

# WOODRUSH HIGH SCHOOL

AN ACADEMY FOR STUDENTS AGED 11 TO 18



## PROSPECTUS

For 2024 Intake

# Welcome to Woodrush High School

Woodrush High School is a thriving, over-subscribed 11-18 school and teacher training provider and has established a reputation locally, regionally and nationally as a vibrant community for learning and excellent teaching.

We are a caring, supportive and positive place for all; committed to forging strong proactive links within the community which contributes to the success of the school and the sense of belonging that students, families and staff feel.

Every individual student at Woodrush is supported through our comprehensive pastoral support. We are proud of our students' excellent behaviour and we support all our students to grow into polite, kind and considerate individuals through a purposeful ethos framed through tutoring, assemblies, our personal and social development and character education programmes.

We are committed to ensuring that all our students receive their entitlement to an excellent education. We have a hardworking and well-qualified team of staff who are dedicated to delivering a challenging and vibrant curriculum that is ambitious, engaging and exciting. Our range of disciplines in Key Stage 3 and qualifications in Key Stage 4 and 5 helps students to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of their education.

We are justifiably proud of our students' academic and extra-curricular achievements. All students are nurtured to do their very best and encouraged to be proud of their successes and in doing so fulfil their full potential. Our 11-18 status means choosing Woodrush ensures that your child has the opportunity to continue their learning beyond their GCSE years and into A-Level study at our post-16 provision, Woodrush Sixth.

Woodrush Sixth and our student leaders provide positive role models for our younger students and across the year we celebrate the high achievements of students through our assemblies and House System.

We are relentless in our pursuit of excellence in all aspects of teaching, provision and care. Whilst we focus on strong academic performance, personal development through our wide range of clubs, teams and extra-curricular activities is central to the culture and spirit of Woodrush. The opportunities for students are wide and varied with enrichment activities taking place almost every day of the year. Learning outside of the classroom ensures our students can discover and enhance their talents and interests, apply important skills and enjoy the facilities that Woodrush offers.

By choosing Woodrush, you are choosing a school that will work hard to inspire your child through deep and enriching learning experiences; inspire ambitious life-long learning and encourage, nurture and celebrate every child's endeavours across their time with us.

We very much hope your child is able to join us!



**Mr J. Barber, Headteacher**  
**BA(Hons) PGCE NPQH**



# Vision & Values

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Our vision is to be a centre of excellence at the heart of our local community. Everything we do is aimed at improving our students' life chances.

We believe in developing life-long learners by delivering an exceptional education through consistently inspirational and challenging teaching, exemplary standards, and aspirational goals.

We will ensure equality of opportunity for all; respecting individuals, their talents, qualities and needs so that every young person can thrive and experience success.

## Excellence through Endeavour

### Our aims are to:

- Create an open, caring, safe environment where our students feel happy and where aspiration is always towards excellence.
- Provide equality of opportunity for all, celebrating and embracing our students' multiple identities and backgrounds.
- Provide a rich, stimulating curriculum and high-quality teaching which enthuses, inspires, and meets the needs of all our learners.
- Support all our students to develop self-confidence, self-motivation, and self-discipline, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to be successful.
- Promote a capacity and motivation for independent learning.
- Offer a wide range of experiences and opportunities beyond the formal curriculum.
- Celebrate the success, excellence and achievements of all our students.
- Prepare students for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, supporting our young people to make a positive contribution to society.
- Promote an active involvement in caring for the environment of the school, the local community and the wider world.
- Encourage the interest and involvement of families and carers, governors, industry, commerce and the community in the life of the school and furthering the success of our students.
- Promote a culture of innovation and development.
- Deliver inspirational leadership which fosters a passion for learning in our students and staff.

# Pastoral Care

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Pastoral care at Woodrush is a clear strength of our school. Our pastoral team go above and beyond to ensure we promote a happy, secure environment for all our students. We work hard to ensure that we know your child well as an individual and that every child has someone that they can turn to for help, advice and encouragement. We treat all students in a caring and supportive manner, all equally important and deserving of attention. With just over a thousand students, Woodrush is significantly larger than most of the primary schools our students will come to us from. However, through our multi-layered approach to pastoral care, we ensure each student gets the support they need to thrive as they grow and journey through our school.

