



Wadham School

A Church of England Community School

"Life in all its fullness" John 10:10



Sunday 25th September 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Headteacher's Update 25.09.22

In my last update I spoke to you about 'pausing' in life to see all that is good and great, already hidden in plain sight – and there is lot to see here at Wadham. This certainly has not changed in the last 7 days! This week, however, it certainly feels a little more hurried in a 'blink and you'll miss it' sense. Perhaps because I cannot believe it is October next week, because we're already at the halfway point in the term, and because there is still much to be done.

As such, I would like to use my message this week to update our parents and carers on the most pressing issues:

Additional INSET Days

I am proud to work alongside such a talented and hard-working staff, who place learning and well-being at the heart of what we do. That said, no-one could have anticipated the unique challenges in welcoming 300+ new students and 30+ new staff into what is, essentially, a new school.

For this reason, I am having to add two further INSET days to our calendar, to create additional time for reflection, change and planning, so that as a school we are utterly secure in our curriculum across Key Stages 3 and 4. It's about time – the most precious thing we have, and I believe this time, taken now, will have the biggest impact long term in improving the outcomes and life chances of our students. Wadham will be closed to students on these INSET days, and I am grateful to our parents and carers for their understanding and support.

The two additional INSET days are:

- Friday 21st October 2022 – the last day of this half term.
- Wednesday 4th January 2023 – students return on Thursday 5th January

Open Evening - Thursday 6th October, 5.00-7.00pm

As a new school, we get to do some things differently! This year, I am excited at the prospect of our Year 7 students being tour guides to our guests at Open Evening. It's a showcase event, and one where students are actively encouraged to get involved as student ambassadors across the subjects on offer. Mrs Finch has issued consent letters should your child wish to be involved, and it's a massive thank you from me to everyone that is working hard to make sure Wadham puts on a night to remember next Thursday!

School Transport

I received an update on Friday from the Transport Team to say that 2 bus routes had been allocated to a different provider and that parents would be contacted with an update – I do hope this is the case. I am also able to share that I have 88 responses from parents, using our survey to share their concerns. Thank you for doing this – it has helped relieve the pressure from our staff on Reception and gives me everything I need to put our collective concerns in a formal letter to the Council.



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

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SOMERSET
County Council

Uniform

I have seen an increase in the number of students wearing trainers during the day. Currently this is limited to a small group in Years 10 and 11, and I am keen to reverse this trend very quickly.

A reminder that shoes must be black and of a sensible, flat style. Heels should not be more than 2 inches (5cm). Open-toed shoes, mules, and sling back styles are not allowed. No canvass shoes or boots above the ankle can be worn.

Students must wear school shoes at all times and should not be changing into their trainers (or other non-school type shoes) during the day. Students wishing to change into trainers to play football on the field at lunch must do so at the field, as they are about to start their game. At the end of lunch, they must change back into their school shoes before leaving the field.

Students that do not follow these expectations will receive a tick on their Behaviours Card.

Wadham Behaviours

Students have completed their first week carrying Wadham Behaviours Cards to recognise and reward positive behaviours under the headings of "Ready, Respectful and Safe." These relate to behaviours that occur as students travel to/from school, around the site, to/from lessons, in the canteen and at social times. They also refer to Homework and mobile phone misuse in lessons. All students have had 2 weeks prior to launch where we have explained and modelled the desired positive outcomes, explaining that each week, up to 9 House Points will be awarded as the card is changed – a point for every blank 'tick' box on the card. Equally, a ticked box means that an expectation has not been met. 3 ticks under any one of the 3 headings results in a new card being issued and a 20min breaktime detention set the following day.

I am delighted to report that over 7000 House Points were awarded last week – perfect recognition to the large, silent majority of students that simply do their best without needing to be asked. Equally, it is encouraging to see students attending detention, reflecting on their mistakes and hopefully taking steps to make better choices in the future.

Student Absence

We have seen a rise in student absence regarding coughs/colds where students are experiencing light symptoms. I am politely asking parents/carers to consider the threshold at which students are kept home 'unwell' and would like to remind you that where consent is given, students can bring and store paracetamol in our medical room, which can be dispensed by staff if required. In this way, although I recognise students may feel 'under the weather,' if still able to attend they can do so – much like in the real workplace.

Thank you for getting to the end of this letter. I hope you find these updates useful in understanding action taken to ensure our efforts in securing the best possible outcomes for our students are achieved and I remain ever grateful for the part you play in making this happen.

Yours sincerely,



Richard Burgas
Headteacher

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