

Meopham School

A Member of Swale Academies Trust

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Our ref:SDI/JC

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All parents/carers

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the summer term. I thought that it would be timely to update you with some key developments in school.

Achievements of the students

GCSE and A level examinations

The GCSE and A Level exam season is progressing well, and students are reporting that they feel confident about their performances in these all-important public examinations. We look forward to celebrating the final outcomes with the students during our results days in the summer.

Literacy

Our Literacy Focus this term has been on the use of synonyms. We have been ensuring that students use synonyms in order to improve the quality of their written work. We have also been encouraging students to think about their use of synonyms within a spoken context in order to improve their verbal literacy skills. Each term we have one focus for literacy across the school that helps to embed the message for our students. This year so far, we have focused on the use of topic sentences, discourse markers, using a range of punctuation marks and using subject specific vocabulary.

House Point and Achievement Postcards

At Meopham, we are always keen to celebrate every kind of success. As you may be aware, I send out postcards to the ten highest performing students in terms of House Points from each year group. House Points are given as a reward for academic success, effort, community service, good conduct, and performance in each of the Metacognition Muscles. They are, therefore, a clear measure of all-round performance. I feel that it is equally important to explicitly reward academic *progress*, as this is something that students of all abilities should be seeking to maximise, both in school and beyond. As a token of recognition, the top ten students who have made the most progress towards achieving their target grades now each receive a postcard from me at the end of term. I would like to congratulate every student, once again, who has received one of these postcards during the course of this year.

Pupil Conduct

As Headteacher, it is my privilege to walk the site every day, witnessing students in both structured learning time and during break and lunchtime. I am, equally, delighted to take visitors around the school to witness the excellent work ethic and general conduct of our pupils. Members of my Senior Leadership Team, our Trust CEO and Trust Executive Headteacher and I observe lessons where pupils are focused, collaborative and ambitious in stretching themselves in their learning. Our young people are a real credit to both their school and their parents, and I am really proud of the way we continue to work together to achieve this.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN A RURAL SETTING

Attendance

I am delighted to report that attendance has improved significantly this year. I am particularly pleased to inform you that, as of last week, we have now met the ambitious attendance target of 96% which I set for the year. A huge amount of effort is required to make even a 0.1% improvement in attendance figures across a whole school. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you all in supporting me so that we have achieved this fantastic milestone. Put simply, the attendance at Meopham School has never been so good! I know, as a parent myself, that a lot is done at home in the mornings to encourage students to attend school, particularly on the days when they are not feeling their best. This really is so important, and establishes a work ethic that is crucial for success in the workplace. Thank you for your continued efforts, and let's continue to work together on this to ensure that attendance improves even further.

Academy Week – 27th June – 30th June

The week commencing 27th June will see the beginning of Academy Week. Academy Week gives Key Stage 3 pupils the opportunity to apply a wide variety of skills that they have learnt over the year to experiments, fun activities and real life scenarios that do not often come embedded in the standard programmes of study.

Each of the four days will have a particular focus. On day one the focus will be the development of entrepreneurial skills involving formulating business ideas, costings and profit. The day will build towards a Dragon's Den type pitch with their team. Day two will focus on British Values and the Monarch, researching the history and celebrating the culture surrounding them. Day three will see pupils engaging in Euro 2016 activities including geography of the host nation, French cuisine and sports competitions. Finally, day four aims to inspire and engage pupils in core subjects by completing projects including making catapults, bath bombs and some inspirational creative writing.

During this week there are also some school trips occurring:

- Year 9 Art students will be going to Whitstable on a day trip to sketch;
- KS5 Art students will be visiting a London Art Gallery;
- 39 year 7's will be heading to the Loire Valley to test out their speaking and listening skills and explore the local area;
- Some of our students are attending a PGL residential trip,
- 82 pupils from years 7-10 who made the fantastic achievement of no consequences at all this year have been offered a trip to Thorpe Park as a reward.

Academy Week gives pupils the opportunity to develop social skills, gain an insight into where subjects are seen and used in the real world and most importantly have fun!

During this time year 10 will be completing core exams, spend time practicing their speaking and listening skills and looking at science stem projects such as DNA.