## **Form Tutor:**

The tutor system is the primary element of pastoral care. All students are placed in form groups upon their arrival at Woodrush. The Form Tutor acts as an advocate and mentor offering encouragement and support to students. This promotes students' confidence and self-esteem and helps them to develop into well-rounded successful young people. The Form Tutor will provide each student with help and guidance in both academic and personal development. This encourages mutual understanding, tolerance and promotes the social wellbeing of each student.

## **Heads of Year and Assistant Heads of Year:**

Attached to every year group is a Head of Year and Assistant Head of Year who oversees the Form Tutors and who has overall responsibility for student welfare including achievement and behaviour. Each Head of Year and Assistant Head of Year ensures that students' personal development is of the highest possible quality. They are fully committed to building positive relationships with all students and parents and are dedicated to providing guidance, support and care to their year group which helps build a strong school ethos, community spirit and positive school climate.

## **Engagement Leaders:**

Our specialist Engagement Leaders build a crucial layer of pastoral support for your child. Our team of pastoral specialists work alongside our Inclusion team and Year Teams to address barriers that student may have that could impact on their learning and progress. If needed, interventions and support are put in place for individual students ensuring that each and every student achieves their best at Woodrush.

## **Pastoral Intervention/ Support Programmes**

We offer a wide variety of different intervention and support programmes for students: from counselling, resilience training and horticultural therapy to positive behaviour and self-esteem-building programmes. This ensures that each and every student is given the guidance and support to thrive.

## **Emotionally Available Adults & Counselling**

Our Emotionally Available Adults provide further additional pastoral support for our students. These members of staff design and deliver bespoke sessions for small groups or individuals who require support with issues that may affect their mental health including low self-esteem, anger management and anxiety. In addition, we provide one-on-one mentoring sessions with individual students who may require more intensive support.

# Celebrating Achievement

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Our school is founded on the belief that everyone can unlock talents and achieve excellence through endeavour. We make it our mission to bring out the talents of our young people and to celebrate their endeavours and successes at all levels. This could be excellence in a subject, meeting a challenge, making progress or helping another person.

Our ethos and student celebration is driven by our House system, composed of our four houses - Brindley, Cadbury, Eliot and Lanchester. On arrival at Woodrush all students are assigned to a Form within a particular House and encouraged to work hard and make progress in all aspects of school life; individual efforts contribute to the collective fortunes for their designated House. Each House community is led by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. They are responsible for developing the individual and distinctive ethos of their House. There will be various House competitions held throughout the academic year and attendance, achievement and conduct points all contribute towards the competition. A celebration House assembly is held every term to share House successes and to promote the House ethos.

Encouraging self-confidence, high aspirations and pride in our young people are some of our main priorities and we do this through a range of rewards and positive feedback opportunities. Here are some examples of the many ways that we reward achievement:

- **Achievement points.** These are issued for students during lessons in recognition of good or outstanding achievement, effort or character during any given lesson. Each year group has an achievement incentive scheme in place where all high achievers get the opportunity to receive prizes and privileges in recognition of their successes. Achievement logs are recorded on the student's file and parents/carers are able to view how many achievement logs their child has in their planners and via the parent app.
- **Blazer flashes.** These are badges that are awarded to be sewn onto students' blazers. These badges are to acknowledge any specific achievements linked to certain subject areas, which may include anything linked to attainment, participation, effort or progress. The house colour blazer flash is also awarded for 100% attendance at the end of the academic year during the final celebration assembly of the year.
- **Celebration assemblies.** Every half-term the students attend a celebration assembly for their house. The focus of these assemblies is to award students for outstanding conduct, sporting achievements, excellent attendance, significant contributions to the extra-curricular life of the school and to recognise and celebrate those students that have achieved the highest number of achievement logs. Student success is also celebrated in the weekly year group assemblies.
- **Letters, postcards and certificates.** Certificates are also awarded during celebration assemblies. Added to this, subject teachers, Heads of Year, Curriculum Leaders, Engagement Leaders and members of the Senior Leadership Team will also send letters and postcards home to celebrate student achievement.
- **Awards evenings.** Our Awards evenings are prestigious events to celebrate outstanding performance in examinations, sporting achievement, contributions to the local community and students of the year.

# Woodrush Day to Day

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Students at Woodrush are immensely proud of their school and rarely have time off. All of our young people are expected to have an attendance of 96% or above. It is vitally important to attend school regularly and on time. This gives the best opportunity for each student to make progress and achieve their full potential.

