

10<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**First Newsletter of the Year**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Can I extend a warm welcome to all our new Year 7 pupils and the new Year 12 students and all other pupils new to the school. We hope you have a long and happy association with the school.

We have a number of new staff joining us this year. I also, on your behalf, welcome them to our school.

**English**

Miss Hance  
 Miss Woollett  
 Mr Ward  
 Miss Fryza

**Geography**

Miss Law

**Languages**

Miss Rusbridge  
 Mrs Pelly

**Maths**

Mr Davies

**Media**

Ms Langdon

**DT**

Mr Hannaway

**Student Development & Support**

Mr Gillespie & Ms Priest

**Cover Supervisors**

Mr Okoh & Ms Chiappini

In terms of contacts, the usual first point of contact will be your son or daughter's Form Tutor or their Director of Study, who oversees a year group. The responsibilities are detailed below:

<b>Year 7</b>	Director of Study Deputy Headteacher	Mr Keeling-Jones Mrs Lewell
<b>Year 8</b>	Director of Study	Mr Smith
<b>Year 9</b>	Director of Study Deputy Headteacher	Mrs Stamp Mrs Craig
<b>Year 10</b>	Director of Study	Mrs Hillier
<b>Year 11</b>	Director of Study Deputy Headteacher	Mr Devonald Ms Bevan
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Form</b>	Director of 6 <sup>th</sup> Form	Ms Hern
<b>Year 12</b>	Assistant Director	Mr Ramkhalawon
<b>Year 13</b>	Assistant Director Assistant Director	Mrs Williams Ms Biddle

In terms of contacting the school, please can I ask for your patience. Usually, teachers are in classrooms and so may not respond to a query until the end of school. You should not really

expect a response after office hours (ie. 5pm) unless of course it is an emergency. The school office is open at 8am. But we have receptionists in school from 7am. until 5pm. each day.

I always start the beginning of term with a note about behaviour. It is obviously crucial that every pupil in the school has very high standards of behaviour. We expect our pupils to follow reasonable instructions, do their best, wear their uniform properly and behave well on the way to and home from school. Anything less will be dealt with in a firm and fair way. All of this is designed to avoid disruption to learning in the school.

A reminder of the school rules:

1. Students will treat all members of the school community with respect and courtesy.
2. Students will be punctual.
3. Students will demonstrate the highest standards of behaviour and compliance, particularly in relation to safety instructions from staff related to any ongoing Covid 19 restrictions.
4. Students will have correct equipment with them for each lesson.
5. Mobile phones must not be used in school unless authorised by a member of staff. Their unauthorised use whilst on the school premises will lead to confiscation.
6. Electronic devices and earphones are not to be used in corridors and will be confiscated.
7. 'Smart watches' are not to be worn in school.
8. Students must not leave the school site, or enter into 'out of bounds' areas at lunch and break times.
9. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated and will be dealt with firmly.
10. Smoking or Vaping on the school premises is forbidden.
11. Chewing gum is not permitted on the school premises.
12. Potential weapons must not be brought to school.
13. Possession or the use of alcohol or drugs on the school premises is forbidden and can lead to permanent exclusion.

### **Uniform**

Thank you for supporting the school in ensuring that our uniform continues to be of a high standard. We make our school uniform rules as simple as possible and our students wear their uniform with pride. A handful of students have returned to school wearing 'trainer style' school shoes; these are not permitted in our uniform code and should not be worn to school. School shoes should be formal in style. Please remember that the school's PA has a second hand uniform shop (including PE kit) which can be found here <http://opgsipa.org.uk/2nd-hand-opgs-uniform/> and any parent with a student eligible for Pupil Premium Grant should contact the school if financial assistance for the purchase of uniform is required.

In terms of Covid, I draw your attention to my letter before the beginning of term. Please, if you have not already done so, read the detailed risk assessment on the school's website:

### **[Covid Risk Assessment](#)**

We are in the process of conducting two lateral flow tests for all our pupils and we continue to encourage all pupils to wear face coverings in communal areas such as the hall and in between lessons. Pupils still have to wear face coverings on public transport.

### **Lateral Flow Testing**

All students, where consent has been given, have now been tested once in school. When they complete their second test they will be given a pack of Lateral Flow tests for twice weekly testing at home. These may be the original nose and throat swab packs or the latest nose only swabs – please read the instructions that come with the packs.

We ask that you continue to test at home so that we can keep the school community safe. Thank you for your efforts so far. Parents have been very proactive in reporting symptoms and positive cases; this is very much appreciated.

Every time your son undertakes a Lateral Flow test at home, please record the result (positive, void, negative) using the link below. This will enable us to keep a track of our testing stock and identify patterns in positive cases.

[Student Home Testing - Notify the school](#)

The Government will be reviewing the practice of home testing at the end of September; we will contact you again with an update.

If you have any questions about the testing process, please contact Mrs A. Lewell ([alewell@opgs.org](mailto:alewell@opgs.org))

I was delighted to share details of our pupils' achievements at A Level and GCSE in the summer on our website. As you know, the results this year were the product of Teacher Assessed Grades. Our teachers worked incredibly hard and with great professionalism to deliver these grades under a very tight deadline. I am very proud of their achievements, as I am of our pupils. Full details of individual achievements and the school's overall results are available to view on the website. <http://www.opgs.org/news/>

It is a pleasure to be able to bring back the full range of enrichment activities. Enrichment Days during this academic year will see students involved in a wide range of activities ranging from visiting Howletts Wildlife Park to a Spanish Language Theatre company performing in school. Furthermore, the OPGS Excel programme of clubs and societies has been relaunched giving students a wide range of activities they can join in with at lunchtime or after school. The OPGS Excel booklet is attached with the newsletter, and I would encourage students to speak to the staff member in charge of an activity to take part.

