

1<sup>st</sup> March 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to take this opportunity to be the first person to welcome you and your child into our school community, welcome to the Ferndown Family.

I am very honoured to be the Head of FUS because I feel that we are a school which cares, where our students enjoy their learning and where they are challenged to reach their full potential. Every student is treated as a person, and we can provide each student with support, as well as individual challenge. We also believe that we have an innovative and interesting curriculum, where students are given exciting opportunities for enrichment and where they can enjoy engaging lessons.

Ferndown is a school that is built upon relationships, it is the bedrock of our success and working together, our teachers will ensure that your son or daughter will fulfil their full potential.

Evidence of our students' success are the DfE's National Performance Tables. Ferndown Upper School students achieved the **best GCSE results in Dorset in 2019, 2022 and 2023** (there were no league tables in 2020 and 2021). We have also been the **best Upper School in England for the last two years**. Other highlights were; our Maths, English, Science and Humanities also being the highest achieving at GCSE. For A Level outcomes; Maths, Sociology, Fine Art, Business and Physical Education were also in the top 1% of national results.

<https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/schools-by-type?step=default&table=schools&region=838&geographic=1a&for=secondary>

So it can be seen, that whatever your passion, Ferndown is the school that has something for everyone.



However, schools are not just about exams, the behaviour of our students is also excellent, with our students being both well behaved and engaged in their learning. We encourage our students to be whoever they want to be. **Bullying is rare and always dealt with**, because we believe that happy students will be motivated students.

Our last Ofsted inspection recognised these strengths and others besides, with the inspectors experiencing just how special a place to learn Ferndown Upper School really is. The inspectors commented upon our excellent extra-curricular and pastoral provision - **they were amazed at just how much opportunity our students have** available to them. They were also impressed with our students' behaviour and our calm learning environment, where students are allowed to be themselves, as this is quite unique for an upper/secondary school.

We are particularly pleased that the inspectors praised our ambitious curriculum. Our students now have access to triple science for all (being the first non-selective state school in the UK to do this), we offer a Foundation Art course (usually delivered by universities), we are the first deliverer of T Levels in Dorset and BCP and most importantly we encourage personal choice.

We are extremely proud of our **four 'free' GCSE option block choices** (the most comprehensive offer of any local school).

Some of the key Ofsted quotes being:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The lessons had no disruption, students were attentive and calm”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Students work incredibly hard”</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “There is a well lead and inclusive culture and attitude across the school”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Teachers at FUS have strong subject knowledge”</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “highly skilled teaching”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “pupils want to learn”</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The leaders know their school and have high expectations, they lead with a high moral purpose and passion”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “relationships between pupils and teachers are a real strength”</li> </ul>

I will be in contact again, in order to keep you up to date with key Ferndown Upper School news and events and I would also like to invite you all to our:

**Virtual Y8 Transfer Evening, which is on the Tuesday 12th March at 6.30pm.**

This event will be a 'live' Teams meeting and you will be able to access it via this link: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

We will also send out a reminder nearer to the time. This evening is a short introduction to FUS and is aimed at parents, with the opportunity to ask questions at the end.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact the school at any point if you have any questions or queries via [transfer@fernup.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:transfer@fernup.dorset.sch.uk)

Yours faithfully,

