



Waddesdon C of E School | Parent Newsletter – December, 2023



We're listening...

In the feedback you gave us from last month's Connectedness Survey, and Year 12 Parents' Evening, some of you suggested the following ideas to connect you more closely to your school community:

- Having opportunities for you to meet other parents, especially those new to Year 7 or Year 12.
- Receiving feedback about day-to-day achievements and behaviour
- Finding out more about what your son or daughter is studying



In this, our 60th year, there will be a number of events that will enable new, and existing, families to feel more closely connected with the school, some of which you will be able to read about in this newsletter.

One of the most exciting opportunities to get involved in, is the development of **our new Sixth Form Centre building programme** (see page 2). This once-in-a-generation opportunity will be one measure of how strong our community links are, and a chance to meet other parents in a variety of different ways.

You will find information about other events in this month's newsletter, as well as an update on our SIMS In-Touch 'real time' communication with you. You will also find links to your son or daughter's curriculum so that you can see what they are covering in their subjects.

We say goodbye to three members of staff at the end of this year, namely Mrs Poole, Miss Whittaker and Mr Williams. We wish them all well. Miss Clarke will be 12RW's new form tutor and Mrs Ewart will do the same for 11KWi. They are both looking forward to getting to know their new forms.

We welcome Mr Fernández González, an experienced Spanish teacher, Mr Dell an LSA, and ex-student, and Mrs Masters, Cover Supervisor, to the school.

Mr Abbott



Building for the Future

Thanks to the generosity of the Rothschild Foundation and Buckinghamshire Local Authority, I am delighted to let you know that we are well on our way to building the Sixth Form Centre that the students at Waddesdon so badly need.

The [Alice de Rothschild Sixth Form Centre](#) will provide much needed space for study, a performing arts and lecture space, an innovation and enterprise suite and a reflection room. It has been designed to meet our young people's needs, enabling them to flourish, as they move from school to further study, employment and adulthood.



This is a landmark moment for Waddesdon, the product of five years' careful planning and discussion.

As well as providing financial support, the Local Authority, together with our remarkable Governing Body, have been with us every step of the way and, with us, will ensure that the building delivers against our ambitions for the students. It will be used by all year groups, as well as being a base for our Sixth Form.

We now need a little help from our friends...

Building will commence in February, 2024, but we are looking for your support to raise a final £500,000 which will enable us to complete the project to the highest possible specification. We cannot raise this amount alone, but the collective impact of individuals working together will make our vision a reality.

Your [donation](#) (either one-off, or on a monthly basis) will specifically ensure that that the building is environmentally sustainable, has the technological infrastructure necessary to support its design and is sympathetically incorporated within the existing school site. The building of Sixth Form Centre also enables us to improve the accommodation in other areas of the school, in particular our Enrichment Space.

If you are not able to donate, but have a fund-raising idea, or maybe have a link to businesses who might want to support this amazing opportunity for our young people, please get in touch with us, or the WSA. As the Chair of the WSA, Libby Keane, regularly says, "Many hands make light work."

Thank you, in advance, for your support.





How can I find out what my child is studying?

You will find information relating to your child's programmes of study via the following weblinks:

[Key Stage 3 booklet](#)

[Subject pages](#)

[Sixth Form Prospectus from page 17](#)

If you would like more specific information, please contact the school via the office email address.

Keeping in touch with you

This term we have been trialling the 'real-time' SIMS In-Touch application. Year 7 parents have received notification of their children's achievements with Waddesdon Points and alerts when homework is not completed or handed in, or equipment missing.



