

23rd February 2024

Dear Parents / Carers

We hope that you and your child had a relaxing and enjoyable half term break. We are now in term 4 of the academic year and this is another fairly short term. We started this new term with school assemblies for years 7 to 10 with feedback from the school council and our responses to support their requested changes. Below are the key changes implemented from Tuesday 20th February. You will also find a video attached explaining the updates. With continued thanks for your support in discussing these with your child.

### **School bells - punctuality to lessons**

As of Monday 19th February the school bell will sound to indicate to teachers the end of a lesson or break and lunch time. The bell will then sound five minutes into the start of a lesson and if any students are late after the five minutes they will be logged as truanting and will be given a truancy detention. Thank you for checking that your child is clear of the bells and timings.

### **Year 7 to 10 Roll Call**

With effect from Tuesday 20th February roll call for Years 8 - 10 was introduced, Year 7 already had roll call in place at the end of last term. This will enable us to check and correct uniform first thing each day to ensure consistency across the school. This will also enable us to settle students and celebrate success and reward each morning. If students are in the incorrect uniform they will be escorted to Student Services where this will be rectified. Thank you for checking that your child leaves for school in full school uniform and/or PE uniform.

### **Access to toilets**

An update on the toilets at Kingsdown was shared with your child. A block toilets will be open throughout the day. The other toilets across the school will be accessible at lunch and break times (supervised) and for a 10 minute window during lesson change over. Thank you for checking that your child understands the importance of using the toilets at social times and lesson changeovers.

### **Uniform reminders**

Please can you kindly donate any uniform that your child has grown out of to our student services. We can always find room for PE uniform in particular, as well as blazers and ties. All donations gratefully received.

### **Students who are late to school**

All students must be on site on or before 8.30am. We have some students who are arriving at school between 8.40 and 9.00. In order to reduce lateness, the attendance team will escort late students to the ILS where they will be supervised by Mrs Leigh-Robinson until the start of lesson 1. Thank you for checking that your child understands the importance of being on time to Kingsdown and being on site from 8.30am and that they go straight to their roll call area.

### **Year 11 Mocks**

Thank you for supporting your child in this first week of mock exams. Their behaviour has been high quality throughout this period in the exam halls. There is still one more week to go so thank you for supporting your child to complete their revision on the google classrooms. It is also important for

students to take time to rest this weekend to ensure that they are well prepared for the week ahead.

### **Year 10 Mocks - how to support your child**

The year 10 mocks will be commencing on Thursday 14th March with the Art mock and then on Monday 18th March for the exams in the sports centre. An assembly will be taking place in the sports hall with the exams officer on Friday 15th March so that students understand the arrangements for the exams, their seating and the processes. To support your child, please help them organise their time so that they can complete their revision as well as have time to rest prior so they are ready for their first mock exam series.

### **Mobile phones at Kingsdown**

You would have noticed that mobile phones have been in the news this week. Our response at Kingsdown is that they are not seen and not heard. If they are seen or heard our students know that they are confiscated until the end of the day. If it were to happen on 3 occasions then the phones are again confiscated and will only be returned to a parent / carer.

With thanks for your continued support here.

### **Careers Events**

In the week beginning 4th March we will run Careers Week within school for years 7-9, they will have the opportunity to hear from a number of local employers as well as in Years 7 and 8 they will attend a STEM workshop. All students in Years 7-9 will have the opportunity to attend a careers fair. Year 7 will focus on employment, Year 8 will focus on STEM and Year 9 on post 16 and post 18 opportunities.

In addition to this, we run a Year 10 Aspirations Week which enables students to have an immersive experience day at New College, undertake a Mock Interview with an employer for which they will have to produce their CV and for which they receive feedback on as well as on their interview performance (from the employer), a visit to a University with interactive workshops or should they not wish to, workshops on site led by employers, plus a two day carousel of six different employer led work experience sessions. The Aspirations week is a very important one which enables students to identify their own skills, abilities and interests which leads to clearer decision making for their Post-16 (and in some cases also Post-18) options.

We are delighted to inform you that we subscribe to an online portal, Springpod which provides Virtual Work Experience across a range of industries and roles, with large employers such as the NHS, Finance, Construction, Engineering, Legal, the list goes on. Springpod is available for students in Years 10 (which they can continue in Year 11 should they wish to). They each receive scheduled time in their timetables to engage with this but it is not limited to during school time, students can also log in from home. Certificates are generated for all completed work experience to evidence the students' hard work; this enhances students' CVs by demonstrating commitment and other key skills they develop throughout the process. Year 10 students now all have access to this so they can access these at any time.

In person Work Experience can be arranged by parents but this should ideally take place within the school holidays.

If you or anyone you know is able to support our careers events please do get in touch with Mrs Parry.

Should you have any queries about careers, please don't hesitate to contact Mrs Parry on [bparry@kingsdownschool.co.uk](mailto:bparry@kingsdownschool.co.uk).

### **Financial support for families**

We recognise that there are families that might need support during their child's education from time to time. A support fund has been established to help support, we have also reviewed and improved our process to apply for financial support for items to support barriers to learning. Please visit [www.kingsdownschool.co.uk/info/disadvantaged-students](http://www.kingsdownschool.co.uk/info/disadvantaged-students) for more information.

If you think you may be eligible for Free School Meals, but are not sure, please contact the front office to seek advice and understand the process.

### **Events for term 3**

w/c 26th Feb	: Year 11 Mocks
w/c 4th March	: NEA Food Exams
Tues 5th March	: Recital Evening 6.30pm
Weds 6th March	: Senior Student Interviews
Thurs 7th March	: Year 9 HPV
Thurs 14th March	: Head Student Interviews
Thurs 14th March	: English KS4 Macbeth Trip 5.15pm -11.15pm
w/c 18th March	: Year 10 Mocks
Weds 20th March	: Pencelli Parents' Evening
w/c 25th March	: Year 10 Mocks

With our continued thanks. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need any further information.

Mrs Leigh-Bennett  
**Headteacher**