



16th May 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

In this letter

- Outdoor Education achievements
- Public Exam Season begins
- Social Media challenges
- Uniform and appearance
- Medical appointments
- Toilet cubicles
- Student safety

Outdoor Education achievements

Many congratulations to all those involved in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition training and the Ten Tors competition over the last few weekends. Nearly 200 students have been out on the hills in one form or another, and they've shown real resilience over some tough weekends. It has been wonderful being able to offer these hugely valuable experiences properly again. I'm hugely grateful to all the staff and parents involved in supporting these - we simply couldn't do it without everyone's willingness to help out. Thank you!

Public Exam Season begins

Following a lovely Year 11 Celebration Day on Friday, the public exam season gets underway properly this week. With every best wish to all students taking public exams over the coming six school weeks. They have worked really hard, despite many challenges, over a very long time, and deserve every success.

A reminder that Year 11 students must attend school and lessons as usual up to half-term when not in exams. Bespoke revision sessions programme will then be scheduled for after half-term for subjects with exams still to be sat.

Social Media challenges

Social media is part of our lives now, and young people have to learn to engage with it responsibly. Unkind messages placed in the 'public space' of social media is incredibly hurtful, but it also has a number of other damaging impacts. In particular, some parents are reporting to us that their children are receiving messages through the night, which is not conducive to good sleep.

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In a very few cases, students have set up accounts anonymously that are designed to cause harm and upset to others and, on occasion, using the school's name or logo. We will take strong action wherever social media activity involves the school in any way, and will pass anything offensive, abusive or inappropriate that we are informed about to the Police.

We know that, for parents, this is a really difficult area to work with your children, and not a challenge that we faced in our youth. All the advice points to being as closely involved with your child's social media activity as possible (even if it means getting used to a number of apps that we might not be very familiar with!). Whilst we appreciate the challenge it may initially present, we would also strongly advise having a 'curfew' each evening at around 10pm, ensuring devices are not allowed in bedrooms overnight. People report seeing real long-term gains from this.

Do read the NSPCC guidance around social media use <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/>.

Uniform and appearance

After a largely very good start to term on uniform and appearance, things have slipped a little for a few students in the last week. Please ensure that your child(ren) is/are in correct uniform each morning. Where this is not the case, please do not be surprised if you receive a phone call asking you to bring the correct uniform into school.

A reminder that nose piercings are not allowed in Years 7 to 11. This includes clear studs, or a piercing covered with a plaster. Due to the length of time it takes a nose piercing to heal, please do not allow your children to have this type of piercing until they have left Year 11.

We will soon be inviting parents to hold meetings with school where persistent issues relating to uniform or appearance are evident.

Medical appointments

When students are required to attend a medical appointment or similar and need to leave site during the school day, please ensure you inform attendance in advance of the appointment, either by telephone on 01275 841374 or by email attendance@gordanoschool.org.uk. Please note that evidence of the appointment will be requested. It is up to the student to remember the appointment on the day; they will need to leave class and go to Student Centre to sign out and then make their way to Main Reception where parents/carers can collect them. Should the student forget, we will do our absolute best to get a message to them but in a school of this size it is not always a speedy process so please ensure you have allowed plenty of time before the appointment to allow for delays.

Toilet cubicles

We have had a few situations recently where more than one student has been discovered in a toilet cubicle. This is quite often associated with vaping. You will understand the concerns that this presents for the school in itself, but also from a safeguarding point of view.

We have to assume that if more than one student is in a cubicle, they are doing something that they shouldn't. As such we will be enforcing with an A2 and after school detention.

If students need support for any reason then they should go to the Student Centre, where a member of staff will be able to help them.

Student safety

At the end of last week we received reports of a female student being followed by a black VW Transporter van. Please ask your children to remain vigilant and we strongly encourage students to walk home with others wherever possible.

Despite a number of challenges outlined above, the vast majority of students continue, every day, to do exactly as we'd expect and to be the most wonderful ambassadors for the school. Our responsibility is to ensure that we give them the very best experience that we are able, and part of this is to tackle challenges 'head on' when we face them. As ever, please contact us when you have any particular concerns, using the new 'online' form. In our next letter we'll ask for feedback from the first term of using the new online form.

Thank you for all your continued support.

Kind regards



Tom Inman
Headteacher