down to the Sacred Heart Church, the pupils' behaviour and participation in the service were excellent.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families a safe, peaceful and enjoyable Easter.

I would also like to ask you to remember in your prayers our former pupil, Luca Buttaci, and his family. As you are aware Luca, who left the College in 2021, died at the beginning of March following a long illness due to cancer. His funeral takes place on Easter Tuesday [2 April] at 12.00pm in the Sacred Heart Church. All those who knew Luca are welcome to attend the service.

Lent Fundraising

Thank you so much to everyone who has helped support our Lent fundraising appeals. Our non-uniform day was fantastically supported, if you have not made the donation for this yet,

please do so via the “shop” on Arbor. We will be keeping the fundraising going over the holidays. We have been encouraging students to take on sponsored challenges like sponsored runs, sponsored silence, sponsored chores, sponsored screen free day/weekend etc. Please do ask your son about what sponsored activity they have chosen and, if they have not done one yet, do try and encourage them to do one over the holidays and send the Justgiving link for their year group’s charity to friends and family to ask for sponsorship. Thank you so much for some of the very generous sponsorships that have come in so far.

Drama

The Drama Department were once again extremely pleased to be part of the King's College Community Production. The First Stage Drama Club has been working with several other Merton schools on their Community Partnership Performance of The Time Machine. The performance was on Tuesday 26th March, and it was excellent; imaginative, fun and full of talent. We are looking forward now to our next project which is the Merton Arts Share exhibition. We always welcome new pupils to join us, please do go and see Miss O'Brien if you want to get involved.

Music Festival 2024

Mr Thomas is pleased to announce that we will be holding our inaugural Wimbledon College Music Festival after Easter. As you will see there are three separate events and admission to all of them is free. Please do attend if you can as they will showcase the significant talents of our pupils.

Thursday 18th April

Choir concert at 6pm in the School Hall. This will include works by Bruckner, Lotti, Monteverdi, Mozart and Palestrina

Friday 26th April

Piano recital at 3.30pm in the Sacred Heart Church. This will include performances by some of our piano students and include works by Chopin, Liszt and Mozart

Tuesday 30th April

The Swing Band will be performing various big band classics. The concert will also feature performances by other school bands.

Instrumental Lessons

Some of our Year 11 and 13 pupils are finishing or pausing musical instrument lessons next term. This means that some of our tutors have spaces for new students. If you are interested in your child receiving additional lessons on a musical instrument, please fill in the form on the link below:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdBfWO81HcR7VizCA7GqIVqq_7PwLmZcE1nyA4IWaHWi-2XVw/viewform

Please note that pupils have 10 lessons per term. Lessons are usually 30 minutes long and the cost to parents is between £190 and £210. If you have any queries, please email Mr Thomas [musicdepartment@wimbledoncollege.org.uk].

Use of mobile phones and banning smart watches in school

As I am sure you are aware the Government has asked that there is greater restriction of pupils' use of mobile phones in schools.

Our policy regarding mobile phones in school is clear and laid out in our Behaviour Policy. Pupils are allowed to bring mobile phones to school, however they must be switched off when the pupils are on Edge Hill and while at school, unless they are given permission by a teacher to use their phones in support of a lesson. Phones must then be switched off again once the task has been completed.

If we find that a pupil has their phone switched on [and this includes on silent or 'air plane' mode] then their phone will be confiscated for five days.

The exception to this is Sixth Form students who are allowed to use their phones in the Sixth Form area. They are not allowed to use them around the school.

Unfortunately, we have had a number of incidents where pupils have been using their smart watches, which are connected to their phones, in lessons for accessing messages, etc and thus have been a distraction to learning. As a consequence, we have taken the decision to ban the wearing and use of smart watches at school. Pupils can of course use normal watches that have no capacity to connect to mobile phones, laptops, etc or to access the internet.

I ask that you support the school in this measure, so that we can ensure learning is not disrupted in this way, by informing your children that smart watches are not allowed in school. The ban on smart watches is effective from the start of next term [15 April 2024]. Smart watches will be confiscated for five days, if they are brought into school.

Nut free school

I must remind all parents that we are a nut free school. The reason for this is that we have a number of pupils who have severe allergic reactions to nuts.

We have become aware that a very small number of pupils have recently been bringing nuts into school to eat as a snack. This is not acceptable as it places those pupils with allergies at risk.

Would you therefore ensure that you do not send your children to school with nuts [either separately or as an ingredient in other food products] as part of their packed lunch. I would also ask that you discuss nut allergies with your children so that they know not to buy nuts on the way to school and then bring them into school.

School Uniform Code

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all parents of our expectations regarding our School Uniform Code. This includes the uniform itself as well as wearing proper school shoes and adhering to expectations regarding hair styles. Main school pupils should also be clean shaven.

All pupils are expected to be in correct uniform. I ask that all parents support the College in this matter and that over the Easter holidays you ensure that your child has the correct uniform and that their appearance is in line with the College's Appearance Rules.

The Uniform and Appearance Rules along with the Uniform List can be found on the College website. I have included a link to the page here:

<https://www.wimbledoncollege.org.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=1245&type=pdf>

Gradecards

Pupils in years 7-10 and Sixth Form will receive their gradecards this week. Pupils in Syntax will receive theirs at the start of next term. For pupils in Rhetoric the Half Term 4 grade is their March examination grade. Further information on how we report academic progress to parents is available here:

<https://www.wimbledoncollege.org.uk/curriculum/assessment-and-reporting>

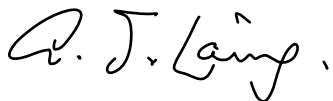
If you, or your child, are concerned about their progress compared to their target grade please do not hesitate to speak to their Head of Line.

Early finish on Wednesday 17 April 2024.

I need to bring to your attention that school will finish at the end of p5 [2.15pm] on Wednesday 17 April [first week back after Easter]

Finally, just a reminder that **next term starts on Monday 15 April 2024**

God bless.



Adrian Laing

Headteacher