

2nd March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

### **Joining Year 9 at Wootton Upper School in September 2020 - Welcome**

On behalf of our governors, staff and current pupils, I am delighted to welcome you and your child as members of the Wootton Upper School community. We are delighted your child has been offered a place in Year 9 from September 2020. Our three core values are: **aspiration, opportunity for all** and **belief in ourselves**. Our values underpin the Trust motto "*the pursuit of excellence*". As you and your children prepare to embark on their journey through our upper school, we hope you and they are excited by the opportunities that are available to all and are ambitious to do well.

Two hundred and ninety-four children have been offered places in Year 9. Given the ever-increasing number of new houses being built in the admissions area we are anticipating that Year 9 will have around 300 pupils by the start of the new school year, and therefore, we are planning for eleven tutor groups, each with approximately twenty-seven children. There will be children from both middle schools in every tutor group and we will work with the middle schools to group the children appropriately.

Whilst the vast majority of children joining our school are currently at Marston Vale Middle School or Holywell School, thirty-six children are also joining the New Intake from a variety of other schools.

Staff at Holywell and Marston Vale Middle Schools both speak very highly about their Year 8 pupils and we are looking forward to learning about the children joining from schools other than Marston Vale and Holywell over the next few weeks! I am sure these schools will speak equally highly of their current pupils.

The vast majority of families with children joining Year 9 have visited our school, usually at an Open Morning or Open Evening. If you were unable to visit and would like to look around during the school day, please let me know. **There are a number of opportunities planned for parents/carers and the new intake children to visit us in the next five months!**

### **Keeping in Touch**

Our current Wootton Upper School website - [www.woottonupper.co.uk](http://www.woottonupper.co.uk) - has a section for our New Intake families. From the homepage, go to **Key Documents** and then go to **New Intake**. All of the information we send to parents/carers will also be posted on the website and also other information, such as information about the Year 9 curriculum in 2020 – 2021.

It is our policy to send home a weekly Trust Newsletter to keep parents/carers informed of our work; this is emailed to all parents. If you are a parent/carer of a current pupil, you will be familiar with the newsletter. If you do not have a child at our school, you can still read the newsletter as it is on the School website go to Parents and then go to **Principal's Letters**.

I hope you will be able to find all the information you need on our website, but if not, please telephone our school on **01234 767123** and a member of the Reception Team will do their best to put your call through to the right person. Alternatively, email the school using [y9transition@wootton.beds.sch.uk](mailto:y9transition@wootton.beds.sch.uk) and we will reply to your question.

The school's two Vice Principals, **Mrs McMorn** and **Mr Frazer**, will be responsible for managing your child's transfer to Wootton Upper School for next September. Mrs McMorn and Mr Frazer – and other Wootton Academy Trust staff - meet regularly with staff from Holywell School and Marston Vale Middle Schools to ensure the transfer process is as smooth as possible. They also contact senior staff in schools other than Holywell and Marston Vale who have children transferring to Wootton Upper School.

### **Next steps**

#### Event One – initial post offer visit to Holywell and Marston Vale Middle Schools

Mr Simpson and Mrs Jennings, Headteachers at Holywell School and Marston Vale Middle School, have given their permission for Mrs McMorn and Mr Frazer, as well as our Curriculum Lead, Mr Freemantle, Assistant Principal to visit the two middle schools to speak with Year 8 children in a year group assembly. This is likely to take place in the week beginning March 9th.

The purpose of the assembly is to answer any questions the children have at this stage about their transfer to Wootton and also to talk to them about what they be learning in Year 9 and **especially what three option subjects the children are going to choose to study during their first year at Wootton Upper School**. Following these assemblies, the children will give an early, non-binding indication of what subjects they *might* wish to pick as their options. This will enable Mr Freemantle to start to think about the number of groups likely to be required next year in each subject.

We will ensure a copy of the PowerPoint shown to the children in the assembly is put on the website so those children in other schools can see it, and also if they wish tell us about their likely preferred choices.

#### Event Two - Parent/Carer Information Evening – Tuesday 24th March

**We are organizing a Parent/Carer Information Evening for you which will take place on Tuesday 24th March.**

At this event we will explain to parents/carers how we intend to group children in each subject and the information we use to make these decisions. We will also provide you with information on the Year 9 option subjects children may select and give out an options form which you and your child, may, if you wish complete at the event, or alternatively take home and then return to us, either by post, or by email, or by returning it to Holywell or Marston Vale Middle School if your child is a pupil at one of these schools where we will collect it. **The deadline for returning option forms to us is Tuesday 31st March**

Options form and information about each option subject will also be available on the School website.

Whilst the primary purpose of the Information Evening will be to provide you with information on what your child will learn in Year 9 **we will also outline how to order uniform** and give you an overview of forthcoming next steps events.

Members of the Senior Leadership Team will be supporting the event to answer questions you may have. There will be three presentations on Tuesday March 24th at 5:00 pm, 6:15 pm and 7:30 pm. We will send a separate letter about this event in the near future.