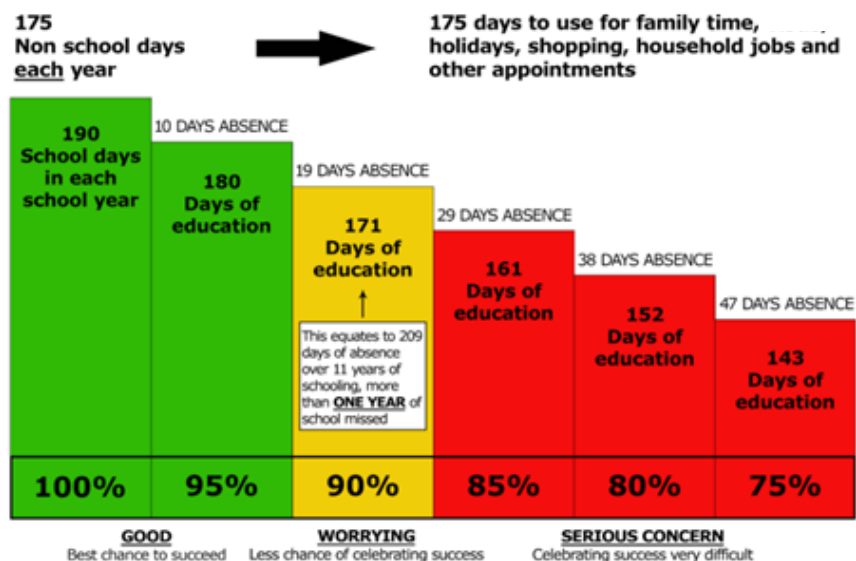
In the new year, we will be rolling out this improved home-school communication tool to the rest of the year groups. If you have any feedback on SIMS in-touch, please contact the school office and your email will be passed to Mr Purchase, our IT systems manager and Mr Cahill, Deputy Headteacher.



Attendance Matters – You're doing a great job

The attendance figures for this term remain positive. Thank you for supporting your children in attending school and lessons and a particular well done to **Year 8** whose attendance is most improved across all year groups.

Please talk to us about how we can support any specific issues that you are facing at home. Every child, and their circumstances, are unique. Let's work together to get them into school.





What to do if you have symptoms of COVID-19 and other sickness

Some parents have told us that it's hard to keep on top of the current guidance relating to a positive COVID result, or a bout of sickness.

You should refer to the links for the most up-to-date guidance which we follow as a school:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/covid-19/covid-19-symptoms-and-what-to-do/>

The current advice for health protection in schools when there is a case of diarrhoea and/or vomiting is:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/diarrhoea-and-vomiting/>

You must keep your child off school for 48 hours after their last episode.

DfE advice (Sept, 2023) regarding [general cold symptoms](#) is that "children should not be sent to school if they have a temperature of 38C or above"



We are a Nut-free School – Even at Christmas

Last year, we very nearly had a serious allergic reaction from someone who was unaware of a latent allergy.

For that reason, we ask that you respect the request not to bring in food stuffs which contain nuts or traces of nuts. At Christmas, in the desire to give presents and share goodwill, sometimes chocolate items or gifts can contain nuts.

Our school nurse, Mrs Leach writes,

"At Waddesdon, we want to make sure our students with allergies feel safe at school as we have a number of students with a range of allergies.

These students could be at risk of serious harm if they have an allergic reaction, so we ask that everyone does what they can to help us keep them safe.

We are a nut free school so please ensure that no products containing nuts are brought into school (including peanut butter, cereal bars, chocolate spread, shop bought cakes and snacks).

If you are unsure, please don't hesitate to contact us."



I'm making a list, I'm checking it twice...



For information about our Carol Service and the Christmas lunches at school (13th & 14th December), please refer to our letters on the [webpage](#). The Carol Service is at St. Michael's and All Angels, Waddesdon on Tuesday, 12th December at 7pm



Future Skills Questionnaire (FSQ)

Over the next few weeks students in various Year groups will be completing the Future Skills Questionnaire. This will help us evaluate the school's careers programme, plan future careers activities and target students who may need additional support.

Students will complete the 15-minute questionnaire which asks questions on their career related knowledge and skills. This should be an enjoyable activity for students and encourage them to begin thinking about future careers and next steps after school.

