

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We last sent out a news bulletin in July, but as we reach the middle of Term 1, please bear in mind the following items of information:

**Term 1** ends on Thursday 17th October at the usual time of 3.10pm.

**Term 2** begins on 4th November (Day 6) and ends on Friday 20th December.

**Attendance:** Please remember that 90% attendance over a year means 4 weeks of missed school. Congratulations to the following form groups which have the highest attendance so far:

Year 7 - 7Pi: 100%

Year 8 - 8Br: 99%

Year 9 - 9Br, 9Th and 9Ri: 98%

Year 10 - 10Br and 10Th: 98%

Year 11 - 11Ri, 11To and 11Ca: 97%

Year 12 - 12Th: 99%

Year 13 - 13To, 13Ri and 13Br: 97%

**Reports:** A Term 1 report will be issued to all year groups at the end of Term 1.

**Mock Exams:** these commence for Year 11 on 11th November, and Year 12 class tests begin on 4th November.

**Year 9 GCSE option choices:** GCSE Options Evening is scheduled for 29th January, and the deadline for choices is 7th February. To assist students in making wise choices, our Careers Coordinator Mrs Harman, along with Head of Middle School Mr Coate, will be delivering guidance assemblies and providing important information on Unifrog. Students should keep an eye out for further details.

**Year 9 Science Test:** to help us give a recommendation for GCSE Triple or Combined Science, Year 9 students will be taking a science test on Tuesday 5th November in the morning during period 1. Revision material will be published by the Science Department.

**Year 11 Sixth Form Applications:** Sixth Form open evening takes place on Thursday 16th January starting at 6.30pm. Year 11 students should attend. Applications open on 1st January and close on 6th February. Further details will be on the school website in due course.

**Year 7 Parents Evening:** is on Tuesday 19th November via SchoolCloud. Those staff who teach more than 3 classes will have additional slots available on a second date. Year 7 parents will be contacted a couple of weeks prior to the parents' evening with further details on how to access SchoolCloud.

**Online safety:** we continue to be mindful of the risks to our students associated with the increased time spent online. We make regular posts in Google Classrooms to help raise awareness and encourage sensible online behaviour, and strongly encourage parents to exercise heightened curiosity about what their son or daughter is doing online.

Keeping our students safe online is an absolute priority for the school.

Our various 'Acceptable Use' policies aim to set out what students should do to stay safe online.

The most important document is the [Student Acceptable Use Policy](#).

These provide common sense pointers on how to operate in the online environment.

In the unlikely event of having to implement remote learning, we have [a document](#) which addresses the dos and don'ts for safe online learning. A similar one exists for staff.

**Safeguarding:** permeates every aspect of our school and influences all decisions and actions taken by our staff. Our [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#) describes this aspect of our work, and the [Safeguarding pages](#) of our website are very useful. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mr Morris, and he is supported by 2 Deputy DSL's, 7 Heads of Year and 3 Heads of School/Key Stage. Each Key Stage has 2 or 3 non-teaching pastoral support staff. We have 5 Mental Health First Aiders, 4 Learning Support Assistants, 3 ELSA practitioners and 2 Counsellors.

If your son or daughter needs help or support, or you are worried about another child, please don't hesitate to contact us on [office@sjwms.org.uk](mailto:office@sjwms.org.uk) or [safeguarding@sjwms.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@sjwms.org.uk).

**Online safety parental support:** we want to [support parents around online safety](#). We recognise that for many parents with busy lives and various responsibilities it is not always feasible to maintain a grasp on advancing technologies. To help parents get familiar with topics such as social media, gaming and online harm, we will be hosting a [parents workshop](#) on Tuesday 11th February from 5.30pm to 6.15pm in the main hall.

**In addition,** we will also be circulating a monthly parental online safety resource, to help equip parents with the knowledge to help their children navigate the online world safely. [This](#) is the first one.

**Chromebooks:** these are a superb tool to enhance learning, but students need to work on their ability to manage their emails, task lists and Drive folders, and we will be doing some work in tutorials to assist this.

**Chromebook damage:** Chromebooks are an expensive resource and we ask that they are treated with consideration. A growing number of these devices are being intentionally damaged (for example, keys being removed, trim being peeled off, screens being cracked). Consequently, we will be introducing a charge to cover the repair bill.

**Reporting Absence:** Parents should report their child's absence each day either by email to [absence@sjwms.org.uk](mailto:absence@sjwms.org.uk), or via the My Child at School App. If no contact is received to explain an absence, the school's Attendance Officer will make contact with parents. Further information can be found on our website [here](#).

**Year 6 Open Day and tours:** we are enormously grateful to our Year 8 students who will be acting as guides and touring visitors around the school in the weeks before Open Day and at the event. Our guides always demonstrate all the character virtues that we aspire to develop within our students, and are great ambassadors for us.

