



Headteacher: Mr Paul Beale, BSc (Hons), NPQH, PGCE

17th July 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of another academic year, I would like to take a moment to thank you, and your children, for your continued support of Old Buckenham High School. Schools thrive when families and staff work together, and I am incredibly grateful for the encouragement, trust and partnership that you have shown throughout the year.

As Headteacher, I continue to be excited by the potential of our pupils and the dedication of our staff. Every day I see examples of our school values of Community, Ambition and Respect in action. Whether in lessons, on educational visits, in performances, on the sports field or through the kindness shown to others, our pupils continue to make us proud.

This has been another year full of achievements, opportunities and memorable experiences.

One of the highlights of the summer term was Sports Day. The atmosphere throughout the event was fantastic, with pupils fully engaged and showing tremendous support for all competitors. The encouragement and sportsmanship on display reflected everything that is good about our school community. Congratulations to Yellow Tie, who won Sports Day by the narrowest of margins, finishing just one point ahead of the competition. Congratulations also to Yellow Tie for securing victory in the Interhouse Sports Tournament, completing an outstanding sporting year.

Pupils once again enjoyed the opportunity to visit Wimbledon, where they watched world class tennis and even had the chance to meet Hubert Hurkacz after watching his match. Experiences like these help bring learning to life and provide lasting memories. We were also delighted to take part in the first Sapientia Education Trust Interschool Fishing Competition and look forward to taking on more challenges and opportunities across the Trust next year.

The performing arts have continued to flourish. Our Year 7 Vocal Concert was an absolute joy and showcased just how much pupils can achieve after only a single term at secondary school. Their bravery in performing in front of an audience and the quality of their singing were exceptional. Our Summer Concert provided another opportunity for pupils across all year groups to demonstrate their musical and dramatic talents. I continue to be impressed by the creativity, confidence and enthusiasm of our young people.

This week's activities programme has provided another reminder of the wonderful character of our pupils. Our Duke of Edinburgh Award participants in particular made us incredibly proud. Following their expedition, we received a glowing email from a member of the public who wrote:

"I must say how very polite each and every one was towards me. All bid me a 'Good afternoon' or 'Hello' and all, without exception, thanked me for standing aside so they could pass."

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Comments such as these demonstrate the fantastic young people we have at Old Buckenham High School and the positive impression they leave on our wider community.

We have also continued to strengthen opportunities for pupil leadership. This year we interviewed pupils earlier than usual for next year's Head Students and Senior Prefects. The quality of applications was exceptionally high and I would like to congratulate all those who took part. I have no doubt that they will be outstanding ambassadors and role models for our school. In particular, congratulations to Laura and Tomas, who will serve as our Head Students next year.

Attendance and behaviour continue to be areas of real strength. We are particularly pleased that attendance has improved significantly this year. The Department for Education has recognised that attendance at Old Buckenham High School is now amongst the strongest when compared to similar schools across the country. This is a remarkable achievement and reflects the hard work of pupils, families and staff working together.

Our Zero Heroes initiative also continues to go from strength to strength. We now have approximately 350 pupils achieving either 100% attendance or zero negative behaviour points. In fact, so many pupils met the original criteria this year that we have had to make the challenge even tougher for the summer event. This success is a wonderful reflection of the positive culture and high standards that exist across the school.

One of the most significant developments this year has been the introduction of Core Questions. These have helped pupils secure the essential knowledge they need in every subject and have been extremely valuable in supporting learning. Thank you to every family who has helped their child learn these at home. The Core Questions have been reviewed and improved for next year and are already available for pupils who would like to get ahead during the summer holidays.

As we look ahead to September, we have a number of exciting developments planned. Over the summer term we have been working on several structural improvements that we believe will make the school even more successful whilst making it clearer and easier for parents to understand what is happening and when. I will write to you again in September with full details, but these changes will include:

- Consistent assessment windows across Key Stage 3, using new assessments linked directly to Core Questions.
- A four cycle curriculum for Key Stage 3 pupils.
- Improved lesson routines to maximise learning and consistency across the school.
- A revised toilet provision, with separate facilities for senior and junior pupils.

We will also be saying farewell to several valued members of staff. I would like to thank Miss Fox, Mr Alderson and Mr Gibbs for their service to the school and wish them every success for the future.

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At the same time, we are delighted to welcome new colleagues who will join us in September:

- Mr Green – Head of Expressive Arts
- Mrs Sparkes – Science Teacher

The summer break is a good opportunity to check uniform and equipment ready for the new academic year. As before, we ask pupils to bring a ruler, whiteboard pen and pencil case to school. Mr Dwight, Deputy Headteacher, has written separately with detailed guidance regarding our uniform expectations for September.

In addition, every pupil will receive a reusable school water bottle in September so that all pupils have access to fresh drinking water throughout the school day. We recommend that pupils have a suitable school bag that can comfortably accommodate their equipment, stationery and water bottle.

Thank you once again for your support throughout this academic year. It has been another successful year for Old Buckenham High School and that success is only possible because of the collective efforts of our pupils, staff and families. I hope that you all enjoy a restful and enjoyable summer break, and I look forward to welcoming our pupils back in September for another exciting year.

Kindest regards

Paul Beale
Headteacher

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