

Meopham School

A Member of Swale Academies Trust

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SDI JCR

20th December 2016

Dear Parents/Carers

I am delighted to report that there has been excellent progress made within and around the school during what has been another exceedingly busy term.

Attendance

Our running total for attendance is currently 95.7%. This is above where it was at this time last year, and is above the 2016 national average for secondary schools. I would, once again, like to thank you for the support you have given to us over the last year in further improving our attendance figures. As you will already be aware, we would like attendance at the school to be above 96% by the end of this academic year. To this end, we would like every student (with the support of their family) to set themselves a personal target of 96% or above. Each missed day costs more than one lost day's work as the students will inevitably lose some time just getting back up to speed with where the class has got to. Illness remains the main reason for student absence. I understand that it is often quite difficult to make a decision about whether a student is well enough to attend school. Often students who come into school feeling poorly in the morning do feel much better by break-time. We are happy to arrange for Pastoral Support to telephone you during the day if a student really does not feel well enough to participate in lessons. The cold weather does bring with it an inevitable increase in absence due to winter ailments. We would really like to urge everyone to try their hardest to ensure that every student's attendance meets or exceeds the 96% target. Congratulations to those students who were at or above this target. We do hold rewards afternoons at the end of term organised by Mr Williams and Miss Crockford to reward students for keeping their attendance figures high. I am very appreciative of the way you, as parents, have supported us to further improve our attendance in the last year.

Student Books

Thank you to everyone who returned the recent questionnaire regarding exercise books. We continue to be proud of the standard of presentation and the quality of work in students' books, which is mostly high. These exercise books are a record of their learning and are essential for revision purposes for all year groups. We would encourage you, as parents, to look at your son/daughter's exercise books both to monitor the quality of the work they are producing and to develop a further awareness of their personal "next steps" as identified by their teacher. Staff spend a considerable amount of time marking our pupils' exercise books and writing diagnostic learning-focused comments. We actively encourage pupils to explicitly engage with this marking in their books by completing "now try this" tasks and through responding to questions posed by the teacher in the marking of the work. These questions could be, "how", "why", or "explain", for example. We would very much welcome your support in ensuring that your son/daughter is responding to the comments made by staff in order to develop their learning further. These responses to marking should be completed in green pen (in line with school routines).

Christmas Cracker show -14th and 15th December 2016 7.15 p.m.

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. Many thanks to Mr Knight, Mrs Curtis and the Creative Arts faculty for all their efforts in producing such an amazing performance.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN A RURAL SETTING

Meopham School New Build

Building work continues on the school site. Our proposed completion date of December 2017 has been moved to February 2018 due to the archaeological finds during the summer. As you are aware the existing ethos of the school will continue in our new home. We are, and will remain, a small rural school with traditional values and a focus on academic excellence.

Year 8 Options Evening

We will be holding an Options Evening for students in Year 8 on Thursday, 23rd February 2017 starting at 4.30pm. This evening is essential for all parents of pupils in Year 8. We look forward to seeing you there.

School Website

I would like to remind you that our Meopham School website www.meopham.kent.sch.uk is updated regularly with news and information.

Next term

The school opens to students on Wednesday the 4th January 2017 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 2017.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs S. Dickinson
Headteacher

Term 3

Term 3 Starts: Wednesday 4 January 2017
Term 3 Ends: Friday 10 February 2017
Holiday: Monday 13 February 2017 to Friday 17 February 2017

Term 4

Term 4 Starts: Monday 20 February 2017
Term 4 Ends: Friday 31 March 2017
Holiday: Monday 3 April 2017 to Monday 17 April 2017

Term 5

Term 5 Starts: Tuesday 18 April 2017
Term 5 Ends: Friday 26 May 2017

Staff Development Day:

Holiday: Friday 28 April 2017
Monday 29 May 2017 to Friday 2 June 2017

Term 6

Term 6 Starts: Monday 5 June 2017
Term 6 Ends: Monday 24 July 2017
Staff Development Days: Monday 3 July 2017
Monday 24 July 2017