Welcome back year 11!

I hope you all enjoyed a well-deserved summer break and are refreshed ready to start this next exciting chapter. It has been so lovely to see our students start back with us this week and they have made a really positive start to the term. I remain delighted and deeply honoured to continue as their Head of Year this year as they finish their GCSE journey with us here at Ferndown Upper school. It is one of my greatest privileges to have been there with them through their whole journey and they are a real credit to you. You may remember that I asked your young people to 'Start Strong' and 'BEE Strong'. This meant working hard to make great impressions, build up that foundation of knowledge and have a go at everything so they knew what they were passionate about and where their strengths lay. Your young people have not disappointed! I cannot wait to see what they achieve this year.

I have tried (and failed) to keep this letter short for you with key information and dates to refer back to. As a result, I have collected everything I think you'll need for the year into a handy information booklet which has been attached alongside this letter. Please put the kettle on and have a read through or dip in and out as needed. I hope you find it useful. There is also a lot of information on our exams page: https://fernup.dorset.sch.uk/exams/ including information about when exams are coming up and what is and isn't allowed into our exam hall and what to do if something happens on the day of an exam.

This year is such an exciting year, their final journey in Lower School here with us at FUS. We have so much to be excited for and I've challenged all of year 11 to BEE Ready for it. Of course we have their final exams approaching this year and they will need to build on their hard work from year 10 and start getting ready for these. Preparation is key to success in Year 11, being ready for some hard work, being ready for when they need the resilience they built last year, being ready for tough choices and being ready to take on responsibility for their learning themselves.



However, there is more to year 11 than just preparing for exams, this is the culmination of their school career so far – a celebration of all they have achieved, all the skills and attributes that make them so wonderful. That also means being ready for the next chapter. It is really important that our wonderful young adults start thinking about what they want to do next, it might be college or 6th form. We naturally hope many of our wonderful year

group stay with us at our 6th form but we also appreciate there are others they may wish to explore. We also know students may want to look at apprenticeships and training programmes. All we need is for them to have a plan and we are here to support if they really don't know what to do. Please help us at home by having these conversations and reaching out to their House Tutor (the one on Thursday and Friday) if you feel they need some extra help. Your young person can also book a careers appointment with our dedicated careers adviser Lucy Giles by emailing her directly.

We also have Prom to look forward to and our celebration event at the close of their time at Ferndown Upper School. I'm sure I will be very emotional at both of these and I think the students are just hoping they aren't entirely Bee themed!

As a year team we are working on the following values this year:

- Believe in your ability to improve and succeed
- Aim for your personal best
- Revise regularly and consistently
- Resilience means keep going when it gets tough
- Effort every day, even in small amounts, even when it feels impossible
- Tenacity to stick with it until you get it
- Try again after mistakes and learn from them so you grow even more awesome

I truly believe these are going to be key values this year and I know that my year group have many of these. We would love to see them all leave us as rounded individuals and shine as the wonderful people they are. My hope is that by having all of these values together, in all our students, we will be able to build our 'Hive' into a successful, positive and happy place to learn, somewhere students belong and most importantly set them up to achieve their goals and in the process they graduate as Barrett Bees, something I'm sure all of them are desperate to become!

Key information and contact:

1. Please keep us up to date with any changes of information such as address, email address or telephone number
2. For any queries, please make any contact with the year 11 team (Mrs Barrett - Head of Year, Ms Gillett – Deputy Head of Year, Miss Clements – Pastoral manager) through the email address Headofyear11@fernup.dorset.sch.uk
3. For absence please use this contact studentabsence@fernup.dorset.sch.uk We kindly request you let us know of any absence by 8.15am each day.

4. For any specific SEND queries please use Sendsupport@fernup.dorset.sch.uk
5. If there are any concerns with Bromcom and accessing anything please email Gaylemilsom@fernup.dorset.sch.uk and she will be able to help you.
6. Please use ITSupporthelpdesk@fernup.dorset.sch.uk for any issues with logins and technical issues your young people may have, students are also welcome to pop along to IT Support in C Block if they would like a member of the IT team to help them.

Medical:

Please can parents/carers check MCAS under the data collection form section and ensure that you are happy with the current medical details we hold for your young person.

Care plans will be sent by the 18th September, if you do not receive a care plan and feel your child should have one please contact medical@fernup.dorset.sch.uk.

Key dates:

Below are several key dates already scheduled in the school calendar for this academic year, we will update you with any additions as more events and opportunities are added. Our term dates and inset days can be found on the school website.

- **Year 11 Fraser portraits:** 11th September period 1-3
- **First year 11 parents' evening:** 7th October 4-7pm online
- **6th form open evening:** 4th November 6:30-8:30pm
- **November GCSE Mock Exams:** 16th November – 27th November
- **GCSE PE practical moderation day:** 27th November
- **Year 11 GCSE Mock results day:** 7th December
- **March GCSE Mock Exams:** 3rd March – 12th March
- **Fraser Portraits Year 11:** 25th March. As is custom for a departing year group, there will be a Year 11 group photo taken during the morning of 25th March in school. Where possible, please ensure your child will be present for this, as we would love for everyone to be included. Copies of this will be available afterwards.
- **Year 11 Parent's evening, invite only:** 25th March 4pm-7pm in person
- **Study leave:** last day for year 11 in school will be 28th May TBC closer to the time.
- **Summer exams:** May to late June, with contingency set for 23rd June 2027
- **Leavers:** Thursday 24th June
- **Prom:** Thursday 1st July

- **GCSE Results day:** 19th August - This will be the morning in which school will be open for the collection of results. Many staff will be in attendance, the FUS Sixth Form team will also be there to support with confirmation of places.

The year team are really looking forward to seeing how your young people face this next part of their journey with us, as ever it is such a privilege to be a part of this important milestone, getting to know your children even better this year and being able to support them in their academic and personal development.

Please do not hesitate to get in contact if you have any queries, however small, or even share with us any of their successes or achievements outside of school as they are often reluctant to do so! Remember the best way to reach us is through Headofyear11@fernup.dorset.sch.uk

Kind Regards,

Rachael Barrett

Mrs Rachael Barrett
Head of Year 11