



# Wimbledon College

## Head Master's Spring Half-Term Letter to Parents

Monday 17 February 2020

Dear Parents

This half term has flown by and although the weather has had a significant impact on our sporting fixtures the boys have been involved in a variety of activities. Last week saw the culmination of the Jack Petchey Speak Out with a variety of excellent speeches from our Grammar finalists. Boys in Lower Grammar and Syntax have also taken part in the annual Maths Challenge. Football, basketball and swimming have also featured strongly over the half term and the Rugby Sevens season has started well with the Senior Seven reaching the semi-finals of their first competition. Rehearsals are well underway for this term's musical production [more details later] and our Grammar Ski trip taking place as I write. We celebrated our Founders' Day in January and this year I was also privileged to attend the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Mass of St Ignatius College, Enfield in January. St Ignatius is the other Jesuit state secondary school and interestingly once Fr Nicholson SJ had established Wimbledon College he was sent to north London to repeat his endeavours at Stamford Hill. Our First XI also found themselves facing St Ignatius in the London Catholic Schools Football Cup and I am pleased to say that we were victorious.

It has also been a busy half term for our exam classes with Syntax pupils taking their mock exams this half term and Rhetoric preparing for their mocks that take place immediately after the half term break.

If you do not do so already I recommend that you follow the College Twitter account as it gives a real sense of what is going on in the College.

### Report Card

Pupils in Years 7-10 and 12-13 received their report cards on Friday and I hope that they have given them to you. [Syntax received their mock results on Wednesday]. As you know the grades are colour coded so that you can see an overall impression of your son's achievement and progress in each subject. By this point in the year you should be seeing a shift from red through amber to green as you look across the report. If you, or your son, are concerned about his progress compared to his target grade please do not hesitate to speak to your son's Head of Line.

### Coronavirus - Covid-19

I would like to draw your attention to the current guidance that we have received from Public Health England regarding Covid-19 and steps that can be taken in response to it. The information

below is correct as of the date of my letter however the advice is being updated as is necessary and I will keep you informed of further updates as we receive them.

Public Health England is encouraging good hygiene for everyone and I would ask that you discuss this with your son over half term. We will be reiterating this with them on their return to school. The advice from PHE, which we will expect pupils to follow in school, is:

*As always, if you have symptoms of a cold or flu, then there are measures you can take to stop germs:*

- *always carry tissues with you and use them to catch your cough or sneeze. Then bin the tissue, and wash your hands, or use a sanitiser gel.*
- *wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after using public transport. Use a sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.*
- *avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.*
- *avoid close contact with people who are unwell.*

The current advice for travellers to this country from China and other specified areas is as follows:

#### ***Travellers from Wuhan and Hubei Province***

*If you have travelled from Wuhan or Hubei Province to the UK in the last 14 days you should immediately:*

- *stay indoors and avoid contact with other people as you would with the flu*
- *call NHS 111 to inform them of your recent travel to the area*

*Please follow this advice even if you do not have symptoms of the virus.*

#### ***Travellers from other parts of China and other specified areas***

*This advice applies to travellers who have returned to the UK from the following areas:*

- *Elsewhere in China*
- *Thailand*
- *Japan*
- *Republic of Korea*
- *Hong Kong*
- *Taiwan*
- *Singapore*
- *Malaysia*
- *Macau*

***If you have returned to the UK from any of these areas in the last 14 days and develop symptoms of cough or fever or shortness of breath, you should immediately:***

- *stay indoors and avoid contact with other people as you would with the flu*
- *call NHS 111 to inform them of your recent travel to the country*

Up to date information is available on the Government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public>

## **The Frogs**

The College's Easter Production is the *The Frogs*, a comical masterpiece of a musical from Stephen Sondheim, Burt Shevelove and Nathan Lane. It's an incredible comical masterpiece that follow the Greek god of theatre, Dionysus, on his quest to save the world from the mess that it is in. The cast and band are formed from the talented boys of the College and girls from The Ursuline, and we are sure you are going to be impressed by the treats on offer in the production, whether it is the complex genius of the songs, the playful but poignant exploration of the deepest human issues, the sheer madness of our collection of dancing hip-hop frogs, or the beautiful set featuring Grecian pillars, and gold doors that magically become the depths of the River Styx. We welcome you to this medley of magnificence on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, start time 7.30pm, in the College Hall. Tickets are £7.00 (£4.00 concessions) on School Gateway.

## **The Mystery Cycle**

After Easter, on Thursday April 24<sup>th</sup>, from 6.00 until 8.00pm we are once again celebrating Paschaltide with our production of *The Mystery Cycle*. Over 60 boys from all year groups will be taking part in the plays, which are based on the ancient English tradition of mystery cycles, where the story of Christianity is re-told in different areas, and the audience move around to witness each re-telling. The stories from the Old Testament, and the moments of The Passion of Christ are given a new flavour, they are funny, rude, moving, always entirely human and yet completely touched by God, and last year this production was a huge success. Entry is free, with donations after to a charity to be chosen nearer the time.

