



3rd October 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Weekly Communication

Black History Month

This year's theme for Black History Month is 'Saluting our Sisters' and it encourages us to focus particularly on the contributions of Black women. Our Red Ties who lead the Equity Commission Husna, Angel, Anne-Laure, Sage, Feyi and Jedidah have worked extremely hard to ensure Black History Month is full of activities and celebrations. Their assembly was extremely informative and full of celebrations of our sisters. Please find attached the Calendar of events for Black History Month. Each week we will provide you with more information on what has been going on.

World Mental Health Day 2023

The theme for 2023, set by the World Foundation of Mental Health, is 'Mental health is a universal human right'.

World Mental Health Day is about raising awareness of mental health and driving positive change for everyone's mental health. It's also a chance to talk about mental health, how we need to look after it, and how important it is to get help if you are struggling. This World Mental Health Day on Tuesday 10th October, students will be completing a wellbeing origami activity during form time along with being asked to wear a yellow accessory. You can show young people that you are with them by wearing yellow and showing them that they matter and deserve the support they need, when they need it, no matter what.

Y13 Sport's Fest 2023

This Wednesday the annual Year 13 sports fest commenced with teams competing to be crowned victors. The events included a tug of war between girls and boys with debates still about who won, tug of war between humanities students and STEM students, bulldog and many more activities. The event was organised by Senior Prefects Caitlin and Mashal, showcasing the talents and competitiveness of students. A tuck shop stall kickstarted the fundraising for the summer Leavers' Ball. The event was highly engaging and much needed after UCAS exams last week. Many thanks to Caitlin and Mashal, all involved in fundraising at the stall, controlling the music, PE department and everyone who participated in the games and donated to raise money.

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Early School Closure

On Thursday 19th October and Thursday 9th November school will close at the end of period 5 due to our Open Events. Lessons will therefore finish at 2.35pm. We have informed Abbey Travel and TFL for the 602 bus.

Squid cards

It is very important for all students to remember to bring their Squid cards for use in the school dining hall-Bytes. Squid cards should be used as the fastest and safest way to make purchases. If you do not have your Squid card this causes significant delays in service so you will be sent to the back of the queue in order to ensure a fast and smooth moving service in the dining hall in the interest of all students.

Please Hold the Date- Year 7- 11

On Monday 11th December at 5.30pm, the '2 Johns' have been invited to talk to our parent/ carer community. The '2 Johns' e safety training is conducted by two former police officers with extensive expertise in online safeguarding. Over the past five years, they have been actively involved in various key events related to Online Child Sexual Exploitation of Children. Their insights and knowledge have been sought after by prominent media outlets such as BBC Breakfast TV, BBC Radio 4, Channel 4 TV, as well as numerous local radio stations. They have also conducted presentations in schools across the UK. The '2 Johns' will deliver a tailored talk to students from Year 7 to Year 11. To further enhance our commitment to online safety, the '2 Johns' will also provide training for our staff on Monday, 11th December alongside the informative parent event thereafter. I do hope that you will all join what promises to be an incredibly informative session from industry experts - we may think we know all there is to know about keeping our children safe online - but there is always more to learn. I look forward to welcoming you to the event - please could you register your attendance using the link: [Link to Register Attendance](#)

WhatsApp Factsheet

Please find attached a parent/carers factsheet regarding WhatsApp and what you need to know.

Bexley Information, Advice & Support Service (IASS)

IASS invites all parents and carers of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities to their coffee mornings. Once a month (dates on attached flyer), you can receive impartial and confidential guidance and information on supporting your child's education and wellbeing.

There is no need to book an appointment with the Service.

EXACT Screener – Year 7 students EXACT Subtests

During the week commencing October 9th, 2023, your child will participate in the EXACT (Educational Exploration and Assessment of Children's Thinking) subtests during their library lesson. We want to emphasise that there is no need for your child to prepare for these assessments, as they are designed to provide us with valuable insights into specific areas of their learning profile.

The subtests will assess the following areas of your child's learning profile:

- Word recognition
- Reading comprehension and reading speed
- Spelling
- Typing to dictation
- Handwriting to dictation

The EXACT subtests aim to identify areas where your child may require additional support in their academic development. These assessments are a part of our commitment to ensure that every student receives a tailored education that meets their individual needs and enables them to reach their full potential.

We understand that assessments can sometimes create anxiety for students and parents/carers, but please rest assured that these tests are administered in a supportive, stress-free environment. Our dedicated staff will ensure that your child feels comfortable during the process.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in your child's education journey. By working together, we can provide the best possible learning experience for every student at Townley Grammar School.

If you have any questions or require further information about the upcoming EXACT subtests, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Swart (nswart@townleygrammar.org.uk).

Mobile Phones - Years 7 -11

At present the school does not permit any student to use a mobile phone in school and have ensured that all mobiles are 'out of sight' at all times during the day. After half term, we will expect all students to leave their mobile phones in their lockers throughout the school day; mobile phones may feature prominently in people's lives but there is no place for them in an educational setting. This is to ensure that students are not tempted to check mobile phones intermittently as part of our wider commitment to reduce screen time and encourage more physical, social interaction.

In addition, UNESCO, the UN's education, science and culture agency, states that there is evidence that excessive mobile phone use was linked to reduced educational performance and that high levels of screen time had a negative effect on children's emotional stability. The research into the damaging effects of mobile phones for teenagers is overwhelming and if you would like to read more then there is a useful article below.

Your support is always appreciated so please could you reinforce this message at home. Any student found carrying a mobile phone with them during the day will have it confiscated. Students may always ask their Learning Managers or the Student Hub if they need to contact home and likewise, if parents/carers need to contact their children, please let reception know and we will be able to get a message to them quickly. As a further reminder, Year 7 and 8 are not permitted to have Smart Phones in school at all. [Article on banning Smartphones](#)

Yours sincerely,



Miss S Totty
Senior Deputy Headteacher