

Friday, 14 February 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are all well. As our students and staff prepare for the half term break, I would like to share with you some of the highlights of the term so far.

New Year's Resolutions

We have had an incredibly positive start to 2025 with students continuing to display positive attitudes to their learning and respect for others. In the first week back, all year groups attended an assembly from me on the theme of New Year's Resolutions. I spoke about my own resolutions to try and make every minute count, to listen to those who know better and to show a growth mindset. I encouraged the students to do the same by working hard in every lesson, listening to their teachers' advice and guidance and showing some self belief, especially when things get tough.

I am very happy to say that our students have embraced this fully as evidenced by a record number of achievement points being logged since January - over 79,000! I have also enjoyed starting everyday delivering over 100 Headteacher awards to students who have shown excellence in their learning, character, community and/or achievement.

Teaching & Learning Excellence

Another highlight this term has been having Headteachers from three other Kent schools coming to see for themselves the fantastic teaching and learning that takes place here at The Sittingbourne School. They all commented on the great practice seen across the school and were very complimentary about the excellent effort and behaviour from the students both in lessons and moving around the school. The staff and students made the school proud!

Exam Preparations

Our Year 11 students started the term finding out their mock exam results from November, and there was a lot to celebrate. Across the board there were significant increases in the average grades students received compared to last year. We have also seen more students reach important benchmarks including the proportion of students passing both English and Maths and the amount of students passing at least five GCSEs including English and Maths. I spend a lot of time visiting Year 11 lessons and it's been great to see the hard work taking place in class. Year 11s have their second set of mock exams after half term and, if their effort in class and the increasing amount of homework being completed is anything to go by, I expect to see even more improvement. Well done Year 11 and keep up the good work!

Year 12 Work Experience

This term our Year 12 Sixth Form students took part in a week of work experience. Students undertook a range of experiences in the local community and schools as well as some completing theirs in London

and Birmingham! Sectors included, catering, law, health and social care, education, hair and beauty services, hospitality, local retail, administration, fitness, animal care and a range of trades. We also had a group of students who completed their work experience on site offering a helpful hand across different departments.

There were a number of successes with two students being offered apprenticeships upon the completion of the time in sixth form. Oliwia K has been offered a Business Administration Apprenticeship at EKC with Archie D offered a Personal Training Apprenticeship at S Leisure Centre.

The Sittingbourne School Sixth Form would like to thank all employers for providing these opportunities for our students and congratulate the Year 12 students for representing our school so well over the course of the week.

Facebook

As always, I highly recommend you head over to Facebook to see all the amazing things taking place here at The Sittingbourne School. This term alone there are posts about our Dance Showcase, engineering visits to businesses and Christmas cards from our French pen pals. Search for The Sittingbourne School on Facebook to see much more.

Next term

Looking ahead to next term, we have the following announcements:

Mobile phones

Please join us in reminding the students that if a mobile phone is brought into school then they must be switched off and in bags. They cannot be left in pockets. We also politely ask that you don't call or accept calls to/from your children. As our Mobile Phone policy states:

"accepting a call or reading a message from a parent/carers during the school day may result in the child's phone being confiscated"

If you need to contact your child, please call reception who will be able to pass a message on.

Attendance

This term we will continue our relentless push to increase student attendance. Parents and carers should be aware that if a child arrives at school after 9.10am then they will be considered as absent for the morning. This is as a result of guidance from the Department for Education and in line with all other schools.

Lost Property

As you can imagine, a school with over 1,600 students has a lot of lost property. If your child has lost something and you would like to know if we have found it, please use our new The Sittingbourne School email address: tss-lostproperty@swale.at

Parent & Carer Surgeries

As you will hopefully know by now, I feel strongly that parents and carers need to have their voices heard when it comes to how the school operates. Therefore, next term we'll be holding a range of surgeries for parents and carers to come in and speak to key staff about either their child or an aspect of the school they have questions or concerns about.

A member of Swale Academies Trust

Below are the dates for the surgeries. Please call the school office if you would like to book a 10 minute meeting slot between 3.15pm and 6.00pm.

- Year 9 - Tuesday, 4 March 2025 (please note this is not the same as Year 9 Progress Evening that is on Thursday, 13 March 2025)
- Year 10 - Monday, 17 March 2025
- SEND - Tuesday, 18 March 2025
- Year 11 - Wednesday, 19 March 2025
- Year 8 - Thursday, 20 March 2025
- 6th Form - Thursday, 20 March 2025
- Year 7 - Friday, 21 March 2025
- Headteacher Surgery - Thursday, 27 March 2025

PTA

We are also looking for parents and carers to join our PTA. Please click on this [link](#) if you would like to help us make The Sittingbourne School the best school around:

Parent/Carer parking

Can I please politely remind parents and carers who pick up their children in the car after school to show consideration for our neighbours. In particular, please avoid parking or waiting on the cul-de-sac part of Swanstree Avenue. Our neighbours there are becoming increasingly frustrated by people blocking access to their homes.

Thank you

As always, I would like to end by publicly thanking all The Sittingbourne School staff for all the hard work they do for our students day in, day out. We are lucky to have such dedicated staff going above and beyond for our students.

I hope that whatever you have planned, that you have a good week over the half term break and I look forward to seeing all of our students back in school, ready to learn by 8.35am on Monday, 24 February 2025.

Warmest regards



Mr N Smith
Headteacher