



# NEWSTEAD WOOD SCHOOL

*"creating opportunities for success"*

9 January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you all had a lovely Christmas holiday and a good start to 2026. Thank you to all the school community – students, parents, staff and governors – for your very warm welcome to Newstead Wood School.

During our CPD day on Monday and throughout the week, I had the opportunity to speak with staff about many aspects of school life. When asked about the most positive feature of our school, the overwhelming response was clear: the students. Staff deeply value the energy, enthusiasm, and willingness to seize opportunities that your daughters and sons demonstrate, while continually growing into unique individuals within a caring community that supports one another and brings out the best in everyone.

When I spoke with the student leadership team and students around the school, they said how much they value the warmth and respect within the community, and how caring and helpful the staff are. When you hear how much relationships matter to people, you know you have found a wonderful place.

We are also here to make sure that students achieve the very best grades they can. We are a highly academically ambitious school. Excellent grades help unlock opportunities in the future, and we will work together to ensure all students make outstanding progress in their subjects. However, students are infinitely more interesting and valuable to the world than for their grades alone. Therefore, academic achievement must be built on the foundation of strong character – the ability to show initiative and tenacity, to collaborate with others on shared goals, the capacity to reflect on their studies and the wider world to see how to make it better, and to create engaging and inspiring work across all subjects and disciplines. Excellent grades must be matched with these broader perspectives if students are to move into the worlds of higher education and ultimately build successful, fulfilling careers.

To let you know a little more about me, I am a physics teacher by subject and have worked across both state academies and the independent sector during my career. For the last ten years I've been on senior leadership teams at United Learning Schools, including as an Assistant Principal: Head of Sixth Form, Deputy Head and Headteacher.

I will contact you soon with an invitation to a 'Meet the Head and Team' evening where there will be the opportunity to meet in person and hear more about the work the Senior Leadership Team are leading on within the school. I very much look forward to getting to know your daughters and sons and to working with you all in the next year.

With kind regards,

**Paul Norman**  
**Headteacher**

**Headteacher:** Mr Paul Norman MA, MSc, BSc (Hons), PGCE

Newstead Wood School is part of United Learning. United Learning comprises: UCST (Registered in England No: 2780748. Charity No. 1016538) and ULT (Registered in England No. 4439859. An Exempt Charity). Companies limited by guarantee. VAT number 834 8515 12. Registered address: United Learning, Worldwide House, Thorpe Wood, Peterborough, PE3 6SB.

Newstead Wood School  
Avebury Road  
Orpington  
Kent

t: 01689 853626

e: [office@newsteadwood.co.uk](mailto:office@newsteadwood.co.uk)

w: [newsteadwood.co.uk](http://newsteadwood.co.uk)

