



Waddesdon C of E School | Parent Newsletter – September, 2026



"A full life is the abundant, broad, deep, **rich sense of living together** through all the ups and downs, twists and turns, joy, pain, elation, depression, dancing, weeping, singing and mourning..."

As the new year starts, my hope for everyone in our community is that we continue to sustain one another in good times and bad. At Waddesdon we will endeavour to do this for each and every young person and for their families. I hope that the year has started well for you and for your child/ren.

The newly unveiled 'Wall of Thanks', celebrates the generosity of the school community, friends and other donors which contributed to the successful completion of the Jacob Rothschild Sixth Form Building. Thank you if you were part of that programme – spaces remain if you would like to see your name, or your child's name on the wall..

A few parents have contacted us about problems with SIMS. Our IT department is working hard to fix these issues. On Monday, 14th September, our new IT Network and Systems Manager, Mr Silversides, will join the team. He is aware already that this is a priority for parents and for the school.

Mr Abbott

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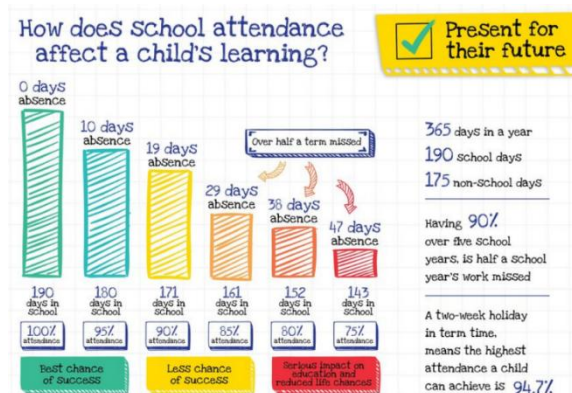




Present for the Future

If you are reading this newsletter, the chances are that you are amongst the vast majority of our parent body who know how important daily attendance is for well-being and academic success. In fact, every day of attendance at school now, is a present for future successes.

We are determined to work with you to ensure that all children attend and make progress; this is because all children matter and because the data for future outcomes of students who are persistently absent makes stark [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. We also saw this evidenced in our summer exam results. The correlation between school attendance and attainment was striking.

We do understand that some children face barriers to school attendance, including emotionally-based school avoidance. Please talk to us about how we can support any specific issues that you are facing at home.

You will also find support information on Buckinghamshire's [Present for their future](#) webpage.



After school support at Homework Club

We provide homework support for students to help them complete their homework. These run Monday to Thursday, and provide students with free IT access as well as support. **Everyone is welcome!**

Starts: Monday, 14th September
When: 3.15pm - 4.20pm
Where: Enrichment 2

We also provide supervised study in our Period 6 sessions. These sessions are provided as a sanction for missing homework, as well as support to get it done. If you think your child may need to develop better homework habits, the place to start is at Homework Club.



Information Evenings for Year 7 and Year 12 Parents/Carers

Please see below two information evenings about which you should have received a letter:

Year 7 Parents' Information Evening: Tuesday, 15th September – 6pm

Year 12 Parents' Information Evening: Thursday, 17th September – 6pm

If you ever miss a letter or want to check what we've sent out, please check our [letters page](#) on the school website.



Do you believe your child is a young carer?

If you believe your child qualifies as a young carer, but the school does not yet know please do email office@waddesdonschool.com and one of our staff will be in touch to make a referral to Bucks Young Carers and ensure your child is supported in school.

