



September 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

We hope you are well, and your child is recharged and ready for their final eight months at Fred Longworth High School – how time has flown! As your child continues their journey through GCSE, we are keen to continue working closely with you in supporting your child to succeed. We also think it is essential to communicate some of the common issues we see amongst students as they approach their GCSEs, and how we can work together in supporting your child to overcome these and reach their full potential. Please read this information carefully, and we look forward to seeing you at our upcoming Year 11 Launch Event.

Parent/Guardian Events

Thursday 19th September 2024 6:30-7:30pm - Year 11 Launch Night

This event will provide information about the year ahead, alongside the calendar of key dates including mock examinations and careers events. We will also be sharing guidance on effective revision strategies and offer advice on how best to maintain a healthy work life balance. Finally, we will be delivering a short session on supporting your child's wellbeing, providing a range of useful strategies for managing stress and worry.

Please click on the link below to confirm your attendance at the Y11 Launch Event on 19th September:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=ikGYyHheHUGk5eFXR_dJHJW5k7O1FQ1HvdnmBH_o1JdUMzAyUjU3R1ROMlo2VFg1U1RVTFo2UkMzNi4u

Thursday 7th November 2024 6:30-8:30pm – Core Examinations Event

This event offers 30-minute sessions across the core subject areas. Led by specialist teachers from English, Mathematics and Science, subject-specific revision strategies will be shared and modelled. You will be guided through the exam specifications and given expert advice on how to support your child in the run up to examinations.

Thursday 23rd January 2025 from 4:30pm - Year 11 Parents' Evening

An opportunity to meet with your child's individual class teachers, Head of Year, and other key staff following the mock examinations to discuss their progress and priorities in the run-up to the GCSE examinations.

The Challenge Ahead...

We are incredibly proud of our GCSE outcomes this year and more confident than ever that your children are receiving high-quality curriculum delivery and expert teaching. Our results for 2024 indicate that our students are more than capable of achieving excellent outcomes which, for many students at Freddie's, means receiving above average grades in a wide variety of subjects allowing them to choose from a range of options post-16: from A-levels to apprenticeships, T-levels to BTEC courses.

However, since the pandemic, we have seen a rise in the number of students who tell us they '*only need a 4*' in their subjects and/or who are happy with '*just passing*' at grades 4 and 5. Though this is a massive achievement for some students, it saddens us that some students who are capable of above-average grades seem to be settling with only minimal effort, choosing to opt out of revision or wider study on the assumption they'll secure the grade 4 standard pass and '*this will do*'. We have also seen students who, more than halfway through GCSE courses, shift focus towards certain subjects and give significantly less attention to subjects they feel are not required for entry to colleges and other avenues post-16.

We want to see a rise in students' ambition, understanding their capacity for impressive results and working hard to chase their potential. We want every student to have done their **best**, whether their best be a grade 4, 7 or 9, and to have that enormous sense of pride on results day when they see the hard work paying off. And it does.

A Focus on Commitment...

This year, we need your support to encourage your children to commit fully to both their time in school as well as their time at home. For high performance, it is not enough to simply be present in the lessons; students need to be committed to their learning - listening intently, participating positively and completing work to the best of their ability. Outside of school, the most successful students show commitment to wider reading, homework completion and quality revision. Of course, a healthy work-life balance is essential, but we are keen to instil good routines now to avoid panic and stress as the year progresses.

We also ask that students commit fully to the interesting and varied courses for which they have opted. Your child will receive valuable qualifications and points for **any and every** grade that they receive. Regardless of college entry requirements, these points can never be taken away from your child and can only serve to benefit them, their CV and prospects in the future. We want all doors to be open to every one of our students, and therefore want to encourage them more than ever to keep pushing for the highest

possible grades. We want to remind our parents that we do not allow subjects to be dropped (unless there are medical grounds and evidence provided) and are very grateful for your support with this. Your children are over halfway there, and they **can** do it.

A Focus on Independence...

It is essential that every child recognises the value of self-directed, independent study at home. Your child will continue to receive explicit guidance on how to revise successfully via our study skills programme delivered during form time. Attendance during form time is, therefore, more vital than ever in that it ensures your child receives this information and support. Specific information about the revision methods used will be revisited at our Year 11 Launch Event.

You will also notice a standard nightly homework on your child's *Satchel One* throughout Year 11. This will be indicated as 'Self-directed study' and set for one and a half hours per night. We hope this will ensure that all students engage daily with independent study and recognise its value from the off. Again, we will be guiding your child on how to organise their time during form and assembly slots.

Of course, class teachers will be setting homework as appropriate to your child's courses, so there may be evenings when it is not appropriate for students to complete an hour and a half of independent study. The notice of self-directed study is there to remind your child that, as and when they do not have subject specific homework, they should use the time to independently study using the 'OSCAR' model and skills they have been taught, returning to previously taught content to revise. We also feel this supports parents and carers if your child says "I have no homework" – they do!

How can you help us?

The key message across Year 11 is that students never have no homework; there is always some independent study/revision that can be done to ensure success. We do not want any child to settle for 'just enough' - we want all of them to be hungry for more. Your child deserves the very best opportunities in the future with no door shut to them. Together, we will do everything that we can to ensure that they get there.

Your Child's Attendance

Every year, we see the impact of low attendance on student outcomes, both in terms of their academic performance and mental wellbeing. There is a significant gap in the average grades received for those with excellent attendance compared to those whose attendance in school is poor. We want to do all we can to support your child to be in

school every day and ask that you support this message from home, encouraging your child to avoid missing curriculum content through absence. Here is a breakdown of the absences for the following attendance percentages:

Attendance during one school year	Equivalent Days	Equivalent Sessions	Equivalent Weeks	Equivalent Lessons Missed
95%	9 Days	18 Sessions	2 Weeks	54 Lessons
90%	19 Days	38 Sessions	4 Weeks	114 Lessons
85%	29 Days	58 Sessions	6 Weeks	174 Lessons
80%	38 Days	72 Sessions	8 Weeks	228 Lessons
75%	48 Days	96 Sessions	10 Weeks	288 Lessons
70%	57 Days	114 Sessions	11.5 Weeks	342 Lessons
65%	67 Days	134 Sessions	13.5 Weeks	402 Lessons

Lunchtimes

Please be aware that your child must adhere to our punctuality and behaviour policies in order to be allowed offsite at lunchtimes. The school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege should a student be late to school or lessons. This is to ensure that all students understand the importance of punctuality and are not adversely affected by being allowed offsite at lunchtimes.

We thank you in advance for your support during your child's final year at Freddie's. We wish them every success and look forward to working closely with you to help them achieve their best.

Yours Sincerely,

P. Davies
Headteacher

L. Ward
Assistant Headteacher

N. Turner
Head of Year 11