



Robert Smyth Academy

Dear Families,

Staffing Changes

Firstly, I wish to write to thank **Mr Jabbar (Head of Computer Science)** and **Miss Woodford (Teacher of Business and Economics)** who will leave Robert Smyth Academy at the end of this term. Each colleague has brought their own talents and abilities to our team, and they will all be missed. I hope that this advanced notice will give students and opportunity to wish them well next week.

I am delighted to confirm the appointment of the following colleagues who will join our team in January:

- **Mr Van Asch:** Teacher of Computer Science
- **Mrs Bialek:** Teacher of Business and Economics

I am also delighted to confirm the appointment of **Miss Jones** as our new **Head of Computer Science**.

A Special Thank You...

We are very pleased with the appointments that we have made, but this is an opportunity to provide families with a moment of honesty about the landscape of teacher recruitment because there is a shortage of secondary school teachers in England and this is creating a compound deficit over time ([see article](#)).

Whilst I can reassure you that we are proactive and dynamic in recruitment, and we seek to retain our brilliant teachers, the magnitude of this challenge is being felt in many schools across the country whereby high-quality teachers simply cannot be recruited.

I share this with you in the spirit of reflection and honesty because your nominations via the **Everyday Hero Awards** have captured one of the key reasons that Robert Smyth Academy is a great place to teach; your fantastic support, gratitude and appreciation for the people who make the magic happen.

We value your support which makes a huge difference, and we thank you for your high expectations, passion, and supportive voice in Harborough and beyond. Thank you for being champions for our school and for your expressions of our values in practice; respect, succeed, aspire.

Christmas Jumper Day

In our ongoing efforts to honour and commemorate the memory of Chloe Longster, we will invite students and staff to wear a Christmas Jumper or Christmas colours (red, green, yellow) instead of their blazer on the final day of term. We ask that families who participate in this fundraising initiative make a small donation on ParentPay. Alternatively, donations can be made on the Just Giving Page organised by Chloe's family and from which the monies raised will go to the UK Sepsis Foundation. Families can make a donation [here](#).

Please note a number of notices ahead of the end of term (next page).

I hope that you have a restful weekend ahead of the final week of what has been an excellent term.

Yours sincerely,

Dan Cleary
Principal



Robert Smyth Academy

Back to school: Uniform

As a timely reminder before the break, please note that all students will be expected to return in full school uniform and without piercings/infractions that are not acceptable. We would be grateful if parents could remain mindful that **we do not permit the following**, as per the uniform [policy](#):

- **Nail polish or false nails**
- **Unnatural hair dye**
- **Multiple ear piercings (one single stud in each ear maximum)**
- **Nose piercings**

We will **specifically follow up on these features of our uniform policy** to ensure high standards from all:

- Blazers to be worn in school.
- Grey pleated skirt, regulation length, **on or just above the knee.**

This is in response to a small minority of students attending school without a regulation blazer or wearing skirts at an inappropriate length (i.e., not regulation length).

Back to school: Punctuality

Students should be at their Tutor Base by 8.45am, ready for their Form Tutorial session. Students who arrive late will be placed into detention for lateness on the same day.

Where can I access support while the school is closed?

During the Christmas holidays families can access the following sources of support:

- **Childline:** <https://www.childline.org.uk/> or by calling **0800 1111**
- **Children's Services:** <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/community-safety/>
- **NHS England:** Call **111** or visit <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/>
- **Guidance on coronavirus:** <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- **Market Harborough Food Bank:** <https://www.harborough.gov.uk/foodbanks>

Suicide prevention

I want to remind you of the support available via [Papyrus](#); an organisation dedicated to the prevention of young suicide. Suicide is the biggest killer of young people under 35 in the UK and every year thousands more attempt or contemplate suicide, harm themselves or suffer alone, afraid to speak about how they are feeling.

If you are the parent of a young person who experiences thoughts or feelings of this kind, then we would strongly advise that you seek an appointment with your GP and that you access the following support:

If you are having thoughts of suicide or are concerned for a young person who might be you can contact HOPELINEUK for confidential support and practical advice.

Call: 0800 068 4141

Text: 07860 039 967

Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org



Robert Smyth Academy

Key Dates

- **w/b Monday 18th December:** Year 13 Trial Exam week
- **w/b Monday 18th December:** Year 11 A-Level Taster Lessons
- **Friday 22nd December:** *Early finish at midday.*
- **Monday 25th December – Friday 5th January 2024:** CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY

Parents' Evening Dates

- **Thursday 18th January:** Year 13 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 25th January:** Year 12 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 1st February:** Year 9 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 8th February:** Year 9 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Tuesday 12th March:** Year 10 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 21st March:** Year 10 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 23rd May:** Year 8 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)
- **Thursday 6th June:** Year 8 Virtual Parents Evening (4.00 – 6.30pm)

Teacher Training Days

- **Monday 29th January**
- **Friday 28th June**

Term Dates (2024/25), as previously communicated, can be found [here](#).



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