

#TeamVarndean Community Newsletter 3
8th October 2021



Welcome to #TeamVarndean

Monday morning's gift of a beautiful double rainbow above school stopped many students and staff in their tracks as they hurried to tutor time, senior student meetings and more. The feeling of optimism brought by this has continued throughout the week as positive Covid cases have significantly dropped for students and staff. I would like to thank families for supporting our 'Keep Covid Out' campaign by being vigilant with checking symptoms and continuing with lateral flow tests. We are pleased to report that cases have now dropped below 2%, which reassures us that with your continued vigilance and the control measures in school, we are seeing less positive Covid cases. This week's link for recording your child's tests up to 10th October is: <https://forms.gle/x8JJHqfnQtHAXsEN6>

Thank you to Year 7 families who attended the recent 'Wellbeing and Progress' evening where we shared information about supporting your child at Varndean. It's been fantastic to hear discussions amongst students about working towards their accelerated reader badges in English - which tutor group will get their bronze badge first?

Next Thursday we have a joint Wellbeing and Progress event for families with children in Years 9 and 10 and hope to see many of you there, further details can be found below.

It's that time of year when our Year 11 students are preparing for their PPE exams. Exams start next week and students are being supported by teachers, tutors and assemblies about how to best approach the exams. We continue to be impressed by our Year 11 students and their mature approach to the exams and how they are supporting each other. Plans are underway to organise some social events after half-term to ensure there are community events to get involved in to compliment the hard work and revision.

As well as all the fantastic work we have seen produced across the year groups so far this term it is also really encouraging to see the high take up on our inter-school competitions and extra-curricular activities. In the inter-school competitions Angelou are leading the way currently with wins in Year 7 touch rugby and dodgeball - well done to all who took part. We're also really excited by some of the progress made by our [equalities](#) group who have been busy working on our equalities evaluation which has just been published. Please keep an eye on our school twitter account [@VarndeanSchool](#) for the latest updates on activities in and around school.

We have two weeks to go until our long awaited enrichment day. This will be a fantastic day for students and staff to come together and enjoy the activities we have on offer and celebrate the end of a successful first half-term.

Shelley Baker
Headteacher

Key Dates

11th - 20th October - PPEs for Year 11

14th October - Year 9 & 10 Wellbeing and Progress evening 6.15pm

22nd October - Enrichment day

25th - 29th October - Half Term

Ellis Meet and Greet For Year 7 Families

As promised at the Year 7 evening, we have plans in place to invite all Year 7 families into school to meet school base staff and have a tour of the school with senior students. We appreciate that some families in Year 7 might not have ever been into the school due to Covid restrictions so want to open up the opportunity so you can at least visualise where your children are coming to each day. The Ellis Year 7 Community drop in event will be on 15th October 3.15pm-4.15pm, if you would like to attend please fill out [this short form](#) so we have an idea of numbers. Further events for the other schools will follow over the next few weeks and we will write to families with details.

Sandra Knights
Assistant Headteacher
Acting Head of Ellis

Year 9 and 10 Wellbeing and Progress Evening - Thursday 14th October at 6.15pm

A reminder of the details sent out yesterday to Year 9 and 10 families:

We are pleased to invite you and your child to Varndean School's first online Year 9 & 10 'Supporting Wellbeing and Progress' evening of the year.

This live webinar will provide an opportunity for parents and carers to hear from key members of staff about the year ahead and how you can support your child with the GCSE curriculum. Sessions will focus on developing outstanding learning habits and effective revision. The English department will also run a session on the demands of reading at Key Stage 4.

Finally, you will hear from the English, Maths and Science departments to find out the best ways for your child to revise the core subjects.

To attend this online webinar please use the link below.

The evening is intended to get parents and children working together so please encourage your child to watch the webinar with you.

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_CEyeNvPRCajKHoSawUz8Q

Elise James
Assistant Headteacher

Brighton & Hove Citizens Assembly

A citizens assembly focusing on mental health across the city is being held on **Thursday 14th October, 18:30-20:30 (virtual)**.

