



Wimbledon College

Headteacher's Spring Half-Term Letter to Parents

Wednesday 19 February 2025

Dear Parents

I hope that you and your family are having an enjoyable half term week. Our half term finished with the return of the House Music Competition, which was a tremendous success with numerous outstanding performances. You will find further details later in my letter. The last week of half term also saw our U13s win the Gordon's School Invitational 7 a side football tournament as well as two of our pupils competing in the England Indoor Athletics Championships in Sheffield. Conor Kelly ran a personal best to win the Under 20 Men's 400m title and Buddy Reid threw a personal best in the Under 17 Men's Shot Putt finishing 8th. The results from this year's Intermediate Maths Challenge also came through with 12 pupils achieving the Gold certificate, 39 Silver and 30 Bronze. Three pupils, Jay Han [Yr 9], Jarvis Hui [Yr 9] and Juan Frias [Yr 11] all qualified for the Junior Mathematical Olympiad with four others qualifying for the Grey or Pink Kangaroo Competition. On the Friday before half term our Grammar Ski trip departed for a week in Kitzbuhel.

Farewell to Mr Soalla-Bell

We said farewell to Mr Soalla- Bell at the end of half term as he leaves us to begin a new career. He will be sorely missed not least by the many pupils he has supported over the last eight years on the athletics track and field. In addition to curriculum time he has worked with individuals and small groups of pupils before school, at break and at lunchtime to help them develop their sporting talents. The results of this can be seen in this letter. I am sure that you will join me in wishing him every success in his future career.

Grade Cards

Grade cards for pupils in Years 7-13 have been sent out electronically this week for the last half term. Higher Line and Sixth Form gradecards include the latest, graded, assessments for this half term (HT3). Lower Line gradecards contain the subject progress judgement for this half term.

Further information regarding how we assess pupils and report to parents is available here: <https://www.wimbledoncollege.org.uk/curriculum/assessment-and-reporting>

If you have not received your child's grade card would you please email their Head of Line to let them know.

House Music Competition

As I mentioned earlier there was an incredible breadth of talent on display at our House Music Competition last week and some of the performances were quite remarkable. Our overall winner was Yuji Huggett and you can see his performance on the College's Instagram page [<https://www.instagram.com/wimbledoncollegeofficial/>].

The competition was broken into three categories [by Key Stage], with an overall winner and runner-up. The results are as follows:

Lower Line

1st Place and Overall Winner: Yuji Huggett

2nd Place: Leo Fulgeanu Baiao and Jay Han

3rd Place: Alessandro Lorusso

Higher Line

1st Place: Vincent Glick

2nd Place: Darron Nazario

3rd Place: Alex Cho

6th Form

1st Place and Overall Runner-up: Rafael Das

2nd Place: Alex Fulgeanu Baiao

3rd Place: Jonathan Tombleson

I would like to thank our Judge, Mr Bob Rathbone [Former Director of Music] for giving up his time and for his very careful adjudication given the high standard of the competition. I must also thank Mr Thomas and Mr Reynolds who were the driving force behind the night. Without their enthusiasm and support for the pupils we would not have had such a successful evening.

Forthcoming Musical events

Please make a note of these events in your diaries:

Wednesday 5th March

GCSE and A Level Recital (Hall), 7pm

Monday 17th March

Spring Concert: Swing Band and other bands and ensembles (Hall), 7pm

Tuesday 1st April (Please note the change of date)

Mass and Choral Concert (Sacred Heart Church), 6.30pm

Faure's *Requiem* and a trio of motets for Tenebrae

PSHE and Careers

We would like to thank the Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation for coming in to the College to deliver a very powerful theatre production to Lower Grammar about the dangers of taking drugs. In addition, Rudiments have had workshops this half term with 'Catch 22' focusing on vaping and the health risks associated with vaping.

We celebrated National Apprenticeship Week with a series of activities in lessons and with additional sessions to engage boys with the growing apprenticeship opportunities available.

Figures had a fun day doing teambuilding exercises with the Royal Navy and understanding pathways into a career in the Navy. We welcomed Laurie Dalrymple, CEO of Harlequins Rugby Club to Syntax. They heard about the day in a life of a CEO and were able to ask him thought provoking questions. LDN Apprenticeships provided online sessions for Lower Grammar and Grammar students and gave an overview of the different apprenticeship opportunities available.

College Sports

We have a lot of fixtures taking place throughout the coming half term and I would like to remind all parents that they can access our fixture lists via the College website.

