



Smithdon High School
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Dear parents

Well here we are at the end of the 2024-25 academic year - another hugely successful and productive year.

There have been so many trips, events and co-curricular opportunities that students have got involved in, let alone the basic teaching and learning that has gone on. It has been fantastic to see so many of you supporting the most recent events, celebrating the children's successes and skills - from the DofE Presentation Evening, to the school summer concert and the KS3 Prize Giving Evening, to name just 3.

This term has also seen us, sadly, say "goodbye" to staff moving on to other ventures, for which I wish them all well. Mrs Barnes has also safely delivered a newborn son and embarked on her maternity leave.

Next academic year we will welcome some new staff into our community: Mrs Williams to the English department, Miss Abdul-Mumuni to the MFL team and Mr Ajeyi covering Music.

Our key focus areas next year will be around wellbeing and attendance, so expect to see much more on these from September in newsletters, the Smithdonian and at our parent information evenings.

Wellbeing

This year we have already employed more hours from our external counselling services, provided more opportunities to engage with Alternative Provision, and moved to a rewards focussed approach - with over 175,204 rewards events recorded this year (compared with 155,807 in 2023-4) - that's 230,361 rewards points in total which is 50,000 more than last year! [For completeness this year has seen just 8,638 consequence events recorded, compared to 13,074 in 2023-4, reflecting improved behaviour in school].

Next year will look more at supporting students to build their resilience, growth mindset and flourish in an ever changing world - including helping them to develop strong relationships with their peers and all those in our community.

Attendance

As I have previously reported, our attendance figures are well below national and Norfolk data, which means many children are missing out on multiple opportunities available in school, from socialisation to trips/clubs as well as missed learning, so we will be trying to improve attendance and support parents and students to address barriers to attendance.

While our approach to this will be around offering support, guidance and interventions, we will be communicating much more about attendance and asking for more information from parents regarding absences. Some of you with children in Yr10 and Y11 will shortly be receiving a letter inviting you and your child to a meeting with myself and Miss Clarke, the attendance officer, on our second INSET day (2 September) in order to begin this approach, others in all year groups may receive a check-in call on 2 September from the Pastoral or SEN teams to see if you need any support to get your child into school after the long summer break.



Additionally, we will be sharing a parental questionnaire with all parents towards the end of the summer holidays for you to inform us of any concerns regarding your child's return to school and to update us regarding anything that has happened over the summer holiday. Please use this to request a supportive call if you feel you would benefit from this.

September return

We look forward to welcoming students back as follows - with some adjustments to our induction programmes, to reflect our focus on wellbeing:

- **Wednesday 3 September** - Yr7 and Yr11 Induction Day
 - For Year 7, this will reflect recent years with an emphasis on transition, meeting form tutors, learning the basics and getting to know their new peers
 - For Year 11, this will be a day based on rotations
 - 2 hours with their tutor, receiving their new timetable and beginning their post-16 application process
 - 1 hour workshop with the West Norfolk Mental Health Support Team, focussing on maintaining a healthy approach to this exam year
 - 1 hour session with Mr Chapman on revision techniques, revision timetables and how to spread the load of Year 11 work
 - 1 hour workshop with Mrs Gibbins (me) on Growth Mindset and building a resilient approach to every day challenges and learning
- **Thursday 4 September** - all students return

May I take this opportunity to wish you a fantastic summer - hoping the rain fades away and the warmth and sun return soon.

Yours sincerely

A. Gibbins

Mrs A Gibbins
Headteacher