

# Meopham School

A Member of Swale Academies Trust

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SDI

18<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Dear Parents/Carers,

I thought I would take this opportunity to update you on a few key aspects of the school at the end of what has been an incredibly busy and successful term.

As a school we are increasingly being recognised as a centre for professional excellence, both locally and nationally. We have hosted conferences for both English and Maths teachers this term, inviting staff from the Swale Academies Trust and staff from our local schools in Gravesham. In addition, Mrs Wrighton, Director of English, and I were recently invited to speak at a national conference of headteachers and senior leaders to share our strategies for success in English. As a result of our key note speeches (at Central Hall in Westminster) we have been visited by school leaders from locations as far away as Lincolnshire who are keen to see our staff and students in action. They have been impressed by the Meopham approach to teaching and learning (our “House Style”) where students use their RAG books to select their own individual learning pathways in lessons.

Our students, your children, are a real credit to us. I am always immensely proud to show visitors around the school. Our young people are enthusiastic learners who are actively engaged in lessons, and are always keen to give of their best in all that they do. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our young leaders, the Meopham School Ambassadors. They have admirably assisted in events both within and beyond the school day. I would particularly like to note their contribution during Open Evening, Open Week, Parents’ Evenings, the Poppy Appeal, and the Christmas Cracker. They even put on their Christmas aprons and helped serve and clear up during the student Christmas Lunch last week.

Our ethos creates a supportive, energising and inspiring climate for success. I have recently updated our website to reflect not just our focus on “Academic Excellence in a Rural Setting” but also our emerging focus on “Excellence Through Character”. We absolutely recognise that success should be measured not just in terms of excellent academic outcomes, but also in terms of the development of strong character. Qualifications and personality open doors initially, but it is strength of character which keeps those doors open and allows our young people to lead happy, successful and healthy lives. Our traditional academic curriculum combines with our Excellence Through Character curriculum to ensure that every student is nurtured to uncover their talents and aptitudes. This curriculum is evident in our enrichment activities (both during and after school), our academic lessons (where the 4Rs of Resilience, Reciprocity, Reflectiveness and Resourcefulness are actively promoted) and during Advisories and PSHE. We report on the 4Rs in our annual written reports to you as parents, and reward house points when students have displayed one of the 4Rs in lessons, during enrichment activities and during social times. We have organised rewards “pins” in bronze, silver, gold and platinum (not in the “real” metal I am afraid!) which we are looking forward to the students wearing with pride as soon as they have the requisite number house points to receive them.

## Social Media

Miss Smith continues to present as much of the school's news as possible via social media. Please look out for and "follow" the latest news stories on the school's Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Website, and the Teaching and Learning blog. Our social media channels are the very best way to keep up-to-date with Meopham School news. Recent items on Instagram, for example, include SwaleFeast (Swale Academies Trust "Ready Steady Cook"), the charity Food Drive, the Year 9 Pantomimes, the Bug Hotels created by students in KS3, a trip to Wembley to see the England versus USA football match, and Year 11, 12, and 13 BTEC Health and Social Care and Sports students' visit to BodyWorlds.

You can also find out about how students can sign up to be part of our new Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme – an excellent way of building strength of character!

## School Website

I would like to remind you that our Meopham School website <https://meophamschool.org.uk/> is updated regularly with news and information.

## Poppy Appeal

A huge thank you to Mrs Curtis and her Meopham School Ambassadors who collected for the Poppy Appeal this year and raised £204.58.

## Christmas Cracker Show -11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Meopham School has always had a reputation for excellence in the performing arts. It is heartening to see so many students participating in what is becoming an annual tradition. It is always a very popular and well attended event. Our Christmas Cracker Show this year took place on Tuesday and Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December. Many thanks to Mr Knight, Mrs Curtis and the Creative Arts faculty for all their efforts in producing such an amazing performance.

## Uniform

Many visitors comment on how smartly dressed our students look and I am always pleased to see the great pride so many of them take in their appearance. Things to particularly bear in mind are:

**Footwear:** Trainers of any description are not acceptable school footwear. All students are required to wear formal school shoes. We have had a number of enquiries as to whether a certain brand of shoe (Kickers) are acceptable given that they have a small red branding tag on them rather than being wholly and entirely black. I would like to confirm that Kicker school shoes are acceptable. They are robust school shoes for both girls and boys.

**Skirts:** Should be black and of a suitable length (ie to the knee). They should not be of a close fitted design or made from Lycra or similar stretchy fabric.

**Trousers:** These should be school trousers and not fashion trousers. We do not allow trousers that are very tight to the leg, or have studded pockets (or any other styling that resemble that of jeans).

