

13<sup>th</sup> January 2023

**Newsletter No. 6**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2023. Happy New Year!

This is a short term but as usual it is packed full of events and opportunities for our students.

Year 13 are right in the thick of their PPEs (mock exams) and these are crucial for our students' progression to university and apprenticeships or work. I hope that they are revising hard and taking them seriously.

Year 11 have a shorter mini PPE set of exams which start on 23rd January and last until 3rd February. These are designed to give our students the practice on questions that they need to improve on from the main PPEs last November. Again, they should approach these in a sensible and serious way as they continue to prepare for their final examinations in May.

We had an enjoyable Enrichment Day on 10th January. I was especially pleased to hear of the Year 11 Languages trip to Harvey Grammar School where both schools worked together on activities to help students compare their skills. There were a number of PSHE related activities across the year groups along with Year 11 tackling Maths problems and Year 7 looking at Dystopian literature.

We have had notification from Kent Highways that Queens Road will be shut from 14th January until 23rd January. Our understanding is that the closure will be past the entrance to the Oakwood Park Campus from London Road but there may still be some disruption.

Can I encourage all parents to support the work of the Parents Association in any way they can. They are doing a hugely important job by holding second hand uniform sales and raising funds for the school.

The next pre-loved uniform sale will be on Thursday 2 February 15:30 to 17:00 in the School Hall. They take cash, debit card or a bank transfer. The bank transfer details will be available on the evening.

If you cannot attend the sale and need uniform, please email [Chair@opgs.org.uk](mailto:Chair@opgs.org.uk) who will be able to support you. They have also requested that if you would like to donate uniform and PE, please leave washed donations at the school office.

All the funds raised go to our school for additional enrichment and learning opportunities for our students. Through their fundraising, we have £3,000 to spend on purchasing more picnic benches

for our playground areas. If you are interested in volunteering or helping in any way, then please email [chair@opgspa.org.uk](mailto:chair@opgspa.org.uk)

Also, you may have seen last week we sent out a link to a parents and carers survey we are completing. We are keen to gather views on wellbeing, behaviour and safety in school and would be grateful if you could take 5 minutes to complete it. The survey can be completed via this link: <https://bit.ly/ParentWSBSurvey>

Congratulations to Knight Vince (8C) for being selected to represent the U14 Kent Golf Team.

I wish you a happy and positive start to the term.

Yours sincerely,



K.W. Moody  
Headteacher

### **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

Oakwood Park Grammar School is committed to ensuring that all pupils make excellent progress and secure outstanding outcomes, not only in final public examinations but also in the assessments they complete in class throughout the academic year and in end of year examinations. As we discussed in the information evenings for parents at the start of the academic year, attendance plays a crucial role in academic success and is equally important if pupils are to benefit from the wider opportunities available to them at school. We actively promote and celebrate 100% attendance for this reason. The last three years have had a significant impact on attendance and attendance habits nationally, with Covid and more recently the Scarlet Fever, Strep A and Flu outbreaks leading to some students having a lower than usual attendance record, however, as a school we are also noticing the following trends, which as parents you should be aware of:

- i) One day, one off absences, usually for non-specific illnesses such as headaches, migraines or tiredness.
- ii) Students oversleeping in the morning leading to lateness to school.

In the case of the latter, one off, one day absences, can build over time to have a negative impact on overall attendance, a student with five days of one off separate illnesses since September will currently have an attendance of under 90%. If you are a parent or carer who has noticed that your child is taking single days off school for some of the reasons above, please contact the relevant Director of Study, or our FLO, Mrs Taft, who will be more than happy to support you and discuss any issues which may be impacting on attendance.

It is worth noting that parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attend school regularly and arrive on time. It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent and on every day of the absence. This is a safeguarding issue so that all parties know that your child is safe.

Pupils are expected to arrive by 8.30am. All pupils that arrive late must report to the school office where the reason for lateness is recorded, if there is no good reason for lateness a student will be given a U grade (unauthorised late) which impacts on their overall attendance record. If a large number of students are late due to public transport we do not penalise students by giving them a U grade.

Where we have concerns about a pupil's attendance we will make contact with parents, this will either be by letter/email or in a phone call. If your child has attendance which is currently less than 90% you will receive a letter prior to the end of this term. The letter will also include a breakdown of your child's attendance which will allow you to see trends and patterns. We may then invite parents in for a meeting which will address how we can support a pupil to improve their attendance. Should there continue to be an issue with attendance we will liaise with external agencies which may include KCC Inclusion and Attendance Service. We will always inform parents if we take this step.

Should a student be late on more than two occasions in a without good reason a Director of Studies detention will be issued. Our FLO, Mrs Taft or the relevant Director of Study may also be in touch.

You can use Edulink to check your child's attendance by clicking on the attendance button on the home screen and the using the right arrow, scroll across to 'Statutory Academic Year.'

