



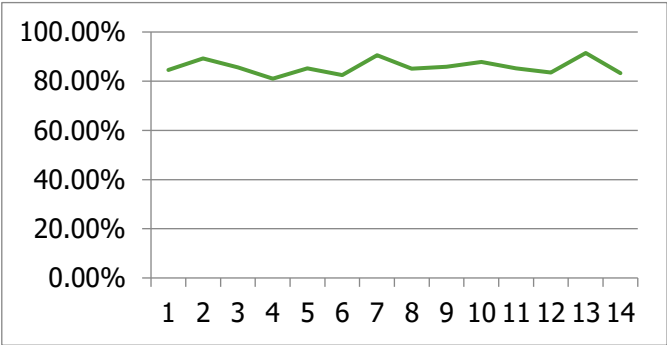
Waddesdon C of E School | Parent Newsletter – March, 2024



Parent Survey Feedback

As you will see in this month’s newsletter, we continue to work hard to provide you with the information which we think will help with the joys and challenges of being a parent.

Please keep us up to speed about what’s going on for you, so that we can work together to enable your child to be healthy and happy, and be proud of what they are achieving at school.



We value the feedback that we get at the end of parents’ evenings in response to the questions below.

- 1 - My child is happy at school
- 2 - My child feels safe at school
- 3 - The school makes sure pupils behave well
- 4 - Bullying is dealt with quickly and effectively
- 5 - When I have raised concerns with the school they have been dealt with properly
- 6 - The school makes me aware of what my child will learn during the year
- 7 - The school has high expectations for my child
- 8 - My child does well at school
- 9 - The school lets me know how my child is doing
- 10 - There is a good range of subjects available to my child at this school
- 11 - My child can take part in clubs and activities at this school
- 12 - The school supports my child's wider personal development
- 13 - I would recommend this school to another parent
- 14 - My child has SEND, and the school gives them the support they need to succeed



Mr Abbott

Keeping in touch with you

SIMS App

A majority of parents of children in Year 7-11 have now signed up to the SIMS app. This gives you access to more personalised and regular updates about your child, including when they have received a Waddesdon Point for a positive contribution to school or lessons, as well as if they have been logged for lack of homework, lack of equipment or incorrect PE kit.



If you have not already done so, please look back to the letter sent at the start of January and the email which followed. This provides you with the information and links required for the two-step process of signing up to the app. Mr Purchase was on hand during Year 9 Parents' Consultation Evening to support any parents/carers who were having difficulty with the sign-up process.

If you have any issues with setting up or accessing your SIMS Online Service account or the SIMS app, please visit the website and select Parents and then Communications from the home page, where you will find a wealth of resources. If you still have issues that you cannot resolve, then please email office@waddesdonschool.com.



Attendance Matters – You're doing a great job

In your child's second report for this year, you will see their attendance percentage so far.

As we outlined in the October edition of the parents' newsletter, we know that students who don't attend school fall significantly behind their peers; the data for future outcomes of students who are persistently absent makes for serious [reading](#).

In 2019 secondary school pupils who didn't achieve grade 9 to 4 in English and maths **missed 10 more days on average over the key stage** than those who achieved grade 9 to 5 in both English and maths.



Please talk to us about how we can support any specific issues that you are facing at home.



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”.



Supporting your Child's Health – Monthly Spotlight

Dark chocolate

At this time of year, the shops are full of all sorts of enticing chocolate treats. With its health-boosting antioxidants (flavanols), have a think about dark chocolate (with at least 70% cacao content) as it could provide some health benefits. These flavanols help fight inflammation and have been linked to helping the immune system and reducing stress levels. The key is to maintain a balance between healthy food choices and occasional treats.

Any medications to be administered in school (pain relief, antibiotics etc.) need to be brought to the Thorp Office so that our medical team can monitor their administration.



Vaping and your Child's Health

Here4YOUth

The dangers of young people vaping are becoming increasingly well-known. In particular, young people are vulnerable to the attractive packaging, perceived harmlessness of vaping and the peer pressure to “give it a go”.

In Monday's assembly this week, Mr Sturla outlined the key issues for our young people. We followed this up with a letter home on Tuesday – please see our [letters home page](#) if you missed it.

Spice risk

There have been reports of vape liquids and pens containing very strong synthetic cannabinoids ('spice') being sold as THC vapes. These are causing serious, unintended effects for users.