**Blouses:** These should be of a fitted, open-neck (revere) design and are intended to be worn outside the skirt.

**Jewellery:** The school has a no jewellery rule which includes any form of earring or stud. Please do not allow your son/daughter to have their ears pierced in the holiday, as the piercing will not have time to heal before we return on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019. We do not make a concession for students who have recently had their ears pierced who believe they should be allowed to wear earrings until the piercing has healed. Such a concession would introduce ambiguity and risk being unfair to those students who do conform. Therefore, if any students are considering getting their ears pierced they would be advised to do so at the very start of the summer holidays to allow any necessary healing to take place before they return to school when they will not be allowed to wear earrings or studs.

**Hairstyles:** We do have clear guidance about what are acceptable student hairstyles at Meopham School. The aim is to avoid the fickle extremes of fashion which are a distraction from the orderly working environment that your sons and daughters have worked so hard to create. In the interests of fairness to all, a line has to be drawn about what is allowed in a way which is as unambiguous and clear cut as possible.

In terms of prevailing boys' fashions our view is that there should be no line or sharp variation in hair length. Hair colour should be mono-tonal and natural looking. Once again, I would urge parents to ensure that hair styles for the start of the new term are appropriate. The start of summer holiday would be the point where students can safely experiment with styles which will have grown out by the end of August.

#### **PE Kit**

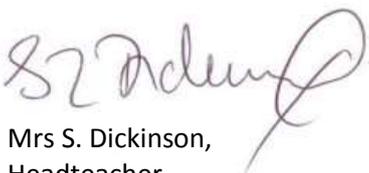
You can now purchase the Meopham School PE kit at The Sewing Shop. The PE kit consists of just two items carrying the Meopham School logo. The rest of the kit may be purchased in a store of your choice, making the kit more cost effective.

#### **Next Term**

The school opens to students on Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 and all students are expected back in at the normal time for lessons to start at 8.40 am.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone in the Meopham School family a restful holiday and every possible success in 2019.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs S. Dickinson,  
Headteacher

## Current Academic Year 2018 – 2019

Dates for the academic year of 2018 – 2019 are below.

Holiday: Thursday 20 December 2018 to Wednesday 2 January 2019 38

### Term 3

Term 3 Starts: Thursday 3 January 2019

Term 3 Ends: Friday 15 February 2019

Holiday: Monday 18 February 2019 to Friday 22 February 2019 32

### Term 4

Term 4 Starts: Monday 25 February 2019

Term 4 Ends: Friday 5 April 2019

Holiday: Monday 8 April 2019 to Monday 22 April 2019 30

### Term 5

Term 5 Starts: Tuesday 23 April 2019

Term 5 Ends: Friday 24 May 2019

Holiday: Monday 27 May 2019 to Friday 31 May 2019 27

### Term 6

Term 6 Starts: Monday 3 June 2019

Term 6 Ends: Wednesday 24 July 2019

*Staff Development Days:* **Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019**  
**Friday 28 June 2019 Swalefest**  
**Wednesday 24 July 2019** 34

	Date		Start time	End time
Thursday	17/01/19	Year 10 Parents' Evening	15:30	18:30
Thursday	07/02/19	Year 12/13 Parents' Evening	15:30	18:30
Thursday	07/03/19	Year 7 Parents' Evening	15:30	18:30
Wednesday	13/03/19	Year 8 Options Evening	16:30	17:30
Thursday	21/03/19	2nd Year11 Parents' Evening	15:30	18:30
Thursday	25/04/19	Year 9 Parents' Evening	15:30	18:30

## 2019 – 2020 Academic Year (proposed)

Dates for the academic year of 2019 – 2020 are below.

### Term 1

Term 1 Starts: Tuesday 27 August 2019  
Years 7, 11 and 12 return on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> August. All years in school on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2019  
Term 1 Ends: Friday 11 October 2019  
*Staff Development Day:* **Tuesday 27 August 2019**  
Holiday: Monday 14 October 2019 to Friday 25 October 2019

### Term 2

Term 2 Starts: Monday 28 October 2019  
Term 2 Ends: Wednesday 18 December 2019  
*Staff Development Day:* **Friday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018**  
Holiday: Thursday 19 December 2019 to Friday 3 January 2020

### Term 3

Term 3 Starts: Monday 6 January 2020  
Term 3 Ends: Friday 14 February 2020  
Holiday: Monday 17 February 2020 to Friday 21 February 2020

### Term 4

Term 4 Starts: Monday 24 February 2020  
Term 4 Ends: Wednesday 1 April 2020  
Holiday: Thursday 2 April 2020 to Wednesday 15 April 2020

### Term 5

Term 5 Starts: Thursday 16 April 2020  
Term 5 Ends: Friday 22 May 2020  
Bank Holiday: Monday 4 May 2020  
Holiday: Monday 25 May 2020 to Friday 29 May 2020

### Term 6

Term 6 Starts: Monday 1 June 2020  
Term 6 Ends: Thursday 23 July 2020  
*Staff Development Days:* **Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019**  
**Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020**  
**Thursday 23 July 2020**