



## News from the Headteacher

Welcome to our Christmas newsletter, 2023, and the last from me as Headteacher. It has been a busy business-as-usual start to the academic year. Our Year 7 students have settled in well to the rhythm of secondary school life, and Year 11 students have approached their final year with determination, with the first set of mock exams out of the way. We have high hopes for Year 11 – attendance is a significant indicator of academic success, and our Year 11 students sit well above attendance for the national average. I am so proud of their focus, this term. In fact, our whole school's attendance sits comfortably at the national average. Thank you for your support in ensuring your child attends school on a regular basis. We are not yet back to pre-pandemic figures of 95%, but 92% is big improvement on the last three years.

Your support in encouraging your child in their studies, whatever their year group, remains hugely important. In fact, parental support this term has been extremely positive. The hall was packed with parents and students for our Year 9 GCSE Options Information Evening, in November, and our Year 7 Settling-In Parents Evening was attended by 95% of parents. This is an incredibly high figure; we cannot thank you enough for your support in helping us provide the best experience in school for your children. Don't forget that you can monitor your child's Homework routine via *ClassCharts*. Please contact your child's Curriculum Learning Tutor, if you need help setting up the app.

We are delighted to have welcomed Miss Taylor, Head of Science, back into school in the last couple of weeks, following her Maternity Leave. I'd like to thank Mrs Tunney for her work as interim Head of Science, this term. We have recently appointed a temporary teacher of Spanish, Miss Williams, and Miss Gittins has joined our admin team in Reception; it feels like she has never not been part of the team. We send our best wishes to Mr Olaleru, from the Science department, who leaves us at the end of term. Miss Oakley left us in November; she had been a teaching assistant for the last six years. We wish both Mr Olaleru and Miss Oakley well in their new roles and thank them for their support during their time with us at Ludlow School.

We send our love and best wishes to Mr Poulton, who retires at the end of term. Mr Poulton joined Ludlow School as Headteacher 2004, before moving to a wider Trust role in 2017. His commitment to the education and wellbeing of our children is beyond compare, and I can only thank him for the support he has given me in the last few years. He will be deeply missed by everyone throughout the school and the Trust.

The last few days have suddenly got colder, and perhaps we will have snow in the New Year. Should extremely bad weather cause us to close the school to students this winter, there are a range of systems we use to convey the information. We would endeavour to use our messaging system to inform you directly, as well as putting a post on the Ludlow School Facebook page, and the school's website. We also contact Shropshire Council, and it places all school closures on its website. Local radio stations use the website as it point of information. Therefore, we have been advised that you can listen to local radio stations for updates, or look at the Council's website at [www.shropshire.gov.uk/school-closures](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/school-closures).

Advent is upon us, and, once again, our students have got behind our *#reverseadvent* campaign, with our collection of food items for Ludlow's Food Bank. Thank you for your support. It feels especially important that we work together to help people living in our own community. We will also celebrate the last day of term, Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December, with Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day. Students can wear a Christmassy jumper, along with their normal school uniform, for £1. Students will be in normal, full uniform when they return to school on Thursday 4th January 2024.

And so, I wish you all a very fond farewell. I have loved my time at Ludlow School, from starting as Head of English in 1989, to the last seven years as Headteacher. I have been extremely fortunate to have worked with an outstanding team of staff, school governors and brilliant students. The last few days have been emotional ones, with the excitement of our production of *Grease* and the joy of our carol service in St Laurence's church. I couldn't have asked for a better send-off! However, it is the daily moments with your children that have always been the highlight of working at Ludlow School, and I will miss them very much. I know Mark Burton, the new Headteacher, is looking forward to joining Ludlow School, and I send him my best wishes.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your support over the years, and wish you and your children every success and happiness in the future.

Have a peaceful and restful Christmas, and a Happy New Year.

Paula Hearle

## Shropshire Family Information Service

Shropshire Council are providing new ways to support local families. *Shropshire Family Information Service* offers information via social media. *Shropshire Strengthening Families* offer face to face support at the Helena Lane Community Centre every Monday 9.30 - 11am and Wednesday 1.30 - 3pm. If you are struggling with the cost of living crisis, the pressure of family life, or the challenges of parenting, then please seek help from them.



## Christmas Holiday and Christmas Gifts

School closes for the Christmas holiday at 3.25pm on Tuesday 19th December. Please note that the school does not close early on Tuesday for Christmas. The new term for students begins on **Thursday** 4th January. I would urge you not to purchase visible piercings or oral piercings for your child during this period, as they are unlikely to have healed in time for the new term, and will need to be removed in line with our Uniform Policy. I would also urge you to discourage your children from bringing into school expensive gifts, such as iPhones, smart phones or iPods. The school accepts no liability for items, unless they have been taken into the possession of a member of staff (and only then up to a limit of £50). I would also suggest that, as we enter the very cold weather period, coats bought over Christmas should not be of exceptional value, if they are to be worn at school — we have a huge basket of unclaimed items in lost property.