At Woodrush, we have a dedicated team of pastoral staff who work diligently to help students attend well. We communicate with parents and carers in relation to attendance and provide support to overcome barriers to poor attendance.



## SCHOOL MEALS

Students can choose to bring their own food or choose from a variety of hot and cold meals and snacks on sale. Daily choices always include salads, meat, vegetarian and vegan dishes and other healthy options. Snacks can also be bought during morning break.

## UNIFORM

Woodrush students wear their uniform with pride and look smart. We believe that a smart and distinctive school uniform helps maintain a sense of collective identity, belonging and pride.



# The Curriculum

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At Woodrush we pride ourselves on providing students with a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum. We believe that, as they move through the school, they need to be able to select courses that simulate their interest, support their future aspirations and give them strong foundations for their future education and career choices.



## KEY STAGE 3

In years 7, 8 & 9 students are taught in a mixture of prior attainment groups. All students take the following disciplines: Art, Computing, Design Technology, English, Geography, History, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Religious Education, Personal & Social Development, Science and Spanish or Mandarin. We are one of only 67 schools in the country to run the Mandarin Excellence Programme and this is available to students with the highest levels of attainment at the end of Year 6. At the end of Year 9, students will be supported in selecting appropriately challenging pathways for their KS4 studies.



## KEY STAGE 4

In Year 10 and 11 all students study a core curriculum of English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Sciences, Physical Education, RE, Personal & Social Development and either History or Geography. We offer a range of GCSE and vocational courses including; Spanish, Business Studies, Sociology, Art and Design, Food and Nutrition, Product Design, Photography, Drama, Dance, Film Studies, Health and Social Care and Textiles.

## KEY STAGE 5

In our Sixth Form students can choose from a range of predominately academic A Level courses, although a smaller number of vocational courses are also sometimes available. Students are given the opportunity to develop as individuals and take increasing responsibility for their own lives, study and decisions, all within a caring and supportive environment. Sixth formers have access to the school's facilities as well as their own private study and social areas. Past students have moved on to study at prestigious universities as well as apprenticeships with local employers such as Jaguar Land Rover.

# Personal Development & Welfare

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The personal development and welfare of our students is of the highest importance. Staff and students alike contribute to make our school an inclusive community where everyone is valued and cared for. Our students have an active voice in the school, led through our student council, as well as the opportunity to join our various student forums, such as our Equality & Diversity, Community or Health Forums.

## Personal & Social Development Programme

In addition to the academic subjects studied, all students participate in our PSHE programme as part of their curriculum. This covers statutory relationship and sex education, health education, citizenship, work-related learning and finance. During these lessons, students are given opportunities to discuss and reflect on current events and British Values as well as global challenges to help them discover their place in the school, the community and the wider world. Throughout the year there are also full PSHE days where a year group are off timetable and focus on a specific topic such as careers or key skills and attributes like innovation and creativity.

## Religious Education

Teaching of Religious Education is based upon the Worcestershire Agreed Syllabus in Key Stage 3 & 4 and is delivered as a discrete lesson and complemented through our PSHE lessons, tutoring programme and assemblies. In RE, students explore spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues and crucially world religions and traditions. The main aim of Religious Education at Woodrush is to encourage an awareness in students of the spiritual dimension of life by introducing them to the challenging and varied nature of religion.

Through RE, students will develop an understanding of the six major religions of the world – Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Judaism – bearing in mind that the Judaeo/Christian heritage has played, and continues to play, a powerful role in developing the culture of the country.



# Personal Development & Welfare

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## RELATIONSHIP, SEX & HEALTH EDUCATION (RSHE)

RSHE is taught in accordance with government guidelines, which states that the moral, spiritual and physical development of students should be inter-related into the curriculum. We also recognise that the prime responsibility for bringing up children rests with parents and carers. We aim, therefore, to teach in a way that is complementary and supportive of the role of families, and which has due regard for moral considerations and the values of family life.

This aspect of the curriculum is partially delivered through the science curriculum and is also taught through our PSHE programme, delivered by staff who are sensitive to the concerns and the needs of students and their families and who respect the beliefs of religious and cultural groups within the community.

We recognise that students have varying levels of attainment and physical and emotional maturity and teaching is appropriate to those levels. Our primary aim is to give students access to accurate and objective information about the nature of relationship, health and living in the wider world - equipping them with knowledge and skills to make informed, safe and healthy decisions in their young lives.