Bucks Young carers - <https://carersbucks.org/information-for-carers/young-carers/>

The young person cares for someone with at least one of the following:

- a physical disability (including sensory impairment)
- a learning disability
- a long-term illness, with clear diagnosis
- a terminal illness
- a mental illness, with clear diagnosis
- drug or alcohol dependency
- or who is elderly

Year 11 Parents'/Carers' Information Evening – Tuesday, 8th September

We know that starting Year 11 can feel like a daunting moment in your child's educational journey. As a school, we have found that the more that we approach this year in partnership with you, the better it is for your child. In addition to the information provided on the evening, the following **four tips** will help you have a good start to the year:

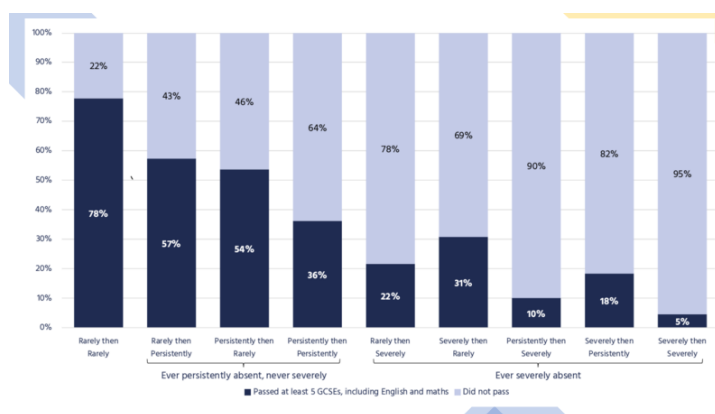
1. **Attendance and Punctuality matter** -

there is a wealth of data to show the clear link between students with high levels of attendance and pass rates at GCSE.

2. **Home environment** - support your son/daughter by providing them with a space to work in the house which is not locked away in their bedroom.

3. **Plan the week** - at this stage there is no requirement to be doing hours and hours of revision. But it will help to start with small amounts of work which look back on Year 9 and Year 10 work, and start to create revision resources.

4. **The power of sleep** - by ensuring a good amount of sleep each night, it helps young people to remain more positive and able to learn. As difficult as it might sound, insisting on phones being off at night and away from bedrooms will be a big step in ensuring healthy sleep patterns.



As always, if you have any questions about the year ahead, please contact Mrs Clark or Mr Cahill.

We also look forward to seeing you all for the **Year 11 Mock Exam Information Evening** on 20th October at 6.00pm.



UCAS - free webinar

The company, *Parent Guide to Education*, are offering Year 13 parents/carers a free webinar: UCAS Final Push: Crafting a Great Personal Statement and Choosing the Right University

Wednesday 16th September, 7pm (includes re-play access)

Hosted by Paul Hughes – ex-6th form tutor with 21 years' UCAS experience

In this session, parents/carers will learn:

- A simple structure for a strong personal statement
 - How to help their teen show genuine passion - without writing it for them!
 - What admissions tutors are really looking for
 - The most common mistakes – and how to avoid them
- ...with a live Q and A at the end

A reminder that our internal deadline for UCAS application is: 14th December. There is plenty of support available at school too.



Spotlight on Health: Auto Adrenaline Injectors

We would like to remind parents (and students), that from this term we require all students who have been prescribed an auto adrenaline injector (Epipen or Jext Pen), to have one in their school bag or blazer pocket, **AS WELL AS** one to be kept in the School Office.

This is to help meet the new statutory requirements which are in place from September 2026 (Benedict's Law), and promotes safe practice and is part of encouraging independence - especially for students on their way to and from school.

The Medical Team

Post-16 SEND opportunities

Post 16 SEND Opportunities Showcase

Tuesday 8 September 2026
1pm - 5pm
The Gateway, Gatehouse Road
Aylesbury HP19 8FF



 Buckinghamshire Children & Young People's Partnership

Come along to find out more about the different programmes offered by a range of Post 16 Specialist Providers for young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Around 14 providers will be showcasing in a calm and spacious environment with a wide range of opportunities on offer including:

- A range of vocational pathways and qualifications
- Personal development and individualised therapeutic programmes
- Supported internships and employability programmes

Suitable for young people from year 9 upwards with an active EHCP.

No need to register – young people, parents/carers and professionals all welcome to drop by and chat to the providers.

Free parking available onsite.



