WOODRUSH HIGH SCHOOL

AN ACADEMY FOR STUDENTS AGED 11 TO 18

PROSPECTUS

Welcome to Woodrush High School

*"Woodrush High School is a thriving, 11-18 school and teacher training provider that has forged strong educational and community partnerships. We are proud to have established a reputation locally, regionally and nationally as a **vibrant community for learning and teaching**. We work tirelessly with stakeholders to create a **caring**, **supportive** and **positive** place for all, building a strong sense of **belonging** for all students, families and staff.*

*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; helping everyone to discover and enhance their **aptitudes** and **skills** and realise their full potential at Woodrush.*

*Our 11-18 status means choosing Woodrush ensures that your child can 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 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**. And whilst we focus on strong academic performance, **enrichment** and **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 activities taking place almost every day of the year. Learning outside of the classroom ensures our students can discover and enhance their talents, interests, apply important skills and **enjoy** the facilities that Woodrush offers.*

*So, by choosing Woodrush, you are choosing a community that will work hard to **inspire** your child through deep and **enriching** learning experiences; instil ambitious life-long learning and encourage, **nurture** and **celebrate** their endeavours across their time with us. And in doing so, Woodrush will help them flourish, enjoy and **achieve**. We very much hope you choose for your child to join our wonderful school!"*

Mr J. Barber, Headteacher

Vision & Values

Woodrush High School is a welcoming and inclusive community, building a sense of belonging; committed to providing an aspirational environment for learning and growth. Our curriculum challenges, inspires and empowers ***all to thrive*** *and exceptional teaching and support provides the foundation for* ***all to achieve****.*

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.
- Provide inspirational leadership which fosters a passion for learning in our students and staff.

In summary, our aim is:

To **INSPIRE**	*To* **ACHIEVE**	*To* **CELEBRATE**

Ofsted statements, April 2024

Our recent monitoring inspection highlighted just some of the aspects of Woodrush that make our school community a 'GOOD', thriving, safe and ambitious place for the learning and growth for all students.

- *Pupils live out leaders' expectations of being Woodrush Ready: be prepared, be productive, be respectful, and be reflective.*
- *The school is a harmonious community where difference is celebrated, and pupils behave considerately to each other and to visitors*
- *The school takes pride in its role in the local community, and pupils take a lead in promoting this.*
- *Pupils respond well to the school's expectations of them academically*
- *The school has successfully clarified expectations around pupils' conduct, with 'Woodrush Ready' being clearly embedded through regular*
- *reviews in form time. This means pupils understand how the school expects them to behave, and pupils are polite, respectful and courteous.*
- *Pupils know the school will take effective and fair action should they need support to meet leaders' expectations.*
- *Pupils appreciate the leadership positions which exist in the school, and that their voices are heard by leaders.*
- *Pupils know that the school will listen to them and support them in a range of ways. Pupils speak highly of this and are proud of their school.*
- *Leaders take care to track uptake on trips and wider opportunities to ensure that all pupils benefit from their offer.*
- *Leaders review the provision to ensure it remains of high quality, including the work to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.*
- *Pupils receive regular information about careers and future destinations throughout their time at the school.*
- *Pupils in Year 10 and Year 12 have work experience placements, and the school ensures that pupils who are disadvantaged have appropriate support to achieve this.*
- *The school has well-developed links to a wide variety of post-16 and post-18 destinations.*

Pastoral Care

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 Tutors:
Our 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, respect 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.

Inclusion Leaders:
Our specialist Inclusion Leaders, led by our Inclusion Coordinators build a crucial layer of pastoral support for your child[ren]. 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

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. Across the year, we hold various House competitions throughout the academic year and attendance, achievement and conduct points all contribute towards the competition.

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, Inclusion Leaders and members of the Senior Leadership Team will also send letters and postcards home to celebrate student achievement.

- **Awards mornings.** 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

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.

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.

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.

The Curriculum

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 76 schools and 20 Sixth Forms 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

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. Students have an active voice in the school, led through our student council. Students also have 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; drugs education, citizenship education, health education, 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

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 relationships, 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*

We regularly consult and invite parents and carers to Parent Forums 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. At Woodrush, homework is designed to reinforce classroom learning, develop key knowledge and help students become confident, independent learners. Homework is primarily delivered through online learning platforms, enabling students to access engaging, self-marking activities that provide immediate feedback.

In Years 7 to 9, students complete regular homework in English, Mathematics and Science, with additional homework in Humanities and Languages from Year 9. Tasks are carefully planned to support the curriculum and consolidate learning. For students in Years 10 and 11, homework continues to build knowledge, understanding and exam readiness. Core subjects typically require around one hour of homework per week, while option subjects set regular independent learning activities to support progress and achievement.

In the Sixth Form, students are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for their learning. As well as regular subject homework, students are expected to undertake independent study outside lessons, including wider reading, research, practice questions and exam preparation. We work closely with parents and carers to support homework completion and make use of online platforms to ensure students can access learning resources both in school and at home

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

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 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/carer 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

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 with several schools, local charities and organisations who provide us with insights and opportunities which benefit students of Woodrush. Our partners have included The Wythall Parish Council, British Council, The Tree Council, South Birmingham Network of school, and most importantly our local and feeder primary school. We are also 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 each year Woodrush st 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 the 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, Naked Bakes. 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, who take part in the Summer Reading Challenge or who have been visiting with their primary school, will be familiar with our library before they start at Woodrush.

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

Woodrush Youth & Community Centre

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. The local community truly values the extended youth provision offered by Woodrush and recognises the impact it has on the young people and families.

Proudly part of The Black Pear Trust

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