



11th January 2019

Dear parents and carers,

A very happy New Year to all members of our school community I wish all students staff and their families best wishes for a peaceful and prosperous 2019. The New Year has begun with great positivity at Wollaston School and we thank parents for ensuring that students have returned to school well-equipped, in correct uniform, refreshed and ready to learn.

Attendance

We have now had official confirmation from the Department for Education, that in addition to our best ever headline GCSE results, our attendance figures for the 2017-18 academic year were also record-breaking! We have broken the 95% mark for the first time, with whole school attendance hitting **95.3%** for the academic year, breaking the national average and our 2016-17 figure of 94.6%. I would like to thank parents, students and pastoral staff on this excellent achievement. It is evidence of how our commitment to partnership working can produce great outcomes for our students. All the educational research demonstrates that excellent attendance at school results in excellent academic outcomes, and it can be no coincidence that our highest attendance level coincides with our best ever headline GCSE results. Thank you for your ongoing support in ensuring that attendance at school is such a high priority. I know this is greatly appreciated by staff, governors, students and families.

Trips & Visits

Thank you to staff and students who represented Wollaston so effectively during the annual tour of remembrance to Auschwitz. This is a profoundly moving trip and the lessons learned will be shared with the entire school by our Holocaust ambassadors, as they encourage us to use their experiences to remember the horrors of the past, reminding us to live lives which are full of happiness and kindness, whilst standing up to discrimination, intolerance and hatred wherever we may find this.

I would also like to thank Mr Hopkins and Mrs Correa-Humphries for their leadership of the trip and in particular, their rapid and decisive action when learning that Gatwick was closed due to drone activity. Their speedy and well-judged response ensured that alternative flights were arranged and the tour party arrived back in Wollaston with only a two hour delay - an exceptional outcome, given the chaos at Gatwick we saw on the news!

The 2019 programme of enrichment begins with a Year 9 trip to the Living Rainforest on Monday, 14th January and we look forward to learn of their experiences on their return!

The Greatest Dancer

Eagle eyed viewers may have spotted some of our Wollaston dance students on BBC1's 'The Greatest Dancer' television programme on Saturday evening. They appeared in a montage section, but we understand there is more to come for them in future episodes! The dance group to look out for are called 'Rage' and Wollaston students make up 4 of the 6 members of the group. Many parents and students will have seen the students perform as part of our Performing Arts faculty productions and showcases, and it will come as no surprise that these exceptional dancers are deserving of an even wider audience. We look forward to seeing them perform in future episodes of the programme.

Thank you as always for your support of Wollaston School. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us via email on office@wollaston-school.net.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Birkett". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "James" and the last name "Birkett" clearly distinguishable.

Mr James Birkett
Headteacher