Could your child be entitled to a



Apply for free school meals



All academies, free schools and maintained schools in Buckinghamshire have a duty to provide free school meals to eligible children who attend school full time.

What are Free School Meals?

Free [school](#) meals provide vital nutrition for children during the school day. We've just announced that many more families will be eligible. Here's what parents need to know.

What is changing in September 2026

Two Tiers of free school meal:

- **Targeted FSM**
 - For lower-income households (under £7,400 earnings)
 - Includes extra support (like pupil premium funding)
- **Expanded FSM**
 - For all other families on Universal Credit
 - Still provides free meals, but without additional funding

Protected Eligibility is Ending:

- **Everyone must reapply**
- It does not transfer from primary to secondary school

Who needs to apply?

- Anyone on universal credit (for expanded FSM)
- Universal Credit - with an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400 (For targeted FSM)
- Income Support (IS)
- Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance (IBJSA)
- an income-related employment and support allowance (ESA)
- Child Tax Credit (with no Working Tax Credit) with an annual income of no more than £16,190
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of the State Pension Credit

How do I apply?

Follow the instructions on: <https://apply.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims>

If you do not have access to the internet, or need support in completing these forms please email office@waddesdonschool.com FAO Anna Ewart.

ITAG Week 2026: *Is There a God?*

This year's ITAG Week invited students to explore one of humanity's oldest and most profound questions: **Is There a God?**

Throughout the week, students from Years 7-12 had the privilege of hearing from leading academics and experts from a range of disciplines. Their thought-provoking talks challenged students to think deeply about philosophy, science, artificial intelligence, faith and the nature of existence.

We were delighted to welcome:

- Professor Paul Heslop - Mathematical Physics, University of Durham
- Dr Joshua Sijuwade - Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Birmingham
- Dr John Nelson - Lecturer in Greek, London School of Theology
- Professor Nigel Crook - Professor of Artificial Intelligence, Oxford Brookes University

Each day, students not only listened attentively to our guest speakers but also engaged in lively and insightful question-and-answer sessions. Students demonstrated remarkable curiosity, confidence and intellectual maturity, asking challenging and profound questions about faith, morality, suffering, free will, consciousness and the origins of the universe.

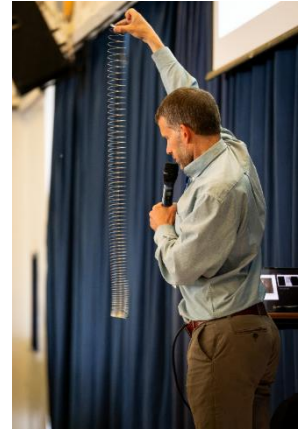
The discussions directly complemented the content studied within GCSE and A Level Religious Studies, particularly in Philosophy of Religion and Ethics. However, the week also encouraged students to develop wider life skills, including critical thinking, respectful dialogue, evaluating evidence and considering different perspectives on complex issues.

Form time activities throughout the week gave students the opportunity to discuss arguments for and against the existence of God, work collaboratively and take part in debates within their tutor groups. Engagement was exceptional, with students demonstrating thoughtful reasoning and a genuine willingness to listen to and challenge one another respectfully.

A particular highlight of the week was receiving a signed copy of *Rise of the Moral Machine* from Professor Nigel Crook. Students were fascinated by discussions surrounding artificial intelligence and morality, and the book now serves as a lasting reminder of this exciting opportunity.

To celebrate student participation, form tutors selected a **"Philosopher of the Week"** from each tutor group. These students were recognised for their thoughtful contributions, enthusiasm and engagement throughout the week. Winners received a certificate and a well-deserved sweet treat in recognition of their efforts.

