



WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

IMBERHORNE SCHOOL

Headteacher: Matthew Whatford

Compassion

Achievement

Respect

Endeavour

*The cornerstones of our
learning community*

16th January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

Water supply

Thank you for your support and patience after a very challenging weekend and first three days of the week. A particular well done to all students who logged on and accessed their learning at home for the period of our closure due to a lack of water, and to the Year 13 students who came in and completed their exams. We have been incredibly impressed with the resilience of our students under these circumstances and understand that this will have created further stress on our families, especially those who were without water. Thank you for all of the support you have provided for your children.

We do not take any decision to close the school lightly, but I am sure you will appreciate that it is not possible for us to open and serve our community of 1600 students and 200 staff safely without water. It is our sincere hope that this is the end of these issues, but it is increasingly clear that there is a need to improve water infrastructure and contingencies in the event of a catastrophic failure of service as the network is under increasing stress. We will clearly represent this position in our feedback to the authorities because we do not feel that it is acceptable that we had to close our school because of this.

Year 11 mock results

Today, students in Year 11 will have received their mock results. I know that teachers were extremely impressed with the way in which they approached these exams before Christmas and some of them will be extremely pleased with their progress when they open their letters. For some students, there will obviously be some disappointment. We are here to support all of our student community and want to impress that it is not too late to do something now that will affect outcomes in the summer. Please encourage your children to attend as many of the intervention and revision sessions as they are able to. Use the mock results to help them identify which topics are a priority. There are many online resources available as recommended by staff. We will signpost our recommendations again in the next Year 11 newsletter. Students also had some highly valuable revision input from Elevate at the start of the year - they should revisit this and plan out their revision from this point onwards, starting with the bits they don't remember or find hardest! Teachers will only be too happy to help, support and advise. Students and families should feel confident in approaching them if they need help.

Year 9 options

Next week we will start the options process for Year 9 students. This is an extremely exciting time for them as they embark on the first set of decisions about their educational future, defining around 40% of their curriculum for Years 10 and 11. Mrs Best will be sending through lots of information on this process and we will have Y9 Parents' Evening on Wednesday 28th January, which will focus on academic progress and achievement, helping to inform thinking about student choices. This will be followed by the Options Fair on Tuesday 10th February, where all families will be invited to Imberhorne Lane to find out more about the Key Stage 4 curriculum offer.

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All subjects available at Key Stage 4, as well as those that are compulsory for all students, will be represented at this fair, meaning that students and families can have all of their specific questions answered. Students will then submit their final four choices, with two additional choices, by Friday 13th February. We always aim to give all students their first choices, but there are some limitations which mean we need to revert to their additional choices instead. We will discuss this with any students and families if this is the case.

Imberhorne Farm Development

Although we are yet to be communicated with directly over the planned works at Imberhorne Farm, it is clear that some investigative activity is now underway near to the pathway that some of our students use to come to school. These activities are not in an enclosed area, meaning that pedestrians can easily walk into and around these spaces. There are some clear signs warning of danger and risk, but can I please ask that all parents and carers of students who walk in and around this area speak to their children and ask that they take extra care, not going into the areas that are being explored or anywhere near the machinery. We have communicated these concerns to West Sussex County Council and are seeking to further communicate with the developers. As soon as there is a further update, I will ensure this is shared with you.

Inspiring Future Teachers

I have written before about our close working relationship with the Tanbridge SCITT Hub and the importance of ongoing recruitment to the profession. We have been delighted to grow the number of trainee teachers in the school this year and plan to continue to widen this offer further over the coming years. Applications are now open for the next cohort in September 2026 and there is an engagement event at Tanbridge House School at 4pm on Monday 26th January - we would encourage anyone, even with just a modicum of curiosity, to pop along and find out a bit more. Further information can also be found here: <https://www.inspiringfutureteachers.org/tanbridge>. We also have a close working relationship with the i2i teaching partnership in Reigate. They are also recruiting for September and details can be found on their website at www.i2ipartnership.co.uk. Parents, carers and members of the wider community can request to train at Imberhorne (amongst a number of other local schools) if they are successful in their applications.

Yours faithfully

Mr Matthew Whatford
Headteacher

Sporting and Arts success

U12 RUGBY (COUNTY CUP)

IMBERHORNE 05 : 05 CUMNOR HOUSE

A tough result for the year 7 boys, who could feel hard done by, but a draw seems about right considering how closely matched the two teams were.

Imberhorne were caught napping for Cumnor's try, which happened within the first 5 minutes of the game but rather than combust, the U12s were instead galvanised. Always under pressure, we grew into the game and in the second half Imberhorne thought we had equalised, only to have our try disallowed. Rather than dropping their heads, the year 7s pushed to score again and finish 1 try a piece.

Huge praise for Stanley, who was amazing, Thomas B-B was on fire but everything that happened also seemed to include Bobby - a great performance from him.

U13 RUGBY (COUNTY CUP)

IMBERHORNE 10 : 45 CUMNOR HOUSE

A tough game, against a very well drilled team.

It's always harder to take positives from a heavy defeat but the year 8s need to remember that it's only by playing quality opposition that you get better.

There is something to be said for a team that can rally from a half time score of 25 : nil, to score 2 well crafted tries in the second half. Well done to the Under 13s for a spirited team performance.

Words by Mr Byrne