Finally, please find below up to date guidance from the Government on flu, Covid 19 and Scarlet Fever:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/news/back-to-school-advice-issued-amid-high-levels-of-flu-covid-19-and-scarlet-fever?utm\\_source=13%20January%202023%20C19&utm\\_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm\\_campaign=DfE%20C19](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/back-to-school-advice-issued-amid-high-levels-of-flu-covid-19-and-scarlet-fever?utm_source=13%20January%202023%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19)

### **LOST PROPERTY**

A large amount of lost property is accumulating in the school, most of it un-named. On Monday 16<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January, all lost property will be laid out on tables by the School Office.

If your son has lost anything, whether it be uniform, coats, shoes, sports kit, drinks bottles, pencil cases etc, please encourage him to have a good look at the items on display and reclaim his property. At the end of Tuesday, remaining lost property will be washed, bagged up and given to a charity.

### **NELFT/NHS Workshops for Parents**

NELFT/NHS Wellbeing Teams will be running online workshops/information sessions for parents in February and March. Although these are advertised to parents of primary school children or children in Year 7 you may still find them of interest. The links to join the workshops can be found on [www.nelft.nhs.uk](http://www.nelft.nhs.uk)

Understanding ADHD on 30.03.23

Understanding anxiety on 07.02.23

Understanding autism on 02.02.23

Understanding behaviour on 15.03.23  
Understanding Resilience on 27.02.23  
Understanding sleep and autism on 22.03.23

### **Diary Dates**

Mon 16 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Last day of Year 13 PPEs – normal lessons for those not doing an exam. Computing Oxford challenge.
Tues 17 <sup>th</sup> Jan	MFL GCSE Speaking exam p1-5. Computing Oxford challenge (27xYr9) p4 Rm 43 (VCR). Sixth Form Faculty Activity 1.50-2.20pm – LRC. Year 7&8 Assembly – Hall 1.50pm (MKJ). Year 8B Football v Ravenswood - Away, 2.00pm KO, depart 12.45pm (RDE).
Weds 18 <sup>th</sup> Jan	MFL GCSE Speaking exam p1-5 SFC. U13 Kent Schools Individual Table Tennis Championships 9.00am-3.00pm (RMR). 2nd XI Football v Cornwallis Academy - KSports FC, 2.00pm KO, depart 1.15pm. 1st XV Rugby v Beths GS - Home, 2.15pm KO (MHD, MKJ).
Thurs 19 <sup>th</sup> Jan	MFL GCSE Speaking exam p1-5 SFC. Year 9 Assembly – Hall 1.50pm (SPS). Sixth Form Faculty Activity 1.50-2.20pm – LRC. Primary School link event 4.00-5.30pm (CHA). Year 9 Football v Maidstone GS - Away, 3.45pm KO, depart 3.00pm (SPS). Year 10 Maidstone Schools Rugby Competition - Aylesford RFC, 3.30pm KO, depart 3.00pm (MKJ).
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Year 11 IAG Media Studies - LRC 1.50pm. Year 13 Briefing – Hall 1.50pm.
Mon 23 <sup>rd</sup> Jan	Year 11 mini-PPEs (until 03/02).
Tues 24 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Year 10 Assembly – Hall 1.50pm (MST).
Weds 25 <sup>th</sup> Jan	U16 Kent Schools Individual Table Tennis Championships 9.00am-3.00pm (RMR). GCSE/A level Drama Theatre visit 12.30pm (RBU and CO).
Thurs 26 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Year 12 Physics Olympiad p2 Rooms 46 & 50 (GKE, SV). Sixth Form Faculty Activity 1.50-2.20pm – LRC. Year 11 Assembly – Hall 1.50pm (HIL, JBV).
Fri 27 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Year 11 IAG Computing - LRC 1.50pm. Year 13 Briefing – Hall 1.50pm.

## Sports Results:

Round of 16 - U14 Kent Cup vs Charles Darwin won 6-2

Round of 16 – U19 Kent Cup vs Langley Park won 2-0

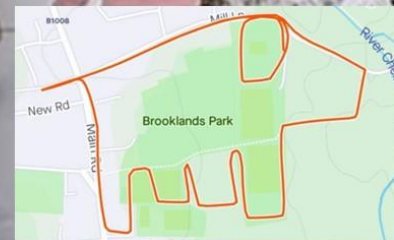
Both teams progress into the 1/4 Finals.

## Sadler House Challenge:

Winter Walking Competition

The competition involves walking (without stopping for too long) in a country park, for example Bedgebury or Mote Park, a place of natural beauty, around a town or city, or a walk in your local area.

The winners are those with the most creative locations or routes. (See the examples).



## How to enter:

When you have completed your walk please email [ssmith@opgs](mailto:ssmith@opgs) with a screen shot of your map, (you can track your walks with your phone or smart watch) and upload a picture of the walk (see examples below from Strava) and a photograph.

All entries need to be submitted by Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January.

Strava or Nike apps are available to download to track your walks.

Good luck!

