



WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

IMBERHORNE SCHOOL

Headteacher: Matthew Whatford

Compassion

Achievement

Respect

Endeavour

*The cornerstones of our
learning community*

30th January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

Mobile Phones in School

You may have seen in the news that this week all schools were written to by the Education Secretary to explain the government's position on mobile phones in school. The letter states specifically that 'all schools should be phone-free environments for the entire school day'. Schools' mobile phone policies and their implementation will now also be scrutinised by Ofsted to ensure 'firm, confident leadership'.

Our policy on phones in school is clear and remains unchanged - **phones must be off and away in bags from gate to bell**. If any phones are seen or heard, including if they are in pockets, they will be taken by staff. Phones will be returned to students at the end of the day after they are taken for the first time in a term, but any subsequent confiscations will require parents or carers to come and collect them from school. We see no reason to change this position as it is well understood and managed. We also feel that it is important that we allow phones after the bell at the end of the day due to the significant number of students who use buses to travel home.

Federation Masterclass

This week, 30 students in Years 10-12 attended a masterclass at the University of Brighton, alongside students from our federation partner schools. The event was hosted at the University's Faculty of Applied Sciences, with students experiencing a lecture on university life and the Student Union activities, followed by short practical masterclass sessions on Geographical field research, Electrophoresis, Chemistry and Pharmaceuticals. This is the first event of its kind, building on the other student activities that were established last year, and was a great success. We are extremely thankful to the University for their generosity and support. A further masterclass event is being planned for later this year, targeting Key Stage 3 students. I will write to you with more information on this in the future.

Site Improvements - Windmill Lane

We were delighted this week to learn that our plans to further improve the Windmill Lane site were agreed by the local authority. These works will be phased across the next few years and will be funded through Section 106 monies that have been committed to the school through local development agreements. In the first phase we are planning to remodel the Year 8 and 9 toilets so that they are at the same standard as the new Year 7 toilets. In this phase we will also be seeking to improve the Drama facilities in our main hall and replace the current Music classroom near to our student entrance. We are hoping to have all of these improvements in place for the new school year in September. There is obviously much still to be done regarding governance, surveying and planning for these works, but I will keep you updated as to the developments and any further planned works beyond this phase as and when there is more exciting news to share.

Y11 GCSE Drama

The very best of luck to our Year 11 Drama students, who are busily rehearsing for their final performances that are set to take place next week. We look forward to welcoming parents and carers into school for these performances next week.

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Year 11 Parent Consultation Evening

A quick reminder to all parents and carers of students in Year 11 that we have our second Parent Consultation evening on Thursday 5th Feb. This will be online and booking details can be found [here](#).

Safeguarding - Self-harm webinars

Sadly, we are aware that across West Sussex and the country more widely, more families are facing challenges with young people they care about and self-harm. This has been seen as a taboo subject for some time, and it is important that we name it, recognise it and work together to support our young people with the challenges they are facing. Recognising these challenges, West Sussex Mind have set up some free webinars for interested parents and carers to learn more and feel more confident in managing situations where their families are exposed to self-harm. If you would like to sign up to one of the sessions, please do so [here](#).

Maths Challenge

This week, 128 students from Years 9 and 10 took part in the UK Mathematics Trust Intermediate Challenge. This is a demanding multiple-choice challenge that stretches our most able students on their problem solving and creative thinking skills. Historically our students have performed well in these maths challenges, with many students achieving a Bronze, Silver, or Gold certificate of achievement. Others have gone on to the next round of the competition, representing the school, which is a great achievement.

We wish all the students involved the very best of best of luck and hope that some of them are successful in their aim of reaching the next round of the competition. If you would like to test your mathematical acumen, please click on this [link](#) to have a go at some of the problems yourself.

Wraparound Childcare Survey - WSCC

A reminder to complete West Sussex County Council survey for parents and carers on wraparound childcare. The focus is looking at access, provision for families with children who have SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and how access to provision has impacted families. If you would like to participate in the survey, you can do so by clicking on this [link](#).

Additional School Funding

A key part of our mission in school is to ensure every child at our school has access to the very best resources, and our families play a key role in this. If your family is eligible for **Free School Meals**, applying does much more than provide a healthy lunch for your child - which we know is vital for all students who access it - it also unlocks significant **additional funding** for the school. For every eligible pupil. For every student in receipt of Free School Meals, the school receives extra "Pupil Premium" funding, which we use to invest in things such as additional teaching assistants, new classroom equipment, after-school clubs, and subsidised school trips.

By checking your eligibility, you aren't just accessing support for your child; you are helping us secure the extra investment needed to enrich learning experiences for students. The process is entirely confidential, and your support in this helps our whole school community thrive. Details of how to apply can be found [here](#). If you are struggling in any way to complete this application, please contact Mrs Best or Mrs Abingdon who will be more than happy to help.

Yours faithfully

Mr Matthew Whatford
Headteacher



Sporting and Arts Success

Basketball

Imberhorne faced Michael Hall in a tense, closely fought basketball match, with the score tight throughout. It was an excellent team performance, supported by strong individual contributions from Jhon R and Marley G.

Going into the final minute, Imberhorne held a narrow one-point lead, with Michael Hall pushing hard for a late winner. However, disciplined defence and calm play under pressure saw Imberhorne hold on to secure a 40-37 victory.

Words by Mr Ibrahim

U16 RUGBY

IMBERHORNE 31 : 31 RIDDLESDOWN

What an exceptional match!

Despite a strong pre-game plan, we found ourselves 14-0 down early on. A quick reset under the posts was needed, focusing on core skills. Strong carries from Dylan M, Oli C, and Nick P, quick ruck ball, and a dynamic attack saw a fantastic turnaround, bringing the score to 14-14 at half-time.

The second half was a true 'seesaw' battle. With Imberhorne trailing 26-31 as the referee called the last play, the team displayed incredible determination to push into the opposition's half and score the crucial final try, ending the game 31-31.

It was a brilliant display of character and skill, played in a proper rugby spirit. A pleasure to coach! PBY

- Try scorers: Jacob B (1), Oli S (1), Jack S (1), Logan F (2)
- Conversions: Hudson T (3)
- Man of the Match: Nick P

Words by Mr Byrne

Sixth Form Football.

The footballers headed to the sports club to play a mid season friendly vs Sackville looking to get revenge for the Dabell game defeat. With a squad size that resembled more like a rugby team, Imberhorne dominated early on and scored through Ross with his first goal for the school. After what seemed like hundreds of substitutions Longstaff and Wallace made it 3-0 before half time. After another flurry of changes 3 became 4 when Georgiou slammed in. Imberhorne held out to wrap it up 4-0.

Next up is a Quarter final cup vs Worthing College on February 11th.

POTM: Ben P

Words by Mr Collyer