



3rd October, 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian,

## Re: October 2023 update

Where did September go? Although we've only been back for four weeks, we've already started strong and made progress. Since returning, I have enjoyed seeing many students fully engaged in their lessons, following the Wickersley and Subject Way, and remaining determined to achieve their full potential. I am particularly pleased with Year 7, who have transitioned quickly and settled well into secondary school life.

Things at Wickersley move quickly, we're always thinking of new ideas and ways to improve our teaching and students' learning. To help you fully support your child with their education, I would like to outline a few important messages and changes:

### 1. Our values and ethos

At Wickersley, success at school is not judged by grades alone. Our aim is to *send students into the world able and qualified to play their full role in it*. Whilst academic success plays a part in this, it is our personal development curriculum, the [Wickersley Way](#) and the extra activities in school, that teach students the characteristics and resilience to cope with life and thrive.

The Wickersley Way is embedded in everything we do and say. It promotes and reinforces the skills and characteristics our children need to be successful, their independence, responsibility, and resilience. Alongside this, we also have our programme of extracurricular activities, **Wickersley Extra**, which offers a variety of fun activities designed to develop our students. We challenge all students to take a risk and join a club or activity at break or lunch! The full programme of events can be found [here](#).

### 2. Inside and outside *Every Lesson*

At times, learning at secondary school can be difficult for students and parents to manage. We know from experience that students like to know exactly what to do to be successful, and what they're responsible for.

After all, *taking responsibility for our choices and actions* is the **Wickersley Way**.

To help with this we have created a clear *blueprint for success*, we call it **Every Lesson**. Every lesson is a list of students' responsibilities inside and outside every lesson at Wickersley. We're certain that if students follow this blueprint - for **every lesson, every day** - they'll be successful:



### 3. Home learning

Homework, or home learning, is an important part of our curriculum; it develops good study habits and promotes independence. Our teachers will enhance their quality classroom teaching by setting regular home learning. Most home learning tasks will be knowledge-based. If students complete all the work set, they should be able to recall the knowledge later, for example, in a test. Teachers will often assess how well homework tasks have been completed through low-stakes-high-challenge assessments in class.

Occasionally, teachers may set home learning that is designed to enthuse students in their subject, e.g., watching a documentary. Although these tasks may not be linked to an upcoming test or assessment, they're just as important and help us create mini subject specialists!

### 4. BRAG marking and feedback (blue, red, amber, green)

It's important that students know whether they are on track to achieve their target grade or statement, and if they're falling behind, it's important that they know what they need to do to improve. Marking and feedback help us do this. Throughout the year, your child will receive regular feedback from their teacher. Verbal feedback will be given instantly in class, often during questioning. Written feedback will be given on homework, assessments, and tests. Some assessments will be accompanied by a feedback sticker, we call this **BRAG** feedback:

<b>Blue</b>	This sticker means that the student was absent for this piece of work and must complete it.
<b>Read</b>	This sticker means that the student has not completed this piece of work <b>fully</b> and must complete it.
<b>Amber</b>	This sticker means that a misconception has been identified by the teacher which may be common across the class or with significant groups of students within the class. The teacher designs a set of tasks which the students will complete to address the misconception(s).
<b>Green</b>	This sticker means that the student has a secure understanding of the work completed. The teacher will set a task which extends the student's knowledge further.

We expect our students to use purple pens when responding to the feedback given by their teachers. This allows us to see whether they have understood the feedback given and whether they understand how to improve.

## 5. Reading

Reading is important to us, being able to read well is an essential life skill. Regular reading benefits students academically and improves their well-being. All our staff are reading advocates, and to promote reading for pleasure, we have dedicated 20 minutes of reading time to every school day. Those who fully embrace our reading sessions will see the benefits in their studies.

## 6. Attendance

Good attendance is important to us. If students are not here, they are not learning. Punctuality is just as important, too. Often, teachers will plan activities at the start of their lessons that *flashback* to previous learning. Missing this is a missed opportunity. Please encourage your child to arrive on time for all lessons, and in the mornings too at 8:40 am so they are in their form rooms and ready to start at 8:45 am.

We are incredibly proud of our students and the fantastic start they have made to this academic year. I look forward to sharing further updates with you as we progress through the academic year. If you have any further questions or concerns, please email [contactus@wickersley.net](mailto:contactus@wickersley.net)

Yours Sincerely,



Mr T. Hardcastle  
Headteacher