



15<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Dear Parents/carers

As you read this letter over 100 year 9 students have started their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh expedition. The fact that almost two thirds of the year group have signed up for this award is phenomenal and it is great to see students taking the opportunities that are being offered to them. I look forward to distributing the awards at the Annual Presentation Evening in due course. I would also like to extend my thanks to the staff that have volunteered to supervise students over the course of the two days – this couldn't happen without them. Here's hoping the weather is kind!

Other messages for the week can be found below:

### **Yr 7, 9 and 11 student photos**

Colorfoto will be in school on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September to take individual photos for year groups 7, 9 and 11. Classes will be taken at the appropriate timeslot that morning to have their photograph. Students will be given a card to take home with information on how to view and order the photographs including their unique access code.

### **Parental Communication**

I always encourage regular communication between home and school and all staff contact details can be found on the school website. I would like to remind/inform parents that the expectation is that all queries/correspondence are responded to within a 48 hour period. All staff have other commitments during the school day that will mean an immediate response is not possible. It may also be that within that period an acknowledgement to the query is sent but some further time is needed to resolve the issue. Of course, if there is an emergency parents are encouraged to contact reception directly who will then contact any staff that are available. Many thanks for your understanding and please be assured that staff will respond as soon as they are able to do so.

### **Open Evening – Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September, 5pm – 8pm**

As parents may be aware from social media posts our annual Open Evening for students currently in year 6 takes place later this month. Staff will be asking for student volunteers to act as subject ambassadors and/or tour guides in the next few days. In addition in order to ensure the site can be fully prepared for the evening and in recognition of the late finish on the evening there will be some changes to the school day that week.

- Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September – students will be dismissed at 2pm. There will be no lesson 5 that day. School transport providers will be informed and students will leave one hour earlier than usual
- Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September – students will be expected in tutor time for 9:40am. There will be no lesson 1 that day. Students will attend period 2, as usual, from 10am. School transport providers will be informed and students will arrive one hour later than usual

### **Year 7 Homework**

Thank you to the parents who have contacted us to clarify the position regarding the setting of year 7 homework. Unlike last year, based on the feedback from curriculum areas and students, year 7 homework will not be set by a central timetable. This was because there was often confusion, given

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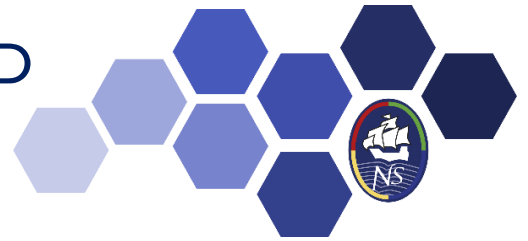
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timetable permutations across all teaching groups in the year, that some subjects had to set homework when groups were not seen on that day.

Instead, staff are free to set homework on a day which suits them, ensuring the expectations of homework are adhered to (at least 3 days turnaround, set on ClassCharts and intended to take between 15 – 30 minutes in total per subject)

If you have any concerns please contact you child's tutor in the first instance.

## **Attendance overview**

Please find a letter outlining the Wessex Learning Trust's stance on attendance and a link to an updated area of our website that explains how that process will be applied at Nailsea.

## **Iceland Trip – November 2024**

Current year 11 and 12 students have the opportunity to come along to an information evening on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September at 5pm to hear about our planned 5 day expedition to Iceland. Although this will be incredibly useful for students taking A Level Geography, the trip is open to all students. The meeting will take place in the auditorium.

**Finally...** it was a pleasure to lead the first week of House assemblies this week. It was immediately obvious how we have grown as a school population given the very small number of seats that remained empty! Although the title of my assembly referenced '2 songs, and an interview' (ask your child for further details) it is the film reference I would like to reiterate in this section of the letter this week.

Baz Luhrmann's 1991 film, 'Strictly Ballroom', is a classic, in my opinion. At a key point in the film when Scott is having his doubts, Fran, who is half Spanish, turns to him and says:

*'Vivir con miedo, es como vivir a medias'*

*Translation: 'A life lived in fear is a life half lived'*

I challenged the students to think hard about where they feel they are now, where they want to be and what they were going to do to get there. Over this year how hard were they going to work? What interests will they develop and what new friendships will they make and what opportunities will they take? I asked them to keep pushing and not to live life in fear. My promise to them was that myself and the staff here will be there to support them on their chosen path, even when time gets tough. Like Fran, I want every student to dance new steps this year. Enjoy your weekend.

Take care and be kind

Mrs Dee Elliott  
Head teacher