

March 2019

Dear Parent/Carer,

## **GOLD AWARDS AT THE WEALD: An explanation of how we bestow our prizes for our annual presentation ceremony**

I write to explain the context of our annual awards ceremony known to our community as Gold Awards. Every year we celebrate the efforts and achievements of our students with a prize giving evening, (the Gold Awards presentations), during which Gold Award certificates are presented to a number of students in each year group, for either effort or achievement, or both.

Effort awards recognise those students who have made an outstanding and sustained effort throughout the year in a number of subjects. Achievement awards recognise those students who have done particularly well in a subject. All students receive a Gold Award certificate at the presentation evening, which states the subject(s) for which they have been nominated. Students receiving achievement awards also receive a £5 gift token for each subject nominated. There are, in addition, a number of trophies or monetary awards donated by individuals and external organisations which are presented to students for achievement in particular subjects, or subject areas; recipients are elected by Subject Leaders. Students hold these trophies for one year, after which time they are returned to the school.

The process of deciding which students should receive **Gold Awards for effort** involves all teachers nominating two students in each of their classes for an award in their particular subject. We ask staff to base their nominations on the Weald Community Framework that outlines our expectations in all aspects of school. This would highlight students who demonstrate particularly positive attitudes to learning, such that they:

- work hard to understand their targets and goals, have a clear idea of how they are going to achieve them and are willing to work consistently towards them
- are engaged and interested in lessons
- show resilience and independence in lessons, work hard to manage their own learning and resolve problems; they are also proactive about finding solutions to these problems
- often take a lead in activities or events and encourage others to try new challenges
- are willing to hold leadership positions within the classroom or subject.

These nominations (of which there are a very large number) are collated and counted, and put into rank order. In larger year groups, we proportionately adjust the number of awards to take account of the greater number of classes.

**Gold Awards for achievement** are selected by all the teachers in each subject area. Pupils are less likely to receive these awards in Years 7, 8, 10 or 12.

**Gold Awards for special contribution to extracurricular activities** are decided by the staff responsible for those areas. Heads of House and form tutors decide the student who has made the most overall **contribution to the House**.

Parents of students receiving a Gold Award are sent a letter of invitation to the evening towards the beginning of June. This year the ceremony will be held in the Sports Hall on Thursday 18th July, with a drinks reception before the ceremony.

There is always an invited guest speaker who will present the awards to around 250 - 300 students from Years 7 through to Year 13, with a number of interludes during the evening from our students.

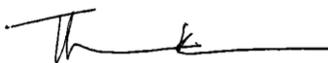
The ceremony is attended by parents of students receiving awards, the prize winners, a number of invited guests and school governors. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors give a short talk on events that have taken place during the school year.

We are fortunate that the vast majority of students are active, hardworking, engaged learners and this makes the process very competitive. If your son/daughter is awarded a Gold Award we look forward to celebrating this with you later in the term. However, not every student can win and this in no way detracts from the hard work and commitment many of our students show which we commend and recognise through other reward systems. We do recognise by formal letter all students who gain nominations but do not quite reach the level required for a Gold Award each year. We would encourage them to keep working and enjoying their learning.

We are appreciative and proud of the commitment and attitude to learning shown by all our students this year, which is a reflection of their own hard work and the support they receive from their teachers and parents.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T Brixey', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mr T Brixey  
**Assistant Headteacher**