You can support the work being done by students and staff by registering to attend at:

<https://brighton-and-hove-assembly.eventbrite.co.uk> Further information including the manifesto and

attendees can be found [on our website](#).

Varndean View

Thank you to families who completed our most recent Varndean View survey at the start of term. The focus for September was our 'Wellbeing and Progress Evenings'. Thank you for responding to us. We received lots of positive feedback about how you feel we support families and in particular you like the evenings to be virtual and recorded so that you can watch them at a time that suits you. Some of the feedback included what we are currently improving such as:

- ★ More sessions on anxiety and exam revision
- ★ Sessions on online safety, which was included in the latest evening
- ★ Keeping the same format as this is easy to access and that families ca

Varndean View #4

This month we want to ask you about types of social media communication you would like us to use.

[Click here to complete](#)

A Guide to Communications at Varndean School

In addition to social media we use various systems for communicating with families and students and have created a guide for families to show what is used and when. You can [view this on our website](#) so you can refer back to it if needs be.

We would also like to highlight the weekly student bulletin which is emailed out every Friday to all students. Many students actively use this to keep up to date with what is going on in and around school but we would always welcome more engagement so any encouragement you can provide would be most welcome!

Ellis Senior Students in action!

The Ellis senior student team has been meeting weekly to formulate an action plan for our Ellis community! Already as a team we are visiting Ellis forms and working with students and form tutors to support the return of Ellis students to school. In particular we have worked with Year 8 talking about options choices and making the most of Year 8. Over the next few weeks we will be working with Year 9 encouraging them to get into good study habits for their GCSEs. The Ellis senior student team also hosted a Year 7 drop-in for students at lunchtime in the Amphitheatre. This was an opportunity for Year 7 to get to know us and also each other. There are more of these planned for next term.

Raising the profile of our community is our biggest aim this year. We are in the process of deciding on our Ellis charity for 2021/22 and we have a number of events that we are planning to raise money for our chosen charity. This includes the famous Ellis Extravaganza! Watch this space for more information on this.

Finally we are in the process of producing our first Ellis newspaper, the "Ellis Express". This will feature articles and information about Team Purple.

We hope to be able to share more exciting news with you in future newsletters.

Ms Knights & Ellis senior students, Evie, Josh, Alice, Jess, Xhesika, Betty, Hallie, Lucy, Joe, Niall, Chloe & Esme

Year 11 Latest Update

In preparation for the PPEs next week we held an assembly for year 11. This looked at the arrangements for the next two weeks. Key messages are:

- Exam timetables with information on dates, times and rooms for exams have been emailed to all students. They can also check their timetable on Varndean Plus. If they click on assessment and then exam timetable this will show them their personal timetable. This is updated throughout the PPE exam period so a top tip is to check the night before for the room of their exam and more importantly their seat number. This will save them time on the morning of the exams.
- During the PPE time period students are to meet in the canteen before their exam. They will then be dismissed row by row to go to the exam hall. When students don't have exams they will have normal lessons and registration time.
- Finally the PPEs are designed to give a realistic experience of the future exams so all normal examination rules apply. These include all phones to be off and in bags before entering the hall.
- If there are any questions about the exams please contact Mr Manville our exams officer.

As Mrs Baker has said we are very proud of the current year 11, their diligence and commitment to making the most of their learning since starting back in September has not gone unnoticed by teaching and school base staff. We wish them all the best in the next two weeks and want them to remember that this experience is about testing their revision and using the experience to help them prepare further for the summer exams.

Well done year 11!

Sandra Knights

We are hiring!

