



# Wadham School

A Church of England Community School

*"Life in all its fullness" John 10:10*



Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

## **Re: Headteacher's Update 22.01.23**

I think no update this week can begin without mentioning Wednesday and the arrival of snow! I would like to thank students, staff and parents for the (relatively!) calm response to the decision to close and for the orderly manner in which students helped us in contacting parents – ensuring that the departure from school was planned, controlled and safe.

I would also like to highlight the significant efforts of our Site Team in making sure pathways were gritted and snow cleared. They went above and beyond over a 72hour period to keep Wadham open and accessible, on top of everything else they must do – well done and thank you!

One change because of the adverse weather is that our Year 11 Parents' Evening will now take place this Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> January. We're looking forward to seeing families from 4.00pm. If you are unable to attend, do contact Mr Jackson, Head of Year, [cjackson@wadhamschool.co.uk](mailto:cjackson@wadhamschool.co.uk) so that we can look to find a solution for you.

Looking ahead, we are nearing the half-way point in our academic year, with messages that follow focussing on our minimum expectations we ask everyone to maintain in keeping learning and well-being at the heart of what we do.

As with any challenge we want to overcome, Faith is key, and is usually the first thing to be tested. I have faith that our community is working positively together for the greater good – enabling the children and young adults in our care to flourish and become confident, successful citizens, ready for life in the modern world. I take faith in knowing that I am not alone – that you are with me on this journey.

**Dear God,**

**As we seek to serve through our schools and churches may we find strength in you,**

**As we navigate new landscapes may you guide us**

**As we overcome new and complex challenges may you remain our firm foundation**

**As we adapt to changing contexts may we always show love, respect, and care for others**

**Thank you for your example to us and your gift of love for us all**

**Amen**

As always, thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Burgas

Headteacher

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Headteacher: Mr R Burgas  
Chair of Governors: Mr C Chapman



## Violence Against Women and Girls – Assemblies and Workshops 16.01.23



On Monday last week, Years 8 and 9 received a special assembly on the topic of stopping violence against women and girls.

Guest speakers spoke honestly and openly about misogynistic behaviour and how matters can escalate to physical threat and violence.

A small group of students were invited to take part in a follow-on workshop, creating media content to highlight the situation in our society currently, as well as signposting advice and support for those that might need it.

## Non-Uniform Day – Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February

Our Student Well-Being Ambassadors are delighted to announce that Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February (the last day of this half-term) will be a non-uniform day to raise awareness around mental health – with this day falling within 'Children's Mental Health Week 2023.'

Students' minimum £1 donations will all go towards a local mental health charity, to be decided by the student ambassador team.

Thank you for your support!



## Wadham Behaviours

Some useful reminders regarding our expectations in keeping the focus at Wadham School on learning and well-being:

### Picking Up / Dropping Off at School



This is never an easy issue to resolve, but please can I ask all road users to be mindful of their surroundings when waiting to drop off/collect children from school.

In particular, please ensure that you only park in permitted areas, not blocking residents' drives or junction entrances.

I am exploring any and every solution with the council, but in the meantime am extremely grateful for a common sense and 'neighbourly' approach from our road users in showing consideration towards local residents.

## Uniform

A polite reminder that our school policy remains in force all year round, and in all weathers. We are noticing an increase in the number of students choosing to wear trainers and/or a hoody, instead of the required black shoes and Wadham Jumper/Sweatshirt.

*Our policy states: "In poor weather it is expected that students will want to wear a jacket or coat as an outer garment when outside. Please note that these should not be denim. Hoodies or any other kind of sweatshirt are not acceptable as an outer garment. Students are to wear a Wadham School polo shirt and have the option of adding a school sweatshirt or a coat or both."*

Students in breach of this policy will have their WB card ticked and be asked to change into correct uniform. Non-uniform items, such as hoodies, may be confiscated for persistent breaches of school policy.

## Student Appearance

**Make up** - This should be worn discreetly and kept to a minimum.

**Jewellery** - Students may wear one small stud or small sleeper in each ear lobe. No other visible body piercing is allowed for any student in the school\*. One simple necklace chain is allowed. Hoops, dangly earrings, wristbands, bracelets and rings are not allowed.

For health and safety all jewellery must be removed for PE lessons and in some other practical subjects, when requested by member of staff.

**Nails** - False nails, long nails and nail varnish are not allowed. Nails should be trimmed so as to not cause injury during PE or around the school

**Note\*** - I am aware that a compromise agreement was in place with students in that a clear, plastic retainer may be worn in the nose. For several months this compromise was respected, but recently we have seen an increase in students wearing metal studs and hoops. I am looking to discuss student dress code with the school council and am happy to consider changes as part of growing student voice, but in the meantime must insist that if a student chooses to wear a nose piercing, it must be a clear retainer.

Students with a piercing in defiance of this compromise will be asked to remove the piercing and receive a tick on their WB card. We have a small supply of clear retainers in the Pastoral Hub which students may come and use to meet our expectation – there really is no excuse!

Our full Uniform Policy can be found here: [download.asp \(wadhamschool.co.uk\)](http://download.asp(wadhamschool.co.uk))

## Mobile Phones and Air-pods

We know that technology can bring positive benefits to the way we live our lives. Equally, we know that many parents have given mobile phones and smart watches to their children so that they can keep in touch and to help them foster independence.

As a school we do not have a blanket ban on mobile phones and headphones, **but we do insist that they are switched off and kept out of sight during the school day.**

Sadly, we are seeing a significant increase in the number of students using their phone, and in particular their air-pods during the day and in lessons. **Learning suffers as a result.**

We will continue to tick WB cards where policy is not followed, and ask students to put their device away, but where this behaviour is persistent, students will have their phone or air-pods confiscated, with parents contacted to arrange collection.

## **Wadham Behaviours**

Finally, although this last item is limited to a very small group of students, for transparency (and for your support) I'm sharing to all my concerns regarding incidents of offensive language and extreme defiance shown towards others.

Most recently this negative behaviour is being expressed as truancy from lessons, with a small number of students becoming verbally abusive and defiant when challenged.

We are an inclusive school. We see the best in everyone and promoting a culture of 'unconditional positive regard' we're working hard to ensure that we are all moving forward together.

Support is here for anyone that needs it, regardless of the reason why it is needed.

Sometimes a young person may need time to accept that we (parents and staff) really DO have their best interests at heart, and so long as they are willing to TRY and engage with support offered, we know positive change CAN be achieved.

**It is not our purpose, however, to explain to a student that is refusing to attend lessons WHY they should do so.**

**Similarly, in line with other public offices and places of work, we will not accept the use of offensive language or threatening behaviour towards others - in any form.**

In protecting the learning and well-being of everyone at Wadham School, the following is made clear:

- Students that choose to behave in this way risk suspension.
- Students that choose to *persistently* behave in this way risk permanent exclusion.

Please contact me directly should you wish to discuss any aspect of this expectation, or if you feel that support is needed to help your son/daughter make more positive choices.

Richard Burgas 22.01.23

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