



Friday 18th October 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we close in on the end of the first half-term, I thought it was about time I wrote to you all with an update.

Earlier in the term I put out a request to the community for volunteers to support our library. I have been overwhelmed by the positive response and I am now working out the details with a number of volunteers to restore our library service. There is still some work to be done but I hope that we will be up and running soon after half-term. I am incredibly grateful to all those who offered help.

This half-term I have been heavily involved in promoting the school to prospective Year 6 students and their parents, who are now choosing school places for next year. Each morning for the last two and a half weeks I have taken tours around the school, nearly 250 families in total. It has been impressive. Your children have been welcoming to our guests and enthusiastic about their school.

Yesterday, Open Evening marked the end of our promotional activities. To say that I was the proudest headteacher in the country is no exaggeration! All of the students who attended were phenomenal ambassadors for the school and many of the visitors were glowing in their praise for them. In fact, despite being the highest attendance ever (over 800 visitors on the night), we had more guides than we needed - I can assure you that has never happened before! I hope all of the students found it a rewarding experience. This was a real team effort, the students were brilliant and so were the staff, who put on a tremendous event. My sincere thanks to you all for your support with our early closure; I realise that this is added pressure for you, especially as the buses can only be brought in early for the last day of each term. Additionally, many of you will have brought students back to school in the evening and collected afterwards. Again, thank you! We literally could not do the Open Evening without the support of the whole community.

Next half-term we will begin working closely with our Year 11 students regarding their post-16 options. They have a huge amount of choice within our Sixth Form and elsewhere. Over the coming weeks we will be preparing the students for their 'Wave' and mock exams, which will be important milestones on the journey to success in the real exams this summer. Our Sixth Form Open Evening will take place on Thursday 21st November and I hope to see many of you there.

Our Sixth Form will be leading the annual Fundraising Week from Monday 11th November. This year the students have chosen to support Young Minds (<https://youngminds.org.uk/>), which is a cause close to my heart. I am sure that this



will be a fun-filled week; I hope that students from all year groups will come ready to support this. Wrist bands for entry into the events will be on sale from Monday (£2).

I am pleased to announce that we have appointed our house captains for 2019-20. Each house is led by Sixth Form students, supported by a member staff. They play a vital role in ensuring that the house system is at the heart of the school.

Our house leaders are:

| | Jupiter | Mercury | Saturn | Venus |
|----------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Colour | Yellow | Red | Green | Blue |
| Teacher | Miss Matthews | Miss Taylor | Miss Donovan | Mr Edwards |
| House Captains | Jessica Court Doretea Baji | Zara Sullivan Cameron Clark | Katie Hampton Luke Woodhead | Ramis Jaura Olivia Rowell |

I am told that, to maintain my impartiality, I cannot be a member of a house. So, it is with regret that I leave Jupiter House, which I first joined in 2005. I will do my best not to be biased in the future.

We are all very much looking forward to our next house competition, the Halloween Bake Off on Monday 4th November. The entries last year looked and tasted amazing, so I hope that the standard can be maintained (or bettered!) this year.

Finally, it is important to me that all students feel safe here at school. Should you ever have any concerns about your child, it is important that you communicate these with us as soon as possible. Bullying takes place in all schools, but it is vital that it is stamped out and resolved immediately. In the first instance, please contact your child's tutor and year leader to report any concerns that you might have.

Please feel free to contact me (nmcsweeney@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk) at any time – I may not be the right person to resolve your query personally, but I will know who is.

Best wishes,

Nick McSweeney
Headteacher