

Dear Parents and Carers,

This last half term has been one of many changes for both staff and pupils, focusing on a wider curriculum, structured lessons, new behaviour systems, and the pupil council. The whole school community has come together and embraced these changes which has led a calm school focusing on learning and meeting the pupils' needs.

Positive Change

We are delighted to report that our newly implemented school timetable has been v! Pupils have adapted incredibly well to the structured day, demonstrating inquisitive learning in lessons and taking great pride in the work they produce. This approach has allowed for deeper engagement in subjects. From excelling in classwork to actively participating in discussions, their hard work and commitment are something to be proud of. This week we started the first of our weekly awards certificates and for "readers of the week" and "resilient learners of the week," which the pupils took great pride in receiving. I am looking forward to awarding more in future weeks.

Another significant and positive change this term has been the introduction of our new behaviour policy. Pupils have been using the system to help them manage their own behaviours, especially when they face challenges. We want to extend a big thank you to parents for their continued support in reinforcing these positive changes at home.

Pupil Council Making an Impact

The pupil council has been very active, sharing their thoughts on a range of topics including food choices, school uniform, and the need for more staff trained to support the gym. They have also put forward strong requests for a sensory room, a calm room, and the return of Sports Day. The pupils have conducted themselves incredibly well, making a persuasive case for each point and representing their peers effectively. Additionally, they have played a key role in our recruitment drive, asking tough and insightful questions to candidates, and representing the school with pride.

Attendance Matters!

Regular attendance is vital for a child's success in school. This term we have seen a consistent improvement in pupils attending school, even if they have a cold. We encourage all parents and guardians to ensure their children attend every day unless they are seriously ill. Consistent attendance helps pupils stay engaged with their learning, build strong relationships, and develop positive routines. Let us work together to improve attendance and give our pupils the best possible educational experience!

Summer Uniform

As the weather gets warmer, we want to remind everyone that the school uniform must still be worn. However, we understand the importance of keeping pupils comfortable in the heat. A separate letter has been sent out detailing some adjustments to the uniform policy to help prevent overheating while maintaining our school's high standards.

Our first Academic review day was a fantastic success. Thank you for engaging with us as a school both on Teams and face to face, and for also completing the parent survey. All the points raised by parents will be carefully considered as we continue evolving as a school community. The pupils really enjoyed showing off their learning and their school. We look forward to one a half term going forward with the next one being on Friday 18th July.

Extracurricular Clubs Thriving Our extracurricular activities have been a major highlight this term! From sports to creative pursuits, pupils are embracing the opportunities available and discovering new passions.

- **Gardening Club:** The school garden is beginning to take shape beautifully. With pupils working hard to plant and care for various plants, we are looking forward to seeing the success of which fruits and vegetables grow over the coming months.
- **Football Training:** Excitement is in the air as football training sessions have kicked off. Our budding athletes are showing great determination, teamwork, and skill, making us hopeful for future competitions!
- **Arts and Crafts:** Creativity is thriving among our pupils! Many talented young designers are highlighting their skills through arts and crafts, producing wonderful and imaginative pieces. Their passion for design and creativity is truly inspiring.
- **Forest School:** Our Forest School sessions have been a fantastic opportunity for pupils to engage with nature, develop survival skills, and build confidence in an outdoor setting. From building shelters to learning about wildlife, pupils have been thoroughly enjoying hands-on learning experiences in the natural world.

The success of these activities highlights the well-rounded experiences our pupils are gaining, helping them develop essential skills beyond the classroom.

What has each class been doing this term?

Year 7 have been learning about angles, shapes, and symmetry in maths.

We have used our knowledge of turns to guide knights around a maze as well as comparing angle sizes in turns and 2D shapes. This led to us learning about the key features of 2D then 3D shapes. We drew and sorted 2D shapes, we used straws and plasticine to make 3D shapes, and we made shape nets. This really helped us to understand how many sides, edges, and vertices each shape has and why.

We loved learning about lines of symmetry in shapes and enjoyed folding different shapes to find those lines. We then progressed to using mirrors to help us create symmetric pictures, on paper and with our class resources.



