

September 2017

Dear Parent or Carer

It has been a pleasure to take over as Head of Year 8, and to begin to get to know students individually; I am extremely proud of the year group's outstanding reputation within the school, and of their positive attitude towards learning. In the early weeks of the new term, I have emphasised to students my aspirations for them for the coming year. As well as focusing on the excellent academic progress we expect at Framwellgate, Year 8 - with the support of their tutors - will be involved in a programme of 'active citizenship'. We will focus on the importance of active involvement in both the school and wider community, and on how our attitudes and behaviour towards one another contribute towards society. In particular, I have emphasised to the year group the importance of acting as mature and supportive role models for our Year 7 students, and would very much appreciate your support in reinforcing this message at home.

I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce to you Mr Chivers, who is the Pastoral Manager for Year 8 students.

Attendance and punctuality

I am sure that you are aware of the importance of good, consistent attendance at school in providing students with the best chance of success. This year we will continue to monitor attendance closely and will contact you if there is a cause for concern. 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.

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 (Study, Tutor, Extended learning, Preparation) 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.

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Behaviour in lessons and conduct around the school

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.

Outside of lessons, we also expect our students to behave responsibly and be respectful towards one another around the school site. Any students failing to meet these expectations will also face sanctions.

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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 8 Parents' Evenings are Thursday 11 January for students taught in X band, and Thursday 18 January for students taught in Y band. If you have any concerns regarding progress please feel free to contact me to make an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Mrs E King
Head of Year