

October 2016

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

On behalf of all the staff at Ivybridge Community College, and as the newly appointed Principal I would like to warmly welcome you to the new academic year 2016/17. As an experienced Headteacher and a parent at the College myself, I am passionate about continuing on the road to further excellence and carrying on with the baton of success from former Principal, Mr Rob Haring; which sees the College with GCSE results amongst the highest in Devon and will once again be amongst the top performing schools nationally. I am particularly proud that students of all abilities have made such outstanding progress.

Chair of Governors, Mike Saltern has commented, "We are immensely proud of our students' excellent results and we congratulate all our students and staff who have continued to uphold our ethos of total commitment to outstanding Teaching and Learning. The students now embark on their journey through life with every confidence and I wish them every happiness and success in whatever direction their roads may take them".

As Principal, I firmly believe in continuing to develop the 'Outstanding Ivybridge Legacy' by maintaining a focus on high quality Teaching and Learning for all of our learners and keeping the students at the heart of all our decisions. I very much look forward to meeting with students and parents alike over the coming months and will be offering a range of opportunities for parents to become more involved with life at the College in the near future. In the meantime, please continue to support your son/daughter's attitude to learning and their progress at the College by regularly checking their Planner and ensuring they continue to adhere to the first section which provides a clear outline on the College's expectations, particularly with regard to the:

- Code of behaviour
- College Uniform / Dress Code
- Rewards and Commendations

We take pride in our excellent College's reputation and I am extremely proud by how hard the staff work to support the high standards that we expect of our students. The staff are always grateful for the support and communication that parents provide on this matter. Working in collaboration is a key ingredient to providing the best educational outcomes for any student and I look forward to developing our partnerships throughout my time at Ivybridge Community College. We shall be launching a new website shortly with many new features that will enable closer parent/College communication. Therefore, I would welcome your parent views on a brief survey which can be accessed via the link below. This will provide an ideal starting point to prepare us going forward and I would be grateful for responses by Monday, 31 October 2016.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1QzIG6mKID-EIIRsFYb_6b_h81CpR3pfRt3P_0KJYofA/edit

On this note, I would like to hand over to Dr Kershaw, Head of Year 12, who is keen to share current developments specific to your Year Group.

It has been a very positive – if hectic – start to the year for Year 12, with Tutors and teachers working extremely hard to ensure a smooth transition for students. With all students now settled on their Sixth Form courses, it is timely for me to outline plans for the rest of the term.

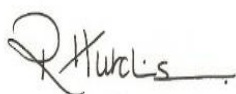
I talked during the Year 11 into 12 Transition Evening in July of the importance of parental involvement in determining student outcomes in Sixth Form. To this end, I would like to share with you my focus for this half-term, which is the setting of a career or long-term goal, which I believe is central to providing motivation for study. As I have explained to students in Assembly, it doesn't matter if they change their mind on what career they would like to pursue; hopefully, in working towards it, they will be more successful and open up more options for themselves in future should they change their mind. Using *Careers Planner*, an online platform that you as parents can also access¹, students have been challenged to research a career path and understand the different routes and requirements for reaching their target career. Tutors are supporting students in doing this, and I would like all students to have a pathway mapped out by half-term. Your support with this would be much appreciated. Moreover, very soon I will be explaining the process behind securing a Work Experience placement in July, and I will provide you with details of this so that you can support your child.

In addition to developing a vision and knowing what they want to achieve, I am conscious of developing students who have the wherewithal to achieve these goals. This is with regard to the effort they put into their studies, the systems they have for organising their work, the nature of the work they carry out, and their attitude in responding constructively to setbacks (building resilience). We have already had a very well-received visit from ex-students to talk about their experiences in Sixth Form; I will also be giving weekly Assemblies to try to equip students with the qualities required for successful Sixth Form study, and much important work will take place in Tutor Blocks developing study and life skills. It is therefore very important that students are punctual for Tutor Block – they should aim to arrive at their Tutor Bases for 8.50am.

This term still holds much to come, with the Sixth Form council now formed, and visits from MPs and the *Learn 2 Live Road Safety Roadshow* on the horizon. Mindful of the mental wellbeing of students, we will also be running stress management sessions with outside agencies.

Lastly, I am hoping to communicate more by email to share opportunities that arise throughout the year and to keep you informed of the pastoral work that we are doing with students, so keep a look out in your inbox for KS5Office@ivybridge.devon.sch.uk.

Yours faithfully



Rachel Hutchinson
Principal



Tom Kershaw
Head of Year 12

¹ To access *Careers Planner* as a parent, go to www.careersplanner.com and create a free account using the College's exam centre number, 54315.