

17 September 2019

Dear Students and Parents

At our meeting last week the Heads of the secondary schools in the Wessex Partnership discussed the forthcoming 'strike day' focused on raising awareness of the Global Climate Emergency. Whilst the Heads wholeheartedly support the motivation for the campaign in general and the strike in particular, I hope that you will understand that we have some significant concerns about the idea of young people absenting themselves from school to join such an event. We worry about the safeguarding implications of young people being away from school with no supervision and also we are concerned at the possibility that our youngsters could be caught up in any disturbances that could result. In short, we know that highlighting climate change as a fundamental issue for society is the right thing to do, but we feel that there may be other ways in which we can all make our views count – ways which do not compromise the safety of young people.

As a result of the discussion we have agreed collectively to petition our students, parents and staff to establish that there is overwhelming support locally for dramatic action to address the problem of climate change. We will then publicise the petition through the local media and with local politicians and, if we can, lobby at a county, regional and national level too. The motion on the petition will be:

We, the undersigned, believe that the current climate emergency poses a major threat to the health and wellbeing of current and future generations worldwide. The level of threat demands urgent action at local and governmental level NOW.

It may be that individual schools within the Wessex Partnership might have their own events to address this issue, and I would urge you to support your own son or daughter's school with those. As a group of Heads we really hope that you will support this initiative and sign the petition which is available via the link:

<https://www.change.org/p/local-government-wessex-schools-partnership-climate-change>

Together, we feel that we can publicise this hugely important cause and make a difference.

Yours sincerely



Dr S D Smallwood
Head Master, Bishop Wordsworth's School
Chair of The Wessex Partnership

Avon Valley College
Bishop Wordsworth's Grammar School
Pewsey Vale School
Salisbury 6th Form College (S6C)
Sarum Academy
South Wilts Grammar School
South Wilts UTC
St Joseph's School
Stonehenge School
Trafalgar School
Wellington Academy
Wiltshire College & University Centre
Wyvern St Edmund's School