



# WILLIAM FARR

C of E Comprehensive School

Our ref: KXE/TA

October 2023

**Year 9**

Dear Parent/Guardian

## **The New Academic Year – 2023/24**

I hope you and your family had a wonderful summer break. Year 9s have had a fantastic start this September. The students seem focused, enthusiastic and ready to start their final year of KS3. This is an important year for the students as they will be selecting their GCSE options and focussing on career options during PSHE lessons. We start our PSHE journey with Sexual Health, moving onto Careers in January, and finishing with Hate Crime and the Justice System. A full overview is available on the VLE. We are continuing with our Mental Wellbeing Programme this year, with some of the students kindly volunteering as “Wellbeing Ambassadors”, who will be going into Year 7 forms to deliver parts of the programme. This term’s focus starts with ‘connecting to others’ and moves to ‘giving to others’.

I know students are already starting to think about which options they want to select for next year. It is important to highlight that these options do not start until Year 10; students are required to fully engage with the broad curriculum during Year 9, to ensure they are wholly prepared for Year 10. The Head of Year Information Evening on Thursday 2 November 2023, will be an opportunity for you to ask any questions you have about the options process. Students will receive support in the lead up to making their choices. In January, the option choices information will be available on the school website and students will have individual tutor mentoring to discuss their thoughts. Students will then partake in a Year 9 Options Morning in January 2024, which will provide an opportunity for students to ask questions and experience taking subjects at a GCSE level. The Year 9 options forms will be released on Monday 8 January 2024, with the hand-in deadline being Monday 11 March 2024. During this time there is also the Year 9 Parents’ Evening, which will take place virtually on Tuesday 6 February 2024.

The impact of missed school days can affect any student’s confidence in lessons. In a year when your child will be preparing for GCSE’s next year, attending school every day is even more important. I want to take this opportunity to remind you that it is mandatory for your child to attend school. Myself and the school’s Educational Welfare Officer, Mrs Chatterton, will be supporting students and parents if there are any issues regarding attendance. Please ensure you contact the school if there is a day where your child is not able to attend.

Last year the year group fully embraced the reward system and received a record-breaking number of merits and certificates. I hope they will continue with this hard work as they move into Year 9. They still have their Citizenship Awards to work towards this year, but instead of merits they will be collecting Excellence Points. These will be recorded online allowing you to see on the ‘My Child At School’ App when your child has been awarded one, so you can celebrate their success at home too. On Thursday 14 December 2023 we have a rewards trip to Playzone. For your child to be invited on the trip they must achieve an average Behaviour for Learning Grade of at least a B+ from the December data point, and their attendance must be over 97%. We will celebrate all their success over Key Stage 3 with a Celebration Evening on Thursday 11 July 2024. This is a fantastic evening where the students have the opportunity to get to dressed up and reflect on their journey through KS3. They will be presented with a folder full of all their certificates and achievements they have earned both in and out of school.

I would like to remind you of some of the basic expectations of William Farr School, which help us to create an outstanding climate for learning:

- Mobile phones are not allowed in school.
- Vapes and e-cigarettes are banned items.
- Students should always bring basic equipment to school – pen, pencil, rubber, ruler, coloured pencils, highlighter, calculator, French dictionary (if appropriate), correct PE kit (if appropriate).

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Headteacher: Mr Jonathan Knowler BA (Hons) | Registered in England and Wales | Company No. 07469546 | VAT No. 120 9852 21

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- Students must remain seated at all times when travelling on the school bus and wear seat belts if provided.
- Students must wear the correct school uniform at all times. They will be required to borrow our spare uniform if they arrive to school incorrectly dressed. You will also be contacted and requested to bring into school the correct uniform. The policy can be found on the school website. In summary:
  - Skinny trousers/jeans are not permitted.
  - School shoes must be black, of a solid construction, polishable and suitable for a busy school environment. No logos. No adornments of any kind. Low heels (5cm or less). Platform soles are not acceptable, neither are flimsy fashion shoes, canvas shoes or trainers. No sling backs or stiletto heels. Boots are not acceptable unless in severe weather conditions. Where a pupil is forced due to legitimate medical reasons to wear trainers or boots instead of shoes, a medical note is required.
  - Skirts must not be rolled or held up by a hair band.
  - Only 1 earring is permitted in each ear (there should be no other visible body piercings including nose and tongue – no clear studs allowed), and these must be a small stud or sleeper earring.
  - Nail varnish, fake nails, fake tan, excessive make up or fake eyelashes are not permitted.

Our school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of our students this is of paramount importance. With this in mind, I would like to remind you that we will not tolerate any child-on-child abuse, which can include bullying, physical abuse, sexual violence and harassment and misogyny. We do not accept excuses such as 'banter', 'part of growing up', 'it was for a laugh'. We do not accept body shaming, sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude images and semi-nude images and videos). All reports of any of the above will be investigated and dealt with in line with school policy. Students' online behaviour also continues to be a priority and we do a lot of work educating students on keeping themselves safe, but we would appreciate parents and carers monitoring their child's online presence and to report to the Police any concerns. If you would like any further information on this, or any other safeguarding matters, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mr Muir, Assistant Headteacher or Miss Griffiths, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, in school.

We have a huge volume of lost property made up of unnamed items. Please ensure all items belonging to your child are named, so we can return it to your child if it is misplaced. Unnamed lost property will be kept for 6 months before being donated to charity. Lost property is in a cabin outside the main entrance, it is open Monday/Tuesday/Thursday 8.45 – 9.00am and Wednesday/Friday 9.05 – 9.20am. If your child has lost any property in the summer term or since the start of this term, please encourage them to collect it during the above times.

We have a number of students who suffer with severe nut allergies in school. In order to support our community, students are requested not to bring nuts into school. This includes nuts in packed lunches and snack bars.

The Autumn term is an exciting one, with many opportunities in the calendar to note:

- Thursday 2 November – Head of Year information Evening
- Tuesday 7 November – Film Night
- Friday 17 November – Non-uniform Day
- Thursday 14 December – Reward Trip to Playzone

I am absolutely delighted to be working with the year group as their Head of Year again this year. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me. My email is [k.ewing@williamfarr.lincs.sch.uk](mailto:k.ewing@williamfarr.lincs.sch.uk). As part of our commitment to supporting staff workload and wellbeing, I will endeavour to respond to emails within 3 working days. Emails should be written in line with the Parent Code of Conduct as shown on the school website under the Governors' section.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support and I look forward to working with you in partnership again this year.

Yours faithfully



**Miss K Ewing**  
**Acting Head of Year 9**