

WOODHOUSE GROVE SCHOOL

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Dear Parent/Guardian

I would like to start this letter by asking you to reiterate my thanks to your sons and daughters for their commitment and contribution to what has been an extremely busy school term. Quite how they managed to fit in everything I will never know; from end of unit tests, preparation for trial examinations and university preparation, to taking main roles in the school play or performing in music concerts (in the case of some, both) at the same time as playing for a sports team or representing the Grove in another way.

At every level our pupils are making what they will one day realise have been giant academic strides, as well as being involved in a multiplicity of activities. I would also like to thank them for the help they always offer, with great humour and loyalty, whenever we hold Open Days, prospective parent visits and school events, for parents and the public. When visitors write to me to thank the School for running one event or another, they invariably praise the boys and girls who chatted to them or provided a tour.

I would also like to thank my colleagues. It heartens me to see how much Woodhouse Grove pupils appreciate what their teachers do for them, whether in lessons, on the playing fields or taking trips, or by offering help and advice over university choices, or dealing with pastoral issues. This appreciation makes our jobs much more fulfilling as we strive to ensure that, when the day comes, your boys and girls leave us with the best possible results, golden prospects and fond memories. I would particularly like to record my thanks to our acting Head of Sixth Form, Mrs Claire Nott. With the help of our Sixth Form tutor team, and in the unforeseen absence of Mrs Ainscoe, Mrs Nott has processed a huge number of UCAS applications, as well as overseeing the Oxbridge admissions process.

I expect all our pupils, whatever their academic ability, to work hard and do their very best. Whilst there is never any room for complacency, I congratulate the vast majority in their academic endeavour throughout the course of this term. In our values-driven community, it is important to also emphasise that the pupils I respect the most are those who also look after each other and go out of their way to show kindness to those in need. To paraphrase Rudyard Kipling, my hope is that we can teach our pupils to stand out as having, 'the confidence to walk with kings, yet not lose the common touch'.

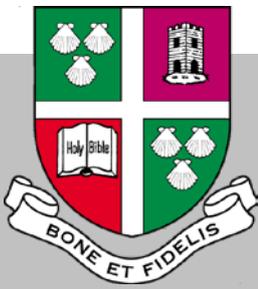
As ever, this has also been a busy term outside the classroom. Our netball and rugby players have had a very active few weeks and it has been particularly pleasing to see the Grove field a record number of teams in inter-School fixtures. The 1st VII netballers have secured their place in the quarter final of the Independent Schools National Plate competition with a convincing win over St Bedes, Manchester. The draw for their next game will take place in January.

Apperley Bridge, West Yorkshire, BD10 0NR
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I am Grovian.



Woodhouse Grove School is part of the Methodist Independent Schools Trust.
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Charity No. 1142794. Company No. 7649422.



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Particular congratulations go to our 1st XV rugby side on their exceptional achievement, progressing through to the semi-final stage of the National Schools Cup. Their semi-final will be played against Warwick School in March at Allianz Park, the home of Saracens RFC, and we wish them every success in what I know will be a very tough encounter. As well as the major games, there have, of course, been a whole host of other individual and team sporting activities that have taken place over the course of the term, the achievements of which have been well showcased in this term's editions of *Newsflash*.

This year's School production of *The Importance of Being Earnest* was a truly remarkable achievement. In the antepenultimate week of term, Mrs Baker, ably assisted by Mr Middleton, Mrs Lee and Miss Evers, quietly unveiled a miraculous production where every line and every moment was totally credible. The staging, costumes and make-up put many professional productions to shame, but even more astonishingly, so did the cast who made each performance unforgettable. Congratulations to all those involved in an exceptional school production.

At the end of the current academic year we will say farewell to Rev Bonny who will have served the Grove as its Chaplain for a decade. Mr Bonny has worked tirelessly to support the young people in his care and has been the spiritual conscience of the school throughout his time with us. When the time comes, we wish him and his wife, Chris, all the very best as they head off to the Trent and Dove Methodist circuit based in Uttoxeter. I am delighted to be able to inform you all that the School, in conjunction with the Methodist District has appointed Mrs Vicky Atkins to succeed Rev Bonny as School Chaplain. Vicky will start in September 2019 and is currently a Methodist Presbyteral Minister serving two churches in Addingham and Ben Rhydding.

In my half term letter, I drew your attention to the proposals for the redevelopment of Yorkshire Water's Esholt Estate. As you may recall, one of the proposals includes a review of permits and access along 'The Avenue' which could be restricted further. As a large number of our parents have permits, this could affect a great number of families. In the New Year, we will be meeting with representatives of Keyland Developments, who are undertaking the redevelopment, in order to gain a clearer understanding of the proposals and the potential impact on our school community.

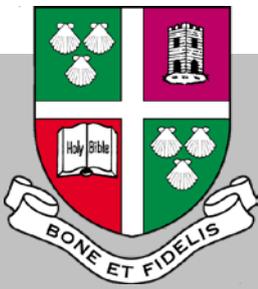
Back in October 2013, and whilst Headmaster of another school, I attended the annual HMC (Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference) Conference in London. As the press widely reported at the time, the Conference theme devised by the then HMC Chairman, Tim Hands was 'The Child'. This was newsworthy because in his conference speech he made a strong case for the inability of politicians to concentrate on the key subjects: 'The more the state has intervened post-war in the life of the child, the less it has offered by way of extra-curricular provision'. I am pleased to report that the education provided at Woodhouse Grove has not suffered at the hands of our politicians and that the School continues to actively promote and deliver an all-round and full education for its young people.

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Following a magical Solo and Chamber Concert, a very convivial Boarders' Christmas Dinner and an excellent Carol Service in the penultimate week of term, the festivities concluded on Thursday evening with the spectacular Christmas Concert.

This January we will have over 150 Year 6 children sitting our entrance examination. This is testament to the growing reputation of Woodhouse Grove and all that we offer our pupils.

Finally, in seeking to foster and maintain good relations with the community, I must repeat the School's concern at parents who continue to park or drop off their children and/or collect them in the car park of the Moody Cow, or across the road in Little Park. This issue has been raised with us once again by residents. Not only does this affect the good relations of the School with our neighbours but, most importantly, it compromises the safety of the students themselves, as well as other road users. This corner of Harrogate Road is hazardous enough as it is and additional cars, sometimes double parked, combined with the business of the beginning and end of the School day, could have very serious consequences. I would be very grateful for your support in this matter, and would encourage all parents to make use of the School's main car park, or indeed the bottom car park. In closing, thank you to you, our parents, for your unstinting and loyal support throughout this busy term. It is through the building of good relationships between pupils, parents and teaching staff that truly effective school communities are created.

Sarah and I wish you all a very peaceful and relaxing Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

With all best wishes,

Yours sincerely

James Lockwood MA
Headmaster

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