

18 July 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to you at this end of the hugely important academic year for Wapping High School and at the end of my first full academic year as the proud Head of this amazing school.

This year has seen some pivotal changes in the school's focus and in the structure of leadership and management in the school. Our school has now also formed some new and potentially exciting national and international partnerships which we are determined to make the best of for the benefit of all of our students.

In terms of exam performance, although we were pleased with last year's results, this year we are predicting even better results, with again every leaving student going onto planned meaningful destinations.

Arguably, our stand out achievement this year was our performance in June's Ofsted inspection. The school has struggled to impress on Ofsted its true worth in the past and, as the final report arrived at School on Tuesday this week, I can now formally announce we have been classified as a Good School in all categories.

This is a wonderful achievement and I'm proud of our students and staff alike who were collectively determined to show off how proud we all are of our great school. I have included an electronic version of the report with this emailed letter and a downloadable version is available on the school's website. As I stated in a recent letter home, I will be inviting everyone to join Governors and Staff in an evening event in September where we can celebrate our collective achievements together. More details will follow soon here but I genuinely hope you can join us.

In terms of developments here at Wapping High, we begin our new weekly structure model in September and here is a summary of motives and details prepared by myself and Kerstyn Comley, Chair of Governors.

As I mentioned previously here, last year's GCSE results were some of the best in the Borough and predictions for this year's results are even stronger. We are fortunate at Wapping High School to have a highly diverse and engaging set of students as well as a talented staff team. However, some aspects of the school week and curriculum aren't working well and need to be improved.

- Enrichment happens at the end of a long school day. Consequently, it leaves students and teachers exhausted and is not of a standard that we expect nor does it contain a suitable range of engaging experiences.
- The current late finish and short slots for PE make it hard to arrange fixtures with other schools or benefit from extended training.
- As the school has grown and has faced challenges to staffing retention, the quality of Project Based Learning opportunity has fallen and essential opportunities to partner with external organisations such as universities and companies have diminished.
- The current timetable for students is insufficiently personalised; it requires more opportunities for individual intervention and opportunities for self-led study to help students prepare for successful higher learning and career success in the future.

In order to improve here, over the past few months we have been examining how other schools in both the UK and abroad tackle these problems. We would like to thank all the parents and students who have also contributed their feedback. If you haven't yet had a chance to share your views or perhaps were not aware of these discussions, don't worry. We would still really like to keep hearing from you.

From September, we propose to improve the school week by removing unnecessary activities like the afternoon registration and unnecessarily long lunchtimes and restructure Wednesdays to allow for more personalised and self-led learning. Unless parental permission is received for key stage 3 students to work from home on Wednesday, students in years 7 & 8 will benefit from a whole day focused around cross curricular project based learning with increased connection to external partner resources. Students in years 9 - 11 will have curriculum-based lessons in the morning and private study leave (in school or at home) or focused interventions in the afternoon. We are confident that the new weekly model will significantly step up the overall quality of the learning experience while maintaining quality across the entire curriculum. Fuller details are provided in the following section of this letter.

The new structure for Workshop Wednesdays and enrichment on Tuesday and Thursday.

Information for students in Key Stage 3 (years 7 & 8)

- Within the new Workshop Wednesday structure, Year 7 and 8 will now all enjoy a double lesson in the morning which will bring together STEAM, REAL learning and opportunities for creative design and collaboration. Students will be expected to work as teams and eventually formally present their achievements and outcomes to other groups or to create something new and innovative with their learning.
- Timetabled lessons will end on Wednesday at 13:00.
- On Wednesdays, following Full School Assembly after period 4, students with permission to leave will be dismissed.

- On Wednesdays, all students, including students entitled to free school meals, are very welcome to stay for school lunch following Full School Assembly.
- Students without permission to leave will be able to carry out supervised study and continue with their project based learning work until 15:40.

#### Information for students in Key Stage 4 (years 9, 10 & 11)

- On Wednesday, with parental and school permission, students may leave from 13:00.
- Students entitled to free school meals can stay for lunch.
- Any remaining Key Stage 4 students will be encouraged to use this independent learning time productively either through private study or by taking part in the sporting and creative activities that will be offered on Wednesday afternoons. By giving students responsibility for a small part of their school week it will better prepare them for the freedom that they will experience at Sixth Form and University.

#### General information

- Enrichment activities will run on Tuesday and Thursday from 14:40 to 15:40 for all students. In some instances activities may take place off site and with parental permission students will be dismissed from those locations. A full list of enrichment activities will be provided to students in the first week back in September.
- 1-to-1 coaching and personalised learning interventions will be provided to select students instead of enrichment.
- There will be more Project Based Learning opportunities for students at Wapping High School, more external learning opportunities to link to other educational and business partners and more Google Classroom set homework use.
- The new timetable will give teachers more time for further training and collaborative planning which will improve the quality of all learning and improve standards.

#### Starting back in the Autumn.

In terms of the start back after the Summer Break, please note all students need to return on Wednesday 3rd September. Our new Year 7 students need to come into school on Wednesday 3rd September at 8.25 am to meet with their Heads of House and Form Tutors and complete their important induction to school. Years 8 to 11 need to join us after Break at 11am where they will again have their new year induction and receive their timetable for all lessons.

There will be a full school assembly at the end of Period 4 then students from Years 9 to 11 will be welcome to leave after lunch as we begin our new week structure model. Years 7 and 8 will be invited to stay on their first day should parents indicate that they wish them too. Can you please contact the school office by email on [office@wappinghigh.org](mailto:office@wappinghigh.org) should you wish your child to stay to the end of the first day otherwise students will be at

dismissed lunch. Please note that if you have any questions on the above please contact me on [headteacher@wappinghigh.org](mailto:headteacher@wappinghigh.org) and I will respond quickly to any queries.

In summary, this is an exciting time to be a student at Wapping High School with so much going on as we now celebrate our successes but roll our sleeves up again for the new challenge of now stepping up towards Ofsted Outstanding.

Finally, I want to offer you all my own personal guarantee that I, the Governors and all Staff here at Wapping High School will remain absolutely determined to do all we can together to provide the very best educational experience available for every single one of our fantastic students and continue to transform Wapping High School into the best school in London.

Kind regards and thank you

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Nelson', written in a cursive style.

Gary Nelson  
Headteacher  
Wapping High School.