Here4YOUth, Buckinghamshire's young people drug/alcohol harm reduction service, has prepared a harm reduction information pack about contaminated vapes: [Drug Alert - Contaminated Vapes - Cranstoun](#)



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.



Year 8 Options Process

March is an exciting time for Year 8 as they begin their journey towards the next stage of their education. The Options Conference will be taking place on Thursday 14th March, during which Year 8 students will receive short presentations from the new subjects available to them. We will also have a presentation to parents/carers that evening.

During this exciting phase, please take time to speak with your son/daughter in Year 8 and help them to navigate the different options available.

Year 11 Mock Exams – 4th - 8th March

The final set of mock exams for Year 11 will begin on Monday 4th March. They are being sat in English, Maths, Science and, for those who study it, Creative iMedia.

Please ensure that all Year 11 students arrive prepared for their exams, including having the correct equipment such as calculators and black pens.

50 Hour Revision Challenge

Over the Easter Holidays, Year 11 students are challenged to complete the 50 hours of revision.

This equates to 2-3 hours of revision each day and will set them up brilliantly for the final push to their GCSE exams, which begin on Thursday 9th May.

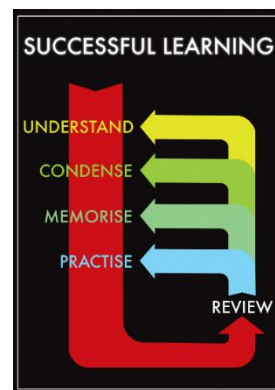
Parents/carers should sign a box for every hour that they complete. All students who hand in a full table will receive a prize, as well as being entered into a prize draw.

Easter Holiday 50 Hour Challenge									
For every hour that you complete, ask your parent/carer to sign the box. All completed grids will be entered into the prize draw to win a voucher of your choice. Anyone who hands in their grid showing some revision will win a prize, even if it's not completed.									
Good luck!									
1 You're under way!	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18 Keep going....	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Halfway There	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44 Nearly There!	45	46	47	48	49	50 celebrate it!

Supporting your Child with Revision at Home

At Waddesdon, our successful revision programme follows four steps: **plan; understand; condense; memorise/review; and practise.**

We have been asked by various parents/carers about how they can support with revision at home, for example, with focus and/or motivation, overcoming challenges, and managing exam stress. Each student is different, but we hope the following information is a helpful summary of general principles so you can support from home as needed.



Where possible, we recommend students study at a table in a shared space at home (e.g. kitchen, dining room, office) and not in their bedrooms. For optimum revision conditions and brain productivity, students know the following are important:

- A clear desk, with no clutter: minimises distractions and keeps the brain focused.
- A quiet space, with no distractions.
- Sitting up straight: if horizontal when revising, this tells the brain to go to sleep and it is much less receptive to information.
- Lots of light: straining your eyes is both draining and distracting.
- 60 second exercise breaks every 15-20 minutes when focus is waning: wakes up the brain and improves mental focus.



With smart phones and laptops, we know that it is very easy to become distracted through messaging friends, group chats, online games and social media apps. Sometimes these are beneficial if being used productively to help with studying. However, as a general rule, we recommend students put their phones in another room and turn off messaging on their laptops while revising. Students have found the following apps useful:

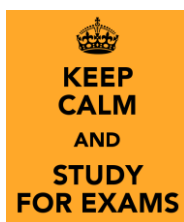


Cold Turkey: blocks selected apps and websites: <https://getcoldturkey.com/>

Forest or Flora: helps focus for a specified time: <https://www.forestapp.cc/> or <https://flora.appfinca.com/>



Sound Agency: music to aid concentration: <https://www.thesoundagency.com/blog/study-app/>



The build up to the exam period can be a stressful time and a certain amount of stress is normal. The following websites provide excellent sources of information for parents to support students with lots of different aspects of their mental health:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/coping-with-exam-stress/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/school-college-and-work/school-college/exam-stress/>

S.T.O.P. Bullying

Dignity, kindness and respect are the key words that underpin our school's values. We strive to create a safe and happy environment, believing that all bullying is unacceptable, and should not be tolerated.

Bullying is...

Several
Times
On
Purpose



Underpinning our bullying policy is the acronym S.T.O.P. (SEVERAL TIMES ON PURPOSE). Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying can be: emotional, physical, verbal, written, cyber, sexual, prejudice-based and discriminatory.

