

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

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 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

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 clearly visible, either carried over the arm or in their school bag. Please can I remind parents that Meopham School branded uniform should only be purchased from The Sewing Shop (Echo Square, 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 available from The Sewing Shop.

Open week 10th July

During the week beginning 10th 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.

Sports Day

Sports Day will be held on Monday 17th July 2017. 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.

Press and Publicity

You may have noticed that Meopham has been in the news a lot recently. Miss Smith has taken on the task of presenting 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 new Teaching and Learning blog.

Below is a brief summary (written by the relevant member of staff) of some of the key events last term, and this term so far:

Swalefest

As part of the 2017 Student Swale fest, a group of our students including Years 7,8 and 9 have been working as part of an oracy based team along with Mrs Tiller and Mrs Tyrell-Vick. The project has included: discussions, presentations and project work based around the focus questions which look at Mental Health and Well-Being and Student Voice. The Swale fest student team have shown maturity, independence and sensitivity whilst dealing with some very important and emotive themes. We are very proud of the students in KS3.

Mrs Tiller

Year 9 Army Day

The purpose of the day was to develop students' resilience, team building and leadership skills as well as inform them about careers in the Army.

The day began in the hall. Students were met by a team of 8 soldiers who are currently serving in the British Army. Redgrave and Brunel promptly went out onto the field and began their physical activities which included a gun run, camouflage techniques, and several problem solving activities. For this students were split into small groups. Each team had a time limit to complete the activity before moving to the next. While Redgrave and Brunel were on the field, Holmes and Newton stayed in the hall for the careers presentation. This was informative and focused not only on the skills needed for the army but on general employment and life skills. Students had time to ask questions and discuss what they had seen and heard. After break the groups swapped and it was Holmes and Newton's turn to compete the physical activities while Redgrave and Brunel took part in the careers presentation.

Mrs Curtis

Sports Events for Year 9 Leaders

The BTEC Sport groups in year 9 have had to lead a primary school athletics event for the schools in Gravesham. They each had to run an event, such as indoor javelin, or standing long jump as well as many other adapted indoor athletic events. They had to demonstrate the skills for the event, and then record results of all the pupils. There was also track events, where the pupils had to demonstrate the running activity and then ensure that the pupils were safe and completed the race fairly. One pupil even led the whole warm up with an aerobics dance work out to get the pupils ready to participate. The pupils were very professional, and had a huge impact on the younger pupils; some were even having more fun than the primary schools. The event has helped to develop our pupils leadership skills which they have been working on this past year in and most are already very confident sports leaders. The organisers of the event were very impressed with our leaders and are very keen to use them for their next event.

Miss Miles

Learn to Lead

Learn to Lead is a programme to improve schools by students having their own opinion. It enables people to work together in teams to bring about the positive changes they wish for and individuals will grow in confidence, self-esteem and ownership. Here at Meopham our Year 8 pupils are set up 3 teams with our very own Learn to Lead (Pastoral Kidz, Just Raise It and Games 'R' us). Pastoral Kidz would like to work along-side our pastoral team and help others around the school. They also want to have their own responsibilities such as selling stationary, sorting lost property etc. Our Games 'R' us team, are a team aiming to help pupils who are less social and will enjoy playing games such as board games or using game consoles. So they are setting up an area around the school to lead these games. And lastly, our Just Raise It team would like to fundraise for charities and things for the school. They want to help make a difference around the school as well as around the world. We are currently in the final stages of setting up the teams, and look forward to them being active within the school community.

Miss Miles

Operation Brakes

Meopham School have been working alongside Kent Specials with 'Operation Brakes' over the last few weeks. The programme is a Road Safety and Speed Awareness campaign. The pupils have been outside the front of the school on Wrotham Road, with Kent Specials, operating the hand held speed guns.

With students at the helm, the officers would then stop any vehicle caught speeding and they were given the option of either receiving the points on their license and a fine, or be questioned by pupils. These questions were created by the pupils as the officers wanted as much input from the pupils as

possible. So far we have had two successful 'Operation Brakes', with 51 people pulled over speeding the first time and then 49 the second time.

The aim of Operation Brakes is to have an impact on the community here in Meopham, and to slow motorists down. Miss Miles, one of the teachers running the project, said, "Already, it is the talk of the school and the community and we have already noticed a decrease in speeding motorists outside our school." The aim of the scheme is to also make the pupils at Meopham more speed aware, ready for when they start to drive, and to encourage their parents/carers to also slow down when driving.