Please see links below for our current job vacancies. If you would like to find out more information on any of the jobs below please email vacancies@varndean.co.uk

[Performing Arts Technician](#)

[Cover Supervisor](#)

Hot Chocolate with the Head

So many of our students are continuing to shine with standout achievements. The latest nominations for Hot Chocolate with the Head are:

- Zoe 8NWE (Lennox)
- Ariella 7MPR (Angelou)
- Lucea 7LNE (Lennox)
- Freya 10KOS (Angelou)
- Ruben 7DFL (Russell)
- Bethany-Paige 8AMI (Turing)
- Lucy 11SJC (Ellis)
- Joe 11SJC (Ellis)
- Saskia 9CEC (Angelou)
- Dottie 7CCL (Angelou)
- Tilly 7JWA (Russell)
- Elliot 11NGE (Turing)
- Riley 11NGE (Turing)
- Iris 7SJA (Ellis)

Well done to all of our nominees!

Support Information for Young People & Families

This information has come via The Brighton & Hove Wellbeing Service:

- The Calm Harm app available on android and iOS <https://calmharm.co.uk/>
- The Mix young people's support text messenger
Text "the mix" to 85258
www.themix.org.uk
- The Samaritans (24 hours a day)
116 123
www.samaritans.org
- Hopeline UK (9am- midnight)
Call: 0800 068b4141
Text: 07860039967
- Calm (Open 5pm- Midnight)
Call: 0800 58 58 58
- Young Minds Parents support line (9:30am to 4pm, Monday to Friday)
Call: 0808 802 5544
youngminds.org.uk
- Sussex Mental Health Line (urgent support 24 hours a day)
Call: 0300 500 0101
- NHS Advice (urgent support 24 hours a day)
Call: 111

In an emergency always call 999.

Here is the link to Brighton & Hove e-wellbeing website which contains advice and support.
<https://e-wellbeing.co.uk/>

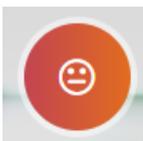
Safeguarding and wellbeing

For all our new parents please direct any safeguarding concerns to...

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Vicky Anstiss
Safeguarding Officer: Kerry Tester
Using the email - safeguarding@varndean.co.uk

We encourage you to contact safeguarding, tutors or school bases to let us know if there is a concern about your child or challenges they are facing that might be impacting on their emotional regulation in school.

We also have a worried button on our website where parents can report concerns anonymously. These concerns may be for another student or for reporting 'intelligence' relating to safeguarding children at Varndean School



Our 'worried' button looks like this and can be found [here](#). Students also have a worried

button on their homepage for letting us know about concerns, but finding it hard to talk directly to someone.

The current [safeguarding policy](#) is currently being reviewed in light of the new [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) DfE guidance and we will share the updated version with you soon.

Vicky Anstiss
vickyanstiss@varndean.co.uk

Pastoral Staff

Don't forget that you can contact your school base between 8am and 3.30pm during term time - 01273 561281

SENCO

Judith Ford - judithford@varndean.co.uk

Lennox

Sara Connolly - saraconnolly@varndean.co.uk

Emma Sutton - emmasutton@varndean.co.uk

Angelou

Sam Whiteman - samwhiteman@varndean.co.uk

Fiona Hall - fionahall@varndean.co.uk

Lorina Ventura - lorinaventura@varndean.co.uk

Russell

Abi Holder - abigailholder@varndean.co.uk

Lucy Smallwood - lucysmallwood@varndean.co.uk

Turing

Georgina Maltby - georginamaltby@varndean.co.uk

Donna Mills - donnamills@varndean.co.uk

Natasha Didcott - natashadidcott@varndean.co.uk

Ellis

Sandra Knights - sandraknights@varndean.co.uk

Caroline Ball - carolineball@varndean.co.uk

Donna Mills - donnamills@varndean.co.uk

Safeguarding

Our safeguarding team will be contactable **during school hours** if you would like advice on an issue or wish to report a concern.

safeguarding@varndean.co.uk

Vicky Anstiss (Designated Safeguarding Lead) - vickyanstiss@varndean.co.uk

Kerry Tester - (Safeguarding Officer) - kerrytester@varndean.co.uk

To access safeguarding advice (**outside school hours**) please contact Front Door for Families

Phone: 01273 290400 9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, 9am to 4.30pm on Fridays

Out-of-hours: 01273 335905 (Emergency Duty Service)