For more information please look at our [policy](#).

NSPCC Speak Up Campaign

It's up to all of us to keep children safe. That's why the NSPCC are encouraging every adult in the UK to Listen up, Speak up.

Through a free, 10-minute training and series of follow-up emails, Listen up, Speak up shows:

- some signs a child might be at risk, and steps you can take to help
- how to approach difficult conversations to help keep children safe
- who you can contact if you're ever concerned about a child or their family.



Learn more and play your part: nspcc.org.uk/listen-up-speak-up.



Year 9 study into Friendship, Emotions and Feelings

Thank you to the students, parents and carers who gave their consent to take part in the psychology study into friendship, emotions and sense of self. The students who participated said they enjoyed taking part and found it thought provoking. The second part of three online questionnaires will be on March 11th and take place in form time for the students who have completed the first questionnaire.



Opportunity to work as a Specialist Supply Teacher at Waddesdon

We are always 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

Improve your child's mental health by talking with them about how they use their phones

Children's mental health can be significantly affected by excessive mobile phone use and the corrosive impact of the algorithms used by apps such as TikTok.



An article on the [Discover Magazine website](#) raised the concerning issue of teenagers being overwhelmed by negative content:

"For teens and children, the TikTok algorithm may be too effective. Reading a teen's innermost thoughts — especially when their vulnerable minds are drawn to harmful content — can lead them to see more problematic content.

Researchers publishing in the 2021 edition of the [*International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*](#) found that TikTok contributed to depression and anxiety in teens and was positively correlated with memory loss. If a TikTok user tends toward sad and upsetting content, that's what they'll get, and for young kids and teens, this can motivate dangerous behaviour."

More recently *The Saturday Times* magazine (24th Feb, 2024) interviewed teens about their use of mobile phones.

Like me, parents will be interested in the following comments:

"If I went an hour without my phone I would be really stressed...Every evening I scroll on TikTok all night...Every social media app is toxic. There are a lot of nasty people on there — and nasty stuff." Charley, 17.

"Self-harm wasn't a big thing before, but since people started speaking on it on TikTok, people became more aware of it. There's also anorexia, bulimia and eating disorder content on TikTok and a new trend called 'starve maxxng'. People find a way around TikTok blocking these videos." Jasmin, 15.

"I regret getting Snapchat at 12 — I wasn't prepared for what was coming. Random people would add me, then ask for nudes... A month ago I was really addicted to my phone. I couldn't live a second of the day without it. I would constantly be checking for messages and at night I'd sit there binge-watching TikTok...My brother's daily screen time was 12 hours. He's constantly up all night and then he complains he's had a bad night." Tai, 14.

"If I didn't have my phone for a day, I would probably be really sad and I wouldn't know what to do...Social media can affect your mental health. I got social media at 11. I would tell younger kids not to get all the social media apps at once, because then you're exposed to everything." Jess, 14.

"I feel like times before phones were a lot calmer...My parents take my phone away at 10pm every night. Deep down, I know that's what's best for me. I wish I didn't need to be on my phone." George C, 16.

"Some aspects of social media heighten feelings of anxiety and insecurity. I get really down in the morning if I've spent last night scrolling and not doing anything. I wish I could stick to the limits I set on the apps..." George B, 16.

"I want my screen time to be lower. Sometimes after scrolling on TikTok, I get a headache and I feel a bit depressed." Calypso, 18.

The article states that, "almost half of British teenagers say that they feel addicted to social media, according to the Millennium Cohort Study [published January, 2024]".

Whatever the age of your son or daughter, having regular discussions about phone use, perhaps by sharing the quotations above, will help them see the risks associated with excessive use and their mental health.

Alice de Rothschild Sixth Form Building

I am delighted to confirm that building starts on 13th March, with an estimated completion date of 7th February, 2025.

If you haven't already, please consider whether you are able to make a [donation](#) (large or small) so that we can provide our young people with the very best of education.



The total raised currently stands at: £4,055 (and counting). If every family were able to commit to giving £10 a month, we would raise £120,000 within the space of a year.

Please help us to support your children to flourish in their time at Waddesdon.

