

Dear Parent/Carer,

This term has flown by; my first at Framwellgate School Durham. I have loved every minute and would like to thank you all for your welcome and ongoing support. We have achieved a lot already and this letter provides a brief summary of the term and looks forward to next year.

### **Already this year we have:**

- Launched a new school day
- Introduced a new mobile phone policy (switched off and in bags)
- Introduced new routines & systems to improve behaviour in lessons (which was already very good). Your child should have come home with a new Rewards and Sanctions booklet
- Opened our fantastic new sports hall for students and the local community
- Updated our Sixth Form offer in line with the majority of schools across the country (3 A Levels or equivalent, no AS Levels, and an accredited enhancement such as EPQ)
- Launched our new website ([www.framdurham.com](http://www.framdurham.com))
- Appointed a new senior leadership team (more on this below)
- Launched a new drama club with the help of St Cuthbert's College at Durham University
- Improved the quality of resources and materials to help students in Year 11 revise for their mock exams in January, and ran a successful revision evening for parents and students
- Improved our assessment practice across all year groups which means that the data you get on your child will be more meaningful
- Continued to run a host of extra-curricular activities, and trips and visits to provide opportunities for all to participate in the wider life of the school.
- Welcomed parents into school for parents' evenings, concerts, sporting events & information evenings

### **What Next?**

One of the things we will do in January is undertake a review of our ethos and values. Our current "strapline" talks about "Turning Potential into Performance" and achieving this through "quality provision, outstanding outcomes and positive relationships". We would like to involve students, staff, parents and governors in looking again at our ethos and values, and asking whether these statements really define us now and encapsulate the things which make Fram so special. We also intend to look at our uniform, and whether there are any changes or improvements we can make, being mindful of the cost to parents. Students and parents will be involved in all of these discussions and further information will be sent out in the new year.

Our priorities as a school continue to be to ensure that our students are safe and happy, and that they reach their academic potential; we will continue to work hard to ensure that our exam results improve and students are stretched and challenged.

### **Staffing Changes and The Senior Leadership Team**

From January 2018 we have a new Senior Leadership Team in school. Mrs Thompson (Deputy Head) and Mrs Richards (Assistant Head) are stepping down from their posts but I am delighted that both of them will remain in the school in other roles; their contribution to the school and their support for me this term has been huge. Mr Connor (Deputy Head) is retiring at Christmas. He has served the school tirelessly for 20 years and his knowledge of our students and their families, and the support he has given them through his leadership of the pastoral system, are immense. I have only worked with Mr Connor for a term but I will miss his experience, expertise and humour. On behalf of everyone at the school I would like to wish him all the best for the future; I am delighted that he will continue to work with us on an occasional basis and that we can continue to call on his expertise.

From January, the Senior Leadership Team of the school will be as follows:

- Mr. Byers: Headteacher
- Mrs. Rayson: Deputy Headteacher
- Mr Ward: Assistant Headteacher
- Mrs. Scott: Assistant Headteacher
- Mrs Machin: Assistant Headteacher
- Mrs Brookes: Director of Safeguarding (she will take over from Mr. Connor as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns)
- Miss Pattison: Academy Business Director

The other staffing change I wish to notify you of is that Mr Robertson (teacher of Computing and IT) has left the school. I am delighted that we have secured the services of Mr Earnshaw who is working in the school now and will take over responsibility for Mr. Robertson's Computing and Digital Literacy classes. Students at Key Stage 3 can expect a return to lessons on digital literacy after the holidays.

### **Communication**

I hope you feel that communication between home and school is improving. In addition to our new website which I would urge you to use, we have also launched two new systems (Parent App and In-Touch). In Touch is our email system (which you are reading this on) and details about how to sign up for Parent App have already been sent out.

Please note that in the case of your child being absent, we have a text system to notify you. The number is **07860095569** and it might be useful to enter this into your phone so that you know that it is the school contacting you. For users of social media, we have a Facebook page and a number of Twitter Accounts (including a school account and my own Headteacher account). You can find details on our website.

### **Last Day of Term**

Further to our recent notification, this is a reminder that school closes for students at 1.15pm on Friday. Buses and coaches have been informed and will pick students up at this time.

### **The New Term & Punctuality**

The new term starts at 8.30am on 8<sup>th</sup> January. I would like to remind everyone that punctuality is extremely important. Lessons start at 8.30am each day which means that the latest students should be arriving on site is 8.25am. We will monitor punctuality and persistent lateness (three or more times per term) will lead to a sanction. Please help us by ensuring that your child understands the importance of being punctual for school.

### **Finally**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you once again for your support. Your children are a pleasure to teach and work with and I hope that you and your families have a lovely Christmas and a good break.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Byers  
Headteacher