

# Meopham School

A Member of Swale Academies Trust

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Our ref:SDI/JC

22 March 2016

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we approach the end of a very busy and successful term there are a few important points to share with you.

As you are already aware, I am always pleased to showcase the school to visitors from both within and outside the Swale Academies Trust. Our students, your children, are always very proud to take visitors around the school and discuss their learning in lessons and the work in their exercise books. Visitors speak very positively about the quality of lessons, the standard of pupils' work and the family ethos of the school. Indeed, I would like to encourage you to spend some time this Easter sitting with your son or daughter and looking at the quality of work they have completed in their exercise books. These books are the very best indicator of the progress they have made since the start of the school year. I also firmly believe that the best way to judge a school is to visit it during the working day. I would like to extend an invitation to current parents to do just this, so that you will have the opportunity to see all our young people at work. I will write to you in the Summer term with more precise details so that you can make plans to visit us if you would like to do so.

## Maths Challenge

I am delighted to share with you a recent achievement by some of our students in Maths. On 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016, four students from years 8 and 9, Bradley Gillies, Dee Edwards, Connor Farrington, and Nam Hui-Bui, participated in the UKMT Team Maths Challenge at St. Olave's Grammar School. The regional final was an exciting day full of engaging mathematical activities based around team work and communication skills. The students participated in four different activities throughout the day including a cross number and a relay race. It was a tough competition in which we placed 11<sup>th</sup> out of 32 schools. This is an excellent achievement by all involved, particularly as our students out-performed pupils in both selective and independent schools. Well done!

## Train to Teach at Meopham School

Have you ever considered a career in teaching? Meopham School firmly believes that the way to secure top quality teaching staff is to grow our own. To this end, we are always seeking to hear from graduates who are passionate about developing young people's minds. If you are interested in finding out about this opportunity, please contact Elizabeth Frost, School Direct Leader, by e-mail [SchoolDirect@westlands.kent.sch.uk](mailto:SchoolDirect@westlands.kent.sch.uk) or telephone on 07496 972 623.

## Year 11 Easter Revision Classes

We have put in place a number of measures already to ensure all our year 11 students have the best possible chance of success in the Summer. We will be repeating our well attended and successful programme of Easter revision classes. Curriculum leaders have been identifying the students who would most benefit from attending. Letters have been sent to the parents of any student invited to one of these sessions. I look forward to hearing about their success. In the past, students have enjoyed the more relaxed and informal atmosphere of these revision classes which have, in turn, deepened their understanding and knowledge.

## Year 11 Study Leave

This year, Year 11 study leave will begin on the afternoon of Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June. On this day, and after the Science exam in the morning, our lovely tradition of celebration for Year 11s will take place. This traditionally happens when the majority of the final GCSE exams have been sat. This year we would like to invite Year 11 to stay after

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ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN A RURAL SETTING

their Science exam in the morning for an afternoon of celebration. We expect them to be in their full school uniform, with a spare shirt of course for signing! The “Leavers’ Celebration” will begin at 1pm in the main hall and start with a BBQ and music. At around 2pm we will celebrate the year with a leavers’ presentation and year book assembly led by Mr Vilday. Students should leave the school site at the end of the celebration event at 3pm. After this point students will be required to attend school for exams only; students will be invited to attend revision sessions in the remaining examination subjects of Statistics and History. Parents will be contacted separately about this by Mr Huggens, KS4 Learning Leader.

### **Charity Events**

#### Text Santa

I am pleased to say that we raised £170.30 for Macmillan Cancer Support by wearing our Christmas Jumpers with school uniform in Term 2.

#### Sport Relief

Our Sport Relief football match of staff versus 6th form students on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March was a great success. The students supporting the event were incredibly enthusiastic and well behaved and we raised over £100 from the bucket collections. The final score was 4 – 1 (to the staff, on this occasion). We look forward to further staff versus student matches in the near future.

#### Ellenor

The Year 12/13 Redgrave FIFA lunchtime charity game sessions held this term raised a total of £50.26 for the Ellenor Lions charity. This is in addition to the Ellenor Christmas raffle, which raised £26.00 – resulting in overall fundraising of £76.26. Thank you to everyone who contributed towards this charity fundraising event.

### **Primary Schools**

We are pleased to be developing even closer relationships with our local primary schools, for mutual gain.