Mrs Khan
Head of RS





Key Dates for 2026 - 27

KEY DATES

The Parent Handbook contains all the useful information that parents/carers need for this academic year, including educational trips and activities and associated costs. Please find some of the key dates for your diaries below:

Parents/Carers' Consultation Evenings

Year 7	Thursday, 10 th June
Year 8	Thursday, 18 th March
Year 9	Thursday, 22 nd April
Year 10	Thursday, 13 th November
Year 11	Thursday, 21 st January
Year 12	Thursday, 25 th February
Year 13	Thursday, 11 th February

Parents/Carers' Information Evenings

Year 7 Parents'/Carers' Information Evening	Tuesday, 15 th September 6.00-6.30pm
Year 8 Options Parents'/Carers' Information Evening	Thursday, 2 nd March 6.00-7.00pm
Year 11 Parents'/Carers' Information Evening	Tuesday, 8 th September 6.00pm
Year 11 Mock Exam Information Evening	Thursday, 20 th October 6.00pm
Year 12 Parents'/Carers' Information Evening	Thursday, 17 th September 6.00-6.30pm
Year 12 Life After Waddesdon Evening	Wednesday, 16 th June 6.00-7.30pm

Exams and Assessment Weeks

Year 7 Assessment Week	w/b Tuesday, 13 th April
Year 8 Assessment Week	w/b Monday, 25 th January
Year 9 Assessment Week	w/b Tuesday, 8 th June
Year 10 Mock Exams	Monday, 26 th April
Year 11 Mock Exams (All subjects)	Wednesday, 2 nd December
Year 11 Mock Exams (Core only)	w/b Monday, 1 st March
GCSE Exams	Monday, 10 th May (TBC)
Year 12 Predicted Grade Exams	Monday, 26 th April
Year 13 Snapshot Assessment Week	w/b Monday, 28 th September
Year 13 Mock Exams	Thursday, 7 th January
A Level Exams	Monday, 10 th May (TBC)

Wednesday Late Bus



From 9th September, your child(ren) will be able to take advantage of the late buses, if they want to take part in extra-curricular activities (see website) and also if they need to catch up on, or complete work. The routes are outlined below:

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.

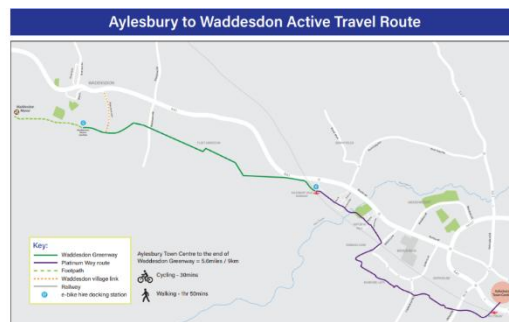
Both buses will leave school at 4.35pm, with the longest journey time taking approximately 45 minutes.



Travel to School

Our School Travel Plan encourages you to commit to doing **one of the three following things** to make the world and our local environment a better place:

- Walk, scoot or bike to school
- Use Waddesdon Manor's overflow car park
- Consider using the five minute walking bubble when dropping off and picking up



The Platinum Way, or Waddesdon Greenway, provides a wonderful approach route to the school from the east. **Join many school staff and Sixth Formers who now use the overflow car park.**



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

Tuesday, 15th Sept – **Year 7** Parents' Information Evening
Thursday, 17th Sept – **Year 12** Parents' Information Evening
Tuesday, 22nd Sept – **Open Day and Evening** – normal school
Wednesday, 23rd Sept – **INSET** Day: Staff Appraisal
Friday, 2nd Oct – **Year 7** Team Building Activity Day
w.b. 5th Oct – **Year 13** Predicted Grades (UCAS) confirmed
Thursday, 15th Oct – Annual Service of **Praise and Thanksgiving**
Friday, 23rd Oct – School closes for **half-term**
Wednesday, 4th Nov – **Year 7** Tutor appointments



Congratulations to our wonderful Year 11 and Year 13 students! This year's results put Waddesdon in the **top 25 % of all schools for progress** for both GCSEs and A Levels.

We are very proud of the hard work that our young people put into preparing for their studies. They did themselves, their families and the school, exceptionally proud.



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."



Website:
www.waddesdonschool.com



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