



# WOODHOUSE GROVE SCHOOL

woodhousegrove.co.uk

March 2024

Dear Parents

I write to you after another action-packed, but immensely rewarding, Term. As we look forward to Easter, hopefully, with the dark clouds and persistent rain behind us, it is also an opportunity to reflect on and celebrate all that has been achieved over the past three months or so.

Woodhouse Grove is an inclusive and inspiring Co-educational Day and Boarding School, which offers an incredible learning environment for our young people. Putting pupils at the heart of everything we do, our shared values create a strong, caring and cohesive community. I often say to visitors that we see ourselves as a big, small School: big enough to offer a huge range of opportunities, but small enough that we are able to get to know each individual, all of whom have their individual strengths and unique characters, and able to encourage them to strive to be the best they can be. The confidence which our young people gain from this encouraging and supportive atmosphere is perhaps the greatest gift we can offer them – without it, they cannot hope to fulfil their potential in work and play. We are rightly proud of our pupils' achievements, both in the classroom and outside it, but the greatest pride we have is in the pupils themselves. They are our greatest achievement.

As I record every Term, Woodhouse Grove is a school of breadth and opportunity, much of which is regularly showcased in our fortnightly editions of [Newsflash](#) and I am delighted that a very large number of our pupils have continued to participate in such a rich and varied programme of co-curricular activities. Here are some of the highlights:

- *The School had the most successful Netball season in its history, with our 1<sup>st</sup> VII reaching the final of the Independent Schools' National Netball Cup for the first time ever. They, along with our very strong U14 Team, also qualified for the English Schools National Netball Finals – making Woodhouse Grove the only Yorkshire school with two teams at the Finals; an amazing achievement, which saw both teams placed in the top 8 in the country. We are immensely proud of the dedication shown by all the pupils and coaching staff.*
- *We have had some outstanding University offers this year, including one to study Law at St Catherine's College, Oxford, one to study Medicine and two Veterinary offers.*
- *It has been a busy Term for musicians of all genres, with an epic Battle of the Bands evening, our Chamber Concert and our final event of the term, last night's Easter Charity Concert. Also in the Performing Arts, we have seen individual successes with students qualifying for the TDCI World Dance Performer Finals and the Miss Dance of Great Britain Finals.*
- *Both our U13 Boys' and U13 Girls' Cricket Teams were crowned West Yorkshire indoor champions this Term, and competed at Headingley in the Yorkshire Finals. This bodes well for the forthcoming outdoor season.*
- *Years 9 to 11 highlighted our academic ability in the recent UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge with 5 Gold certificates awarded. A further 38 students were awarded Silver or Bronze certificates.*
- *The production of The Addams Family was superb and the cast looked like they thoroughly enjoyed performing on both nights to an appreciative audience. There was some incredible acting and the songs were, at times, moving and, at times, hilarious. Congratulations to the actors and the backstage crew and staff on a hugely enjoyable production.*
- *Our Cross-Country runners enjoyed continued success with four students competing for West Yorkshire in the English Schools' National Finals in Pontefract.*
- *Grove Awards for Years 7 to 9 continue to go from strength to strength, with 34 students receiving certificates and badges already this academic year.*

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*I am Grovian.*



Woodhouse Grove School is part of the Methodist Independent Schools Trust.  
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- *Our Rugby Sevens teams, and particularly our U16 and U12 squads, have enjoyed a variety of successes throughout a busy programme of tournaments and festivals.*
- *We applaud more individual sporting excellence this Term, with a number of students selected and playing for elite programmes, including: England U16 Football, Leeds Rhinos Rugby, Leeds Rhinos Netball, Manchester Thunder Netball, Manchester United, Bradford City, England U18 Rugby, Yorkshire Academy Rugby, Wales Netball U17, GB U17 fencing, England Tumbling Championships, Yorkshire NDP Gymnastics and the British Rowing Development Programme.*

The Spring Term is also the time of year when our Admissions Department is at its busiest. We were absolutely delighted with both the number – over 160 external candidates – and overall quality of the candidates we had sitting our Year 7 Entrance Examination in January, many of whom have enjoyed successful Taster Days either side of the Half Term break. We were also pleased to welcome an extremely healthy number of external students to our Sixth Form Taster Day. I am delighted that the School's reputation is such that there continues to be a great deal of interest in securing a place at Woodhouse Grove, at every level, and believe that such healthy competition can only be a good thing. Our admissions process is, by necessity, a time-consuming and rigorous one; and, as ever, the pleasure of those to whom we were able to offer a place has been, inevitably, set against the disappointment of others.

