

22 March 2024

Dear Families

I hope that with the promise of Spring just around the corner this letter finds you all well. Before we head into the Easter holidays, I wanted to give you an update on some of the things that we have been working on at school.

Uniform Update

Firstly, I am pleased to say that after consultation with all stakeholders including our students, we will be introducing a **tailored, charcoal grey school short** to the uniform after Easter. Having these as a permanent addition to the uniform will negate the need for students to wait for us to decide if or when they can wear their PE shorts during times of extreme hot weather. I am sure these will be particularly welcome by students in the warm weather but please note that only tailored charcoal grey shorts will be permitted.



Whilst this is a welcome development, it is important that we maintain our high expectations for the wearing of school uniform which is a key element of anyone wishing to be part of our community. Any student who arrives wearing anything other than the correct uniform can expect a discussion to take place and subsequent steps made to rectify the situation. This may include giving them a replacement item of uniform for the day or keeping them out of circulation until the correct uniform can be brought into school by a family member.

Uniform Supplier

Due to circumstances beyond our control we have had to make a change to our **uniform supplier**. I would like to thank Philip Mann for their wonderful service over many years and their support in our transition to a new supplier who will be starting after the Easter holidays.

When looking at alternative suppliers we wanted to prioritise consistency in the uniform itself alongside costs. I am pleased to say that the overall cost of the uniform has not increased and in fact you will find some items are now cheaper.

Our new supplier, Taylor Made Uniforms, is a family run business based in Faygate, West Sussex and they are really looking forward to working with us. This will however mean that there will be a few small changes to how you order and collect uniform, particularly as we will no longer be able to run the uniform shop onsite.

- The supplier will be available at some of major school events such as Open Evening and will also run a pop up shop on the first Thursday of every month throughout the year (with the exception of July (they will attend Year 6 induction evening) and September (they will come on the 2nd Thursday) and every Thursday across the month of August. This service will be available 2.30-6pm.
- When ordering online you will have the option to select a click and collect service; arrange delivery directly to your home (for a charge) or directly to school (free of charge)
- Further details can be found on their website <https://www.taylormadeuniforms.co.uk/>

Staffing



I have previously mentioned the challenges schools are facing in terms of recruiting high quality staff, a situation worsened amongst other reasons, by poor recruitment into the profession. A recent article in the TES outlines fears of under recruitment for the third year running. Last year the government missed its target for secondary teacher trainees by 50%, rising to 75% in some areas such as physics.

Despite this we are doing all that we can at Sackville to both retain and recruit new staff, to ensure all classes have a specialist teacher and that we can continue to run the broad curriculum we are really proud of.

Whilst the situation still remains a challenge with more movement expected before the end of the academic year, I wanted to take the opportunity to share with you that we have been successful in making a number of significant permanent appointments, in areas such as Maths, Science, B&V, DT and Modern Foreign Languages. A few of these will start with us after May half term and the remainder in September.

We provide ongoing training for teachers and support staff to do their jobs to the best of their ability and to assist the management of workload (one of the key factors in people leaving the profession). Focused training is also taking place for those colleagues who are with us on short term contracts and our cover supervisors for whom it is more difficult for them to get to know students and build up those all important relationships due to not having consistent timetables.

Families focus group

We would like to invite any parent/carer to our next Family Focus group scheduled for **Friday 19 April, 4pm**. Topics to be discussed will include our **mobile phone policy** following the government's recent updated guidance and plans for how we are looking to **extend our school day**, also to ensure we are in line with government expectations by September 2024. Many of you will recall we had to put these changes on hold last year due to difficulties we had with bus timetables. If you would like to attend, please complete the following form no later than Tuesday 16 April.

[Families Focus Group, Friday 19 April](#)

I wanted to conclude by sharing what a fabulous week it has been with a number of fantastic events. I was immensely proud of our Sixth Form Student Leaders for the amazing quiz night on Tuesday and that last night's Sports Presentation Evening was a real celebration of so many students and their sporting endeavours. I am really pleased that we have been able to resurrect the evening and look forward to many more ways of celebrating our students' achievements over the coming months and into next year.

Kind regards,



Jo Meloni
Headteacher



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