



Nether Stowe School

Be Respectful. Be Ambitious. Be Resilient.

19th December 2023

End of Term Letter, December 2023

Dear parent or carer,

I hope you are well and looking forward to the Christmas break. I wanted to take the opportunity to write to you before the end of term with some important updates and information.

End of term and start of term arrangements.

School closes at the normal time, **3pm, on Friday 22nd December**. School will reopen to all pupils at the normal time, **8:30am, on Tuesday 9th January 2024**.

College Competitions

I hope you have had the opportunity to view some of the great images and short videos posted on our social media feeds this term. The College competitions have been incredibly popular and successful this term and, from our FIFA World Cup to Netball, Bush-Tucker Trials, Giant Jenga, Chess and Speed Christmas Present Wrapping, we have been thrilled with pupil engagement and participation. Further information will be shared regarding our forthcoming Arts Festival as well as arrangements for the end of year reward event for the winning College.

We will also be further celebrating success in our College Celebration assemblies all this week, which recognise all the great achievements and hard work of our pupils from this first term. A huge congratulations to all of the students receiving a prize this week.

Behaviour Curriculum

We are very proud of our high standards and expectations for all pupils. But we never take this for granted. Positive behaviour reflects the values of the school, readiness to learn and respect for others. It is established through creating an environment where good conduct is more likely and poor conduct less likely. This behaviour should be taught to all pupils, so that they understand what behaviour is expected and encouraged and what is prohibited – this is called the behaviour curriculum. As we go through this academic year, we will be revisiting all aspects of our behaviour curriculum to ensure that all students, staff and parents are confident of the positive expectations. Two key areas of focus for January are highlighted below:

Uniform

Why is school uniform important:

- Respecting and being proud to be part of your school and your college
- Respecting the ideas of equity and equality
- Being ambitious: creating a professional mindset and being ready for work
- To promote the safeguarding of all students.

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Almost all students look really smart and meet our expectations for uniform every day. We also proactively support students every morning to ensure that, where there may be issues, these are addressed so that pupils are set up for the rest of the day.

Our school expectations are outlined on the website here: <https://netherstowe.staffs.sch.uk/parents/school-uniform-and-pe-kit/>

Two aspects of the policy we will be having a very specific focus on at the start of next terms are **school shoes** and **skirt length**. The expectations for both are very clear on the website.

In relation to shoes, it is very important for me to make clear that [Nike Air Force Ones](#) or [other similar brands](#) are not acceptable school shoes. Many stores and online retailers will explicitly market trainers as school shoes, (the two examples above are not an exhaustive list) but – to be explicit – **they do not meet our uniform expectations**.

Please take the opportunity to ensure that your child's uniform meets the expectations for the start of the next term.

Mobile Phones

Why do we have a clear policy for the use of mobile phones?

- It promotes the safeguarding of all students.
- It helps to develop respect for all by reducing incidences of bullying.
- It promotes the ambition of our pupils by removing additional distractions from learning.

At the start of the new term, we will be reiterating the following expectations to students.

- At the start and end of the school day, **the policy is implemented from the main school gates**.
- Mobile phones must be off and stored in the school bag – **this means if a phone is seen in a pocket, it will be confiscated from the pupil**. We will also implement random checks during tutor time and sometimes in lessons.
- Phones confiscated under the policy will be taken, by the member of staff, to reception.

Each half-term:

- The first time a phone is confiscated, the pupil will be able to collect their phone from reception at the end of the day.
- The second time a phone is confiscated, a parent or carer will need to come to reception, during normal reception opening hours, to collect the phone. If reception is not open, collection will need to take place the following day.
- The third time a phone is confiscated, a parent or carer will need to come to collect the phone and meet with a senior leader. We may, at this stage, place an expectation that the pupil's phone is not brought into school or is left at reception at the start of the day.

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School Detentions

As a school, we pride ourselves on the high expectations we have of our students and the fact that the vast majority of our students never pick up an after-school sanction. Nevertheless, on occasion some students fall below these expectations and, as such, an appropriate sanction is issued. Some of these sanctions will be in the form of an after-school detention. All students are expected to attend the detentions issued. Only in exceptional circumstances will a child be exempt from after school detentions. This exemption must be obtained in writing from the Headteacher.

Over recent weeks, a number of parents have contacted the school office, stating that their child can't do after-school detentions because of transportation arrangements. Whilst, in the spirit of partnership, we will look at each child's case on an individual basis, as a general rule, the use of public transport, or collection by a parent at the end of a school day, will not be reasons for an exemption. The schools full behaviour policy can be found [here](#).

Changes to personal information or medical information

If you need to update your or your child's information, you can do so via the My Child at School (MCAS) app or by contacting school via the office@netherstowe.com address. Please, periodically, take the opportunity to review and update the information we have on file.

Important update: ParentPay debt cap

In line with all ATLP schools, from January, the catering debt cap on ParentPay will be set at minus £5.20 for all pupils. This will mean that any student with a debt larger than this will only be able to receive a duty-of-care meal until the minus balance has been cleared. Therefore, I encourage all parents and carers to regularly, and closely, monitor the balance of their accounts.

Please note that the school does not directly administer Parent Pay – if you have an issue with the use of Parent Pay, you need to contact them directly. However, useful guidance is provided in the following link ([click here](#)) to help you to set up Parent Pay text or email reminders. It is also important to note that it can take some time for Parent Pay to update and, if a pupil contacts home via reception for the account to be updated, the money does not always instantaneously update on the account.

Finally, thank you for your continuing support and I wish you a very enjoyable Christmas break and a happy New Year. We look forward to welcoming students back to school in January.

Yours faithfully,

Glyn Langston-Jones
Headteacher

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