



Framwellgate School Durham
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Dear Parent or Carer

As we welcome your son or daughter back to the final year at Framwellgate Sixth Form I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of a few important points which will help all students to reach their full potential at the end of this year. It will be a busy year with the completion of coursework in some subjects, BTEC and GCSE re-sit examinations in November, the preparation of students for their Post 18 choices and the completion of their two-year courses and revision for their final examinations.

This year we will continue to prepare students for their transition Post 18. We very much expect those students who are planning to go to university to have completed an initial draft of their personal statement and for it to have been handed into their STEP tutor for further advice and guidance; in addition, students should have now registered on the UCAS website. For those students choosing to go into employment or gain an apprenticeship it is important that they continue to update the ULAS website which allows them to develop their CV and personal statement. It also lists the most recent opportunities and apprenticeships available to them. We will continue to provide students with a range of opportunities that will enhance their chances of being successful individuals.

It is important to remind students that to be successful, sixth formers need to study with greater independence, which means being able to organise their time, plan their work and undertake tasks requiring a certain amount of initiative. Consequently, good organization of private study is crucial, and we aim to continue to develop these skills as students move into year 13. We will continue to monitor your child's progress through regular progress checks and will continue to implement subject intervention when needed. This proved to be very popular with students last year and many students welcomed the individual support given by teachers during STEP time as well as having more structured study periods. Should your child be highlighted as someone who needs further intervention s/he will receive an intervention plan to ensure that s/he achieves his/her full potential.

Clearly, study time in school must be supplemented by study at home if students are to cope with the demands of Sixth Form life. On average, we would expect a student to spend at least 16-20 hours per week studying on their own. It is important that this year, students continue to revise the content that they studied in year 12. All students on Thursday 26th September will have an a 'stock the clock' day which will have a focus on year 12 studies. During this day students should focus on ensuring they have consolidated their learning from their year 12 studies. They can study this independently at home. It is vitally important that students complete exam questions and papers and hand them to teachers in order to be given feedback on how to improve further. This will also aid preparation for assessment week which is the week beginning the 4th November. It is perhaps worth pointing out that whilst we acknowledge that many students will want, and usually benefit from, Saturday or Sunday employment, jobs requiring a mid-week evening commitment or those entailing more than ten hours' employment per week are not encouraged. In our experience, such jobs place undue strain on students who then struggle to meet their school commitments. We believe that students who manage their time well should be able to maintain a sensible balance between their academic commitments and their social lives.

We have devised a tutorial programme whereby students meet with their STEP tutor on a Monday and Tuesday to discuss academic progress. Through this, we aim to support, encourage and guide students through the social and emotional issues they may experience. Tutors offer guidance about planning study schedules, balancing academic and personal commitments, seeking advice from subject staff, revising for examinations and so on. We hope that by monitoring and supporting students in this way, we shall encourage them to acknowledge and achieve their potential and gradually assume greater responsibility for their own learning and Post 18 choices.

We endeavour to keep you informed throughout the year of important issues relevant to you/your son or daughter but in order to do so we rely on being kept informed when any changes to contact details occur (address/telephone number etc). Communication will be through text message or through the email address that you provided us with at enrolment. We would also encourage you to use the parent app (where you can monitor attendance and access progress reports) and ask students to use the student SIMS app in order to keep up to date with important notices that may affect them. Should you wish to receive further information on either of these apps then please contact our Data and Assessment Manager, Mr Langford, on Langford.A@framdurham.com

Student attendance in the Sixth Form will be very closely monitored as we know that good school attendance plays an essential part in academic development for post 16 students. All post 16 courses are intensive, and students cannot afford to miss valuable teaching and study time. Sixth form students should strive to achieve consistently good attendance as poor attendance will affect academic attainment. Students should therefore aim for at least 95% attendance for the year. An exemplary record of attendance says a huge amount about you as a person: that you are dedicated, well-motivated, organised and someone who takes their responsibilities seriously. Good attendance also plays an important part when applying to higher education establishments or employment.

Attendance figures in the Sixth Form are a reflection of timetabled lessons and STEP time. Students should make every effort to make medical/dental appointments out of school hours; if this is unavoidable then you must contact reception and make the school aware of this. If there is an on-going medical issue that you think we should be aware of that affects your child's attendance, then please do let us know so that we can support your child. Should your child feel too ill to attend school, you should telephone 0191 3866628 before 8:30 am stating the nature of the illness and when they are expected to return.

I very much appreciate the support that you give the sixth form as it is important to work together in order to achieve the best possible outcome for all our students. Should you require further information on these matters, or any others, please do not hesitate to contact the school at any time.

Yours sincerely

L.Mersh-Roberts

Mrs Mersh-Roberts
Head of Sixth Form