



Dear Parents and Carers

8th February 2024

As it so often does, this term has flown by, and we find ourselves halfway through the school year already. I wanted to take this opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved this term and to highlight some of the events that lie ahead.

Exams

We are so proud of how our Year 11 students have been tackling the build up to their summer exams, much like marathon training, it takes a steady and long build up to be ready for the big one and this term, our exceptional Year 11s have prepared for and completed a second set of mock exams. The time and effort that goes into being exam ready is incredible; not only do students need to revise and practice their exam techniques, but they have to learn valuable life lessons including how to balance work and relaxation and how to ask for what they need to make the exam process more manageable. We often discuss how important it is to balance work and wellbeing with our students and at a time like this, it's more important than ever that students learn to have a healthy balance in their lives; something that doesn't always come naturally to teenagers. Our advice to Year 11s and their parents and carers is to take this half term as a chance to relax and have some fun (and maybe work on finishing off some coursework) and charge up batteries for the months ahead.

We also appreciate that the exam process is hard work for parents and carers, so we will be running our annual **Exam Success evening on March 6th(6:00pm-7:30pm)**, at which students parents and carers can gather revision tips, advice on how to adapt revision to support specific needs, suggestions around sleep, nutrition and mindfulness, as well as some subject specific revision tips and, of course, a chance to chat with Catherine Agius (Head of Year 11), Jo Cooper (Deputy Head: exams) and the wider exams team. We encourage Year 11s and their parents and carers to attend and welcome attendance from Years 10, 12 and 13 too. Making exams run smoothly depends on the hard work of so many, including teachers, students, parents & carers and our exams team; I would like to take this opportunity to also thank our team of invigilators who come from the wider BC community and support our students so well at what could potentially be such a stressful time. Summer exams for **Year 11s start on May 9th and will be finished by June 21st, however, the DfE have included a Contingency day on June 28th** just in case an exam has to re-scheduled nationally (e.g. if there is an online leak of a paper), so we would not advise booking holidays etc. before that. We will be issuing personalised summer exam timetables for Year 11 students early next term. If you would like to be able to support your child in the run-up to the external exams, please accept the link from Mrs Banger via email to connect to their Seneca Learning account. All students should be encouraged to regularly revisit key topics and practice retrieval to boost their progress.

GCSE Options & Careers

During this term Year 9s have also been busy with the business of choosing their GCSE Options for September. This is an important first for our Year 9s, as they have the chance to make decisions about what their timetables will have on them in their GCSE years. As ever, staff have been

impressed with the question's students have been asking and the maturity of their approach. Our recent Options Evening was a great success and has been followed up by taster lessons for subjects which are new at GCSE and 'Meet the professionals' events. Our careers provision has been an area we have focussed more of our resources on in recent years; it runs throughout Years 7 to 13 and is covered in tutor time and Citizenship, as well as being discussed regularly in lessons and including various events throughout the year. Students in Years 10 to 13 will have personal careers advice meetings and support when applying for 6th Form, apprenticeships, and university.

School Production & PTA

This term has also seen a flurry of activity across all year groups as we prepare for our production of Beauty and the Beast (March 19th – 22nd, tickets for the first three nights are still available but they are selling fast!). We have over 70 students from Years 7 to 13 involved this year, covering all aspects of the production from the on-stage cast, to the musicians, technical crew and back stage support and set and prop production. This is also a chance to recognise the hard work and dedication of staff who have been involved even before the weekly rehearsals they have run with our students. It truly is a team effort and shows what our BC community is capable of! I would also like to mention our always supportive PTA, who will be selling refreshments at each performance. It is unusual for a secondary school to have such an active PTA and we feel fortunate to have them working so hard for our students. Their current fundraising focus is to raise enough money over the next two years to pay for a shaded area to be set up for generations of students to enjoy in summers to come. If you can offer your support to the PTA in any way, please email pta@bramcote.college.

Enrichment

Another cross-years event has happened this week as we have celebrated the Lunar New Year. We are very proud to have such a diverse student body and have plans for the year ahead for a range of other cultural events to celebrate all aspects of our school community.

Students are also able to participate in a wide range of enrichment activities which can be found on our website at <https://bramcote.college/curriculum/enrichment> and various residential trips in the summer term.

Policy & Uniform

Our website <https://bramcote.college/> also has a range of statutory and additional policies on it for parents & carers to browse. These include our uniform policy which can be found at <https://bramcote.college/parents/school-uniform>. We maintain our focus on students' uniform as we believe that it gives our students a sense of identity and equality and while there are always a few skirts that could be longer, I would like to draw your attention this term to our policy around smart watches. While students as well as parents and carers are hopefully very clear that we have a policy that mobile phones should not be seen or heard on site, our policy also states that smart watches should not be worn. This is because they can become a distraction if they are enabled for communication during the school day and it is also because smart watches are not allowed in exams, so setting good habits around smart watches is important.

Parent Survey & Parent Forum

At Bramcote College we really value the home-school relationship both in supporting our students and when it comes to developing our plans for the future and reflecting on any changes to school practices. Our next online Parents' Forum is on February 29th (please complete this link to request a meeting invite [Meeting Request](#) or to raise any questions) and the focus will be on the finding of our Parents' survey and how we intend to respond to any points that are raised by it. If you would like to participate in our Parents' survey, please click on this link [Parent Survey](#) and complete by Monday 26th February.

Parent Contact

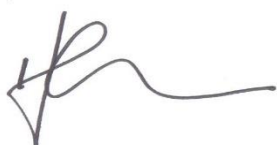
Throughout the year we welcome communication from home to share information or to discuss any concerns you may have around your child / children; please feel free to contact Form Tutors and our Heads of Year as an initial point of contact either by email or by phone.

Year	Head of Year	Email Address
7	Dawn Crouch	Dawn.crouch@whptrust.org
8	Riah Ambasna	Riah-jai.ambasna@whptrust.org
9	Heidi Mansfield	Heidi.mansfield@whptrust.org
10	Penny Crumpton	Penny.crumpton@whptrust.org
11	Catherine Agius	Cahterine.agius@whptrust.org

If you do contact school, it may not be possible to get an immediate response due to teaching commitments, meetings, timetabled mentoring sessions etc. however, staff will endeavour to ensure that you receive a response either on the same day, or on the following day. Similarly, if you drop into school in hopes of meeting a member of specific staff, it may not be possible for you to see them due to these commitments, so I would encourage you to phone up to arrange a meeting in advance.

All that remains now is to wish you an enjoyable half term break and to say that we will see you for the second half of the school year.

Warm regards,



Heidi Gale
Headteacher
Bramcote College