## CAREERS EDUCATION

Careers education is an integral part of our PSHE programme and is planned for progression from year 7 all the way through to year 13. Students are given chance to reflect on their own skills, abilities and talents and explore how these can contribute to developing a fulfilling career plan. It is vital that students are aware of the many different options available to them at all stages of their education

and beyond and so we ensure that they have access to independent advice to help them make informed decisions. Students also have many opportunities to engage with employers throughout their time at Woodrush to get a deeper understanding of the world of work. Events such as our annual careers fair, mock interviews and work experience in year 10 help to enrich students' experience and prepare them for their next steps.

## Parent Carer Forums – Having your say

Each term, we invite parents and carers to hear about important developments and achievements across the school, to meet members of the Senior Leadership Team and we consult with parents and carers on new initiatives or changes. This is then fed into our school improvement plans and ensures parents and carers remain central to the directions that we take. All parents and carers are invited to join any of these Forums.

# Extra-curricular & Enrichment

Extra-curricular and after school activities are a vital part of a student's experience at Woodrush. Each year a large range of clubs, activities and events take place both during and after school hours outside of the core curriculum which allow students to pursue their interests in a variety of areas. We encourage all students to become involved in at least one extra-curricular activity, as we know that these activities play a crucial role in developing essential character traits such as teamwork, self-discipline, commitment, skill development, self-esteem and confidence as well as being great fun! Some of the extra-curricular activities available last year included: sports teams, creative arts productions with dance, music and drama (including a project with the National Theatre), the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Book club, Science club, Chess club, Coding club, Geography club and the Historical Society.

## EDUCATIONAL VISITS

We believe that trips and visits are an important part of our students' education and that students should have a range of opportunities to take part in trips throughout their time at school. Educational visits allow students to experience first-hand the knowledge and skills gained within lessons, helping to enhance their understanding.

A range of residential and non-residential trips are organised with opportunities to visit destinations locally, nationally and internationally. Here are just a few of the many trips that took place during recent years: an outdoor adventure trip to Blackwell Court, art and photography trips to Kew Gardens, a history trip to Berlin, a visit to Worcester Cathedral, revision conferences, theatre visits, university masterclasses and geography fieldwork. We also run ski trips to Italy and a Sixth Form trip to New York.

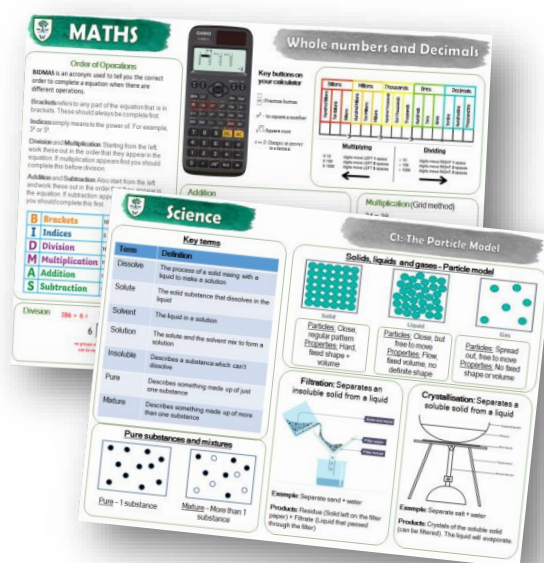


## HOMEWORK

Homework is an essential aspect of learning at Woodrush, playing a key role in the development of independent learning skills and knowledge acquisition. In KS3 homework focuses on the core knowledge that they need to enable them to be successful in lessons.

In addition to weekly homework in English and Maths all KS3 students are issued with a Knowledge Organiser each term which contains the powerful knowledge required for each of their subjects. Following the schedule set out in the student planner they spend time each evening using the techniques they have been taught to learn the information and this is then built on and applied within lessons.

Supporting with memorisation of the Knowledge Organiser information is an excellent way for parents to be actively involved in their child's learning. You can find out more about the techniques the students are taught and how Knowledge Organisers can be used most effectively by visiting the YouTube channel 'Woodrush Online'.



# Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

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Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) at Woodrush High School work from an area of the school known as Student Support. Student Support is made up of a set of classrooms and offices where specialist staff are based and where students access varying forms of support at all hours of the school day.