Year 8 Grayswood have shown some amazing fishing and teamwork skills, helping pupils who are new to fishing to gain more experience. They have demonstrated great resilience through all weather conditions and used their fantastic teamwork skills to catch some very big fish! We are immensely proud of them!

Year 8 Newlands This term, the class has made remarkable progress in maintaining their attention and focus, demonstrating increased engagement in both group activities and individual tasks. Their contributions in Maths and English have been outstanding, showing significant effort and improvement. Notably, they have embraced writing more, overcoming initial reluctance, and actively participating in morning reading sessions. Additionally, they have shown great respect for the classroom environment, keeping it tidy and organized. Their dedication and growth this term have been truly commendable!



Yr 9 Box This term, our Year 9 class has enjoyed a mix of hands-on learning and exciting activities. In Food Tech, we have baked Dutch apple cake, made kebabs, cooked chicken curry, and perfected our pancake-making skills. We have also had the opportunity to attend ROAR Outdoor, where we have taken on boxing, ice skating, and football. In Science, we have been exploring the human body, while in Humanities, we have been learning about cities and how they function. It has been a fun and engaging term full of new experiences!

Year 10 This term the students have started work on their BTEC subjects- getting to know more about childcare, business, and sport. They have been looking at progression plans and how their chosen subject can support their future careers.

This term we have been looking at college courses and careers goals. Between business and childcare, we have started a mini project this has been looking at how to open a nursery. This has shown the students what encompasses starting a nursery and how to set this up. Looking at the different amenities that a nursery needs from a business point of view. As well as the childcare students looking at what each room needs to support the development of the children in a variety of different ages groups.

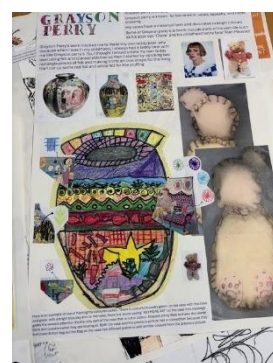
Btec sport has been focusing on the personal progression plans looking at their future choices and how they may get there. The second unit has been playing sport, this has focused on football and the individual elements that makes a good/ consistent footballer.

Yr 11 Pewley have spent the past term preparing for their upcoming Functional Skills exams which will begin next week. We have been thinking about the pupils' ambitions and interests to shape the plan for their next steps post-Grafham. We have been looking at different college courses, sending off applications and having college visits to help solidify these plans.

This term it has been great to see Alfie's passion for working with animals through his Dog Mentoring sessions with Sandra, where he has been teaching Clemmie some new tricks and skills. Will has been cooking up a storm in preparation for his Food Tech assessment meal and been practising his minted lamb recipe. Meanwhile, Milo has been teaching Emily and Zara how to 'actually play' basketball in between breaks in working hard towards his upcoming GCSEs.



Yr 11 Leith have been gearing up for their transition from Grafham to college. They are working hard to prepare for their Functional Skills assessments and GCSE exam, with a focus on key Maths and English topics, as well as completing past practice papers. Outside of academics, they are thriving in Art, Forest School, and Food Tech, where they are developing important life skills and enjoying creative outlets that complement their studies.



Looking Ahead – Year 11 Examinations and Leavers Morning Year 11 pupils will soon begin their examinations, marking an important milestone in their school journey. Their last day of school will be the date of their final exam. After completing their exams, Year 11 pupils will be invited back for a special leavers' morning to officially say goodbye and celebrate their time at school. Further details will be shared soon.

It has been a busy term, and I would like to thank my staff team for all their support in adapting to the changes and to the pupils and parents for joining us on the journey. We look forward to building on these successes and working together to ensure all our pupils can develop their academic knowledge and vocational and personal interests.

Thank you for your continued support. I hope you have a lovely Easter, and we will see pupils back on the 22nd April.

Louise Needham
Principal

Dates for your diary

April 2025

Tuesday 22nd April - Pupils Return to school.

May 2025

Monday 5th May - Bank Holiday

Monday 26th May – Friday 30th May - Half Term Holiday

June 2025

Monday 2nd June - All pupils return to school.

Friday 20th June - INSET DAY

July 2025

Thursday 17th July - Sports Day

Friday 18th July - Academic Review Day

Tuesday 22nd July - Pupils break for summer at 1pm