

September 2017

Dear Parent or Carer

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Year 11 back to school for this crucial year in their academic careers. At Framwellgate School Durham we are privileged to teach students whose characters, attitudes and abilities give them the potential to not only achieve excellent results but also to contribute to the positive ethos of the school. I have been very pleased with the confident start the majority of students have made this year.

Year 11 is undoubtedly a difficult year and recent changes in how young people are assessed, for example the eradication of coursework, controlled assessment and modular examinations in most subjects, has certainly provided a challenge for students who will now be assessed on content and skills they have learned across years 10 and 11 in their final summer examinations.

I have spoken to all students about these challenges and explained the need for sustained effort, organisation and perseverance across all subjects throughout the course of the year. We will work hard to support students in ensuring they are equipped to deal with the challenges ahead, for example, by dedicating part of STEP (Study, Tutor, Extended learning, Preparation) time each week to help students to develop study skills and by helping them to focus on their individual aspirations.

Below I have outlined key information in how you can support the school.

Attendance and punctuality at school

If your child is going to be absent from school, please leave a message on the student absence line. If this absence is prolonged, you must contact the school every day. If you wish to request an absence, your child can collect a form from Student Reception and then return it for the attention of the Attendance Officer. If your child does not have an explained absence and is not registered at the start of the school day, you will be notified by a text message.

Students who are late for school are expected to sign in at student reception where they will be given a yellow 'late slip' and are required to then attend a break-time detention. If there is a pattern of lateness this will be escalated to include lunchtime detentions.

Uniform

The school year has started extremely well with the vast majority of our students dressed appropriately in line with school guidelines. Thank you for supporting the school in setting the standards we expect for our students. We have listened to parental feedback and, on the introduction of the new website, intend to ensure that there is further guidance regarding expectations for trousers and formal black shoes.

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Careers and transition advice

As a school we are presently seeking to move our careers advice from good to outstanding. We are placing a significant emphasis on this aspect of our provision in STEP time. We may ask if you have the capacity to support us with your wide range of expertise in the world of work. Further information regarding our provision and parental support will be on the new school website when it launches.

Behaviour in lessons

Behaviour in the school is very good and this has been evident again in the first few weeks of term. We have high expectations for the attitude students demonstrate in lessons. If students fail to meet this expectation they will receive a maximum of two warnings before being removed from a lesson. A removal from lesson will automatically lead to a 'leadership detention' after school the following evening. We again appreciate the support and positive feedback we have received from parents regarding these expectations.

Homework

We believe in the value of setting regular homework across our subject areas. Topics will be posted on 'Show My Homework' which both you and your child can access. If you are unsure about this facility please contact Mr Ward at ward.f@framdurham.com. The school uses STEP time to develop skills in independent study but Directorates and Heads of Year also may run homework clubs for students who struggle to organise their time.

Progress Reporting

You will receive a Progress report at the end of each term and the dates for Year 11 Parents' Evening are Tuesday 17 October 2017 and Tuesday 27 March 2018. At both these evenings, progress reports will also be issued.

In the meantime, if you have any concerns regarding progress, please feel free to contact me to make an appointment or ask to speak to Mrs Cresswell, our Key Stage 4 Pastoral Manager, by contacting the school on 0191 386 6628.

Yours sincerely

Mrs K Clifford
Head of Year 11