



School Site: Chanctonbury Road, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 9EY
College Site: Birchwood Grove Road, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 0DP
Tel: 01444 244133 **Email:** office@woodlandsmeed.co.uk
Headteacher: Mr Adam Rowland

15th December 2023.

Dear Parents,

Christmas Letter from Governors

This year has flown past so quickly and already we are facing 2024. We have so many things to celebrate – to mention just a few; our students' sporting prowess, the success of our art team including prize winning at South of England Show and exhibition as part of Haywards Heath Arts Festival, a very successful Ofsted (report is now published on WM Website), the simply awesome 10th anniversary celebration production at the Hawth and the amazing Christmas Fayre.

Once again, through the unstinting efforts of Friends of Woodlands Meed, funds have been raised for equipment and facilities for our students we would not otherwise be able to afford, and we would like to say thank you and how grateful we are, to the firms and individuals who have so generously fundraised for us.

For those who follow these things, I have noted that 2024 is the Year of the Dragon, and I understand this is a most auspicious symbol bringing great potential and opportunities and representing strength, courage, creativity and innovation. On a serious note, that exactly describes the team and students at Woodlands Meed.

As the Ofsted inspectors confirmed our students are "exemplary", and with their strength and courage to overcome difficulties, show a willingness to learn and develop. Our staff are constantly finding innovative ways to support them and expand their horizons.

Their expertise extends its reach to SEND pupils in the locality schools through the Meeds Send Alliance, which offers SEND support to SEND pupils in local mainstream schools.

2024 will see the launch of another innovative venture to support our pupils into post school training and employment through the Meeds Job Club. Support for our pupils does not stop when they walk through the school gates at the end of their school career, and a project is being set up to provide Supported Internships which are a structured, work-based study programme for 16 to 24-year-olds with SEND, who have an EHCP with a substantial work placement with a view to long term employment. Funding to support this creative and innovative project has just been confirmed.

The cottage at the college site is now vacant, and plans have started on converting this into a Life Skill Centre, which will be the only one attached to a Special School in the County.

We cannot ignore the elephant in the room. The college building with appropriate facilities for which the students have been waiting for 12 years, is still not ready for occupation. ISG has made some progress, but regrettably it is agreed that it cannot be certain the work will be complete to allow students to move into the new accommodation before the end of March 2024 and the Easter school break.

We are agreed with WSCC that all work must be completed and must be to the required standard and therefore handover of the site will not be accepted until it is in a suitable condition for education to start and there is certainty and confidence that pupils can move in safely and without any further disruption.

If the situation improves then of course parents will be immediately advised.

The Governors wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas and we look forward to following the predictions for the Sign of the Dragon, and exploring new possibilities, starting new projects and achieving our dreams in 2024.

Regards

Marion Wilcock
On behalf of Governing Body
Woodlands Meed.