

WOOTTON ACADEMY TRUST

Monday 27 April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Show My Homework Data for last week – Mr Frazer and Dr Mackay

The percentage of students who logged on to Show My Homework to complete work last week is as follows:

Kimberley College	Y12	Y13	Total
Students logged in Monday 20 April to Friday 24 April 4pm	93%	88%	91%
Not logged in since Monday 20 April	7%	12%	9%

Wootton Upper School	Y9	Y10	Y11	Total
Students logged in Monday 20 April to Friday 24 April 4pm	95%	96%	80%	91%
Not logged in since Monday 20 April	5%	4%	20%	9%

We are pleased with the continued positive uptake with Year 11 and 13. 8 out of every 10 Year 11 pupils and nearly 9 in 10 Year 13 students have accessed their work this week. Coincidentally, the percentages of the other year groups is almost identical to the attendance of these year groups throughout the year.

The Brilliant Club - Mr Stewart

The Brilliant Club is an award-winning university access charity that works with schools and universities across the UK. Currently working with 12,000 pupils across 700 schools and engaging with 38 universities, the Brilliant Club exists to increase the number of pupils from under represented backgrounds progressing to **highly selective** universities. It does this by mobilising the PhD community to share its academic expertise with state schools. The Brilliant Club runs two core programmes; The Scholars Programme and Researchers in Schools. For the last three years Wootton Upper School has been invited to be part of the Scholars Programme.

This year, Wootton Upper School Year 9 and Year 10 pupils invited to be part of the Brilliant Club were supported in school by Mr De Spirito and Mr Stewart. Pupils completed a programme of study analysing the impact of art in history and politics, specifically considering *“Can Art Change The World?”*

The Scholars Programme has three key areas:

- ❖ challenging extra-curricular courses taught by a world-class researcher
- ❖ experience of university-style learning in small group tutorials
- ❖ two visits to highly-selective universities

Our cohort of 10 pupils experienced challenging and stimulating sessions with their PhD tutor on a weekly basis before the current “lockdown” and each received a challenging course handbook to support them through the programme. The pupils completed and submitted their assignments during the lockdown; this is testament to their motivation, determination and resilience.

The assignment was pitched at Key Stage 5 level and the grades each assignment was awarded were classified in the same way that students will be graded should they choose to proceed to university in the future.

We would like to offer our congratulations to the following scholars on their stunning achievements and hope that they are able to attend their "graduation" visit to university sooner rather than later.

Scholar	Honours Grade
Zaki Barati	2:1
William Burr	1 st
Phoebie Green	2:1
Rebecca Hawtin	2:1
Ashvin Kaur	1 st
Katie Mannings	1 st
Limar Mohammed	2:1
Javier Mondair	2:1
Niamh Whelan	1 st

We invited Niamh to add a report for the newsletter on the Scholars programme:

"The tutorials offered by the programme were insightful and enjoyable. Although it was challenging, I have learnt a lot from it, and will look back on it as a fantastic learning experience. Our tutor was always there to offer her help and support, introducing us to many interesting topics. We learnt about different artworks by several artists, including Olafur Eliasson and Yinka Shonibare, CBE; we then used what we had learnt to write an essay addressing whether or not art could change the world.

I even enjoyed writing the essay: it was difficult, but it was pleasing to recall what we had been taught and apply it to a contentious question. I was overjoyed when receiving my result, all the work that I had put into my essay seemed to come to life.

Along with learning about a variety of artworks, the programme has caused me to acquire more confidence and resilience regarding my academic work. Ultimately, it was a terrific adventure in a subject that I was initially unfamiliar with." **Niamh Whelan**

We will add the essays of Will, Niamh, Katie and Ashvin to our Virtual Gallery later in the week. They are very, very impressive. Here is a link to the gallery: <https://bit.ly/2xeBXRu>

Wootton Academy Trust would like to thank:

- ❖ Katerina Morozova, our scholar's PhD tutor for all of her support and encouragement of our pupils;
- ❖ Phoebe Rudguard, from the Brilliant Club, whom our scholars met on their visit to Oxford early in January;
- ❖ Annabelle Marceuse and Susie Whigham for their leadership and co-ordination of the project.

We hope the pupils' participation in the project will make them really ambitious in the future when it comes to applying to university.

Connolly Foundation Award Scheme

Well ... by the deadline we had received fifty-one applications from Year 13 Kimberley College students for the Connolly Foundation Award Scheme. **Good luck to all fifty-one applicants** - who will never know the enormous debt of gratitude they owe to Mrs Ashby who co-ordinated the scheme for the Trust and also the team of twenty-three staff who wrote references for all the applicants, as well as another eight staff who offered to proof read the applications – much of which was also done by Mrs Ashby. **I cannot find the words to thank Mrs Ashby for the difference her work over the five weeks will have made to all the successful students.** On everyone's behalf, I write, thank you to Mrs Ashby for her leadership, tenacity and enthusiasm. Thank you also to the staff who have written very strong supportive references. I also write thank you to the students who have put in a great deal of effort to submit very strong applications. I was very impressed with the applications I reviewed.

Connolly Foundation Wadham Project

The next Connolly Foundation Project our Trust is eager to participate in is the **Wadham Project**.

Each college at Oxford and Cambridge Universities is linked to several counties around the country to support schools in those counties.

Wadham College, in Oxford, is linked geographically with Bedfordshire. **Pembroke College**, in Cambridge, is the geographical link college for Bedfordshire at Cambridge University.