The OZone

The OZone is a pupil and staff learning area which is available for use during and outside of lesson time. It is the Speaking and Listening centre of the school in which oral based lessons take place. Students can air their views about the 'Question of the week' on the OZone board and the area is a space where smaller groups of students are encouraged to study independently.

Every term the school hosts a "SALAD" day. This is a Speaking and Listening focused day where students are encouraged to speak rather than write during lessons. Last term the focus was the use of synonyms. Feedback from staff and students demonstrated that this was a highly successful and enjoyable day.

This summer the students will be involved in a Meopham E.U. referendum where they will have a chance to vote 'in' or 'out' of Europe.

Sports Day

Sports Day will be held on Tuesday, 21st June 2016. Events will begin at 9 a.m. I would like to invite parents and carers to watch this event. Please arrive at 8.45 a.m. and enter between the school buildings from the car park. There will be a signing in sheet and visitors badges at this entrance. If the weather is wet then our reserve Sports Day is Thursday 23rd June.

Uniform

As we move into the warmer summer months, I thought it would be useful to remind you of our expectations in terms of uniform. On the whole, students at Meopham School wear their uniform with pride. The boys are smartly dressed with shirts firmly buttoned to the top, ties tied correctly with the logo just below the knot, and shirts tucked in. Formal shoes (not trainers) are worn by all. For girls, skirts are worn to the knee (or just above) with open neck fitted school blouses which are designed to be worn untucked. Jumpers, if worn, should not be tucked into skirts. The students do not need to wear their blazers in the summer term (term 6). However, if they are not worn, they should be carried over the arm. Please can I remind parents that Meopham School branded uniform should only be purchased from The Sewing Shop (Echo Square, Gravesend) or Longfield Wools (located in the St George's Centre, Gravesend). Please be warned that there are a number of other outlets in Gravesend who also claim to stock our official uniform. These stockists are not official suppliers of our uniform. There have been a number of issues with the quality of clothing purchased here. Please can I urge you to only buy Meopham branded uniform from The Sewing Shop or Longfield Wools.

Summer showcase

Summer Lovin' Wednesday and Thursday 13th and 14th July 6.30 p.m. until 9 p.m.

The new look "Summer Lovin" Creative Arts Showcase will take place on 13th and 14th July 2016. The evenings will consist of an Art gallery, opportunities to buy refreshments made by the Catering students, and the performance Grease, KS3 and 4 Music and Performing Arts classwork, and Media/ Film presentations developed by students.

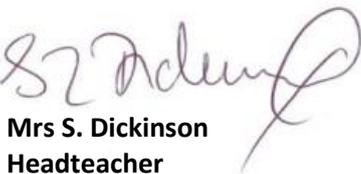
Open week 11th July

During the week beginning 11th July we will be holding Open Mornings for students in Year 5 at primary school and their parents. An appointments system will be in operation. Last year we were overwhelmed with visitors, and we were very thankful to our students who acted as tour guides and great ambassadors for the school.

End of Summer Term – last day arrangements

I would like to inform you that school will finish at 12.20 p.m. on the last day of term (Thursday, 21st July 2016). We will ensure that school buses are rearranged to collect students at this time.

Yours faithfully



Mrs S. Dickinson
Headteacher

Meopham School 2016 – 2017 Academic Year

Term 1

Term 1 Starts: Tuesday 30 August 2016 (students not in school)
Years 7, 11 and 12 start date Wednesday 31st August 2016
Years 8, 9, 10 and 13 start date Thursday 1st September 2016

Term 1 Ends: Tuesday 18 October 2016

Staff Development Day (Students not in school): Tuesday 30 August 2016

Holiday: Wednesday 19 October 2016 to Friday 28 October 2016

Term 2

Term 2 Starts: Monday 31 October 2016
Term 2 Ends: Tuesday 20 December 2016

Staff Development Day (Students not in school): Friday 25th November 2016

Holiday: Wednesday 21 December 2016 to Tuesday 3 January 2017

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 (Students not in school): Friday 28 April 2017

Holiday: 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 (Students not in school): Monday 3 July 2017
Monday 24 July 2017