Event three -Welcome to Wootton Upper School parent/carer event - Monday 6th July

Please keep this date free: on this day we plan to hold a welcome to your new school event when senior staff, the year leader, form tutors, who are already in post - and new members of staff who will be form tutors - who are able to join us for the evening will be present to meet with you.

Other Trust staff - including our SENDCo, Mrs Holmes, Safeguarding Lead, Mrs Enser, will be present as will staff who arrange lessons for children wanting to play musical instruments. We have invited our parent governors to attend the event also so there is an opportunity for governors to meet parents/carers and your children.

Amongst other things we will re-visit our core values and the three rights every child has in our school. We will also go through our Home School Agreement and invite you and your child to sign two copies of it, one for you to keep and one for your child's Form Tutor.

**We will also ask you to check and amend information we have stored on our School Information Management System to ensure it is accurate. This is really important as it is information designed to help us keep your child safe.**

There will be three presentations at 5:00pm, 6:15 pm and 7:30pm.

We will go over the programme for the new intake pupil visit days [Event four – see below] including doing our best to answer any questions about school transport. There will also be an opportunity for you to share with us any information you would like us to know. [We are also planning to put on a surgery- style event one day in June for those parents/carers who may wish to book a time to come and meet a member of the team to talk to us about supporting their child, sharing information when other parent/carers are not there.

Finally, we will give you a calendar of key dates for 2020 – 2021, a booklet outlining exactly what your child will learn during Year 9 in each of their subjects and other important information.

**We will write to parents/carers with more information about this important event in the first week of June.** At this stage please make a note of this date in your diary/calendar and keep it free.

Event four - New Intake pupils visit days - Monday 13th July and Tuesday 14th July.

In the summer term, we hold a two-day programme for all children joining Year 9 at Wootton Upper School next September. Children always find these days enormously valuable, even if they are sometimes a little bit nervous about them beforehand. **The two-days identified for this event are Monday 13th July and Tuesday 14th July.**

The purpose of the pre-September visit days is to help the children to become familiar with Wootton Upper School to meet lots of staff and to meet children from other schools joining Year 9.

Children living in one of our catchment area villages [i.e. Cranfield, Houghton Conquest, Kempston Hardwick, Lidlington, Marston Moretaine, Shelton and Stewartby] will be able to use Central Bedfordshire Council or Bedford Borough Council Wootton Upper School Transport, to travel to and from Wootton Upper School on these dates. Ideally, children living in Wootton will walk to and from the school. Children who live in other areas may be able to use public transport or parental transport.

On these days our new pupils will wear their new **Wootton Upper School uniform** so they do really feel part of their new school.

Yours sincerely



M. G. Gleeson

**Principal**

Wootton Upper School

Summary of key dates
<b>Event 1 March 9th and March 10th</b>
Wootton Academy Trust staff visit Marston Vale Middle and Holywell Middle Schools
<b>Event 2 Tuesday 24th March</b>
Parent/carer event at Wootton Upper School. Options focus.
<b>Deadline for options forms: Tuesday March 31st</b>
<b>Event 3 Monday 6th July</b>
Key information Evening for all parents/carers and pupils starting at Wootton Upper School
<b>Event 4 Monday 13th July and Tuesday 14th July</b>
All pupils will attend Wootton Upper School in their new school uniform.

## Wootton Academy Trust Term Dates 2020 – 2021

<b>AUTUMN TERM 2020</b>	
Tuesday 1st September	STAFF TRAINING DAY
Wednesday 2nd September	School/College year begins
Friday 23rd October	School/College close for half term, 3.00 p.m.
W/c Monday 26th October	Half-Term
Monday 2nd November	School/College re-open
Thursday 26th November	STAFF TRAINING DAY
Friday 27th November	STAFF TRAINING DAY
Friday 18th December	Autumn Term ends, 3.00 p.m.
Monday 21st December	Christmas Holiday begins

<b>SPRING TERM 2021</b>	
Monday 4th January	School/College re-open
Friday 12th February	School/College close for half-term, 3.00 p.m.
W/c Monday 15th February	Half Term
Monday 22nd February	School/College re-open
Friday 26th March	Spring Term ends, 3.00 p.m.
Monday 29th March	Easter holiday begins

<b>SUMMER TERM 2021</b>	
Monday 12th April	School/College re-open
Monday 3rd May	Bank Holiday
Friday 28th May	School/College close for half-term, 3.00 p.m.
W/c Monday 31st May	Half Term
Monday 7th June	School/College re-open
Friday 16th July	Summer Term ends, 3.00 p.m.
Monday 19th July	Summer holiday begins

We know some parents/carers book their holidays a long way ahead and therefore, we are publishing a provisional start of term for Autumn Term 2021 will be Thursday 2nd September 2021 for pupils and Wednesday 1st September for staff. [March 2020]