We use a third-party tool called compass+ to administer the questionnaire. All student data is processed in compliance with General data Protection regulations (GDPR) and you can find more information about how Compass+ collects, uses and stores personal data in the privacy notice for students below:

<https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/questionnaire-privacy-notice/>

An email will be generated and sent to student's school accounts and they will access the questionnaire during lesson time. A member of staff will be on hand to support students with the questionnaire.

FUTURE DATE... Careers Fair: Thursday, 22nd February – 6pm to 9pm. This annual event brings together 60+ employers and further education providers.

If you wish to know more about the careers programme in school and/or would like to get involved please contact Miss Bridges.

Year 11 Mock Exams – Final Guidance

Year 11 mock exams begin on Monday 4th December, and all students were given their final briefing during their CP session on Friday afternoon. In order to support your sons/daughters throughout this process please ensure that they have the correct equipment. This includes **black pens** to write with and the correct mathematical equipment, such as calculators. They will also need plenty of rest and sustenance to keep them going!

Formula and equation sheets will be provided for Maths, Physics and Combined Science exams. It is highly likely that these will be included in the final GCSE exams as there is a [consultation](#) underway for how this will look. In order to support students as much as possible, we would like to remove the stress of remembering the formulae and equations which are likely to be included in these sheets. We will updated students, parents and carers to confirm when this has been agreed for the exams in the summer.

Year 11 students will also be allowed to revise silently in classrooms when they are not in an exam over the mock exam period. They should bring revision materials with them into school each day.

Thank you for your continued support for the Year 11 students as they navigate the challenges of this year.





Year 9 study into Friendship, Emotions and Feelings

Thank you to those of you who have already submitted your consent forms for your child to take part in this study. This is a really exciting opportunity to be part of a national study that will inform future policy. Please could I request that you complete your consent forms as soon as possible and at the very latest by Friday 15th December. You are able to consent via email to me, if that is preferable. ageorge@waddesdonschool.com

Mrs George, Subject Leader for Psychology and Sociology



Year 10 Mock Crown Court

On Saturday 18 November a group of Year 10 students went to Oxford Crown Court to participate in a Mock Trial in the Crown Court. Our students adopted all the roles within the courthouse to play out a trial against other schools.

Both our prosecution and defence team barristers presented clear cases and our witness responded well, especially when being cross examined by other teams. It was an immersive experience with an opportunity for a Q&A with Crown Court and Magistrate judges who gave real insight into their important roles. Our students enjoyed the day and gained skills as well as confidence from their experience.

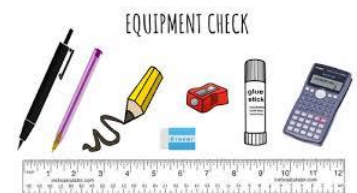
Look out for the December edition of the [Waddesdon Voice](#) for pictures and insights from our students.

Supporting Good Habits

Part of growing through the teenage years is to support good habits at home and at school, whether that be with homework, attendance, uniform or equipment.

- ✓ Please could we ask to support our rules around jewellery by ensuring that your child comes to school with 2 small studs in lower lobes only, no rings, bracelets or acrylic nails. Thank you.
- ✓ Please can you also continue to support your child by regularly checking that they have the equipment they need to access the school curriculum. If you are experiencing financial barriers to this, please let your Head of Year know.

Each day, your child should bring with them: their correct books for the day, pens (more than one), pencils (and sharpener), rubber, a highlighter, 15cm ruler, glue stick, scientific calculator, protractor, pair of compasses, plug-in headphones and tissues.



Lost Property

The site team have put all of the lost property collected over the last month out on a table in the small courtyard. Please can parents remind their children to collect their lost items before the end of term.

We had a really big clear out four weeks ago, but have still managed to accumulate quite a number of items. All items, if not collected this term will be recycled/donated to charity.



