



Excellence, compassion & respect for all

FRAMWELLGATE SCHOOL DURHAM

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we near the end of term, I wanted to write to thank you for your support and update you on some important issues in readiness for next term.

Attendance

We promised to keep you updated about attendance. We will be sending the latest updates out in January, but wanted to remind you that you can also access this information via our parent app.

If you do not currently have access to the app, please let us know by emailing data@framdurham.com and then follow the instructions below to get started:

1. We will send you an activation email, simply click on the link from your tablet, PC or smartphone to activate your account. The email we hold on the school system for the primary contact will be used. If other people need access then you need to contact the school data manager on data@framdurham.com with the details.
2. You can then login using your normal **Facebook, Twitter, Google** or **Microsoft** username and password.
3. From your smartphone or tablet, download the app from the Google Play or Apple App store - search for **SIMS Parent**.
4. From a PC or Windows phone, login online at www.sims-parent.co.uk

Please find below a reminder of what missed sessions equates to in days and weeks and a reminder about our zones. We do realise that there are many individualised factors pertaining to the attendance of each individual student so please contact your child's Head of Year should you wish to discuss any individual situation further.

Attendance- Every Day in School Matters

	190 School Days	Absence
100% attendance	190 days attendance	0
95% attendance	180 days attendance	2 weeks absence
90% attendance	171 days attendance	4 weeks absence
85% attendance	161 days attendance	6 weeks absence
80% attendance	152 days attendance	More than half a term
75% attendance	143 days attendance	9+ weeks absence

Attendance Zones

The school uses a colour-coded traffic light system; a student's attendance will dictate which zone they are in at any given time; this system makes it easy to identify if a student's attendance starts to slip or be of concern. We would like as many pupils as possible to be in the green zone. If attendance does become a concern, we may well instigate a home visit or invite parents into school to discuss the situation and whether any support is needed. The traffic light colour zones are:

- GREEN** **96% attendance or above** (Excellent. Keep up the effort)
- AMBER** **91-95%** (Tutor/Head of Year/Pastoral Team to discuss support with family)
- RED** **90% and below** (As amber + consideration of external agency support.)

Key Dates

As a reminder, the key dates for the remainder of the school year are shown below. We will continue to use our on-line booking system for parents' evenings, and details will be provided closer to the evening for your child.

Term 2

- Half Term 3: Monday 7th January 2019 – Thursday 14th February 2019
- **Friday 15th February 2019: Teacher Training Day: students do not attend**
- Half-Term 4: Monday 25th February 2019 – Friday 5th April 2019

Term 3

- Half-Term 5: Tuesday 23rd April 2019 – Friday 26th May 2019
- Half-Term 6: Monday 3rd June 2019 – Friday 19th July 2019

Dates for Parents' and Information Evenings: 2018/19

Year 7

- Parents' Evening (7A; 7B; 7C; 7D): Thursday 17th January 2019
- Parents' Evening (7E; 7F; 7G; 7H): Thursday 24th January 2019

Year 8

- Options Evening: Tuesday 15th January 2019
- Parents' Evening (8A; 8B; 8C; 8D): Tuesday 5th February 2019
- Parents' Evening (8E; 8F; 8G): Tuesday 12th February 2019

Year 9

- Parents' Evening (9A; 9B; 9C; 9D): Thursday 14th March 2019
- Parents' Evening (9E; 9F; 9G; 9H): Thursday 21st March 2019

Year 10

- Parents' Evening: Thursday 4th July 2019

Year 11

- Parents' Evening 2: Monday 1st April 2019

Year 12/13

- Parents' Evening: Thursday 28th February 2019

Other Important Dates: 2018/19

- Year 10 Exams: Week Commencing 17th June 2019
- Year 11 Mock Exams 1: Week Commencing 7th January 2019
- Year 11 Mock Exams 2: Weeks commencing 25th February and 4th March 2019
- Year 12 Exams: Weeks commencing 3rd June and 10th June 2019
- Year 13 Mock Exams: Week commencing 21st January 2019

Term Dates: 2019/20

This seems a very long way off, but I know that some of you start to plan ahead for holidays and child care. Our new Years 7 and 12 students will return to school on Wednesday 4th September 2019, with the rest of school starting on Thursday 5th September. The rest of the dates for the remainder of the school year can be found on our website: <http://framdurhamweb.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/2019-2020-Term-Dates.pdf>

Schools Funding

Thank you to those who responded to my recent letter about funding in schools. If you think government should fund schools sufficiently and fairly, please show your support by adding your name to the petition 'Increase Funding for Schools', as well as encouraging family and friends to do so, via the link below:

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/232220>

You will be asked to add some minimal information (name, email address, postcode) and then you will be required to confirm your email address by responding to the automated response sent to you.

