



6th September 2019

Dear parents and carers,

A very warm welcome to Wollaston School for the start of the 2019/20 academic year. It has been a genuine pleasure to welcome our students back to school, where they have already demonstrated an enthusiastic, positive and cooperative start to their learning and we are looking forward to another highly successful year.

I would also like to thank parents and families for ensuring that students have returned in the correct uniform, with the right equipment and in good time for school. Your support with this is enormously appreciated by our staff, and also by your children - although they may not always tell you that themselves!

We have had plenty to celebrate during the Summer, with some very pleasing examination results, and we have also made a number of improvements to the site during the holidays.

The staff Professional Development Days were also incredibly useful, including our first formal event as the Nene Valley Partnership, our new Multi-Academy Trust. This allowed staff from Wollaston School, Irchester Community Primary School and Bozeat Community Primary School & Nursery to work together on creating an inspiring curriculum and education for all of the children in our schools from ages 3 - 19. A significant theme was the need to ensure that every student benefits from lessons which offer high levels of challenge in a supportive environment, in which students feel empowered and safe to stretch themselves without fear of getting something wrong.

This concept resonates with us as a school and as a new trust, as we are aware that it is only in this atmosphere that students make exceptional personal and academic progress.

GCSE Exam Results 2019

The GCSE cohort of 2019 have achieved a record-breaking performance, managing Wollaston School's best ever GCSE results! An incredible 75% of students achieved a grade 4 or above in both English and Maths (equivalent to a grade C or above under the previous grading system). There were also incredible successes with the average grade improving to 4.9 across all subjects (broadly equivalent to a grade B under the previous system).

These are remarkable achievements and I would like to congratulate every student on all that they have achieved in their education at Wollaston School.

I would also like to thank our parents and staff for their support throughout. Our students own their achievements, but knowing their families and staff at Wollaston are there to support and help is a vital part of success.

Further details and notable individual successes can be found on the school's website.

GCSE qualifications were introduced in 1988, and it is well worth celebrating the fact that Wollaston's best ever years have been 2018 and 2019, our current Year 12's and 13's, who now make up our largest ever Sixth Form. This is an exciting time for the school and we are looking forward to working with the Year 11 students of 2020 to see what we can achieve together this year!

A-level & BTEC Examinations 2019

Wollaston students achieved some of the best individual results in the county and a list of these achievements and overall figures can be found on the school website. It is also inspiring to read of where and what students are going on to next, and I have included some examples of these not only on the school website, but also in student assemblies this week, as evidence of just where a Wollaston School education can take you!

We are again delighted that results at BTEC and A-level remain very strong and we enjoyed great success across the curriculum, with an improvement on 2018 outcomes. The average grade of A-level courses is at a C+ and for BTECs this is a distinction-.

I would like to wish every one of our 2019 Year 13 students happiness, success and fulfilment in whatever endeavour they have chosen to follow.

Costa Rica Expedition

Our intrepid explorers returned to Wollaston during the Summer, following a trip of a lifetime to Costa Rica. Students achieved a great deal, working with the local communities to refurbish community facilities and being invited to place the Wollaston badge and Nene Valley Partnership logo on the wall of the Eco Lodge in La Luchita, as testament to their work with the local population.

Students were delighted to undertake various tasks and enjoyed the opportunities to observe incredible wildlife, speak the local dialect and embrace local customs. Congratulations to all concerned and thank you to Mrs Lydon and Mr Jackson for organising. Photos are available on the school website.

Parking & Driving close to the school site

The first days back at school are always busy and this has led to some considerable congestion in the local residential area immediately before and after the school day. We are of course concerned with being good neighbours and want to ensure that any congestion is kept to a minimum. We are particularly concerned that some roads close to the school may be virtually impassable for emergency services if required, which could lead to a potentially dangerous situation, particularly as we have a number of elderly residents in our locality. In order to alleviate the issue, we would be grateful if parents and families could ensure that:

- When parking or waiting for students, you do not block driveways, park on corners or double park on both sides of the road.
- Residents' drives and properties are not used as a place to turn around or wait for students.
- A sensible speed is maintained when driving close to the site. This is not only for the benefit of residents, but also for our students leaving at the end of the day.
- Students are encouraged to walk to school when safe and practical to do so. We always recommend walking in pairs or small groups as a safety measure.

Families are also reminded that the site is considerably less busy after 3.15pm once the buses have left. Students are able to wait inside the canteen or library during this time, and then collection can occur at a less busy time.

Thank you in advance for your support in this matter, it is much appreciated. There are no easy solutions to ensuring 1450 students leave with no congestion, but consideration and small measures can make a big difference.



Careers Events

We are pleased to be offering the following careers events during September. Please contact Mr Myers on myersb@wollaston-school.net for further information.

- **Milton Keynes Job Fair** - Saturday 14th September in MK shopping centre – This event received great feedback from staff and students who have attended in the past.
- **Adenbrookes Hospital Cambridge Open Day** - Saturday 28th September 9.00am – 2.00pm. This is an opportunity to find out more about all types of medical professions.
- **Local NHS volunteering opportunities** – A great opportunity for Sixth Formers to add quality to their CV's & UCAS forms, plus a great experience - closing date is Friday 13th September.
- **School Event** - Friday 13th September - Moulton College staff are coming into school at lunch time on Friday to speak with students in Year 11.
- **School Advice Service** – Mr Myers can be located in the library every Friday lunch time, to offer students advice with careers matters.

Site Improvements

During the summer holidays our Business Manager, Finance, Site and IT teams have been incredibly busy updating and improving the school site. A list of works undertaken can be found below, and I would like to thank all staff and external contractors for their excellent and timely work. As parents will be aware, education is not blessed with additional funding and we make sure that we use every penny of capital funding wisely to improve our school environment.

- Tar mac, new entrance paths, dropped curbs and new disabled parking bays;
- Sports Hall Refurbishment;
- New classroom furniture and classroom fixtures and fittings fixed / maintained;
- New telephone system installed;
- Office 365 conversion to improve our IT systems;
- Deep clean of buildings including cleaning of carpets and cookers;
- New boys and girls toilets in the English block;
- Staff offices moved to create better and more efficient teaching spaces;
- PAT testing of all electrical items across the site;
- New fencing installed beside the Sixth Form Centre to further improve security of the site;
- New student water fountains installed.

Thank you, as always for your support and cooperation in these matters and 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,

Mr James Birkett
Headteacher