



VANDYKE UPPER SCHOOL

Responsible, Respectful, Resilient. World Ready.

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December 2025

Dear Parents and Carers.

As the term draws to a close, we have been reflecting on our students' excellent progress and their numerous achievements over the past few months. As a school we have been focusing on praise and ensuring our students are recognised for demonstrating our school 'World Ready' values in their everyday approach to school by being responsible, respectful and resilient. So far this year, students across all year groups have been awarded a staggering 71334 of house points! It has been a pleasure to join the year teams as they have been holding praise assemblies to reward individuals and tutor groups for their excellence this term. A further group of students have been awarded the prestigious Headteacher Praise Awards for their outstanding efforts in school demonstrating our shared values. A huge well done to everyone!

The focus and commitment demonstrated by our students during the recent Year 11 mock and Year 13 BTEC examinations has been excellent. This proactive approach sets a strong foundation for their future success. We have seen outstanding dedication in all lessons, revision sessions and extracurricular activities - with some of the highest numbers ever attending after school Year 11 revision classes. We have been pleased to be able to share our learning culture with current Year 9 parents and carers who have toured the school recently during the working day. Please look out for more invitations, across all year groups, to spend time with us experiencing the excellent culture for learning here at Vandyke.

Thank you to all of our community who have supported our recent whole-school production of 'High School Musical' by coming to watch the performance, supporting with costumes and adding in extra pickups and drop offs to your day for students while they rehearse. Such great events only happen when the whole community works together and shows such strong commitment, talent, and teamwork. We have seen this displayed by every student involved—both on stage and behind the scenes— it was genuinely inspiring and thoroughly enjoyable. Our sporting teams have also had fantastic success, not only showing our students' talent, but also their teamwork and positive attitude across many areas and against many other schools in competitive matches. Please see the attached poster for our extensive extra-curricular offer next term. Our most recent copy of Vandyke Voice also shows just how much has been happening across, and beyond, the school this term: <https://vandyke.beds.sch.uk/latest-news/vandyke-voice/>

Year 9 have started their GCSE options choosing process. Assemblies explaining the process have taken place and many students have opted in to our 'taster sessions' programme to experience those subjects which are not on the Year 9 curriculum so they can make an informed decision about what they want to study in Years 10 and 11. We look forward to welcoming all students and parents/carers to our options evening in the new year to further support this process.



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As we look ahead to the new term, I must draw your attention to a few areas to ensure a smooth start in January.

School Uniform Policy Our approach to school uniform remains focused on providing a comfortable and relaxed environment that supports learning. However, we must ensure our standards are maintained. We remind all students that while comfort is key, items such as leggings and very short stretchy skirts are not permitted in our school uniform policy. Trousers can be flares or 'skinny' style, but we require that these have details such as pockets or zips, which means they are made of more robust, suitable material and are not sportswear. We appreciate your support in ensuring your child adheres to these clear guidelines. Letters have, and are being, sent home as reminders for some individual students who are not in the correct uniform. Full uniform details are on our website.

Mobile Phone Policy Our policy regarding mobile phones allows students to use their phones at social times across the school site. This supports our view that we want students to leave Vandyke as 'World Ready' young people, who know when it is appropriate to use a mobile phone (just as they will experience in their future workplaces). A significant part of this approach is students maintaining concentration during lesson time so they are fully present, focused, and developing critical communication skills. As part of this, we kindly ask parents and carers to please refrain from messaging your child during lesson hours. If there is an urgent matter, please contact the main school office, who will ensure the message is relayed appropriately. This simple step significantly reduces distraction and supports the positive learning environment for everyone.

Students riding bikes to and from school We are increasingly concerned about some students who are riding their bikes carelessly when arriving at, and leaving, the school site. If your child cycles to school, can you please reiterate with them the need to cycle safely. This includes looking both ways before pulling out onto the main road; not weaving in and out of cars as they slow down for the crossing lights; using both hands on the handle bars and not doing wheelies either on the pavement or as they cycle down Vandyke Road. Your support is much appreciated in this matter.

End of term arrangements

- Friday 19 December 2025 - last day of term
- Year 12 and 13 depart at 11.05am
- Year 9, 10 and 11 depart at 12.15pm

Students will be able to buy food at breaktime (this includes students in receipt of free school meals). Buses will be collecting students from school at 12.15pm.

Key Dates for Next Term Please note the following important dates for the start of the spring term and beyond. More details about each event will follow through messages sent via Edulink.

Date	Event
5 January 2026	Staff Training Day
6 January 2026	All students return for 8.40am start
12 January 2026	Year 12 internal assessment fortnight

15 January 2026	Year 11 Mock Results Evening
21 January 2026	Year 11 Subject Consultations Online
22 January 2026	Year 11 Subject Consultations In Person
29 January 2026	Year 9 Options Evening
30 January 2026	Deadline for Sixth Form Applications
2 February 2026	Year 11 English, maths, science mock exams
5 February 2026	Year 9 Subject Consultations Online
9 February 2026	Year 9 Options Deadline

Safeguarding over the Christmas period If you require support with any safeguarding concerns over the Christmas holiday, please visit our website for a range of supporting information and important contact details. [Student Support Services and Internet Safety – Vandyke Upper School](#).

Finally, on behalf of all staff here at Vandyke, thank you for ongoing support and I extend our best wishes to all members of our community for a very happy Christmas holiday. We hope this time offers a well-deserved break and an opportunity for rest and time spent with loved ones. We look forward to welcoming students back on January 6 2026.



Leah Ferguson-Moore
Headteacher