

24 May 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

This half-term has raced away and we can look forward to the half-term break with school resuming on Monday 3 June. Please remind students they have new timetables (issued today) and we return on a Week B. Year 9 students are “promoted” to Year 10 and begin their new GCSE courses, Year 10 to Year 11 and Year 12 to Year 13.

Students have enjoyed an excellent half-term since Easter including lovely Year 9 and Year 10 Awards Evenings. We can look forward to an exciting final half-term of the school year when we hope that the sun will shine!

Public Exams

Students have conducted themselves superbly in attending for public exams in Year 11 and Year 13. Invigilators and teaching staff have been impressed by the way that students have responded to this challenging time. Year 10 students studying Public Services sat their first unit exam and again conducted themselves in exemplary manner. This all augurs well for results in August and is to students’ great credit.

We held leavers’ assemblies for Year 11 and Year 13. These were great occasions that students responded to well and hopefully create lasting memories.

Half-Term Revision

While many GCSE and A level exams are already finished, some remain. A small number of subjects are offering on-line or in person revision next week as below. I hope that students take advantage of these additional opportunities:

Date	Year + Subject	Location	Time
Wednesday 29 May	Y11 PE	Online Google Meet	3pm onwards
Wednesday 29 May	Y13 Law	Online Google Meet	tba
Thursday 30 May	Y11 and Y13 History	B2-5	Y11 10am – 12.30pm Y13 tba afternoon
Saturday 1 June	Y11 Maths	M rooms	9am - 11.30am

Uniform

When we return to school on Monday we expect all students in Years 10-11 to be in school uniform. This includes adhering to the school’s policy on jewellery and piercings which includes a single piercing only in each ear (small hoop or stud) and a small stud only in the nose.

The overwhelming majority of students appreciate that Vandyke’s uniform policy is practical and reasonable ensuring affordability and accommodating the wishes of young people to express their personality and

exercise choice while at the same time ensuring students look smart and are appropriately attired for school work. Please ensure that your daughter/ son attends school in uniform so that no time need be wasted resolving uniform issues but can be spent on teaching and learning and supporting students to achieve their best in their studies. Thank you for your support in this.

Punctuality

Punctuality to school and to lessons is vital if school is to run smoothly and valuable time not to be wasted. Most students understand this and are always on time to school and to their lessons but a few are regularly late. In a change to current practice of break-time and lunch-time detentions, from 3 June we will be instigating an immediate after-school detention for frequent lateness to lessons to help those students to appreciate the importance of punctuality and that lateness to lessons must stop. I have spoken to all students in Years 9 and 10 about this in assembly this week. Parents/carers are always contacted to inform you about any detentions after-school. Thank you for your support.

Car parking

If you have driven into school you will know that parking has become a real issue as has traffic congestion along Vandyke Road. I have continued to take up wider issues of safe routes to school, road safety and traffic congestion with the local authority, local councillors and MP.

Governors have agreed a plan to tackle the issue of parking congestion on site. Only permit holders should be parking on the school site during school hours in term time. Visitors sign in at reception and so are logged as temporary permit holders. The school's site team already undertake regular monitoring of car parking. Under the new system vehicles parked without a permit will be subject to a fine. We will be using the services of a company with access to the DVLA to identify vehicles and issue fines. A fine will only be issued if authorised by the school and following a written warning.

It is not the wish to see any driver being fined and we hope that the new system will be sufficient deterrent to anybody parking without a permit. Signage for the scheme will be put up ahead of its intended start on 1 July. A further letter will be sent to all parents/carers in advance together with the policy and plenty of publicity put out so that drivers understand the new system. Hopefully this will mean that all authorised users of the school site can more easily park up in future.

Vandyke Opportunities Fund (VOF)

For many years students have benefitted from an Opportunities Fund. This is an independent charitable trust that supports students from families in financial hardship to access educational activities. Families can apply for financial support for trips and visits and educational equipment. The Fund relies upon donations. If you would like to make a donation this is always gratefully received. If students who will soon be Year 11 and Year 13 leavers are considering making a donation at the end of their time here as is often the case, the VOF is the school's chosen good cause. Donations can be made by bank transfer – Account Name: Vandyke Opportunities Fund. Sort Code: 30-15-53. Account Number: 89485560.

If you have any questions about these or any further matters please contact office@vandyke.cbeds.co.uk.

Yours sincerely



Tim Carroll

Headteacher