With two successful days of Operation Brakes already, Meopham School and the Kent Specials are looking forward to the future of Operation Brakes and the positive impact it will have on the community. The pupils have thoroughly enjoyed themselves so far and those that haven't yet been able to take part are eager to get involved. It started with year 8s and 6th form pupils, and it has now broadcasted across the school, with pupils now being selected to take part in the operation for good behaviour and high attendance.

Miss Miles

Creative Arts Showcase

Creative Arts Showcase will take place on 21st June. The evening will consist of an Art gallery, opportunities to buy refreshments made by the Catering students, and the performance, KS3 and 4 Music and Performing Arts classwork, and Media/ Film presentations developed by students.

Mrs Curtis

Creative Industries

On Tuesday 27th June the year 7 students will be involved in a Creative industries enterprise competition day. The aim of the day is to give the students the opportunity to explore a variety of Creative Technologies and inspire students to be creative thinkers. As a result students will be able to identify, understand, relate, examine, develop and determine the importance of creativity as a transferable skill.

Students will be split into mini companies. In their companies students will plan, create, and market a product during the day. In the evening students from each company will present their product in a Dragon's Den style competition which will be judged by external judges.

Parents will be invited to the finale event which will take place in the School Hall between 5 and 6.30pm.

This will be where the students present their product for judging and the winner will be announced. As part of the judging process, there will be an opportunity for friends and relatives to visit the market palace set up by the students to purchase the products made as part of the day.

This is an exciting new opportunity for our Year 7's. The day will highlight the importance of creativity in industry while allowing students to develop transferable skills. The focus of the day will be creative thinking and problem solving, developing a practical understanding of resilience and team building.

Mrs Curtis

The OZone

The OZONE is one of the main focal points of Meopham School. Within it students are encouraged to show 'Resilience' (our school Metacognition focus) by working independently either on class based tasks or independent research and study. It is also used as a centre for Oracy whereby lessons

are delivered and students are free to discuss their views on subject based topics. The OZONE has become a hub of the school where all students are motivated to contribute their opinions to the OZONE board giving their thoughts on 'The Question of the week'; the theme of which this term is 'Mental Health and Well-Being'.

Miss Tiller

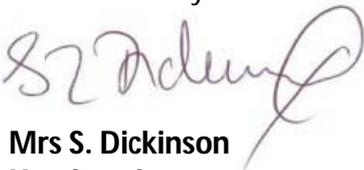
End of Summer Term – last day arrangements

I would like to inform you that school will finish at 12.20 p.m. on the last day of term (Friday, 21st July 2017). We will ensure that school buses are rearranged to collect students at this time.

Autumn Term 2017

The new term begins for Years 7, 11 and 12 at 8.40 a.m. on Wednesday, 30th August 2017. Years 8, 9, 10 and 13 return to school on Thursday, 31st August 2017.

Yours faithfully



Mrs S. Dickinson
Headteacher

Meopham School

2017 – 2018 Academic Year

Term 1	
Term 1 Starts:	
Staff Development Day:	Tuesday 29 August 2017
	The new term begins for Years 7, 11 and 12 on Wednesday, 30 August 2017. Years 8, 9, 10 and 13 return to school on Thursday 31st August 2017.
Term 1 Ends:	Friday 13 October 2017
Holiday:	Monday 16 October 2017 to Friday 27 October 2017
Term 2	
Term 2 Starts:	Monday 30 October 2017
Term 2 Ends:	Wednesday 20 December 2017
Staff Development Day:	Friday 24 November 2017
Holiday:	Thursday 21 December 2017 to Wednesday 3 January 2018
Term 3	
Term 3 Starts:	Thursday 4 January 2018
Term 3 Ends:	Friday 9 February 2018
Holiday:	Monday 12 February 2018 to Friday 16 February 2018
Term 4	
Term 4 Starts:	Monday 19 February 2018
Term 4 Ends:	Thursday 29 March 2018*
Holiday:	Friday 30 March 2018 to Friday 13 April 2018
Term 5	
Term 5 Starts:	Monday 16 April 2018
Term 5 Ends:	Friday 25 May 2018
Bank Holiday:	Monday 7 May 2018
Holiday:	Monday 28 May 2018 to Friday 1 June 2018
Term 6	
Term 6 Starts:	Monday 4 June 2018
Term 6 Ends:	Wednesday 25 July 2018
Staff Development Days:	Monday 2 July 2018 NOTE THAT THIS DATE HAS CHANGED FROM THAT PREVIOUSLY ADVERTISED Wednesday 25 July 2018
Staff Development Days and *Swalefest – Students not in school	