



April 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you had an enjoyable Easter break and are enjoying the signs of Spring emerging at last. I am writing to update you on some of the things which have been happening at Homewood, to flag up some forthcoming events and to ask for your continued support as we work together to make our school the very best it can be for our young people.

Good news

- Our netball teams have had a very successful season: Year 7 and Year 8 teams remained undefeated all season and go up to Division 1 of the local league. Year 9 came 2nd in Division 1- losing only 1 game. Year 10 were undefeated in the league and finished top of Div 2. Well done to all the girls in the Homewood Netball Teams.
- The Homewood Riding Team has enjoyed a great deal of success in the Show Jumping and Eventing competitions they have entered this year. Over Easter, the Homewood Team came first at both heights in their latest Show Jumping competition and their next outing will be to the Hickstead Championships in May.
- The Duke of Edinburgh students have worked very hard this year and we currently have students working towards Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards. Our Gold DofE group survived the snow and freezing temperatures in the Peak District over Easter to successfully complete their practice expedition before heading off to the Lake District in July for their final expedition.
- Homewood staff and students worked hard to achieve the most successful fundraising for Sports Relief ever - £1764 raised during the week, placing Homewood in the top 3% of fundraisers for Sports Relief in the country this year. Highlights included the overnight 24 hour runathon and the sumo wrestling suit worn by various teachers throughout the day on Wednesday. Lots of fun was had by all and for such a good cause. Many thanks to our student Sports Leaders and to Miss Kennett who led the planning for the event, supported by many other staff and students.
- Our newly formed STEM Team (Science Technology Engineering and Maths) have been competing very successfully in their first year and have reached both the KnowHow2 Finals and the Bright Sparks Finals which will take place later this term.
- Three of our A-level artists exhibited their work alongside professional artists in the recent Tenterden Art Show.
- Dr Claire Tyson, our resident Teacher Researcher, has had a number of her research projects published and presented in academic circles; most recently it has been confirmed that her analysis of Homewood's approach to providing a holistic "Whole Education" is to be published on the Sage Research Methods web-site.
- Our Year 13 and 14 students have been very successful in gaining offers from their chosen Universities. Our Head Boy, Max, has been offered a place at Oxford along with offers from four other Universities. Congratulations and best wishes to him and to all those now working hard to achieve the grades they need to confirm their places.

Principal: Mrs S J Lees MA (Oxon) NPQH

ASHFORD ROAD, TENTERDEN, KENT TN30 6LT • Tel: 01580 764222 Fax: 01580 766267 Email: info@homewood.kent.sch.uk

www.homewood-school.co.uk

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- We were honoured to be able to host two heart screening days for young people over the Easter holidays. These were organised through the charity CRY (Cardiac Risk in the Young) by @TeamBenHammond – the local organisation set up in memory of our student Ben. The medical team screened 198 young people over the two days and they hope to organise further days like these in the future.

Sam Cox “Mr Doodle”

Many of you will be aware that one of our ex-students, Sam Cox, aka Mr Doodle, is pursuing a very successful career as a professional artist. He has gained a wide variety of professional commissions both in the UK and abroad and is currently preparing for his largest exhibition yet which will take place in Seoul, South Korea next month. Despite his incredibly busy schedule, he has very generously given of his time over the Easter break to complete a film/media mural in the corridor in the Da Vinci Arts College building. It is a superb piece of work and our students will enjoy identifying the film references he has hidden amongst his doodles. I hope you will take the opportunity to look at this next time you visit the school.

Thank you

I want to thank you very much for your support this year with ensuring that students are meeting expectations with regard to uniform, punctuality, use of phones and positive attitudes to learning. The students are all looking very smart and they are arriving punctually for school in the mornings. Thank you also for supporting the new lunch study sessions we have set up for students who have been off-task during a lesson. These sessions have proved very successful in ensuring that lessons can be properly focused on learning without distraction and students and staff have responded well to the new system.