Reports

Students in Years 7-10 have completed assessments in recent weeks. These have been marked, and standardised, and teachers have recorded the marks. A report for parents has been produced, and will be sent out in the first week back in January. If you have any queries about these reports, once you have read them, we would encourage you to contact your child's subject teacher or Curriculum Leader (contact details are on the website).

Charity

One of the most important things we teach, and explicit in our new ethos statement, is compassion. I want to thank all of our students, parents and staff, who have shown concern for others throughout the year. Over the course of the year, we have raised money through non-uniform days, Children in Need, and Sports Relief events. I'd particularly like to thank those of you who made donations (food and money) to our appeal to support Durham Food Bank. We filled a mini-bus with food, drink and other essentials, and delivered this to Food Bank this week.

I would also like to mention our Year 9 students who have been involved in an exciting enterprise challenge, organised by our new Enterprise Advisor, Nickie Gott. Nickie came to talk to year 9 about her own experiences -in life and business- before formally launching a fundraising challenge in partnership with Cancer Research UK.

Each step group was given a 'seed fund' by the charity that they used to source/create their own products to sell at our Christmas fair last week. Every group rose to the challenge, producing amazing and creative products, as well as using their initiative to get involved in other fundraising, including baking, raffles and sponsored somersaults! The event, the first 'seed challenge' that Cancer Research UK have funded in a North East school, was an incredible success, raising just over £2000 on top of the original seed fund; thank you to all the students involved, and to the parents who supported and attended the event.

School Developments

We have been delighted with the work ethic and behaviour of our students this term and, in particular, at how our Year 7 students have settled in. We have 230 students in Year 7, so it is now over-subscribed, and early indications are that we will be full next year too (if you have a child in Y6 and made us first preference, please don't worry though). This means that the school continues to grow, as smaller year groups leave the school and more students join us. We will have increased our roll by 20% in 2 years since September 2017 and expect that, by September 2020, we will be full. To accommodate the additional students, we will be appointing more teachers and support staff next year and we are already planning to refurbish existing parts of the school or add some temporary specialist accommodation for a couple of our curriculum areas. We are also looking at plans to increase the capacity of our dining facilities from next September to ensure students have a more comfortable (and speedy) lunchtime experience.

My overall aim is to lobby for a new school building; many of you will be aware that there were plans in place to build a new school on this site in 2010, but that the coalition Government cancelled those plans in 2010. The need is still there, 10 years later, so I have been in discussion with our local MP, the Local Authority and DfE, and they understand that this is our (medium-term) aim. I will keep lobbying, and would encourage you to do the same with your locally elected representatives. I will keep you posted on developments as they happen.

School Ethos

As many of you are aware, I write a weekly education blog (www.framheadteacher.com) on a variety of issues. Recently I wrote about the activities of students on-line and how society is seeing an increase in on-line bullying. A link to this particular blog is here: <https://framheadteacher.com/2018/11/23/what-is-your-child-doing-on-line/>; it is important that over the long holidays, students are even more aware of their on-line behaviour and responsibility to keep themselves and each other safe.

We currently work with a fantastic organisation called Humanutopia which puts on courses to help students to make changes to their lives and improve their confidence, happiness, relationships and employability skills. They have just worked with our Year 10 students and we will be planning more sessions with them next year; they support our Y6/7 summer school too. We will also be returning to the themes of kindness, compassion, and anti-bullying with all year groups in the New Year. Although we will continue to improve teaching and exam results (as these improve the life chances of young people), we want our students to be safe, happy, and confident young people who enjoy coming to school and who can develop friendships for life.

Finally

Please remember that school closes for Christmas at 1pm on Friday. Buses and taxis have all been informed and will arrive then.

Once again, I'd like to thank you for your support this year. I have said before that we do our best to teach and support your children and we consider it a privilege to work with them. I know that we make mistakes and don't get everything right; when that happens we will apologise and learn from our mistakes. Overall though, I am proud of the job we do and hope that you are happy with the quality of education we provide. Your support is invaluable. Have a lovely Christmas and a relaxing holiday.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy'.

Andy Byers
Headteacher