

24 September 2020

Dear Parent or Carer

RE: Sixth Form Welcome Letter

It has been a pleasure to welcome your child into the Sixth Form this year, but I wanted to take the opportunity to extend a welcome to you also. Study in the Sixth Form presents an exciting new range of opportunities and challenges for our Year 12 and 13 students, but for many parents it may be the first time that you have a child moving through the Sixth Form and as such it may be very different for you too. Please always feel free to contact me if you ever have any queries or concerns and I will do all I can to resolve them as swiftly as possible.

By now the students have had the opportunity to settle onto courses and should be beginning to recognise the significantly different demands that A Levels bring in comparison to GCSEs. The sooner students recognise this increase in difficulty, the more successfully they will make the transition to being a successful A Level student. There are a few things that I expect of our A Level students as I seek to encourage them to be the best that they can be and to give them strong foundations on which to pursue either further study or employment when they come to leave us in two years' time.

We would recommend that students carry out four hours additional study a week, per subject area, on top of the work that they do in timetabled lessons. It is advisable that they establish a pattern of work which enables this to occur in a planned manner. They have the time and facilities to do some of this during their Sixth Form day and should strive to maximise their time in the Sixth Form. If students have chosen to pursue three subjects this year, they have been allocated some study time on their timetables to help guide them to manage their workload. Usually this study will take place on the school site, but this year we have labelled this as "home" on the timetable as we are happy, due to the particular circumstances we face, for the students to carry this personal study at home. However, if they will work more effectively in the Sixth Form, then the study centre is always available to them from 8.00 am - 5.45 pm.

There is always something to do as a Sixth Form student during these study sessions and I would recommend that a regular programme of review and consolidation, adding further depth to notes from individual research, is the best way to ensure that they are secure in their understanding. They should also be seeking to use past exam questions and mark schemes, where possible, to ensure that they are familiar with the demands of the exam board. In addition we have advised all staff to ask for resubmission of homework that is well below a student's target grade to ensure that they reach their full potential. Once a fortnight the students will carry out an assessment under exam conditions in each subject area in order to develop vital exam technique and build familiarity with exam board expectations. This also offers the opportunity for students and staff to identify any

weaknesses in knowledge and understanding so that these can be addressed. If students utilise their time efficiently and are doing these things, displaying a real commitment to their studies over the coming months, then I have no doubt that this year group will have a great opportunity to gain some remarkable results. We are already highly impressed with them and will work with them in every way to ensure they succeed.

The students have already agreed to our learning agreement. This outlines the need to commit to meeting deadlines, but also highlights our expectation regarding attendance. Students are aware of our procedures for notification of absence on the first morning by calling 01377 232365, texting or calling 07855 224487 between 8.45 am and 9.15 am. On return, students will then authorise their absence by reporting to Miss Bateman in the Student Support Office on the morning of their return to school. Students can self-certify absence up to three times per full term up to a maximum of 10 days over the year. When they have used their three self-certifications parents will be notified and any further absence must be authorised by a parent. This process is vital in being able to monitor attendance closely over the course of the year.

In the coming days the students will receive their target grades which are based upon their average GCSE points score. These will be aspirational, but we hope to see many students seeking to surpass them as they concentrate on their chosen subject areas at Key Stage 5. In the Sixth Form we believe in high academic challenge and rigour and will check progress against targets and report back over the two years to ensure that you are fully aware of your child's progress.

We value the role of the tutorial programme in the development of our young men and women and follow a specialised Post 16 pastoral programme with external speakers addressing issues facing 16-18 year olds, such as driving safety. Students are expected to be present in all allocated tutorials and lessons unless otherwise notified by a member of staff. These will take place at the beginning of period one lessons.

Later in the year there will be a Year 12 parents evening where you can talk directly (although possibly virtually) with teaching staff. However, if you have any early current concerns please contact me at darren.andrews@driffieldschool.org.uk to discuss matters.

Finally, can I repeat my welcome to you. I look forward to working with you and your child to secure the best possible outcomes for their future.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Andrews', written in a cursive style.

Mr D Andrews
Head of Sixth Form