



NEW INITIATIVES 2019-20



## QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

As always, the quality of teaching and learning in a school is fundamental in ensuring that students are equipped with the knowledge and skills, which allows them to succeed and ultimately follow their chosen career path. We have invested considerable time and energy in ensuring that all of our staff get the training and development they require to enable them to perform their role effectively. Despite the national recruitment crisis, we have recruited high quality teachers, support staff and leaders over the past 15 months to compliment and enhance our existing team. We are challenging students to encourage their aspiration, and we are demanding more from them in terms of effort, expectation and GRIT.

At the same time we have, significantly improved the quality of feedback that students receive, showing them how they can and should improve.

## CURRICULUM

As we have clearly stated before WVC is not an exam factory, but we are a school that places value in students taking exams in subjects that are appropriate to them and provide them with a quality passport for later life. This process begins in Year 7 and 8, as our new broad curriculum offer for key stage three that allows students to learn knowledge and skills in 17 different subjects. We have designed new curriculum maps in each subject area, all of which provide a great foundation for further study in Years 9-11 and beyond.

We will continue to invest in the more practical subjects such as Dance and Design, as well as core subjects such as Maths and English.

## EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

We have introduced an expanded programme of activities this year and have supported that by investing in additional late buses on a Monday evening. This year we have our first ever equestrian club starting, as well as a massively increased music, dance and drama offer, culminating in the return of a huge whole school musical this summer.

We have a number of trips and day visits taking place, which gives all students the opportunity to gain from new experiences. We are re-starting the Duke of Edinburgh scheme next year, and we are looking for around 60 students to begin their Bronze award in Years 9 and 10.

## UNIFORM

Unfortunately, the service that you have received from our uniform suppliers has been far below that which we would have expected. As a result, we have given the required year's notice on this contract. We are currently in discussions about who the replacement supplier will be, but there are no uniform changes planned for our current students.



## ASPIRATIONS

It is important that even at a very early stage in their school career with us, that students are able to see what their future life may have in-store for them. Our Careers, information and advice programme, shows students in all year groups what options are available to them, and the opportunities that they can aim for in the future. Students visit universities, work place environments, Further Education and apprenticeship providers, to gather information and to potentially light a spark about a career or profession they may wish to pursue. We also host many education and employment providers to a range of events in school, providing links between what students are learning in their subjects and their use in real life work scenarios.

## REWARDS AND BEHAVIOUR

Feedback from students, staff and parents and in particular visitors is extremely positive about the behaviour of our students, and we continue to demand high standards from them. We are proud to take them to any event or trip, as well as introducing them to the many visitors we receive in College on a weekly basis. Students value the rewards given, and we have seen a significant increase in students being rewarded not for achieving the basics, but for achieving beyond the norm. By pushing students level of GRIT, we encourage their aspiration and the progress that they are capable of making in their studies.

## COMMUNICATION

We are aware from the feedback that we receive that there is always room for improvement in communications between home and school. The Edulink system has been well received, and the use of this system will continue to grow and improve. In the New Year, we will be trialling a clubs and fixtures option that will allow us to provide you with information about team selections and fixture locations, as well as attendance at clubs and other after school activities. We will also be moving to more electronic forms for data collection: for example trip permissions; to increase efficiency and a decreasing dependence on 'bits of paper' .

## SITE IMPROVEMENTS

Despite the best efforts of our excellent site team, the College site and its facilities have been starved of investment for a number of years. This has meant that students and staff were being taught in rooms that were often not fit for purpose, or just looked tired and not very inspirational. Over the past thirteen month' s a programme of refurbishment has been rolled out across the College, focusing on clear areas of need, while at the same time providing facilities that students and subjects require to deliver a modern curriculum. This has included:

- The Cube – A multi-purpose, innovative teaching space
- The Hub – A specialist ICT space with 70 brand new PCs





- Four refurbished Maths classrooms each designed based on an inspirational mathematician
- Two refurbished English Classrooms
- Complete refurbishment of the Main school hall
- A brand new Library, designed to give longer term access to the community
- A teacher training room – to support our next generation of employees
- The Green room – refurbished Music practice room
- Student toilet refurbishments
- Relined Sports hall floor
- The Witchford Mess and Kitchen
- New reception area

All of these inspirational facilities have been produced by our outstanding site team, allowing us to invest more of what is an extremely finite amount of money into new resources. Through a successful Government bid, we were also able to replace windows and doors in the three-storey block, as well as having our old leaking flat roofs relined, making us weather tight for a good number of years in the future.

## WHAT IS NEXT?

A number of projects are in the planning stage for the next twelve months.

- Completion of the refurbishment of the remaining maths classrooms
- Refurbishment of the Languages classrooms
- Complete dismantling and refurbishment of the three oldest science classroom and prep areas
- New designated Year 11 study space
- Changing room refurbishment and upgrades
- Refurbishment of Design Technology rooms
- New curtains and mirrors into drama and dance spaces
- Improvements to netball and tennis courts
- Further fencing for improved site access and security

## THE WITCHFORD MESS

Due to a capital investment grant, we were able to embark upon improvements to not only the student serving element of the canteen, but also to replace kitchen equipment that was reducing the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the food being prepared. By providing the facilities with a theme, that of the Mess, we also provided a link to the Mess that existed on this site in World War two, informing and educating students of our local history and reflecting on the sacrifices that were made.

We are also currently reviewing all aspects of the Mess provision including the menu and will be consulting with students about this in the near future.

