RE: Welcome to Ferndown Upper School!

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I am delighted to be able to write to you with our new Year 9 cohort having made such a strong start to their FUS careers. Staff from across the school have inundated the Year 9 team with positive comments about behaviour and attitude, both in and out of lessons. We have loved meeting everyone and starting to get to know all of the fresh faces now that they are finally here.

Our Year 9 Ethos - #UnearthYourPotential

During the welcome assembly on the first day of school, introduced our whole-year ethos and hashtag: #UnearthYourPotential. This fits in with our Diamond motif that we will be using, and challenges the year group to be open to new beginnings and explore new possibilities as they settle into FUS and, later in the year, decide their GCSE options subjects. I explained that we have chosen diamonds as our motif as they are extremely durable, resilient and valuable, the transformation process takes time, knowledge, effort and pressure, and it also requires the use of the right tools for the job. Finally, they ultimately end up being the embodiment of perfection and success, much like we hope Year 9 will be once they have reached the end of their three years.

To support the year with rising to this, we have identified the following points of focus for Year 9 that will be emphasised throughout the year:

- → **S**elf-belief – Developing confidence in themselves and their abilities
- → **H**ard work – Understanding the importance of hard work in success
- → **I**nitiative – Building independence and resourcefulness
- → **N**urture – Looking after themselves and one another, both socially and academically
- → **E**xcellence – Aiming for their personal best in everything that they do



Our hope is that these will help Year 9 'SHINE' and make sure that they make the most from this academic year, ready for the start of their GCSEs.

A reminder of some of the key information and contacts:

1. For any queries, please make any contact with the Year 9 team (Mr Howard – Head of Year; Miss Small – Deputy Head of Year; Miss Stirling – Pastoral Manager) through the email address headofyear9@fernup.dorset.sch.uk
2. For any absence, please contact studentabsence@fernup.dorset.sch.uk. We kindly request that you let us know of any absence by 8.15am each day.
3. For any specific SEND queries please use sendsupport@fernup.dorset.sch.uk
4. If there are any concerns with Bromcom, MCAS or accessing anything, please email gaylemilsom@fernup.dorset.sch.uk and she will be able to help you.
5. Please check MCAS, under the data collection form, that you are happy with your child's medical details. Care plans will be sent by the September 18th; 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:

- Thurs 17th Sept – Year 9 Meet the Tutor Evening (In-Person) 4-7pm
- Tuesday 22nd Sept – Flu vaccinations
- Thurs 24th Sept – Early finish at 1.20pm (due to open evening)
- Wed 4th Nov – Early finish at 1.20pm (due to 6th form open evening)
- Fri 27th Nov – INSET day
- Tues 8th Dec – School Christmas lunch
- Wed 9th Dec – Christmas concert at St Mary's church at 6.30pm
- Fri 18th Dec – End of term – early finish
- Mon 4th Jan – INSET Day
- Weds 13th Jan – Year 9 Options Launch and Information Evening
- Thurs 21st Jan – Year 9 Online Parents' Eve
- Monday 1st Feb – Year 9 Options Deadline
- Wed 24th March – Non-school uniform day for Food Bank
- Mon 3rd May – May Bank Holiday
- Fri 11th June – Charity Relay
- June TBC – Year 9 Science Exams
- Weds 23rd to Fri 25th June – Year 9 Residential
- Thurs 8th July – Prize giving evening 6.30pm in hall
- July TBC – Sports Day
- Mon 12th July – PE Celebration evening
- Wed 14th July – House Day
- Thurs 15th July – Summer Show 6.30-8.30pm
- Fri 16th July – End of term

Whilst the Year 9 Meet the Tutor Evening is very much on the horizon, if you have any specific questions or queries in the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the details given on the previous page. We know that it will take time for everyone to settle and are committed to make sure everyone has the best possible start we can. We would also love to hear about anything going on outside of school, so that we can learn more about the year and share any achievements with staff. Photo evidence is always very much appreciated!

Kind regards,

Mr Rob Howard

Head of Year 9