**RHSE Policy:** we aim to ensure students are well prepared for the wider world and today's society through a full and thorough Relationships, Health & Sex Education (RHSE) curriculum. The curriculum

has been carefully collated and developed in order to provide pupils with knowledge that will enable them to make educated decisions on aspects of life, and make sound decisions regarding complex contexts throughout their time at SJWMS and beyond. Our RHSE Policy is [here](#) and we welcome parental feedback on any aspect of our RHSE provision. Please email [office@sjwms.org.uk](mailto:office@sjwms.org.uk) with any observations.

**Sports Fixtures:** when students attend offsite fixtures and sporting events the school makes students aware, who are then expected to inform parents. Parents are not communicated to directly by the school when their child is representing the school at a fixture or event off site.

All our fixtures can be found on <https://sport.sjwms.org.uk/>, our dedicated microsite. All players and supporters can find future games and current results on this site.

**Year 12 Parents' Evening:** Tuesday 3rd December, using the SchoolCloud software.

**Carol Service:** Monday 9th December at Rochester Cathedral at 7.30pm. Keep an eye out for more details.

**Clubs and societies:** we offer a range of activities to engage our students outside the classroom. The list is on our [website](#).

**Homework club:** takes place on Mondays to Thursdays for all year groups from 3.10 to 4pm in the DaVinci block.

**Careers newsletter:** Our Term 1 careers newsletter can be viewed [here](#)

**Student conduct:** students continue to show very positive and mature attitudes. We will always place a premium on courtesy, civility and manners, and are pleased to see these remain. Some students may be out of practice with our expectations about work, effort, conduct, routines and manners. Next-day detentions are a key part of this, and we ask for parents' continued support in ensuring students behave and work exceptionally well. Here is a [guide](#) to what we expect.

**School calendar** please check this regularly. School events, such as Parents' Evenings, inset days, mock exams and other events can all be found on our school calendar which is on our website: <https://sjwms.org.uk/events/>

**RMSA, Secondhand Uniform:** We continue to be immensely proud of the tireless fundraising efforts of our parents association, the RMSA. [Click here](#) to find more details including how to volunteer your time.

The RMSA have adopted a new way for parents to purchase second hand uniform using [uniformd.co.uk](http://uniformd.co.uk). Please visit this site if you would like to see what 2nd hand uniform is currently available and to make a purchase.

**Non-Uniform Day:** our next non-uniform day takes place on Wednesday 20th November. More details will follow nearer the time.

**Library Books:** Please view the information regarding library book loans, returns and library usage [here](#).

**Cucina:** Our catering service is provided by Cucina, a private company on contract with all Leigh Academies Trust schools. All food service, [menu choice](#) and payment systems are managed by this company. Cucina welcomes feedback from parents and can be contacted at [catering@sjwms.org.uk](mailto:catering@sjwms.org.uk) or [sjwms@impactfood.co.uk](mailto:sjwms@impactfood.co.uk)

**Wisepay queries:** Wisepay is the system by which parents pay for all activities and services (school fund, trips, catering balances, revision guides, chromebook contributions, etc). Any Wisepay queries (most frequently password reset or account access issues) should be directed to [office@sjwms.org.uk](mailto:office@sjwms.org.uk). These will be dealt with during term time only.

**Incorrect kit for PE & Games:** a reminder that as with school uniform we expect students to wear appropriate PE and games kit. The requirements can be found [here](#). Students who wear incorrect kit can expect to be sanctioned, these are called 'K' sanctions to differentiate them from other behaviour sanctions.

**Parking:** as many more parents are driving students to school please be mindful of safe and considerate driving and parking when dropping off and collecting students before and after school. Local residents and general members of the public have contacted us regarding cases of inconsiderate parking and dangerous driving on Maidstone Road. The safety of our students when travelling to and from school must remain a priority. Driving onto the school site is **not** permitted before or after school to help keep our students safe, unless previously agreed in advance with reception. Please consider parking safely further away from the school to meet your son/daughter.

**Mobile phones:** a reminder that if pupils in all Year groups make their phones visible, or attempt to use them during the school day at any time (except in a classroom at the invitation of the teacher), they will be confiscated. The item will be given to the relevant Pastoral Office (Lower or Middle School) who will contact parents. The phone will only be returned if collected by a parent. Sixth Formers will be invited to collect their own phones if they are confiscated.

**Year 11 intervention:** each subject has a fixed revision/intervention slot after school once a fortnight. We encourage our Year 11 students to attend to help them through their GCSE courses. Students should speak to their subject teacher if they are unsure of any details. The intervention timetable is [here](#).

**Character Merits:** in order to recognise and reward the character traits we are seeking to develop in our students, we encourage staff to issue Merits for each trait. So far this year:

Ambitiousness/Excellence: 3,641 (academic merits)  
Courtesy: 78  
Acceptance: 23  
Respect: 7

Politeness: 37  
Determination: 741  
Self-discipline: 186  
Co-operation: 487

**House Events:** our fiercely contested House Championship is in full swing this year. Parents can keep up to date with all events and the current standings via our [House System website](#).

**Trips:** We look forward to the ski trip to Austria in February, the Year 8 PGL Dorset trip in July, the Bronze, Silver and Gold Duke of Edinburgh expeditions, as well as many curriculum trips which have been planned throughout the year.

Kind regards,  
School Office