As a mainstream high school, the basic premise is that all students access all lessons. We offer many degrees of support though, and work in partnership with all school staff, stakeholders and outside agencies, to provide additional support for students who need this. At the forefront of this support is the relationship we build with our students and their families and carers.

You can find more detailed information in the SEN Information Report on the school website but here is a summary:

## What we do:

- Coordinate support for students, proactively and reactively. We monitor students' progress and wellbeing in many different ways. We are available to students and their parents and carers at all hours of the school day and beyond where necessary. We also liaise with school staff, families and outside agencies to determine how best to support our students, disseminate information and strategies to teachers and support staff and analyse progress data regularly to identify where and how we can better support our students.
- We review Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and also meet parents to discuss the provision for and progress of students at the 'SEN Support' stage of the SEN register. This process includes staff, parent/carers and student feedback, and identifying priorities in response, as well as identifying more immediate requirements and actions.
- Transition between key stages is of enormous importance to students and our focus is on supporting them through transition with the least anxiety. Our involvement ranges from the Open Evening in the autumn of Year 6 and visits prior to that, to supporting students' applications to post Key Stage 5 providers and several stages in between.
- Parents Evenings happen throughout the year and the school SENCo is available by appointment on these evenings as well as on a drop-in basis to talk through any concerns you may have. However, you are not limited to these times to make contact.



# Woodrush in the Community

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At Woodrush we consider community to be a vital part of our Academy identity and responsibility. We recognise the impact which can be made on our young people as well as the community by engaging with people, businesses, councils, charities, groups and organisations – locally, nationally and internationally.



We work closely as a partner with several local charities, including St. Basil's who support youth homelessness. We are a lead school for a

collaborative of over 6,000 students in the UK and Sierra Leone as part of the British Council Connecting Classrooms initiative and so we design learning opportunities within the curriculum for students to learn from and with students of a similar age in Africa. We are proud to be the only school in the UK to be listed as a sponsor for the community development of a train station and so we work with West Midlands Trains to manage the upkeep and environment of our local Wythall Train Station.

We encourage all students to get involved in student leadership opportunities, including our School Council, Year Councils and Student Forums which include an Equality & Diversity, Community and Health & Safe Lives Forums. In addition, we offer Duke of Edinburgh and Sports Leadership programmes.

## Woodrush Community Hub & Library

Through listening to needs of the local community and assessing the needs of our young people, we were able to respond by working together with key stakeholders to develop the Woodrush Community Hub building. The building hosts our Sport and Leisure Centre including Rush Active Gym, Youth Centre, Library (including the local Wythall Public Library), along with Woodrush Community Café. Our Woodrush Teacher Training Consortium also operates from here. All money generated is reinvested back into the young people and their education.

Woodrush High School and Worcestershire County Council work in partnership to run an integrated library service for both the school and the local community. The library, which is located on the first floor of the Woodrush Community Hub, provides access to a wide range of resources in a modern and vibrant space. This unique partnership provides our students with access to a whole range of services.



Young people who are members of the library, taken part in the Summer Reading Challenge or been to visit with their primary school, will be familiar with the library before starting at Woodrush.

All students become members of the library and are supported with their reading through our literacy curriculum.

# Woodrush Youth & Community Centre

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Woodrush Youth and Community Centre is a unique part of our school, providing an informal education programme further supporting young people to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being.

The Centre offers open access evenings three nights a week, offering tailored and different sessions for young people aged between 11-18 years. The open access sessions provide an opportunity for young people who attend Woodrush to socialise in a warm and friendly place with friends outside of school. Our fully qualified staff provide a variety of activities including Sport, Gaming, Art, Cooking, Team Building and others. We also run a variety of issue-based workshops and projects to support young people in their transition through secondary school. We aim to narrow the gap between education and employment through assisting young people with CV development, personal statements and provide opportunities for voluntary and part time work.



Young people on the Youth Management Committee are actively involved and engaged in the management of the Centre and play a vital role in shaping programmes, supporting younger members, assisting with accounts and networking with key organisations.

We recognise the need to support and develop the whole child, and as such run Outdoor Education visits and support young

people in their transition to Woodrush in a summer holiday programme called 'Get Ready Woodrush'.

We engage regularly with the Parish Council, police and local organisations and business to support the work of the school. The local community truly values the extended youth provision offered by Woodrush and recognises the impact it has on the young people and families.



