



VERULAM SCHOOL

Headteacher: Julie Richardson

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22nd September 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Welcome Back

We are pleased to have welcomed all students back to school this term. Staff and students returned from the Summer to fantastic A Level and GCSE results. We are immensely proud of our school community and its progress to date.

Site Improvements

Over the break, a number of renovations have taken place, most notably, at Sandpit Lane. We have invested a considerable amount to re-tarmac and re-fence the drive and parking areas, whilst also improving site security there.



In addition, as a result of our partnership with St Albans City FC whereby we are facilitating their Education Programme as part of our extended Sixth Form offer, we have been able to invest in improving the shower facilities for our students at Sandpit Lane.

The toilets in the Bradshaw block have also been renovated in line with the other toilets that were updated last year. Outside, a number of new benches and table tennis tables have also been installed.

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Lastly, the outdoor multi-rig has been installed thanks to the fundraising efforts of our PTFA (Parent Teacher and Friends Association). Our students have been enjoying challenging themselves on this equipment whilst burning off some energy!

Later this term, a new lighting rig is set to be installed in the main hall, to aid dramatic performances and other events held at the school. This is a costly development and one that was essential as a result of the previous rig no longer being fit for purpose.

Improving the site and facilities is an ongoing task, especially with a site that has some buildings that date back to the 1930s. As you are probably aware from reports in the media and the union strikes that interrupted school life last year, school budgets are incredibly strained because of a lack of government funding. All schools are facing increasing budget constraints and challenges as a result.

Assistance Required!

As a result, we need your assistance to support some improvements that are long overdue and that we simply cannot afford to address on our own. The chairs in our main hall are incredibly old, having well exceeded their shelf life.

We would like to replace the 350 chairs this academic year, so that students, staff and parents can sit more comfortably in assemblies, talks, performances etc.

We are seeking a donation of £25 per family, to support us in raising enough funds for the project. The simplest and most effective way to contribute is through a Gift Aid donation to the Verulam Charitable Trust. Please click [here](#) and complete the google form which will allow us to boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate.

Please set up your donation to be paid to:

Verulam Trust, Lloyds TSB Bank plc, St. Albans Branch, PO Box 1000, BX1 1LT

Account No: 30212360

Sort Code: 30-97-25

Friends and Parent Teacher Association – PTFA

We rely on our PTFA to support us at functions and with raising funds for the school. We are looking for new members to join the PTFA. If you are able and willing to support the school with your time, we would love to hear from you. Email admin@verulam.aat.school and you will be put in touch with our SLT link for the PTFA.

Parents' Evenings

During Covid, most schools moved to online Parents' Evenings. Although there are many benefits to online appointments, we also recognise the importance of having face-to-face communications. As a result, this year we will trial a hybrid version – with Parents' Evenings being face to face until 5:50 p.m. and online appointments running from 6:15 p.m. This will allow parents to select their preference. All parents will be required to be off-site by 6 p.m. to allow staff to conduct their online appointments.

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Unfortunately, there are always some staff who teach two or more classes in a Year group which limits the number of appointments that they can accommodate. For any parent/carers not able to access an appointment, an appointment for a phone call regarding your child's progress will be scheduled.

DPR (Dynamic Progress Reporting)

As detailed at the end of the last academic year, we will be using DPR to set homework and to provide live feedback regarding your child's progress. Information will be shared at each Year Group Information Evening and there is an optional DPR support session available to each Year Group.

Mr Zaman, Assistant Headteacher, will contact you directly via ParentMail with information regarding DPR, as well as links to Loom videos to support you and your child using this platform. We will continue to use Google Classroom to store resources and to communicate with students, however, all homework will be set on DPR once your child's Year Group has had their Information Evening.

Here is a reminder of the schedule for our DPR roll out:

Year	Information evening	Student logins shared parents and with students	Thursday DPR optional support
7	16 th September (presentation at the start of the Summer BBQ)	15 th September	21 st September 6-7 p.m.
13	20 th September	19 th September	28 th September 6-7 p.m.
10	3 rd October	2 nd October	12 th October 6-7 p.m.
9	10 th October	9 th October	19 th October 6-7 p.m.
12	8 th November	7 th November	16 th November 6-7 p.m.
11	14 th November	13 th November	30 th November 6-7 p.m.
8	6 th December	5 th December	14 th December 6-7 p.m.

School Communications

A gentle reminder that no parents should be emailing staff directly. If you have any concerns or queries, please email the admin@verulam.aat.school stating who you would like the email to be for the attention of (FAO), requesting a call back, and it will be forwarded to the correct person. Emails should be polite, courteous and concise. You should expect a response within three working days.

Safeguarding Concerns

If you have any safeguarding concerns please contact Miss Perry, Deputy Headteacher via DSL@verulam.aat.school

SEND Support/Concerns

If you need to contact the SENDCo about your child, would like to raise a complaint in relation to SEND or you feel that your child may have an undiagnosed Special Educational Need, please contact sendco@verulam.aat.school

Updates

Each half term, the Verulam Vox (our pupil newsletter written for students by students) is issued, followed by the end of term corporate newsletter. You can read previous editions [here](#).

In addition to these, each week you will receive our Spotlight newsletter, updating you on one aspect of school life, as well as reminding you of any upcoming dates. You can find previous ones [here](#).

You can also view key dates via our Parent Calendar [here](#).

Verulam School also posts on the following social media sites. Please note, any questions or queries should always be emailed via admin@verulam.aat.school and not posted on any of these platforms:

Twitter [@verulamschool](#)

Facebook [Verulam School](#)

LinkedIn [Verulam School](#)

Alumnus of the Month

We are always looking for past students to be an 'Alumnus of the Month'. It requires a short proforma to be completed along with a photograph. If you or anyone you know would be interested in participating, please contact the Director of Sixth Form, Mr Base via admin@verulam.aat.school

School Dinners

Our current menus are available [here](#). Please note that the cost of the meal deal has increased to £2.75. We provide free jugs of water on each table during break and lunch, as well as hydration stations and two water bottle stations for refills. We recommend that you purchase a reusable water bottle for your child, so that they can stay hydrated at no cost whilst at school.

Free School Meals

Your child could get a free school meal if you receive any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (as long as you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and you don't get more than £16,190 a year)

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- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit (with annual earned income of no more than £7,400 after tax and not including any benefits you get).

Applications to receive or check eligibility for free school meals is managed through Hertfordshire County Council. The online application takes 5 mins and, in most cases, can tell you straight away if your child can get free meals at school. Click [here](#) for further information.


If you require any support in making an application, please contact Mrs Avery, Assistant Headteacher, via admin@verulam.aat.school

Uniform

As we enter Autumn, a reminder that students are **not** permitted to wear any type of hooded jumper or trainers. Students may wear a plain dark grey V neck from any retailer. We also recommend that all students have a Winter jacket.

We hope that your child has had a positive start to the academic year and we look forward to working with all stakeholders in the months ahead.

Yours sincerely



Miss Richardson

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