

12 May 2023

Dear Parent or Carer,

RE: Year 12 Next Steps

The summer term is a busy one for our Year 12 students as they complete their first year of study and start to think about Year 13 and life beyond the Sixth Form. The students will all sit formal mock examinations so that we can gauge progress and seek to ensure that we help provide the right intervention for the students as they set their aspirations for their final A Level outcomes. These exams will take place the week commencing Monday 19 June and will run for approximately five days. As well as helping us to measure current progress, the grades will also contribute towards estimated grades that will be needed for any university and apprenticeship applications. This estimated grade will not be based entirely on the mock performance but achievement in these assessments will feed into a holistic overall judgement. We have encouraged students this week to start creating a revision timetable to help them prepare appropriately, so that they can fully show what they are capable of. It is important that they invest in this preparation as it will contribute significantly to their success both this summer and in their final exams.

This term we are also beginning to consider the students' progress onto the next stage of their career, whether that will be in Further/Higher Education or onto apprenticeships and employment. This may seem rather early, but with the present system of applications for University courses and apprenticeships, all the investigative work needs to be done between now and the end of July, as one of the first steps in Year 13 is to complete applications to be sent off between September and the Christmas holidays. Additionally, open days at universities take place from June onwards so it is important that students have considered options in order to take advantage of these. Apprenticeship and employment options for September are also very competitive and for those looking at these opportunities, these options must be explored now. I realise that the direction in which your child may be heading may not yet be decided, but much research and preparation needs to be done between now and July to prepare our students for this next step.

It is with this aim in mind that I would like to inform you of some of the features of the programme of induction that we undertake with our students. These sessions take place during the registration period with their tutor, so it is vital that they are present every day in these. We encourage all students to engage fully in all of the activities, even if they feel as if they may eventually pursue a different path, so that they are prepared if they change their minds or pursue a particular direction later in life.

A programme of support and advice

Our support and advice for students wishing to follow an employment or apprenticeship pathway is very robust and we look at employability skills, using a range of specific career orientated resources. Nationally the number of apprenticeships is increasing, but their competitive nature means that the students need to be ready to apply for them as soon as they become available throughout Year 13. Support for this process is available to your child through our tutoring system, where students will construct their C.V. and letters of application. I am also available for students to book an appointment with, to discuss next steps and to offer career advice.

For those interested in Higher Education, support is also available through the form tutors and I on a weekly basis. All university applications take place through the UCAS website: www.ucas.com that contains a wealth of information. Your child has been shown how to register an account here and will be able to show you the resources available to help them plot a course through the university application procedure.

I will be running a parental information session from 6 pm - 7.30 pm on Thursday 15 June, in East Hall, where I will provide information and guidance on all the options available to your child after they complete their studies with us. This will include information on university applications, student finance, apprenticeships and other options.

Higher Education Visits and Open days

As part of our support programme I am also organising two university visits for all Year 12 students to attend, should they wish to. These days give many of our students the chance to experience contrasting university sites. One of these is an Open Day at Leeds University, a large university and one of the Russell Group. This visit will take place on Friday 16 June, when the university will present a full programme of events and subject specific sessions for students to visit. Students will leave school at 9 am, travelling by coach, and arrive back to school at 4 pm. As this is after the departure of the school buses, please arrange onward travel for your child.

The second visit is to the Humberside UCAS convention at Hull University. This is not an open day for Hull University, but a national event, hosted by Hull, where most universities from across the country will be represented and students can collect information and also visit a number of talks. This will happen on Wednesday 28 June. Again, students will leave school at 9 am travelling by coach, and will arrive back into school at 3 pm.

These trips will be an invaluable experience for all students considering any University as a possible option, as they will give the students a flavour of the kind of campuses and range of courses that are out there. Even if the students don't intend to study at Hull or Leeds in the future, they will still learn a lot about university life and the opportunities available to them.

The voluntary cost for the visits are as follows (please note the visits may not go ahead if costs are not covered):

- University of Leeds Open Day: £13.00

- Hull UCAS convention: £8.00
- Both visits: £21.00

Students can book for just one, or both, through the link provided: <https://forms.office.com/e/tybcAs6Yiq>. This includes insurance and return coach fare. You can pay the chosen amount through ParentPay. Consent and payment should be made by Friday 26 May 2023. If your child qualifies for free school meals and requires a packed lunch for the visit(s), please indicate this on the consent form.

All universities will be organising open days between now and the end of the summer and I would encourage students to attend open days with you so that they can experience first-hand what their potential choice of university and its surroundings are like. Making a decision on somewhere to live and study for 3 or 4 years should not be based only on an internet and prospectus research; there is nothing like getting feel for a place by visiting yourself. Naturally, students should not miss too much time away from the Sixth Form, but we will authorise absence for attendance at open days. All dates for potential open days are available through the website of each university. You will also be able to order a prospectus for each university here too.

Within the Sixth Form, during the period of time in the run up to the summer, the students will also have presentations regarding gap year opportunities, employment searches and other post A Level choices. The summer term and the summer holidays is also a good time for the students to start considering their potential university and apprenticeship applications and whether employment, or volunteering could help to further the depth and breadth of their personal statements.

I am always willing to personally discuss future options with you and your child if you would like to contact me at darren.andrews@driffieldschool.org.uk

I appreciate that there is a great deal of information here to assimilate, but please do not hesitate to call me if you would like to discuss some of these issues in person.

Yours faithfully,



Mr D Andrews
Head of Sixth Form