4th September 2023

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

**Autumn Term Reminders and Updates**

We hope that all of our staff, students and families have had an enjoyable, safe and restful summer. We are really looking forward to welcoming students back to school for the start of another exciting year at Wellfield. There is so much to look forward to. From tomorrow, we will welcome another 150 Year 7 students into the Wellfield family and, amongst many other things, we are excited for our first overseas trips in July 2024 since before the pandemic and the introduction of the Duke of Edinburgh award over the coming months. Additionally, we are enthusiastic about our ongoing work as part of the School Rebuilding Programme which will continue throughout this term.

**Return to School**

An email was sent home last week to confirm the arrangements for the return of students to school tomorrow (Tuesday 5th). As a reminder, all students in Year 7 and 11 are expected in school for 8.40am for the full day.

All students in Years 8, 9 and 10 can arrive at school from 11am to congregate on the tennis courts. All students must have arrived by 11.25am. Students will spend some time within tutor groups, reflect on the last academic year and look ahead at what is to come. There will also be a house and whole school assembly during the day. The full teaching timetable will then begin on Wednesday 6th September.

**RAAC**

You may have seen recent media coverage regarding Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) and its use in educational settings. RAAC is a lightweight form of concrete; because it is weaker than regular concrete, concerns have been raised about its long-term durability. Department for Education (DfE) has recently changed its guidance to education settings on the management of RAAC to take a more precautionary approach and, as a result, areas in affected spaces will be vacated. We wanted to inform you that we are not affected by this decision and therefore we will continue to function as normal.

**Site Updates**

The number of students attending Wellfield will now reach over 500 so, to ensure we provide the best environment for all, we have been busy throughout the summer. Toilets have been an issue raised by our student council group so we have heavily invested in toilet refurbishment in our Ambleside building. Furthermore, we have significantly enhanced our catering areas so students can look forward to improved dining in the old gym and outdoor picnic areas. Amongst many other projects, we have also improved the surface on our tennis courts to allow for these to be used for physical activity during lunch times. We are delighted with the work completed this summer and hope students appreciate the significant investment when they return tomorrow.

**General reminders**

We want students to start the year as they mean to go on. This means arriving for school tomorrow in full school uniform and wearing the correct footwear. Please see our website for information as a reminder: <https://wellfieldacademy.org/about-us/school-uniform>. Although students may have had piercings or different hair styles, for example, over the summer, please ensure that your child fully meets our standards and expectations when they return to school.  Similarly, it is vital that chrome books are fully charged and all equipment is brought into school on a daily basis.

Many students may well have spent a lot of time over recent weeks in electronic devices and mobile phones. Students are allowed to bring phones into school but our rule is clear- they should be switched off and in school bags. If they are seen at any point by a member of staff, they will be confiscated. Please be aware that, if your

child’s phone is confiscated on a number of occasions, it will not be returned to students and parents will be expected to collect it from the school office. We appreciate your support on this matter as mobile phones can be a significant distraction to students and/or a source of online bullying.

As is often the case, the return to school seems likely to coincide with a return of the sun! Please make sure that your child arrives for school with a water bottle each day and, as always, if school is particularly warm, we will decide to revert to summer uniform. For new parents, our summer uniform means students are not required to wear their blazer or tie and the top button can be undone.

**Staffing Updates**

As outlined in our end of summer term newsletter, we undertook significant recruitment throughout the term in preparation for September. I am delighted to welcome a number of colleagues into our team, despite a national recruitment and retention crisis. Colleagues joining us are:

* Miss Allmark- Teacher of English
* Miss West- Teacher of Spanish
* Mr Barrow- Teacher of Geography
* Mr Gibson-Story- Teacher of Computing (Part time)
* Mrs Ferguson- Teacher of Science (Part time)
* Miss Wheeler- Pastoral Behaviour Manager (Campbell)
* Mrs Naylor- Teaching Assistant
* Mrs Fitzpatrick- Head of Maths
* Miss Duncan-Jameson- Head’s PA

In addition, we have appointed Mrs Langton as Teacher of Maths and she will join the team after Christmas. Mr Foley has been recruited for the Autumn term. Please also be remember that, whilst Miss Sharrock is on maternity leave, Mr Fazal (Assistant Headteacher) will be overseeing the SENDCo role.

**Open Evening**

Despite all of our thoughts being focussed upon the return of students tomorrow, we do also look ahead to September 2025. Our annual Open Evening, which will take place on Thursday 21st September, is an opportunity market the school and welcome prospective students and their families to visit us throughout the evening. Please be aware that school closes to students at 12.30pm on this day although we will be asking for volunteers to return for the evening to ensure it is as successful as it has been in recent years.

**Important Dates**

* **Wednesday 6th September** Year 7 photographs
* **Thursday 21st September** Open Evening (school closes at 12.30pm)
* **Thursday 28th September** SLT Information Evening (KS3 5-6pm 28th/ KS4 6.15-7.30pm)
* **Thursday 19th October** Year 7 Tutor Evening (3.30-5.30pm)

Finally, we encourage open dialogue with parents so please do contact us should you have any questions or concerns. The best way to contact us is via email (enquiries@wellfieldacademy.org). Please be aware that we will endeavour to respond as quickly as possible, ideally within 24 hours but it may well be up to 72 hours.

Looking forward to working welcoming everyone back to school tomorrow for another exciting year!

Yours sincerely,



Mr J Lewis

**Headteacher**