<http://www.wimbledoncollegesport.org.uk/Default.asp?Id=562>

The success of our teams at all levels depends on the commitment of the pupils and the support from you as parents. While I appreciate that many pupils also play regularly for teams outside of school, I would ask that you prioritise school fixtures as we do expect pupils to represent the College if selected to play.

Athletics

In addition to the individual successes mentioned at the beginning of my letter we have seen further achievements, both individual and team, this half term.

Our Lower Grammar team were victorious in the 2025 Boys Indoor Simmonds Cup in January overcoming school teams from across London. Our Figures Team came second in the Merton Schools Year 7 Sportshall Athletics Championship and it was pleasing to see three pupils represent Merton in the Surrey Schools Secondary Cross-Country Championships. Thomas Smith [Figures] was our highest place finisher coming 10th.

Boxing

After a hiatus away from the sharp end of competitive amateur boxing, this month saw our return. One of our Amateur Boxing Club competed in their first amateur boxing bout. Congratulations go to Rocco Cox [Grammar] who boxed on the 'Kings' Boxing Club Show in Kent representing Wimbledon College ABC. A closely contested bout saw Rocco box with great gusto and spirit. Sadly, falling just short to convince the judges in the latter rounds (after initially being up after round 1 on the judges' scorecards) he lost on points overall. The Club and Rocco look forward to competing once again in the second half-term.

Rugby Sevens

The Sevens season commenced before half term and will get into full swing, for all year groups, once we return to school after half term.

Our own John Pieroni Sevens will take place on **Sunday 16th March** at Coombe Lane. If you have never attended a sevens competition it is well worth coming to watch. Many of the best teams in the country at U15 level attend and the standard of sevens is always high.

Attendance

Thank you for your ongoing support in ensuring that your child[ren] is[are] getting to school on time however I would like to remind all parents of the importance of high levels of attendance and punctuality.

Our expectation is that all pupils should be aiming for 100% attendance and that they should have a **minimum** attendance of 95%. The statutory guidance from the Government states that it is legal requirement for students to be in school and that absences can only be authorised for extenuating circumstances. Please see the information sheet [included in the email containing this letter] from Merton regarding school attendance and penalty notice information.

All pupils are required to be in school by 8.25am. For pupils in Years 7-11, failure to do so will result in the pupil having to sign in at 8.10am the following day with the PSA. If a pupil is late 3 time in a week than they will be required to sign in **Saturday morning**. There are different sanctions for Sixth Form pupils who are late to school.

Support with the purchasing of College uniform

I am aware that families may be finding it difficult to purchase items of school uniform at the current time due to financial reasons. We do have provision in place to support our families. I would ask, if you find yourself in a position where your child needs items of school uniform and you are unable to purchase them for financial reasons, that you contact your child's Head of Line in the first instance and we will do what we can to provide the appropriate support.

School Uniform expectations

Thank you to all parents who have ensured that your children are wearing the correct school uniform, not only in school but on their way to and from school.

There are however a number of pupils who are wearing incorrect shoes and coats. I ask that you ensure your child[ren] as [are] wearing the correct uniform when they return to College in January. This includes formal black shoes and appropriate overcoats.

Please be aware that the expectations on coats are that they are plain black, with sleeves and without logos. Hoods are allowed but are not to be worn in school. I must also point out that coats are to be worn over blazers and not instead of them.

I would ask that you check the School Uniform List before buying any school uniform.

Mobile phones and smart watches

I would like to remind all parents of the College's rules regarding mobile phones and smart watches.

Pupils are allowed to have mobile phones in school but they must be switched off ['airplane mode' is not allowed] when pupils are in school and on Edge Hill. Pupils may only have their phones on when they are in lessons and have been given specific permission to use their phones to support their learning in a particular lesson.

Smart watches [that link to mobile phones or are phones in themselves] are not allowed in school for the same reasons that we do not allow mobile phones.

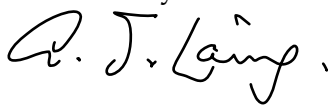
If a pupil is found with a mobile phone switched on when it should not be or with a smart watch [either on or off] the phone/watch will be confiscated for five days, in line with our Behaviour Policy.

Monday 24 February 2025

I remind parents that Monday 24 February is a staff inset day and so there are no lessons. However, Rhetoric mock examinations will be taking place on Monday. I ask that all students in Rhetoric check their exam timetable.

God bless.

Yours sincerely



Adrian Laing
Headteacher