The Connolly Foundation Wadham Project provides opportunities for **five** Year 10 pupils to work with the college over several days each academic year. There are opportunities for other pupils to get involved, for example, on visits. Given lockdown the project is clearly in suspension at the moment. Nonetheless, we want all parents/carers in the current Year 10 to be aware of it.

Like the Brilliant Club, the Wadham Project, aims to support bright, but not necessarily the most-able pupils, to be really aspirational about their future higher education plans. It is not aimed at trying to encourage more applications to Oxford University itself, rather applications to all prestigious universities.

Wadham College has the final say on which pupils are selected; it will identify pupils using criteria such as parents/carers did not attend Higher Education, pupils current forecast to achieve grades 5 or 6 at GCSE, pupils with a good attendance record and pupils with good involvement in a school's enrichment clubs and activities.

We hope the project will start after lockdown – as soon as social distancing rules will allow; and there will be a similar project running which pupils in the current Year 9 will join from the autumn term. Pupils selected for the project in Year 10 will continue on it through Year 11 and into the Sixth Form at Kimberley College.

University admissions 2020 and 2021 – Mrs Stewart, UCAS Co-ordinator

The number of Kimberley College students who have applied to University in the current Year 13 is **190**. UCAS [University Central Admissions Service] sends a monthly report updating the college on students' application status as well as other information such as the most popular choices by university and the universities issuing the most offers to students.

- ❖ 185 students have at least one offer
- ❖ 118 students [62%] have received at least four offers
- ❖ 65 students have received [34%] have received five offers.
- ❖ 166 students have received decisions from ALL their chosen universities. Some are still waiting, which is normal for this time of year.
- ❖ **119 students had confirmed their firm choice of university by April 21** and most had also selected an insurance offer, in case they do not get the grades needed for that university;
- ❖ 25 students had accepted unconditional offers.

The number of firm acceptances is in-line with recent years. The three universities receiving most applications for 2020 from Kimberley College students were:

- ❖ University of Birmingham
- ❖ University of Hertfordshire
- ❖ Nottingham Trent University

In terms of current Year 12 Kimberley College students, making applications for entry to university in 2021, so far twenty-two students had responded to the email request Mrs Stewart sent out asking students to inform her of their intention to apply for early-entry courses.

The deadline for early entry courses is **15 October 2020 at 18:00**. Early entry courses are any course at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, or for most courses in medicine, veterinary medicine/science, and dentistry. Mrs Stewart has advised early-entry students to email their teachers to advise them of their intention. The College will follow this up by ensuring that teachers set these students secondary reading and other work which they can do during lock-down.

Pembroke College, Cambridge has just updated its resources for applications to Cambridge. Mrs Stewart has sent these to Kimberley students who have informed her of their intention to apply to Cambridge. If your son/daughter has not received them please send an email to cstewart@wootton.beds.sch.uk

Wadham College has also informed Kimberley about a mentoring programme it offers and for which it will be providing - free of charge- places for 10 of our 'Early Entry' students. Mrs Stewart is liaising with Wadham College about this offer and once more information is available, she will inform students and include an update in the newsletter.

Responses to parents and carers comments on Year 10 GCSE courses

Last week a number of parents/carers wrote to me in response to my letter about Year 10 options with questions. Tonight, we publish our responses to these questions on our website both on the Distance Learning page. The letter is CV 32A.

Other information recently published

I would strongly encourage you and your children to sit down together to watch this week's **Students' Bulletin** and this week's **Assembly**, both of which Mr Spurling has put onto Youtube. I found them really informative and suitable for "*learners of all ages*"!

- ❖ Youtube Student Bulletin version: <https://youtu.be/GY4QrTkGt6Q>
- ❖ Youtube Assembly version: <https://youtu.be/GvwLLEUmXWg>

The assembly and bulleting can also be seen on our websites.

- ❖ Assembly link <https://www.woottonupper.co.uk/distance-assemblies>

Emailing teachers for help

In our survey you told us one of the best ways for us to help your children was for them to know when they could email their teachers and expect a fast response. We have asked all teachers to be available on specific days throughout the week. The intention is that teachers will monitor their emails regularly and aim to give a same day reply to any emails they receive on the days identified for each subject. Where teachers are part-time, this may not be possible, e.g. a teacher who is not working on a Friday may not be able to reply until their next day at work. This will still allow learners to work flexibly and not have to commit to completing a certain subject on a certain day of the week.

The timetable for this is below and we encourage learners to email their teachers on the days suggested. All email addresses have been shared on the school and college website.

Years	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9 - 11	English, Maths, Science	All other subjects	English, Maths, Science	All other subjects	English, Maths, Science
12 -13	English, Maths, Science, Psychology, Sociology	All other subjects	English, Maths, Science, Psychology, Sociology	All other subjects	English, Maths, Science, Psychology, Sociology

Accessing Word, Excel and PowerPoint files on your home PC, laptop or phone

If your child is struggling to access any of the resources shared via 'Show My Homework' due to not being able to access Microsoft software (e.g. Word, PowerPoint, Excel etc) **we are able to grant them access to Microsoft Office (using their school email address) for their home computer, laptop or phone etc.** We have been told that some learners trying to access this software are incurring additional costs. If you are currently unable to access this software, please email it@wootton.beds.sch.uk indicating the student's name and we will make the necessary changes.

Please stay safe.

Michael Gleeson

Executive Principal

Wootton Academy Trust

Wootton Academy Trust operates:
Wootton Upper School & Arts College
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