The new Sixth Form building is now up and running with many of our Sixth Formers enjoying the new surroundings for curriculum lessons and study periods. The new state-of-the-art facility has seminar rooms suitable for Sixth Form teaching, lectures and career talks. There is increased space for individual and collaborative working and integrated technology for the live streaming of topical issues. Elements of the space have a much more corporate, workplace, feel. Meanwhile, work on the covered Netball / Tennis Courts is almost complete. This project has experienced a number of unforeseen setbacks and the harsh winter weather conditions have not helped progress either. However, as I am sure those of you who have witnessed the construction taking shape will agree, it is going to be a brilliant facility.

As I frequently record in Open Day speeches and Prize Day addresses, an education which is not based upon principle, and a core set of values, is almost worthless. That is why at Woodhouse Grove we place so much emphasis on our Grovian Values. When our young people first walk through our doors they become Grovians for life. Throughout their life, a Grovian is expected to be 'Kind and Generous.' Our Grovian Values are, of course, rooted in our wider association with the Methodist Church. In a School context, how these words become action is the challenge of our Charity Committee; the work of which is led this year by three Sixth Form students; Yulia Buhara, Kaitlyn Walsh and Hugo Poole, who are supported by Mrs Nulty, Mr Lambert and Rev Drost.

The School looks to support causes that are a mix of Local, National and International projects, chosen by the Charity Committee and informed by whole School student input. We continue with our long-standing support for the North Bradford Foodbank, EduKid and Candlelighters and this year we have added ZARACH, a local Leeds charity, who supply beds and bedroom furniture to school children who have none; St George's Crypt, who work 365 days a year with vulnerable adults; Bingley Hedgehog Rescue, a local Animal Sanctuary Centre; and Hope for Justice, which highlights and campaigns against the illegal trafficking of people. Our fundraising efforts are through various initiatives, including non-uniform days, cake bake sales, food and clothing donations and the hugely popular **Battle of the Bands** concert that took place earlier in the Term. We continue to be enthused and inspired by our young people, whose ideas influence how we respond to the different needs to which we are drawn to provide help. To our extended School community of family and friends, we also warmly give our thanks for how you support our students in realising these charitable aims.

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For our Year 11 and Year 13 age groups, examination preparation, in addition to some much needed rest, is the priority for the Easter break. All students have been given extensive advice with regard to their revision work over the holiday period. Most of all, they must ensure that quality time is given to their academic work which, as much educational research proves, should ideally be undertaken in a good working environment combined with plenty of sleep and physical exercise. The last few months of the Academic Year are, inevitably, challenging, not to say, stressful – but we want every pupil at The Grove to receive their results in the summer without any regrets and knowing that they have given of their best. It is important, therefore, that all those facing examinations next Term make the very most of the forthcoming opportunity to organise and refresh, to review and to understand, and to commit to memory. The precise details of the arrangements for Examination Leave in Years 11 and 13 will reach you in due course under separate cover.

I am delighted that Stuart Andrew MP has accepted the School's invitation to be this year's Guest of Honour at Prize Day, which will be held on the morning of Saturday 29 June for prize winners and students in Year 7, Year 8 and Year 13. As I am sure many of you will be aware, Stuart has been a Parliamentarian since 2010 and has been a hugely supportive constituency MP, playing a significant part in the re-opening of a train station in Apperley Bridge, fifty years after a previous station with the same name was closed as a result of the Beeching cuts in the 1960s. Owing to a boundary change, Stuart will be without a constituency to defend at the next Election. I am sure you will agree, this year's Prize Day will, therefore, be a very fitting occasion at which the School can publicly thank Stuart for all his encouragement and support over the last fourteen years.

The Prize Giving ceremony will then be followed by our School Sports Day in the afternoon. More detailed information on these events will be communicated next Term. In addition to which, our Year 13 Leavers' Weekend programme will be released shortly, which culminates in our Old Grovian Family Day and Twenty20 cricket match on Sunday 30 June from 2.00 pm; all Grove families are welcome to attend.

We look forward to welcoming all students back for the beginning of the Summer Term on Monday 15 April, with boarders returning on Sunday 14 April.

Sarah and I wish you all a very happy and relaxing Easter.

With all my best wishes,

Yours sincerely

**James Lockwood MA**  
Headmaster

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