## Uniform

The overwhelming majority of our students look smart and wear exactly what is expected. However, there have been some specific issues this term, where students have been sanctioned for disregarding aspects of the Uniform Policy:

- Make-up must be discrete; false eyelashes are not permitted.
- Students can wear a single stud in each ear, a ring and a watch. Multiple ear piercings, hoops or drop earrings, necklaces and bracelets, are not permitted.
- Facial piercings are not permitted. Students must wear a clear keeper stud whilst they cannot remove the piercing.
- Trainers are not acceptable footwear with school uniform. Students must wear black shoes
- Students must wear black socks with school shoes, and not white PE socks.

Uniform issues may appear trivial, but we have a uniform code, and like any set of rules, they must be consistently followed; individual cases cannot be allowed to undermine the aim of the uniform. We would ask for your support in ensuring your child is in the correct uniform. Please contact your child's CLT, should you require financial support.

## Communicating with us:

If you need to collect your child for an appointment during the school day, please ensure you send in a note in your child's planner, or email us ahead of arriving at the school. We often use Facebook and our InTouch messaging system to send out information very swiftly, to large groups of parents and carers. Both of these platforms continue to be for **out-going messages only**, from the school; please do not reply, as it is unlikely we will receive your message and respond to your query. For all contact with the school, please email us directly: [admin@ludlowschool.com](mailto:admin@ludlowschool.com), and your message will be forwarded to the relevant member of staff.



## Dropping-off and Picking-up from school

We are very fortunate to be allowed to use the extensive area of the Leisure Centre car park adjacent to Bromfield Road, for parents and carers to drop off and collect children from school. Please do not pull into the front of the school, or park in the residential driveways, or the bus lay-by on Bromfield Road, as this causes an obstruction and is dangerous to pedestrians and traffic. Unfortunately, the parking of parents in driveways is causing potholes for the owners. Please be mindful that Majestic Wine's carpark is for customers only.



## Lost Property

I cannot quite believe the number of school jumpers and coats piled up in Lost Property, all unnamed, and so impossible to reunite with their owners. Please encourage your child to reclaim lost items, as we have limited storage. It would be helpful if you could name items of clothing, as we are then able to return them directly. We will be donating unclaimed items to community groups, to support local families.

## Ludlow School will never forget

Our traditional school Remembrance assemblies took on a special resonance this year, as we paused to consider the victims of war, in the present, as well as the past. The school community joined together for our Remembrance assemblies in school on 10th November, with a minute of silence held at 11am, to remember the fallen. It was good to see so many of our students involved in the town's Remembrance Sunday parade and service. Our Head Boy, Jake, and Head Girl, Amy, represented the school with the laying of the wreath at the War Memorial in the Market Square, and then led the prayers in St Laurence's church.



## Advent Carol Service

In late November, Mrs Merrick, Mr Biggin and fourteen students had the honour of attending the Diocese of Hereford Multi-Academy Trust Advent Carol Service, hosted by Hereford Cathedral. Three students read a Bible reading, and two students carried candles in a procession through the Cathedral.



The students were beautifully presented and contributed to every carol with enthusiasm. They upheld our core Christian values wonderfully and we are all very proud of the way in which they represented the school.

The service itself was very moving, as it brought together all the schools within our Trust, with over 300 students and many teachers and parents.

## Reverse Advent

We have had another successful year of #reverseadvent! The students and staff have been busy collecting items for the Food Bank and we are going to be sending another huge donation very soon. The concept of #reverseadvent is that rather than just 'taking' during advent (from our advent calendars), we give, and these small acts of 'giving' are gathered together and make a significant contribution to our local community.

Thank you so much to everyone that got behind #reverseadvent – your donations will brighten the days of those who find Christmas a difficult time, for a variety of reasons.

May God bless those who receive these donations.

## Terms Dates 2023-24

Date	Event
3rd January	PD Day
4th January	Return to School
12th—16th Feb	Half-Term
25th March—5th April	Easter Holiday
6th May	Bank Holiday
27th—31st May	Half-Term
19th July	Last day of Term

## Events 2023-24

Date	Event
18th January	Y8 Parents' Evening
1st February	Presentation Evening Y11 2023
9th February	St Giles Non-Uniform Day for "Helping Hand"
13th March	Y9 Parents' Evening
19th March	Y11 Parents' Evening
1st May	Y10 Parents' Evening
13th June	Y7 Parents' Evening
1st—5th July	Y10 Work Experience Week
2nd July	Y6 Parents' Evening

## Grease

Ludlow School was turned into Rydell High, and transported back in time to 1959 for the sensational production of "Grease", on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> December. An array of students from across all year groups wowed the audience with their singing, dancing and



acting, delivering the classics *Summer Lovin*, *You're the One That I Want*, and *We Go Together*. Amira Chumber and Elliot Siwicki led the cast as Sandy and Danny, and the performers received a standing ovation on both nights for their vibrant and mesmerising work. Memories were made and the joy that the performers and crew experienced will stay with them forever.



## Year 8 STEM Day

On Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December, Year 8 students experienced a STEM Day, provided by Hyett Education, and sponsored by Defence Nuclear Enterprise (DNE). The students had an amazing opportunity to build Lego robots and control them using block coding via iPads. The opportunity was cross-curricular, between Design and Technology, Computing and Science. The challenges encouraged teamwork, problem-solving, creative thinking, and coding/cyber skills. The whole program aims to create a greater awareness of career opportunities that are aligned to STEM, some of which students may not even be aware of.