On 29<sup>th</sup> February Mrs Pillet and Miss Swyny visited Istead Rise Years 5 and 6 to dissect hearts as a launch to their new Science topic, as “experts”! The hearts were dissected and the pupils observed using the visualisers to show on the big screen. The pupils worked in small groups handling the hearts and working out the different chambers and the pathway of the blood. Although some were very wary at the start all joined in the activity. They seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves.

Mrs Pillet is also liaising with Meopham Primary School in order to share resources and approaches. Transition to secondary school is a crucial time for young people and we are keen to do everything we can to support this process with our main feeder schools. Last year, we invited Year 5 pupils in local primary schools to attend Taster Days in July. We plan to do the same this year. If you are aware of other primary schools who you think might be interested in this opportunity, please contact Mrs Pillet (pp@meopham.kent.sch.uk).

### **Careers Fair**

As part of pupils’ careers education, 145 pupils across Years 9, 10 and 12 visited the Detling Hill Careers Fair on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> March. Pupils relished the opportunity to speak to employers from a wide range of industry and with several university representatives about access to further education and university life.

### **Football**

Well done to our Year 11 football team who have been successful in qualifying for the District final, which is due to take place after Easter. Further details of this, and other sporting updates, will be sent to you next term by the PE Department.

### **Uniform**

The vast majority of students look incredibly smart in their uniforms, and are proud of their business-like appearance. As we move towards the summer months, I would like to remind parents about our expected

standards of school uniform. For example, while skirts should be of a suitable length, they also should not be of Lycra or a similar stretchy material. As you are aware, trainers of any description are not acceptable school footwear. We would like to thank parents for their continued support in ensuring that students are wearing formal work shoes. Students are also expected to wear their blazers to and from school.

### **Attendance**

It has been pleasing to see improvements in overall attendance rates over the last few weeks. Where an entire form has maintained a 100% attendance record we have allowed them a free non-uniform day at the end of the following week. I am pleased to report that our attendance figures are increasing when compared to this point in the term last year. Our attendance target of 96% is an ambitious one, but one I firmly believe we can achieve with your support.

### **Parent View – Ofsted Questionnaire**

I would like to thank those of you who have filled in our parent survey forms when you have attended the school for parents' evenings this year. We enter your answers into Survey Monkey which enables us to analyse responses. We also regularly survey the students at the school in order to evaluate how pupils see their school. Currently, we are delighted that 97.4% of parents would recommend this school to another parent, 97.4% believe their child is happy at this school, and 97.6% believe their child makes good progress at this school.

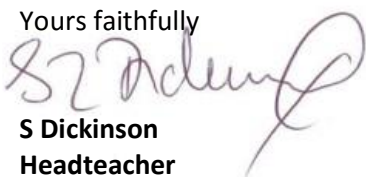
I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of Parent View. Ofsted also make use of the online Parent View service to gather information from parents (<https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>, or via the Meopham School Website Parent tab, Ofsted Parent View - external). We are proud of our school and our students, and would encourage you to complete this "official" online questionnaire as it will assist those outside of the school in evaluating our overall effectiveness.

### **Timetable Change and New Build**

I would like to remind you that there is a letter from Mr Webb containing an update on the New Build. The students will begin new timetables from Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April. They were given these timetables on the last day of term. Timetables have been adjusted to reflect the new rooming resulting from departments decanting into the temporary buildings over Easter. Please see the letter written by Mr Webb for further details.

I would finally like to wish all students, staff, parents and carers within the Meopham School community best wishes for a restful Easter break. Term 5 begins for students on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

Yours faithfully



**S Dickinson**  
**Headteacher**

### Term Dates 2015-16

<b>Term 5</b>	
<b><i>Staff Development Day – students not in school</i></b>	<b><i>Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016</i></b>
Term 5 Starts:	Monday 11 April 2016
Term 5 Ends:	Friday 27 May 2016
Holiday:	Monday 30 May 2016 to Friday 3 June 2016
<b>Term 6</b>	
Term 6 Starts:	Monday 6 June 2016
Term 6 Ends:	Friday 22 July 2016
<b><i>Staff Development Days – students not in school:</i></b>	<b><i>Friday 1 July 2016</i></b> <b><i>Friday 22 July 2016</i></b>

### Term Dates 2016-2017

<b>Term 1</b>	
Term 1 starts:	Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> August, 2016
Term 1 ends:	Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> October, 2016
Holiday:	Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> October to Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> October
<b><i>Staff Development Day – Students not in school</i></b>	<b><i>Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2016</i></b>
Years 7, 11 and 12 start date	Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2016
Years 8, 9, 10 and 13 start date	Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2016