## **Supporting GCSE, A Level, Vocational students**

Boys in **Syntax**, having completed their Mock exams received all of their results together just before half term. We hope that the boys will reflect on this experience and identify how they can make further progress in preparation for their actual exams in the summer. Over the next half term we will be updating the Syntax page on the College's website with guidance and materials to support the boys in this. We ask that you check the page regularly and talk to you sons about their studies. Boys should also be developing their revision timetables to make the best use of their time in the build up to their examinations.

It is important to note that their first public examination is on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020. All Y11 boys will receive an interview on their choices for next year shortly after half term. This will include option choices for courses in the Sixth Form at the College or opportunities at another educational provider.

I would also like to make parents of Syntax boys aware that we use a very powerful online careers platform called Unifrog. It enables the boys to investigate different career options and pathways, looking at careers, apprenticeships and university courses.

Immediately after half term, as part of their preparation for their public exams, **Rhetoric** pupils have the second round of PPEs starting on Monday 24th **February** [Please note that although it is an INSET day there will be examinations taking place]. Timetables have been sent home already and further details have been posted on the College website.

Please note that BTEC and IT lessons continue as normal during the examination period. Full reports will be issued for Rhetoric students at the end of term.

Poetry students on BTEC courses will have mock examinations in the week beginning **24th February**, in preparation for external examinations in the summer. Poetry pupils should also be making use of our online careers' platform, Unifrog, to look at universities, apprenticeships and careers in general. I would also like to remind you that boys may make appointments with our Careers Advisor via Mr Lonergan or Mrs Household.

## **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/Fixtures\\_Teams.asp?Id=562&S=20192020&SID=24](http://www.wimbledoncollegesport.org.uk/Fixtures_Teams.asp?Id=562&S=20192020&SID=24)

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

## **Football**

Mr Barnes has asked me to pass on his thanks to all parents who have been supporting the teams this season and especially those parents who have given up their time to provide hospitality at Coombe Lane on Saturday mornings. Fixtures continue after half term and we hope that the weather will improve.

## **Rugby Sevens**

As I wrote earlier the Sevens season has already started and I would ask that you look at the school sports website for the full list of fixtures, timings and locations. Training for all teams continues after half term.

Our own John Pieroni Sevens take place on **Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> 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.

## **Cricket**

Mr Hulatt has asked to inform all parents that Indoor cricket nets begin on the 2<sup>nd</sup> week back after half term. They will take place in the Sports Hall and sessions will run from 3.15-4.45pm on the following days:

Figures -	Tuesdays - 10 <sup>th</sup> , 17 <sup>th</sup> & 24 <sup>th</sup> of March
Rudiments -	Thursdays - 12 <sup>th</sup> & 26 <sup>th</sup> of March & 2 <sup>nd</sup> of April
Lower Grammar -	Thursdays - 5 <sup>th</sup> & 26 <sup>th</sup> of March; Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup> of March
Grammar, Syntax and Seniors	Wednesdays - 11 <sup>th</sup> , 18 <sup>th</sup> , 25 <sup>th</sup> of March

Boys may bring their own protective kit if they desire, otherwise, kit is provided.

Boys must wear House kit or cricket whites and trainers for the nets sessions.

### **Uniform**

Thank you for your ongoing support by ensuring that your son[s] are wearing their uniform correctly. I would just like to remind parents that if you are buying new school shoes for your son then please make sure that they fall within College uniform expectations. My previous letter outlining which shoes are acceptable is still available on the College website.

I would also like to remind parents that all boys, including Sixth form, are expected to be clean shaven and that there should be no extreme hair styles. This includes combinations of extremely short and long hair. [More detail can be found in the boy's Diaries]

One final point is that if coats are being worn, they are to be worn over the pupil's blazer/jacket and not instead of the blazer/jacket. For boys in Lower Line it should be the College jacket and for boys in Higher Line it should be a plain black jacket without hood or logo. I must also point out that this rule applies while your son is in uniform and therefore on the way to and from school.

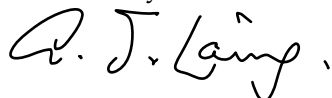
### **Reminder concerning dropping off at school and collecting your sons from schools**

I would like to remind those parents who drive their sons to or from school to be mindful of our neighbours property and access to Edge Hill. When you are dropping off or picking up your sons would you please take care not to block any driveways or park on the private roads close to the College. Over recent weeks a number of parents have been parking in Hannah Court, which is a private road. I would be grateful if parents would refrain from parking there.

Finally may I remind parents that Monday 24 February is a staff inset day and so boys return to school on **Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February**. [Please note that Rhetoric Mock exams are taking place on the 24 February]

I wish you all a restful and safe half term.

Yours sincerely



Adrian Laing  
Head Master