



# Information letter to parents/ carers of students in years 8 to 11

July 2010

Dear Parent/Carer

As we reach the end of another busy but successful school year I am writing to inform you of a number of changes that we will be introducing from the start of the new academic year in September. These changes will affect your child to some degree.

## **New Teaching Day:**

Following consultation and review the Governing Body has revised the Teaching Day with effect from the start of the Autumn term on Tuesday 7 September 2010.

The teaching day is:

<b>8.30am</b>	<b>Warning Bell</b>
<b>8.35-8.55am</b>	<b>Registration/Assembly/Movement</b>
<b>8.55-9.55am</b>	<b>Period 1</b>
<b>9.55-10.00am</b>	<b>Movement</b>
<b>10.00-11.00am</b>	<b>Period 2</b>
<b>11.00-11.20am</b>	<b>Break</b>
<b>11.20-12.20pm</b>	<b>Period 3</b>
<b>12.20-1.05pm</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>1.05-2.05pm</b>	<b>Period 4</b>
<b>2.05-2.10pm</b>	<b>Movement</b>
<b>2.10-3.10pm</b>	<b>Period 5</b>

From September we will be offering a number of Extended Learning Opportunities on both sites. These activities will run from 3.15pm and students will be able to select from a programme which will be issued at the start of term. Details will also be available on the school website.

## **Parents' Evenings:**

I recognise that our policy of operating an early closure on those occasions when the school was hosting a Parent's Evening did cause issues with a number of families and as a consequence of our new teaching day I am delighted to be able to inform parents that the only time we will operate an early closure during the 2010/11 academic year will be the last afternoon of each term when school will close at 2.40pm as a reward for our students.

During the 2010/11 academic year all our Parent's Evenings for years 7-11 will run from 3.30pm to 6.30pm and take place at Lower School. In addition our Open Evenings and Information Evenings will run at differing times and these will be published in student planners and on our website.

## **Holidays in Term Time:**

Many parents will be aware that children who attend East Riding schools are more likely to miss school due to their parents taking them on term time holidays than in any other area of the country. The impact



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of this missed schooling can be quite dramatic and in 2007 only 36% of students in secondary schools with more than 12 days absence achieved 5+A\*-C at GCSE compared to 91% of students with an average of 6 days absence. Obviously these figures have caused concern at Council level and as a consequence all Governing Bodies have been asked to adopt this County-wide policy. The Governors of Wolfreton have agreed to this request and as head teacher I will be adhering to the policy when considering parental requests. The policy is attached to this letter. Requests for term time holidays will be only considered where:

- Parents have to take their holidays in term time due to work commitments;
- There have been medical or emotional issues and it is recommended by a health professional that a family need rehabilitation time;
- Emigration is being considered;
- There is a family ceremony such as a wedding taking place in another part of the country or abroad.

In addition, head teachers will not under any circumstances, including those mentioned above, authorise holidays in the following circumstances:

- In the first six weeks of any term for any student
- Year 9 students during Options time
- No holidays will be approved at any time for students in Years 10 and 11.

I accept that this may cause upset for some families but since September 2009 I have not authorised holidays for students in Years 10 and 11 and we have seen an improvement in student attendance which can only be positive for their achievement. I welcome your support in this matter.

## **School Dress Code:**

Parents of female students will recall that I sent a letter before Christmas expressing our concern about the inappropriate length of skirts worn to school by a growing number of girls. At that time I asked for support in ensuring that girls attended school in appropriate attire. I am afraid to report that this approach seems to have had little, if any impact and as a result the governing body have approved changes to our school dress code. These changes mean that the school will not accept female students wearing tight fitting, short skirts and anyone attending school dressed inappropriately will be asked to resolve the issue or risk being sent home. This change has been introduced to ensure that students wear clothing that is appropriate for a safe-working, business-like school environment.

A number of other minor changes have been introduced and a full copy of the dress code is attached to this letter. The vast majority of our students attend school looking smart. Please support us by ensuring that when your child leaves home on a morning they are dressed appropriately and are consistent with the dress code.

## **Lunch time arrangements:**

It is the policy of Wolfreton School to keep all students in years 7 – 11 on site at lunchtime. This is to ensure that the whereabouts of all students is known and also it avoids students arriving late from lunch and aids a smooth start to learning in the afternoon. This policy has been in place for a number of years and it is probably even more relevant now that we have reduced the lunch break to 45 minutes.



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If a parent/carer wishes their child to leave the school site in order to go home for lunch then a lunch pass can be issued following a written request. It should be noted that this pass permits the student to go home and any student found abusing this system by leaving the site to visit the local shops will have their pass confiscated. Once again, I welcome your support in this matter.

## **Wolfreton – Howden Partnership:**

All schools are encouraged to work together in partnerships with the aim of raising standards and enhancing the educational experiences of all students. Our very successful sixth form partnership with Cottingham School and Hessle School is a good example of the benefits associated with collaborative working and as a school we recognise the value in working in this way.

For the academic year 2010/11 Wolfreton has been asked to support Howden School through a partnership arrangement and I believe that this will have benefits for both schools. The actual form of this partnership means that I will act as Executive Headteacher of Howden School in addition to remaining Headteacher of Wolfreton. In practical terms this means that I will spend a proportion of each working week at Howden, probably for 2 days each week. It also involves Garry Garghan, one of our Deputy Headteachers working at Howden as Acting Headteacher for the year.

The Governing Body of Wolfreton needed to be convinced that these arrangements would not impact on the progress of our school over the next year before they gave their approval for the school to enter into the partnership. I am pleased to report that they were reassured that Wolfreton School has the capacity at all levels of Leadership and Management to be able to support Howden School without a negative impact on our progress. I want to assure parents that I remain fully committed to driving Wolfreton forward over the coming years and therefore play my part in improving the life chances of all our students.

## **In summary:**

The academic year 2009/10 has been an eventful one, particularly since the General Election. It is apparent that there are tough times ahead for all of us and education will be affected by the impending cuts in public spending. Nevertheless I believe that as a school we are well placed to ensure that all young people leave Wolfreton School equipped with the qualifications, skills and experiences that will enable them to move successfully onto the next stage of their life. This is a big task and can only be achieved through partnership and your role as parents/carers is a vital one and I would like to acknowledge that your support is not only appreciated but also valued.

Can I take this opportunity to remind you that school will close for students at **2.40 pm on Friday 23 July.**

Have a good summer.

Yours sincerely

D A McCready

Headteacher