Opportunity to work as a Specialist Supply Teacher at Waddesdon

We are currently looking to extend our pool of occasional specialist supply teachers at Waddesdon. We call on supply teachers when we need to cover illness (often at short notice) and sometimes to cover for staff who are accompanying students on educational visits. All of our supply teachers are qualified, with relevant experience and expertise in one or more subject areas. If you are interested, or know of someone who may be, please contact: kworland@waddesdonschool.com



Support for Parents, Carers and Families

Attached to the email with this newsletter, our SENDCo, Mrs Champness, has shared two courses which may be of interest to some families. There is information on:

- Nurture Programme
- Talking Teens

Waddesdon School Association (WSA) Christmas Raffle



WSA Raffle - tickets are still available to buy on parent pay, with the final date for donations being Thursday 14th December. The raffle will be drawn by a WSA representative on Friday 15th. Miss Bridges will contact the winners and distribute prizes before the end of term. Due to the number of lovely donations received from parents, we are currently able to offer over 40 prizes.

Charitable donations

Food/pet/hygiene/toy bank collection. We are still collecting food, pet food/toys, hygiene items and children's new toys for various charities. Last day for donations will be Wednesday 13th December so that we can deliver in time for Christmas. A big thank you to all students, parents and staff who have already donated items.

Save the Date! Friday, 2nd February

On Friday 2nd February, we will be hosting Mr Judson's 12-piece wedding band, Sir Juke, as they perform for parents and other adults (aged 19+) who are friends of the school to raise funds for the Evelina Children's Hospital and the new Sixth Form Centre.

Mr Judson is running the London Marathon for the Evelina, which has a specialist unit for children with achondroplasia; the same form of dwarfism that his youngest son was born with.

It promises to be a really fun night of well-known music, featuring some excellent professional musicians performing songs from the 60s to the present day, and all for a great cause.





Wednesday Late Bus

We encourage our students to take advantage of our late bus so that they can take part in extra-curricular activities (see [website.](#)) and also if they need to catch up on, or complete work.

Route 1: Westcott, Ashendon, Upper Winchendon, Quainton (The Green), Pitchcott, Oving (Bowling Alley), North Marston (Pilgrim PH), Whitchurch (on request), Hardwick (on request)

Route 2: Kingswood, Grendon Underwood (all stops if required), Springhill (prison), Edgcott, Calvert (Green), Charndon (on request), Marsh Gibbon The Plough (on request), Ludgershall Village Hall (on request)

The buses will return to their depots in Aylesbury and so the bus company (Motts) have also indicated that they would be happy to drop students to a central point in Aylesbury, if required.

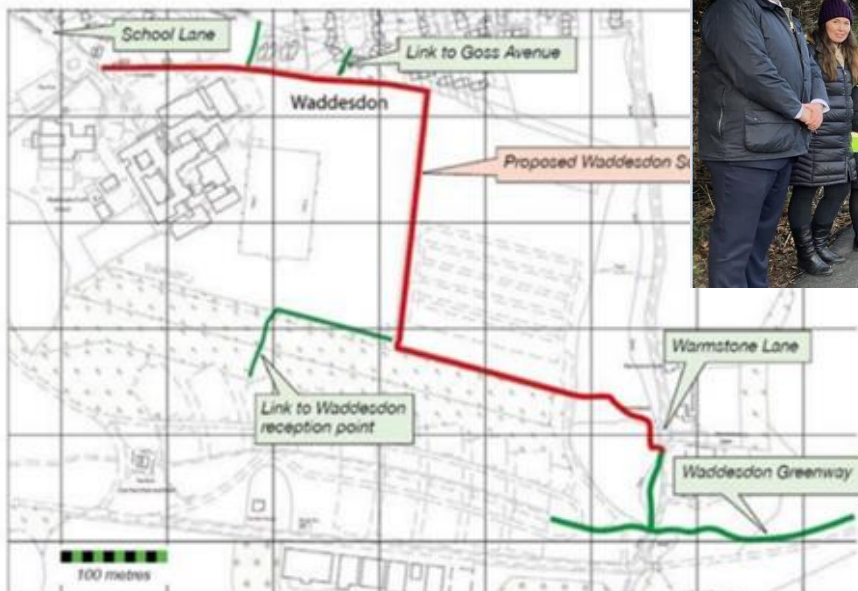
Both buses will leave school at 4.35pm, with the longest journey time taking approximately 45 minutes.



