



VANDYKE UPPER SCHOOL

Responsible, Respectful, Resilient. World Ready.

Headteacher: Mrs L Ferguson-Moore

T: 01525 636700

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W: www.vandyke.beds.sch.uk

4 April 2025

Dear Parents and Carers.

At the end of another busy and productive term, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to you for your continued support and collaboration. Students have worked diligently, and we are seeing significant progress across all year groups both in their academic and extracurricular endeavours.

It has been a busy and productive term for Year 11 and 13 students. We have been so impressed with how they have risen to the challenge of their exam preparations embracing revision with gusto including attendance at after school revision sessions; walking talking mocks; and encouraging mock exam performances. All of this whilst juggling coursework deadlines and producing some truly excellent outcomes in practical exams. Students should be commended on their resilience, drive and determination.

It is important that students now build on this momentum over the Easter break. All subjects have provided clear resources and guidance both in printed form and on google classrooms, to support their revision. There are also a series of Easter sessions in school over the holiday. Full details can be found here: <https://vandyke.beds.sch.uk/students/extra-curricular/revision-sessions/>

We will also be publishing our pre-exam 'warm up' schedule when we return so that all students have the opportunity to spend time with their teachers ahead of each exam for final advice and guidance. All dates and session will also be published on our website.

This term has also been enriched by a variety of extracurricular activities and school trips, including visits to the Tower of London, Pinewood Studios, Ivinghoe, trips to build team work skills and careers events such as business networking breakfasts and STEM events led by Wadham College (University of Oxford). Our Duke of Edinburgh participants have embarked on challenging expeditions, developing valuable teamwork and resilience skills. We are incredibly proud of their dedication and achievements. Furthermore, our recent trip to Germany was a resounding success, providing students with an invaluable cultural and linguistic experience. The students' behaviour and engagement were exemplary, and we thank the staff who accompanied them for their dedication. We also have a group of students and staff currently in Italy; a trip which promises to be a wonderful experience for all.

Annual survey

We greatly appreciate the valuable feedback received from our recent annual parent survey. It was very pleasing to see the overwhelming sentiment that your children are safe and happy at Vandyke. Students also shared this strong belief. The range of subjects and opportunities were also recognised as a strength of the school, as our high expectations for our students' success.



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Your insights are instrumental in our ongoing efforts to improve and enhance the school experience for all. Some of your comments reflected your requirement for improved communication, especially when you contact us initially; we are currently reviewing how we can ensure this process can be improved, which includes how we publish contact details on the website and use Edulink as our primary communication platform.

There were also concerns raised about school toilets. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate that all toilets have been unlocked during lesson times and social times since early February. We continue to monitor the usage of our facilities however unfortunately there have been a few isolated incidents of misuse, including damage and vandalism. This is disappointing because the high cost of repairs takes money away from providing learning resources for students. Where these incidents have occurred, we have followed up with individuals and their families. We are currently putting in place a rolling programme of refurbishment of our toilets across the school and so the quality of our facilities will improve for all. Our expectation will continue to be that they are used with responsibility and respect.

We are also mindful of the few comments that you raise about your concerns about the impact of social media on young people. This has been brought to the fore of public consciousness too through the recent television series 'Adolescence'. As part of our ongoing education for our students about safe online activity, positive role models and seeking support where needed, we are reviewing our curriculum to ensure that we are also reflecting the world our young people are growing up in. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. We also have a very informative Facebook page, which regularly updates and shares local and national support networks and advice about how we can all keep our young people safe: [Vandyke Upper Pastoral Facebook](#)

We are in the process of contacting all parents and carers who have requested individual feedback about issues raised.

Careers education at Vandyke

We are very proud of our excellent careers provision and attached is our Careers Newsletter. We have very strong connections with our alumni and the local community; if you are able to offer any support in how we prepare our students for their next steps, please get in touch. Contact details are at the bottom of the newsletter.

Important dates for the summer term

- Tuesday 22 April – staff training day
- Wednesday 23 April – all students return to school
- Thursday 1 May – Post-18 opportunities evening for parents/carers and students in Year 12
- Monday 5 May – Bank holiday (school closed)
- Wednesday 21 May – Year 9 awards evening
- Friday 23 May – last day of half term
- Monday 2 June – all students return to school
 - *When we return to school in June, all students will receive new timetables and begin their new academic year. Year 9 will become Year 10 and start their GCSE courses, Year 10 will become Year 11 and Year 12 will become Year 13.*



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Please note Year 11 and 13 will be in school full time until the May half term. Further details will follow.

We will also be continuing our parent tours of the school. It is a wonderful opportunity to experience Vandyke during the working day. Please contact Mr Skelton via our main office email address if you wish to visit us.

First aid

A reminder that our first aid room does not provide pain relief for students. Students are allowed to carry one dose with them in their school bags to take if required. The same applies for hay fever medication as we move into the warmer season.

Safeguarding

Please see below our support resources available for parents, carers and students. The safeguarding team, Hannah Sides (DSL) and Claire Powell (DDSL) can be contacted over the Easter break by email on safeguarding@vandyke.cbeds.co.uk

- [Everything Ok?](#)
- [Parent/Carer Resources](#)
- [Children and Young People Resources](#)
- vandyke.beds.sch.uk - Support for Students

Finally, I would like to wish you and your families a restful and enjoyable Easter break. We look forward to welcoming all students back to school on Wednesday 23 April 2025.

Kindest regards

Leah Ferguson-Moore
Headteacher



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