

Meopham School

A Member of Swale Academies Trust

Headteacher: Mr E Roberts BA Hons. PGCE NPQH



Wrotham Road Meopham Kent DA13 0AH

Tel: 01474 814646

Website: www.meophamschool.org.uk

13th September 2024

Dear parents and carers,

I hope this letter finds you well.

It's been another busy and productive week at school, and it has been great to see all of our youngsters working hard and embarking on their new topics this term. I've had the pleasure of congratulating a number of students this week, who have been invited to my office to show me the excellent work they have been doing and receive a Headteacher's Commendation. These students are fantastic representatives of the school and hold exactly the sort of values we want to see within our community. A well done to them all.

A thank you to Ms Metters and Ms Cash, who took some of our Sixth Formers on an exciting and informative trip to the Houses of Parliament this week to meet Lauren Sullivan MP, the Member of Parliament for Gravesham. We thank her for her time, and throughout this year we hope to offer plenty more cultural experiences like this for our students.

Parking Bays

As you will appreciate, our top priority at school is your children's safety and welfare.

Following a site visit from Kent Fire Brigade, we have been advised that the fire access gate to our new building now requires a wider area of clearance.

We have therefore been instructed to cordon off and suspend a row of parking bays adjacent to the fire access gates to allow fire appliances clear access in the event of an emergency.

These bays will be cordoned off from today and will therefore now be out of use. The building contractors will be painting a hashed area and posting no-parking signs in this area in due course.

Only a very small number of bays are affected, and with our new overspill car-park, we believe there is ample parking for all.

Homework - a message from our Assistant Headteacher, Mrs Hatch

Homework is an essential tool for increasing students' progress, and over the coming year we hope that you will support your child to complete their homework to a good standard. Students' homework will be set on Google classrooms, and there are often useful posts on there from their teachers too, for example materials that they can use for revision prior to tests and exams.

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Year 7 students are being shown how to access Google classroom and Sparks Maths during their Maths lessons this week and next.

Your child can access their homework via Google classroom, and you can see what your child has been set as homework by looking at their Google classroom area with them.

The 'Learning' area of the school website has useful information regarding both Google classroom support and for homework. Here you can find a schedule for each year group of what homework your child should expect, as well as how often each subject sets the work and how they are given feedback. There are also digital copies of homework booklets for English, Science, History and Geography should you need them.

Uniform

I would like to thank all our parents, carers and students for their support in establishing higher standards of uniform around the school. My favourite part of the day is greeting our young people at the gate, and the politeness and friendliness with which your children greet staff with a friendly hello - and how smart and presentable they are looking - is credit to you all. I am also exceptionally grateful to my colleagues, who have consistently ensured all students hold to high standards. To give a sense of the raised expectations, last week we had 89 students in incorrect uniform at the start of the school day; yesterday we had 5, and I am happy to say that those students - who sometimes have incorrect uniform for legitimate reasons - all agreed to change into the correct uniform we can provide.

We are aware, however, that there is still some more work to be done with raising the standards of uniform across the school. In particular, we need to address the length of skirts to ensure all students are wearing our uniform in the correct and professional manner.

Should you wish to review our uniform policy further, it can be found here: [Meopham School - Uniform Policy](#)

Should financial hardship mean that any families require support with uniform, please contact Mr Rigglesworth at andrew.rigglesworth@swale.at or the school reception at MSS-reception@swale.at and the school will provide support.

Attendance

Regular attendance and punctuality to school is absolutely vital if a student is to be successful. If a student has 100% attendance, they have an 82% chance of achieving five Standard Passes in their GCSEs. If a student's attendance drops to 90% - which is the equivalent of one day off per fortnight - their chance of achieving five successful GCSEs falls to a worrying 57%. It may seem

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that 90% attendance is not too unreasonable a figure for a student, but let me assure you, this has an incredibly damaging impact on a child's life chances.

More than this, student absence causes disruption for all other learners, as when a teacher needs to catch one student up that has missed school, that is time that cannot be spent working with the other students. If you consider that this can happen in every class in every period every day, you can begin to appreciate what a significant impact poor attendance can have not just on the individual, but on the whole school.

Of course, there will be times when it is right and proper for a child to be absent from school, however it is our duty as a school - and your duty as our partners - to ensure students attend school as regularly as possible.

My colleague Mr McQuillan, our Deputy Headteacher for Culture and Standards, will be sending out a more detailed letter outlining our attendance policy today.

Reports to Parents and Carers - a message from our Deputy Headteacher for Quality of Education, Mrs Romney

In response to feedback from parents and carers, and following a review of our reporting procedures, we have made some adjustments for this academic year. Parents and carers will receive reports detailing student progress three times a year. Two of these will be data reports, with information on your child's current progress in relation to their most recent assessment, as well as an 'Attitude to Learning' effort grade. The third report will be a full written report, with identified 'Areas of Excellence' and 'Areas for Improvement' to help identify where your child is succeeding, and targets for them to focus upon moving forward. These will be supplemented by our return to face-to-face parent and carer consultation evenings.

Meetings with the Headteacher

Thank you to all those who have requested a meeting to meet with me to discuss school matters. For those who have requested meetings, the school should be in touch soon to confirm details. Those who still wish to book a meeting are able to do so via the following form:

[Meopham School - Headteacher Meeting Request Form](#)

I am also pleased to confirm that we have concluded our staff survey on the future direction of the school - including a staff consultation on the launching of a new vision, mission and values for the school - and I will be providing a similar survey to parents/carers next week, so we can hear more about what changes you'd like to see at Meopham, and how you can be involved in its bright future.

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As we reach the end of another busy week, I am very proud of all the fantastic work our school community has put in to make Meopham School a very special place. We all play a part in its success, whether in school or out of it. From my own perspective, I can honestly say that teaching is the best job in the world, and it is a true privilege to help shape the minds of your youngsters each and every day.

Have a lovely weekend.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E Roberts', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ethan Roberts
Headteacher