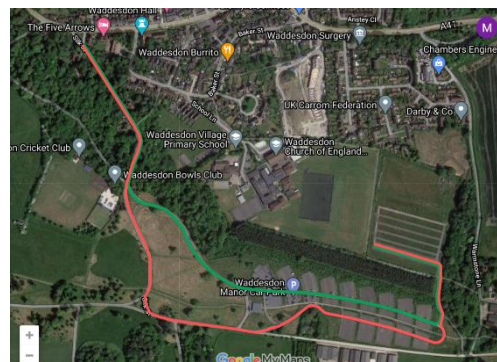
Golden Mede – a polite request

If you drive to collect your child at the end of the school day, please remember that the school is based at the heart of a residential community. Unfortunately, we have received a few complaints of a small minority of cars driving too fast, blocking driveways or parking in private bays. These are particularly related to Golden Mede, although the issue is not exclusive to that road.

Waddesdon prides itself on the core values of dignity and respect, and this extends to the way in which we value our neighbours and the community we serve. Please can we ask all parents/carers to uphold these at pick up time.

The **overflow carpark at Waddesdon Manor** is always available as a space to park while you collect your child, and is connected to the school by the Greenway path.

Thank you for your kindness and consideration of these issues.





Support for Parents, Carers and Families

We have been contacted by the charity Citizens Advice Bucks who have asked us to share with you their latest edition of their information guide to help families struggling with the cost-of-living crisis.

Just click here: [Cost of Living Help for Families](#) for information about food, energy, housing and more.

The charity is also running a FREE course designed to help you manage personal finances with lots of helpful tips and advice. The course is online or via in person workshops. You can find out more information about these by signing up for the online course by clicking here: [Money Matters Course](#)



Waddesdon School Association (WSA) Easter Raffle

This term the WSA will be holding an Easter raffle with the winning tickets being drawn during the last week of term to enable prizes to be delivered/collected in time for Easter.

For the Easter raffle to be a success and to enable the WSA to raise vital funds for the school we are asking for donations.

Items required include:

- Food items
- Easter treats
- Alcohol/non-alcohol drinks
- Chocolates/sweets
- Gifts
- Leisure tickets
- Toiletries



Students will be asked to bring items into school between 4th March and 20th March 2024.

Raffle tickets will be available to purchase on Parent Pay until Thursday 21st March, with the draw taking place on Friday 22nd March 2024.

Thank you for your continued support.



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.



Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel 2024 is the challenge's 15th year, and we would love you to take part and help make it the largest and most successful one yet.

Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel inspires pupils to make active journeys to school, improve air quality in their neighbourhood and discover how these changes benefit their world.

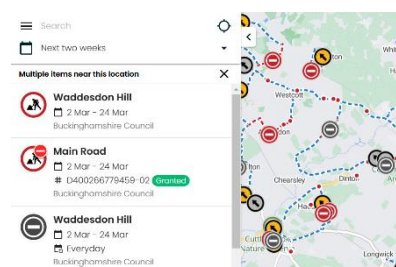
The event aims to encourage more families to travel to school actively and help create healthier and happier communities.

This year's challenge will run from 11 -22 March 2024.



Planned Road Closures

Between 2nd and 24th March, there are some planned road closures to the east and south of Waddesdon. Do be sure to check out what these mean to you in terms of travel time to school, so your child isn't late.



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

Monday, 4th March – **Year 11** Second Mocks – English, Maths and Science

Wednesday, 13th March – **Year 8 Report** release

Thursday, 14th March – **Year 8 Options** Conference and Parents' Information Evening (6pm)

Thursday, 21st March – **Year 8** Parents' Evening

Monday, 25th March – **Year 7 Assessment** week

Wednesday, 27th March – Year 8 GCSE **Options deadline**

Wednesday, 27th March – Whole School Photo

Thursday, 28th March - Year **11 & 13 Report** release. Last day before Easter break, finishing at 3.10pm

Monday, 15th April – Staff INSET (term starts on Tuesday, 16th for students)

Thursday, 9th May – Start of the **GCSEs** and **A Levels** (13th May) and **Year 7** Parents' Evening



Sad News of the Death of Lord Rothschild

Earlier this week, we learnt of the sad passing of Lord Jacob Rothschild at the age of 87.

A strong supporter of Waddesdon School, most recently championing the new Sixth Form Centre, his vision, energy and generosity of spirit will be missed by those who knew him, and those who benefitted from his good works.



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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