

10th November 2023

Dream big • Do your best • Give back

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you have had a good week.

It was lovely to see so many Year 11 students and families join us for Sixth Form Open Evening last night despite the very wet and windy weather. This is always a highlight of our school calendar and an opportunity for students to find out what it is really like to study at Gordano Sixth Form. We hope the presentations, workshops, 'surgeries' and stands were useful.

All students who attended last night, will have a copy of the prospectus and information about the online application form. We will circulate copies to any Year 11 who was unable to attend. If you have any queries about applying to Gordano Sixth Form, please contact our Sixth Form Office Manager, Mrs Holwell on pholwell@gordanoschool.org.uk

We know that Year 11 is an intense time for students and hope that Open Evening – on the back of Year 11 Futures appointments last week and coming just before Year 11 mocks – will allow students to inform themselves about the array of choices they now have ahead. We encourage any student – or parent – who would like additional assistance navigating through this season, to contact their son or daughter's Head of House.

INSET Day

A reminder that Wednesday 22nd November is an INSET day. Therefore, the school is closed to students that day.

Digital Day 2023

We are really pleased to have been involved in the national **Digital Day** initiative set by the British Interactive Media Association (BIMA). We were partnered with **True Digital** – a well-established digital marketing company from Bristol. 4 members of staff joined our students for the day, and they worked through a marketing campaign set by **VUE Cinemas**. The students involved were outstanding; working across year groups to create a response to the challenge. The students presented their ideas at the end of the day and the winning team will have their ideas submitted into the national competition to support students to get involved in the digital industry sector in the future.



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LIGHTHOUSE
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Achievement Reviews: Effort Descriptors

We are revisiting the way we report on **Effort** as part of the Achievement Reviews that go home in an attempt to be clearer with students about what desirable effort with learning looks like and to provide a more accurate picture for parents. Students will still be given a number between 1 and 4, but the numbers will represent the following definition of effort:

1= Highly motivated (going above and beyond with classwork and homework)

2= Engaged (consistently meeting classroom and homework expectations)

3= Passive (moderate or inconsistent effort with classwork and homework)

4= Disengaged (not meeting expectations and likely to underachieve)

We will trial this approach with the Sixth Form initially, followed by Year 10. We will then seek feedback from students before refining as appropriate.

Online Safety and Gaming update

Please be aware that there are a couple of variations of a video circulating on social media about popular YouTuber 'MrBeast'. The videos start out by sharing the false news story of MrBeast turning down \$1bn to buy out the 'new game' he has been developing, which then segues into a description of this fantastic 'game' which people can download onto their phones and which essentially amounts to MrBeast giving people free money.

If students follow the links attached to these videos they are taken to a fake mock-up of the App Store and prompted to download this 'game', which has a multitude of 5* reviews and millions of downloads. This is again fake, as the 'game' is not listed on either the Apple or Android app stores. What it is actually prompting is a download mixture of unverified betting and casino apps which ALSO don't appear on either brand's app store, I suspect because they are riddled with malware.

As this scam is using the face and brand of a popular YouTube icon in MrBeast, whose material is mainly marketed towards teenagers and young adults, we would recommend parents and carers discuss this threat with students.

Also be aware that the popular game **Fortnite** has recently had an update. This update is taking the game back to its original format and is appealing to a lot of gamers. The game is rated as PEGI12 due to the content and violence depicted in the game. We ask parents to be vigilant on whether this game is appropriate for the age of your child and ensure a healthy relationship with online gaming – especially for older students who are currently preparing for mock exams.

For support with gaming, please see this useful article from [Young Minds](#).

Nasal Flu Immunisations – 28th & 29th November

A reminder that students in Years 7 – 11 are being offered nasal flu vaccinations this winter to help protect them from flu and serious complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia. If you wish your child to receive the vaccination at school, please ensure you complete your consent form at:

<https://imms.sirona-cic.org.uk/flu/2023/consent?v=1.23>

Parent Communication

Parental support is a really important factor in our success, and we are very appreciative of the support we receive.

As you are aware, often our teachers are delivering lessons throughout the day and may have meetings and commitments after school, therefore we are not able to guarantee that a staff member can respond to requests for information immediately.

Your understanding that it may take a few days to respond to a query is really appreciated. Obviously where the matter is more urgent staff will endeavour to either respond immediately themselves or pass the matter on to someone else to follow up.

Sponsoring Kindness

As you will all know, we are working hard to develop a culture of kindness at Gordano and we are seeing real changes. Thank you so much for your support at home in discussing this with students and celebrating their kindness merits with them. In tutor groups we have been looking at kindness in more detail and how we can develop this, not only in the school community, but on a greater scale. One brilliant tutor group came up with the exciting idea of turning kindness merits into sponsorship money to donate to house charities in the run up to Christmas. This idea we feel shows how much the students are thinking about how kindness can have an impact on the lives of others and how important it is for us to take action. We would very much like to bring this idea to life and we need your help.

If you would like to sponsor Kindness merits through making a donation on Parent Pay we are currently supporting the following charities:

Year 7: Cancer research UK and Bristol Children's Hospital

Lundy: Pancreatic Cancer UK

Cromarty: MacMillan Cancer Support

Biscay: Action for Children

Fitzroy: RNLI

Shannon: Blue Cross

Portland: Cystic Fibrosis UK

The science of kindness shows that kindness spreads and showing kindness to others improves experiences for other people but also boosts self-esteem and happiness in ourselves. So – we would love you to get involved to spread the culture of kindness as far as we can in our community.

We wish you all a relaxing weekend

Yours sincerely



Ms L Blundell
Headteacher

Key Dates for Term 2

Tue 14th Nov: Year 11 GCSE Music Coursework Recording Day

Wed 15th Nov: Year 11 GCSE Music Coursework Recording Day

Wed 22nd Nov: INSET DAY 4

Thu 23rd Nov: Year 8 Progress Evening, 4.00 – 7.30pm

Mon 27th Nov: Year 13 Textiles Mock Exam

Tue 28th Nov: Year 13 Textiles Mock Exam

Tue 5th Dec: Parent Forum, 6.00 – 7.00pm in CR1

Wed 6th Dec: Year 11 Textiles Mock Exam

Thu 7th Dec: Year 11 Textiles Mock Exam

Tue 12th Dec: Sixth Form Christmas lunch in the Dining Hall

Tue 12th Dec: Christmas Concert, 6.30 – 9.00pm in the Main Hall

Wed 13th Dec: Year 7 – 11 Christmas lunch in the Dining Hall

Wed 13th Dec: Christmas Concert, 6.30 – 9.00pm in the Main Hall

Mon 18th Dec: School Production all-day rehearsal (8.40 – 5.30) in the Main Hall

Wed 20th Dec: Last day of term – 12.30 finish for students