

**Wootton
Academy Trust**



Becoming Wootton Academy – update No. 5 – March 2026

March was another extremely busy month, and the site remains a hive of activity during the Easter break too. There is lots to update people about in this edition, so we hope you find it useful as we continue our preparations for September.

As ever, we love hearing from people and if there is something you'd specifically like to know about, please tell us! Keep the feedback and comments coming, through our website or emailing us on hellowootton@wootton.beds.sch.uk

Site works

Here's the regular update photo on the new block. It's coming on nicely, and now builders are digging out a nice wide path down the side of it, to ensure we can get students on-and-off the tennis courts quickly and smoothly.

The new path will be here

And a lovely peaceful courtyard will be created here – great for students to sit and relax outdoors.



We talk constantly about how we can ensure the best possible “flow” around the site. It's something that is often overlooked as schools develop, and yet it is one of the most important factors in helping students get to lessons on time and in a peaceful fashion. We're lucky to have so much space and so many specialist facilities - the key is to make sure people can get from place to place safely and efficiently.

With this in mind, we're paying close attention to detail and doing lots of little and big things to improve flow, and over Easter we are kicking off several specific improvements, including:

Creating a new path at the front of school, so folk don't have to walk across the grass to get to reception, and more students can safely get to the main gate in the morning



Remodelling the front courtyard, so that there is more space for our morning lineup, and a bigger area for students to relax in at break and lunch.



There will also be improvements to our bike shed, wider steps in the front courtyard near art, a new access/exit route for the tennis courts, plus an additional route between the main corridor and the new rear courtyard as well. In themselves they're not the most exciting of things, but they'll make all the difference in our day-to-day movement.

More pictures on these to follow over the next few months!

March 2nd – National Offers Day

We were delighted to be making so many offers to families at the start of the month. We are aware that there are a decent number of "late" applications in the system too and expect offers to be made for these shortly.

A massive thanks to Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire admissions staff for working so closely with us on all of this. Handling so many extra applications meant more work for people, but they have been superb at keeping us in the loop on things. This has enabled us to think about next steps at each part of the process and work out how to best support families and their children as a result.

It has been heartening to see so many parents choose us for their child and now that we have firmer numbers, we're getting on with the next stages of planning: form groups, timetable organisation, and so on.

A reminder that it's still not too late to apply to join us this autumn – we're still taking queries from people, and have another set of tours in the diary for interested families.

If you want to apply for a place for your child, **just contact the admissions team at your Local Authority and say you want your child to join Wootton in September.** They will point you to the relevant form for the year group in question.

- If you live in Bedford Borough you can email them on admissions@bedford.gov.uk
- If you live in Central Beds you can email admissions@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or call 0300 300 8037

We've already planned for slightly more students in Years 7 and 8, so we still have spaces available for these and Year 9 for people applying through the summer term.

And please do come and visit us for a tour anytime – [just drop an email and we'll book you in](#) on a convenient date.

New appointments – and new Heads of Year!

I mentioned in my last newsletter that we'd been chuffed to bits with our first round of adverts and interviews for September jobs. We were very clear about the quality required to appoint people – “The Sophie Test” - and held firm in this regard.

It meant that for some posts we went out for a second time, but the good news is that **we have now recruited all-but-one of the additional teachers needed for September!** (We need one more French teacher – so if you know anybody [who might be interested in this, send them our way!](#))

This month we also ran a process to interview and appoint two additional Heads of Year. We were blown away by the number and quality of applicants, both external and internal to Wootton. (It was so lovely to see brilliant teachers from other schools apply, as well as existing colleagues.)

Mrs McMorn and the team had the really difficult task of shortlisting and interviewing people, and ultimately **appointed two wonderful folk to our pastoral team.**

When we get back from Easter, we'll be interviewing for Heads of House – a new role created with becoming a secondary in mind, to help us have an even warmer and stronger culture going forward. Once we've done these, we'll update everyone on all these appointments in one go, and then colleagues will start working our prospective students and their families!

All-in-all, we're delighted with how the team is shaping up. With five months to go, we have:

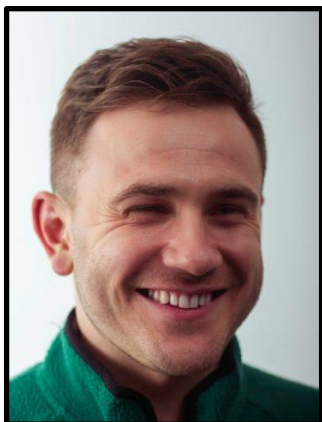
- got nearly all extra posts filled already;
- arranged for lots of new colleagues to start with us in July, so we can induct them before the summer and they can hit the ground running in September;
- a clear plan for training colleagues in the important differences in working with Years 7 and 8;
- extra Heads of Year appointed, and Heads of House about to be appointed; and
- plans for students leaders to be recruited and trained before the summer, to help with the first few days and weeks in the autumn.

Performing Arts at Wootton

We're really proud of our heritage when it comes to the Performing Arts at Wootton.

The school has long been renowned for the range and richness of opportunities available to students here. Our annual musical and dance showcases are second-to-none in terms of quality. Students are able to take part in a variety of drama performances and competitions too.

However, we know that we want to go further in all of this in future! With this in mind, I've asked one of our wonderful alumni to work with the team **to develop an ambitious and inclusive Performing Arts Plan for Wootton and Kimberley.**



Tom Syson is a professional trumpeter, Wootton resident, and an all-round nice guy. He was a student here between 2006 and 2011, before heading to Birmingham Conservatoire to study Jazz Trumpet. He also helped organise our wonderful 50th anniversary concert last autumn.

He's currently working with our dance, drama and music staff to develop ideas. After Easter we'll be sending out a survey to all our current and future students and families to find out how many existing or budding musicians, dancers and performers we have in our midst!

We're keen that every student has the chance to learn to play an instrument or perform during their time with us. I know how much discovering music changed my life as a teenager. It's what I wanted for my own daughters, and it's what we want for all our students too. So **watch this space** – we hope to have some exciting announcements to come in this regard over the next few months!

MP visit to find out more about our plans

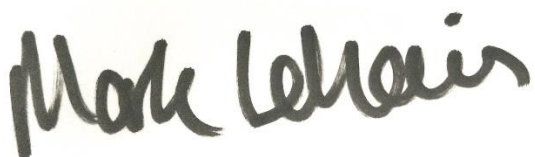


Our local MP Blake Stephenson visited a couple of weeks back. Amongst other things, he was keen to understand how our plans for secondary were coming along, and grab a peek at the new building out the back. (Somehow we have lost the compulsory photo of him in hi-vis and a hard hat!)

He came as part of our growing programme of guest visitors. We want our students to meet loads of interesting and important people, to inspire them to join those ranks when they grow up.

That's all for March's newsletter – have a wonderful Easter and we look forward to sharing lots more news next month!

All the best,



Mark Lehair

Executive Headteacher, Wootton Academy Trust