Waddesdon Greenway is Open!

On Wednesday, 29th November, the Greenway link to Waddesdon was officially opened. As well as the ribbon cutting by Martin Tett, Buckinghamshire Council Leader, support workers were on hand to security mark bikes and to advise on road safety.

The next extension of the route will see it run to Westcott.





Out and About



We are sometimes asked to advertise community events. These are not associated with Waddesdon, but may be of interest to you and your child(ren).

That said, in the case of the **Carols by Candlelight** at St. Michael and All Angels, Waddesdon, we would heartily endorse this opportunity to join with the local community in celebrating the promise of Christmas on Saturday, 9th December at 4pm.

The poster to the left provides you with information about the Carols and also other events in Westcott and Upper Winchendon. Even if you are a sometime church attender, or a first-timer, there is something profoundly special about Carols by Candlelight.

Winter Waggle – 16th February

Join us for our inaugural, fun-filled 'Winter Waggle' sponsored dog walk in the grounds of the stunning Waddesdon Manor Estate.

Cast off those February blues, breathe in some fresh air with your furry best friend, and clear your mind ready for spring.

With a choice of 3k and 5k routes around Waddesdon Manor, Waddesdon, Aylesbury HP18 0JH, registration takes place at the Welcome Pavilion, between 11.00 – 11.30 am and the walk starts at 11.30 am.



www.thepacecentre.org/event/winter-waggle/



What to do if you're not happy about something

If you're not happy about something, please let us know and we will work with you to resolve the issue.

Our [Complaints Policy](#) outlines the steps you can take, but the simple message is to **get in touch with us**. If you send your concern to office@waddesdonschool.com, it will be directed to the right person.

You should expect to hear back in 48 hours, so if you have no reply by then, please ring the school office to check the progress on your complaint.

Even in moments of high emotion, we ask that you consider how best to convey your complaint. If the issue cannot be resolved by email or a phone conversation, then it is usually best to arrange a face-to-face meeting as lengthy email exchanges tend to become counter-productive.



Key Future Events

Thursday, 4th January – **Staff INSET day** (Curriculum and T&L)

Friday, 5th January – **Start of the Spring Term**

Monday, 9th January – **Year 13 Mock Exams**

Wednesday, 24th January – **Year 11 Mock Results Day**

Thursday, 25th January – **Year 11 Parents' Evening (in school)**

Thursday, 1st February – **Big Gig** (music from Year 7 – 13)

Friday, 2nd February – **Sir Juke fundraiser**

Wednesday, 7th February – **Year 13 Mock Results Day**

Friday, 9th February – **School closes for half-term**

Thursday, 22nd February – **Careers Fair**

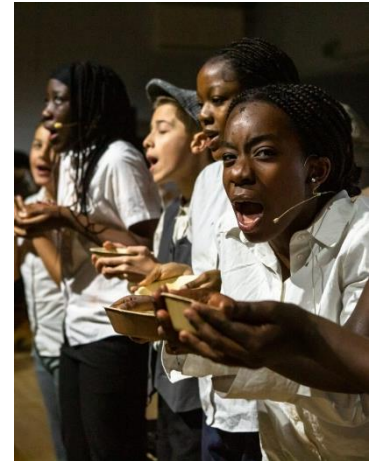


Gum Club



- Waddesdon is a GUM free school.
- For those that struggle to follow the rules
- GUM CLUB – free membership to clear the gum from tables during your free time
- Please have a conversation at home

Congratulations to all our students who took part in this term's amazing production of Oliver! Whatever their role, they did themselves exceptionally proud. Also, special thanks to all the parents and families who had to change their routines for the past 8 weeks to support their child with rehearsals.



John 10:10: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."



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