



# WILLIAM FARR

C of E Comprehensive School

Our ref: RGN/SXG

October 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian

Welcome back to the new school year! I trust you all had a restful and rewarding summer holiday. To our new students and parents in Year 12 I would like to extend a warm welcome to William Farr Sixth form, along with a “welcome back” to everyone associated with Year 13.

As Head of Year 12 and 13, I consider it a great honour to work with such a talented group of students. Our entry requirements are challenging; consequently, all students should be proud of be achieving the required grades – each and every student is capable of achieving highly and progressing to the next stage in their career. I look forward to supporting them in achieving to the best of their abilities and ensuring they can approach the next stages of their education with confidence, resilience and pride.

As Year 13 students are already aware, the Sixth Form experience is different to life lower down the school. A-Level study differs significantly from that of GCSE. In each subject, students receive 5 hours of teaching. They also have 2 lessons a week of supervised study along with an EPQ session. The relationships that students build with their teachers are crucial; interactions are more collaborative and there is a greater focus on independence. To succeed it is essential for students to work outside of the classroom. As a rule of thumb, for every hour spent studying in lessons, an additional hour should be spent on homework or consolidating learning.

Consequently, it is vital that students balance the demands of school with their commitments outside of school. Extracurricular activities both in and outside of school are encouraged. Additionally, whilst part time jobs can help pupils develop a whole range of valuable transferable skills, it is important that students do not take on too much. As a school, we would recommend that students are employed for no more than 8 hours a week. Although I appreciate that students are keen to earn money, this should not come at the detriment of their studies.

Clubs and extracurricular activities remain at the heart of the William Farr experience. Sixth Form students have always played an essential role in our school community. In previous years, Sixth Form students have been actively involved in the wider school community as Heads of House, mentoring younger students and assisting at open evening to name but a few. Year 12 students will have the opportunity to stand in elections to be members of the school executive. Students involved in activities of this nature often report a better sense of wellbeing and improved mental health. Students should endeavour to participate in a number of extracurricular activities during their time in Sixth Form.

Expectations of students remain very high within the Sixth Form. Whilst we do not have a uniform, we do have a Sixth Form Dress Code which students are expected to adhere to. Students are required to wear suitable dress for a school. A copy of this code can be found on the Sixth Form section of the school website. If students in the Sixth Form are unsuitably dressed, as determined by the school, then we reserve the right to ask students to return home to change and/or to not wear said items again.

Please can I also remind you that Sixth Form students are not allowed to have mobile phones in school. Mobile phones cause significant disruption to learning in other schools and William Farr School prides itself on not having this distraction. Interestingly, when I have spoken to students about this issue, they are generally supportive of the policy, recognising the benefits of not being distracted in school.



Sixth Form students who own laptops often find it beneficial to bring their devices to school. We are happy for students to do this; however this is entirely at students' own risk. All rules relating to ICT use on the school network apply to personal devices. This means that students should not access social media or messaging of any sort, take pictures, or play games. As I am sure you will agree, time in school needs to be used for study.

PSHE remains integral to the William Farr experience in Sixth Form. These lessons are essential in preparing students for life outside of school. In Sixth Form this term Year 12 will be focusing on the qualities required of Sixth Form students and how to stay safe as young adults. After half term we will focus on skills required in the world of work, making use of resources provided by Barclays Bank. We will also launch our work experience programme. Year 13 students will be focusing on their Post 18 pathways, with time dedicated to UCAS applications and research into all Post 18 options. In addition to this, we will be holding a Post 18 evening in December, with more details to follow. In November we will host a drama performance of "Too fast too soon" – a piece highlighting the importance of road safety to new drivers. This will fit into a series of lessons focusing on life after school.

Our school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of our students 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.

As I am sure you are aware, attendance is essential to success. As previously, holidays in term time will not be authorised. Additionally, Sixth Form students cannot self-certify absences. I would appreciate it if all requests for planned absence should be emailed directly to me. I think it is also important to note that historically, punctuality has been an issue for some Sixth Form students. Please could you support the school in reminding students of the importance of attending school on time; inevitably lateness is something that simply will not be tolerated in the world of work.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to develop close links with both students' Form Tutors and myself. Should you have any concerns or questions at any point during the year, please do not hesitate to contact the school. If your query is subject specific, please contact the relevant Head of Department. As Head of Year, I will endeavour to respond to phone calls the day they are made. However, I do also have teaching commitments in addition to my role as Head of Year and this may not always be possible.

Finally, I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at my Head of Year presentation on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> of October. Details can be found in the letter emailed out to all parents and guardians recently.

I look forward to establishing a productive and positive relationship with all of you.

Yours faithfully

Mr R Noon  
Head of Year 12/13