

# WOOTTON ACADEMY TRUST

June 20 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

## Update from Dr Mackay and Mrs McMorn

We have now come to the end of Stage 1 of partial reopening.

The success of the week has been phenomenal with overwhelmingly positive feedback from staff, parents/carers and learners. It was a joy to see so many learners who were genuinely pleased to be back in college and school. Over 95% of learners and their parents attended appointments. That was truly amazing. Here are the headlines:

| Year Group | Number of pupils | Appointments attended this week | Appointments scheduled next week | No contact |
|------------|------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| 10         | 312              | 307 [98.4%]                     | 3 [1%]                           | 2 [0.6%]   |
| 12         | 272              | 260 [95.6%]                     | 3 [1.1%]                         | 9 [3.3%]   |

We would like to thank everybody who worked so hard to make the week a success, including our Estates Team, Housekeepers and our first aiders who took everyone's temperature.



**Year 10 one-to-one meetings – Mr Hope**



**Year 12 one-to-one meetings**

We are now looking forward to Stage 2 of our partial re-opening with Y10 and Y12 provision on site. We published some FAQs on Friday which we hope will help you and your children. The FAQs can also be found on our websites under partial reopening. Staff at both Wootton and Kimberley have been very keen to start re-establishing connections with students and we have all been overwhelmed by the enthusiasm of young people and their families. We know that school and college will not be *exactly the same* next week, but we are confident it will be enjoyable and worthwhile and a great first step. We are expecting a very large proportion of our learners to attend.

**Details of school bus arrangements are now available for next week.** These took longer than anticipated. We are grateful to the bus operators and the Local Authorities for their help. Central Bedfordshire has said it will look again at its school bus timetables again next week. We will keep you informed. The school bus timetables are also on the Wootton Upper School website.

Next week, we will be focussing on the current Year 9 in terms of their Year 10 options and also modelling to see if it is possible to arrange face-to-face meetings with Year 9 before the end of term.

**Yesterday we sent another letter to parents/carers of children in Year 8 joining Wootton Upper School in September. This letter is on the Wootton Upper School website in the New Intake Section.**

**Monday 22 June is the last chance to complete Bedford Borough Council's Survey**

The Borough Council has received over 3,500 responses to its survey. Parents' feedback has been extremely positive. Around 200 WAT parents/carers have completed the survey so far. The survey closes on Monday 22 June. Here is the link:

<https://eu.surveymonkey.com/r/NWGG5KC>

**Do you have a son/daughter in Year 12? If so, do you know whether they have registered for UCAS 2021 and started their applications yet? – Mrs Stewart**

We have been encouraging all Year 12 learners to register for UCAS, even if at this stage they are not sure whether or not they wish to go to university in 2021 or 2022. By the end of the day on Friday 19 June 161 students [59.2%] had done so and started their applications.

**Reminder: Cancellation of Year 12 work experience programme – Mrs Ashby**

Whilst undertaking meetings with Year 12 students and parents this week, we have become aware that some families had not seen an announcement in the newsletter on 7th May 2020 where we informed of the decision to cancel the Year 12 work experience programme. Work experience was originally scheduled for Monday 29th June – Friday 3rd July 2020. The on-going changes to the way education is delivered to our students, alongside the very uncertain times that local businesses find themselves and the continued need for social distancing, has meant that this is best decision for all involved. All employers who had so kindly agreed to host a student have been informed of its cancellation. An additional email regarding this has also been sent out directly to all Year 12 students today.

We continue to consider a number of alternative options and proposals to ensure that all students who wish to gain an experience of workplace in the coming year are able to do so and will outline plans as soon as possible. In the meantime, we will continue to make students aware of any virtual work experience opportunities available to them through the weekly student bulletin and the monthly careers opportunities bulletin.

Speakers for Schools work with 56 leading employers to offer Virtual Work Experience to young people across the UK. These include **PwC, Bank of England, Google, Spotify and Cisco.**

Students can register on the site, search and apply for opportunities. Our careers team is already registered with the site as schools/colleges are asked to review and approve any student applications from their college.

We already have a number of students using the system and would encourage all to take a look at what is on offer, opportunities change all the time, so if there is nothing of interest today, keep checking and that may change.

<https://www.speakersforschools.org/experience-2/>

If any students undertake virtual work experience we would encourage them to make Mrs Ashby aware of this by contacting her at [careers@wootton.beds.sch.uk](mailto:careers@wootton.beds.sch.uk).

### **Congratulations to Year 10 and Year 11 Young Fashion Designers – Mrs Rainford**

Several of my Year 10 and 11 pupils entered into the Young Fashion Designer Competition which was by online submission. Pupils had to research fashion from a bygone era and a key designer to design a capsule wardrobe inspired by their findings.

Five of our pupils have received HIGHLY COMMENDED certificates for their work. We are all very proud of them as this work has all been completed at home and all of the pupils have taken time, care and effort in their entries. The pupils are Chloe Carter, Elise Carter, Paige Macrae, Maddison Rowley and Bridie Spelman.

We entered the Midlands section which is entered by Schools all over the Midlands counties. Many congratulations and well done to one and all.

### **Distance Learning Work for next week**

We will send the work our pupils will be doing at home next week on Monday. Pupils in Year 11 should continue to work on the Kimberley bridging project work. More than 400 potential Kimberley learners are currently completing bridging projects.

### **Links to the Students Bulletin and this week's assembly**

Assembly YouTube link

[https://youtu.be/lwnN8a4\\_4Tc](https://youtu.be/lwnN8a4_4Tc)

Mr Spurling leads this week's assembly on YouTube on seven good habits to help us all to return to normality.

Bulletin YouTube link

<https://youtu.be/ICrUs91tWkK>

### **Summer Solstice**

Today, marks the longest day of 2020, the summer solstice. Every day has seemed to be very long just recently.

On your behalf, I would like to thank the staff of the Trust for all they are doing for our pupils and students. Equally on behalf of the staff, I thank you all for your support of the College and the School.

If you will permit me, I will end the letter with a quote from a newsletter I received yesterday from my own professional association which included this lyric by Morrissey:

***"It's so easy to laugh, it's so easy to hate, it takes guts to be gentle and kind."***

... it takes guts to be gentle and kind

This weekend, which includes the longest day of 2020, let's hope all of us, parents/carers, governors, staff and, most of all, our pupils and students have the time and headspace to be gentle and kind to each other and to ourselves. We all deserve it.

Yours sincerely

Michael Gleeson

**Executive Principal**

Wootton Academy Trust

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