

4th September 2023

Dear Parents/Carers, Students and Staff,

Start of Term

Welcome to the 2023-24 school year! I hope everyone associated with the school had a lovely summer holiday. A final reminder that term starts again at 8:30am for Years 7 and 12 on Tuesday 5th September, for Years 8 to 11 on Wednesday 6th September and Year 13 on Thursday 7th September.

Congratulations to our Year 13 and Year 11 students on some excellent results, achieved after 4 years of disruption and change caused by the Covid pandemic. A particular well done to Ruby-Angel and Esther from Year 13, who are both off to Oxford University for their undergraduate degrees. Prize Giving is this week, Thursday 7th September, and I look forward to celebrating with parents and students this year's exam results.

Traffic Regulation Order Outside the School from 1st September

You may recall my July letter mentioned parking restrictions which were expected to come into force on the roads nearest the school from 1st September. During August we were informed by the Council that the new restrictions were approved at their 26th July meeting and in the last two weeks works have taken place to install new road marking and signs.

You can see the affected roads by following this [link](#).

They are very clearly explained in detail and mapped out in that link, there is no need for me to try to repeat them all in detail.

Basically, some parking for limited periods of time on some parts of the roads is still possible at the start and end of the school day. On other parts there is no stopping/parking at any time now and these areas are double-yellow lined. Parts of Smugglers Lane North and South are included in the new restrictions; this may be because they are used by some parents as dropping off points. It seems sensible to expect parking enforcement officers to be active at first. **Parking on Nada Road, Ridgefield Gardens, Nea Close and Forest Way is not restricted by this TRO.**

Reminder: mobile phone/device free from now on

We are a mobile-free school for students in Years 7 to 11 with effect from 1st September 2023. Essentially what this means for Years 7 to 11 students is that they will have their phone *both* switched off and in their bag or locker (not in their hands, not in their pockets, not rolled up in their jumpers, or hidden on themselves elsewhere, nor switched on). Connected devices like ear-pods are not to be worn on site. Smart watches without SIM cards are to be disconnected from their phones, Smart Watches with SIM cards are to be in flight mode and on basic time and calendar settings.

This is to enable our students to change their relationship to their phone/mobile/connected devices during school hours, reduce the distraction they create to concentration or engagement with others, free young people from social media for several hours a day, and promote more healthy, positive, face-to-face interaction. A range of adaptations have been made to routines for checking timetables and paying for things with QR codes, to accommodate students moving 'phone free'.

We appreciate both students and parents support whilst the new policy is implemented.

Security

During the summer holidays additional fencing and controlled vehicle access and pedestrian gates were installed. You may notice these when you visit site. **I remind parents that a pre-booked appointment is required to see a member of staff, which you can arrange through the school office.** Please do not journey to school on the spur of the moment hoping to see a staff member without an appointment, as this will not be possible.

Support Services

In addition to the security work, we've added a building next to Jubilee to house our entire mental health support team in one place, which will really give that frontline service a boost. The whole Jubilee area of the site is now a genuine 'hub' for high-quality support for vulnerable young people. The space freed-up in the main building will support our growing Learning Support service and the front-of-house Student Support office.

Wishing staff, students, and parents a very happy and successful 2023-24 school year.

Yours faithfully,



Patrick Earnshaw
Headteacher