A few reminders

To help us keep the school running as smoothly and safely as possible, I need to ask for your support in a couple of areas:

- Despite regular reminders, we still have parents driving on to the school site to drop off or pick up their sons/daughters and this is causing a health and safety issue for students as they are leaving or arriving on the site. In addition, some parents are becoming quite rude to duty staff when they are reminded that they should not be bringing their cars on site. **Please respect the wellbeing of our students** and make arrangements to pick up or drop off at a convenient place off site.
- Please avoid arriving at school without an appointment to see a member of staff. We are always very happy to meet with parents, but it will be necessary to make an appointment as staff have very full diaries and teachers will be involved in lessons. The easiest way to make contact with us is to phone or e-mail your son/daughter's College Co-ordinator, or phone through to Reception so that our receptionist can put you in touch with the appropriate person to make the appointment for you.

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Premises Developments

We are currently awaiting feedback from Ashford Borough Council regarding planning permission for a brand new all-weather pitch to replace the Redgra area at the bottom of the school site. We hope to be able to start installation in the summer, with a view to having the pitch ready to use by October. It will provide a high quality playing surface for our students to use while they are in school but it will also benefit the wider community as it will be available for hire outside school hours. We are very excited about the opportunities this new facility will bring to our school and local community.

Tenterden Schools Trust

The Tenterden Schools Trust is now over a year old – we are really enjoying working so closely with the primary schools in the town and we are seeing benefits already for staff and students. We are likely to be expanding over the next six months with several of our local schools expressing an interest in being part of the Trust. We will keep you informed as discussions proceed. One of the tangible benefits of being a part of a Multi-Academy Trust is the opportunity it brings for drawing additional funding into the schools. So far this year we have been successful in gaining two capital grants from the Department for Education, one for the all-weather pitch and the other to replace the roof of one of our buildings. We have been awarded a grant to support the expansion of our Trust and we will also benefit from funds from the government’s school development fund which is providing an additional maths teacher for us next year. With school budgets exceptionally tight in the current climate, finding access to additional funding streams is very important for us. We are very pleased that despite significant funding constraints we have not reduced our curriculum offer at all and are still able to offer our students the full range of subjects and qualifications throughout the school, including the 6th form.

Forthcoming Events

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| • Week beginning 23 April | | Year 12 Pre-Public Examinations |
| • 25 April | | Public Exams begin |
| • 26 April | All day | STEM team in Know How2 Finals – East Malling |
| • 3 May | 9.30 am | Year 7 Tudor exhibition in the Library |
| • 7 May | | Bank Holiday – students not in school |
| • 17 May | 6.30 pm | 6 th Form Gala Evening in the Sinden Theatre |
| • 25 May | | End of Term 4 |
| • 4 June | | Start of Term 5 |
| • 13 June | | Drama Showcase |
| • 16 June | | Open Morning for prospective Year 7 pupils |
| • 25 June | | Public Exams finish |
| • 26 June | | Year 12 Parents Evening |
| • 29 June | | Staff Development Day (no students in school) |

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- Week beginning 2 July
 - 6 July
 - 10 July
 - 11 July
 - 12 July
 - 18 July
 - 20 July
 - 24 July
- Year 6 Induction Week; Year 8 move into Year 9
 - STEM Team in Bright Sparks Finals
 - Discovery College Sports Day
 - 3.00-4.00pm Year 7 Festival of Learning
 - Key Stage 4 Sports Day
 - 3.00-4.00pm Year 7 Festival of Learning
 - Junior Prizegiving Day
 - End of Term 5

And finally...

As we enter the examination season once again, I would like to pay tribute to the hard work and determination of our students. Many of the examinations are completely new in structure and in the way they are graded and the bar is being raised all the time so it is a challenging time to be taking GCSEs and A-levels. The vast majority of our students are rising to that challenge. They are showing resilience and perseverance and they are determined to do well. They are ably supported by their teachers who give unstintingly of their time and energies to prepare the best possible lessons and to provide additional support outside lesson time when it is needed. As parents, I know you are doing all you can to support them and I hope you have found the guidance we have provided on the web-site to be useful. As well as expecting them to be undertaking regular and effective revision, it is really important that we all encourage the students into good patterns of eating, sleeping and relaxing. If you have any concerns at all about how your son or daughter is coping with this time of preparation, please contact your College Office. There is a lot of support available at the school and we will do all we can to help them through this demanding period.

I really hope our students get the exam results they genuinely deserve and I look forward to sharing that news with you in the summer.

Yours sincerely

Sally J Lees

Principal

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