17th September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I do hope you are well and your daughters have enjoyed their two weeks back at school. We have certainly enjoyed seeing them and it has been a relief to see the school function in a much more ‘normal’ way than at this time last year. However, we still need to be vigilant and the implementation of our one way system and insistence on masks in public places is all part of helping to keep the entire community safe. I have repeated our COVID reminders below **but I wanted to ask for your support in ensuring that your daughter has a clean mask every day.** We issue hundreds of temporary masks each week and I would appreciate you encouraging your child to view their mask as part of their daily equipment. The alternative is that we have to begin to charge when we issue masks.

**Greensheet**

From now on, our Greensheet will be issued on a fortnightly basis. However, I will continue to write to you at the end of the week if there are any important notices.

**Vaping**

I am disappointed to inform you that we have had a few incidents where students have been caught using vapes in school. These incidents have been dealt with through appropriate sanctions and meetings with parents/carers. However, I would like to ask you all for your support in speaking to your daughter about the harmful effects of vaping, particularly during COVID times, as well as to remind them that vaping and e-cigarettes come under the same law as smoking. This law says that it's illegal to sell any tobacco products to someone under 18. It is also illegal for someone else to buy them for you if you are under 18. This law exists to prevent young people from getting addicted to nicotine and to protect their health. The long-term effects of smoking show that it increases the chances of lung cancer. The health effects of vaping and e-cigarettes are less known but you should be careful as they contain nicotine which is highly addictive, as well as a range of toxic and harmful chemicals.

Vapes can be hard to detect as they often appear to look like pens, memory sticks, key fobs or even inhalers.

If you are concerned that your child might be experimenting with vaping, it is important to ask her to think carefully about why she might want to try this and the effects it might have on her. Please do contact us if you feel you would like any further information or support.

In the meantime, we are going to be increasing our duties in areas where vaping has taken place and will be conducting random bag searches, both as preventative measures, to ensure that we are safeguarding our students’ health and wellbeing.

**Student Rewards**

I am pleased that our student rewards system is now ‘in full swing’ and students in all year groups are keen to gain an extra GREEN point in lessons and around the school. We want to ensure that students are praised for their good behaviour and positive attitude to their learning, and those who consistently excel and go above and beyond are celebrated at the end of the term and year.

Please talk to your daughter about what she is doing to achieve GREEN points. Congratulations to those students who have already received their weekly praise for 5 points or more in a week!

**Teams and Capita Sims**

We use Microsoft Teams to set work and homework for students, as well as sharing resources. Unfortunately, over the summer, Teams, which relies on timetable information from Sims, experienced problems in transferring information from one platform to the other. This is a national problem which has not yet been resolved and we have not been given a timeline for any ‘fixes’ as yet.

In the short-term, we are setting homework in student diaries and posting information on Student Central, as well as asking staff to email work to students who are absent from school. We will update you as soon as we hear any further information.

**Online Safety Webinars**

An organisation we have been working with (Tender) who provide online safety support to schools will be running webinars for our KS3 and KS4 parents and carers via Zoom. The webinar will address online safety and cyberbullying, how to manage it as a parent or carer and provide details on support that is available to you to ensure your child stays safe.

* Wednesday 29th September 4.30 – 6pm: KS3 Online Safety Webinar
* Thursday 30th September 4.30 – 6pm: KS4 Online Safety Webinar

The sessions are open to any parents and carers of Key Stage 3 and 4 students on the respective days and the Zoom link will be sent to you by Ms Warren. There will be an opportunity for you to post questions during the webinar and have a member of Tender staff answer them.

**COVID reminders:**

We are doing everything we can to keep your daughter safe whilst also providing a balanced curriculum and freedom of movement around the building. It is still important that students continue to do the following:

* Twice weekly lateral flow tests
* Do not attend school if you are ill; book a PCR test
* Follow the one-way system
* Wear a mask at all times in communal areas
* Hand washing and sanitising throughout the day

Please speak to your daughter about how she can play her part in keeping everyone in our community safe.

**Parking on Church Hill**

We have received complaints from our neighbours about parents/carers parking across driveways recently. If you have to drive to pick up your child from school, please be mindful of our neighbours. If you collect your daughter/s on foot, we would encourage parents and carers to use the zebra crossing to set a good and safe example to our students.

Finally, please accept my very best wishes for the coming academic year and a very warm welcome to the new families who have joined us. I am really looking forward to meeting you properly during our ‘This is my School’ evening on the 27th September.

Yours faithfully



Ms H Marriott

Headteacher

**Parent/Carer Governor Vacancy**

Walthamstow School for Girls has a vacancy for one parent or carer to serve as a school governor and I hope you will consider putting yourself forward. The Governing Body’s role is the strategic and financial oversight of the school and ensuring that students receive a high quality education which prepares them for the next stage of their education. This includes planning for future development and improvements, but not the day-to-day management of the school. For more information on school governance, please see the Governing Body section of the school website.

If you would like to stand as a candidate, please complete the reply slip attached and return it to the school no later than 12 noon on Thursday 23rd September 2021. If there is more than one candidate for the vacancy, an election will need to be held, but this is a straightforward process. All you need to do is write a short paragraph (no more than one hundred words) saying why you would like to become a Parent Governor. Your statement will be sent out to all parents and carers along with a voting paper. Should only one parent or carer apply, then they will automatically become a Parent Governor. The term of office is four years.

The work of our governors is very important to the school in key areas such as oversight and development of the ethos and curriculum of the school; well-being of pupils; staff employment and use of resources, as well as ensuring that the school maintains its high standards in all areas. You will be expected to attend an evening meeting of the Governing Body once or twice a term and to join one of its committees which also meet once a term. Governors are also encouraged to visit the school during the day by arrangement and help in the oversight of an area of the curriculum, or other important areas such as safeguarding, as a link governor. We are not looking for any particular expertise, but rather a strong commitment to the school and its students, the inquisitiveness to question, and a willingness to give some of your time to governance. However, if you have specialist knowledge or relevant experience, please do mention this in your statement. Induction training is provided for all new governors and governors are expected to attend further training on specific areas of school governance, paid for by the school.

As a school, we are always mindful that the Governing Body should reflect the local community that the school serves, and members of ethnic minority groups are therefore particularly welcomed on the Governing Body and we would encourage you to stand for election as parent governors.

Please note that for the purpose of safeguarding, school governors are subject to an enhanced DBS check, administered via the school, which requires disclosure of any previous criminal convictions. Anything disclosed will not necessarily bar you from holding office and will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the school.

Yours faithfully,



Helen Marriott

Headteacher

**Please return this to the school by 12 noon on Thursday 23rd September 2021. This can be delivered to the school office or emailed to m.hennelly@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk**

I wish to stand as a candidate for election as Parent Governor at Walthamstow School for Girls.

First name:

Family name:

Signed:

Home address:

**Remember to include your statement (no more than 100 words) saying why you would like to serve**

**as a school governor and what skills/knowledge you can offer to the Governing Body from your own life/work experience. You do not need to have previous experience as a school governor.**