### **Sport:**

The U14 Cricket Team played Tonbridge School on Tuesday in the U14 Oliver Cup Final. We lost by 97 runs but the boys had a fantastic day and there were some standout performances individually. Harrison Scott took 3 wickets for 15 runs from 6 overs. Henry Campbell top scored with 38 runs and Freddie Fagg scored 26 runs.

Congratulations to Oliver Fryer (Year 8) who has been selected for the Kent U13 Football Squad.

The U14 and U15 Rugby teams lost in a friendly with Gravesend Grammar School but have produced a really positive start to the year.

### **Upcoming matches include:**

1st XV v Gravesend Grammar – Daily Mail Cup - Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2:30pm kick off.  
Under 15 v Herne Bay High - Daily Mail Cup - Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> September 4:00pm kick off.

The beginning of the new academic year offers a good opportunity for parents and carers to check that the school has accurate contact and personal details. Attached to this newsletter is a pdf guide on how to amend personal details via Edulink.

We also ask that parents and carers plus their child read and agree to the school's Expectations for Learning (Home School Agreement). The deadline for submitting this form is Friday 17<sup>th</sup> September please. This can be done electronically via the Microsoft Form Link below:

### [Expectations for Learning \(Home School Agreement\)](#)

It is of course my sincere hope that we can have a normal school year. I cannot say with any great certainty that this will be the case. However, we will continue to do our very best in the event of any further disruptions that have to be made. Let us hope that they are minimal!

### **Transport**

Thank you to parents who have been updating the school with issues regarding bus services to and from OPGS. As always the school will liaise with local bus companies to work towards a solution. We will keep you updated on issues you have reported. If you are a parent, guardian or relative who transports your son or daughter to school by car please support the school by not parking on the access road leading from the Tonbridge Road to Mid Kent College. We have a large number of students crossing this road at the end of school and their safety is paramount. In addition, bus companies ability to provide a service leaving from directly outside the school will be at risk if they cannot safely manoeuvre and park up. The hardcourt is open with limited parking capacity should you wish to collect your son or daughter from a location close to the school. Although the school recommends that you collect your son or daughter a short distance from the school please ensure that in doing so you show consideration to our neighbours in Penny Cress Gardens, Oakwood Road, Hadlow Close and Bower Mount Road. When parking on residential streets please ensure that you do not impede access along that road and prevent residents from being able to access their driveway. Do not park immediately outside the gate to the school car park or indeed in the staff car park.

Students wishing to ride their bike to school need parental consent. Please click on the link below to ensure that your son or daughter has your permission to do so. Electric scooters should not be used. Under UK law, it's permitted to ride an electric scooter on private land as long as you have the landowner's permission. But it's an offence to ride them in public – including on paths, pavements and roads.

### [Cycle to School Consent Form](#)

I am sorry that we still have scaffolding erected on the main building. As previously explained, the worldwide shortage of building materials, and in particular glass, has posed a real challenge to our contractors. We are working with them to get the project completed as quickly as possible.

Our newsletter is a great opportunity to share a variety of news stories and events with our school community, but we would also like to share with you that an exciting opportunity to join our fantastic Science Department as a Science Technician has arisen. The role would involve working closely with our Physics Department in particular. Some experience in the field of Science and Physics would be advantageous but is not essential. If you are interested in this

vacancy, please contact Ms. Williamson, the Head's PA on [twilliamson@opgs.org](mailto:twilliamson@opgs.org) for further details.

Yours sincerely,



K.W. Moody  
Headteacher

### **Upcoming Dates**

Tues 14 <sup>th</sup> September	Year 8 Assembly - Hall 2pm. Year 13 Geography fieldwork – Camber/Margate 1.
Weds 15 <sup>th</sup> September	1st XV Rugby v Gravesend Grammar – Home 2.30pm (MKJ, MHD) 1st & 2nd XI Senior Football Training (SPS, RDE) Year 10 Parents' Information Evening 7pm. (Virtual)
Thurs 16 <sup>th</sup> September	Year 10 Assembly - Hall 2pm T7 CATs p1 & 2, Rm 43 (SCR, MKJ) Year 13 Geography fieldwork – Camber/Margate 2 (JBA) U15 Rugby v Herne Bay Home 3.30pm (RMR) Year 11 Parents' Information Evening 7pm. (Virtual)
Fri 17 <sup>th</sup> September	Year 13 briefing - Hall 1.50pm.
Mon 20 <sup>th</sup> September	C7 CATs p1&2 Rm 46. X7 CATs p3 & 4 Rm 44.
Tues 21 <sup>st</sup> September	Enrichment Day.
Weds 22 <sup>nd</sup> September	Year 13 Geography fieldwork – Regeneration 1.
Thurs 23 <sup>rd</sup> September	Sixth Form cake sale. S7 CATs p3&4 Rm 46. Year 11 Assembly - Hall 2pm.
Fri 24 <sup>th</sup> September	P7 CATs p1&2 Rm 46. Year 11 Economics IAG - SFC 2pm. Year 13 briefing - Hall 2pm. Year 13 Geography fieldwork – Regeneration 2.