

YEAR 10 COURSE INFORMATION EVENING – September 2022

[SLIDE 2: COURSE BOOKLET]

Good evening and welcome. The aim of this evening is to provide you with some information to help guide you through the next two important years in our core subjects of English, Mathematics, Science and Ethics or Citizenship. Performance in English and Mathematics will have life-long implications for choices, opportunities and doorways. Across these two curriculum areas students can gain at least three GCSEs. Sciences hold the key for up to a further three GCSEs with Ethics or Citizenship providing a further valuable GCSE qualification. Providing a strong platform for progression beyond Year 11. For information on the wide range of other subjects and qualifications our students study please consult the KS4 Course Information Advice & Guidance booklet, which will be available on our school website from tomorrow as will a copy of tonight's presentation, and feel free to contact the school with any queries.

[SLIDE 3: Book and contents]

This booklet contains useful information on all the courses students study here at Highdown School in Years 10 and 11. Each subject also provides some clear steps to success, useful websites and highlights revision guides to support students in their learning and preparations for their examinations. There is also a useful section for parents at the back of the booklet which provides some top tips on how you can support your son or daughter with their studies and revision.

[SLIDE 4: Steppingstones]

The next two years are a steppingstone to what your son or daughter's future is going to look like. They must take responsibility for their learning and be active participants in lessons. They should look to make links between lessons and topics with other subjects and their own life experiences. They should also complete home learning activities to a high standard and on time so they can get the most out of their teachers' feedback to support their progress. You will be aware that all our home learning is set through Class Charts via the internet, meaning you and your child can access home learning anywhere and anytime. It also enables you to closely monitor their progress and support their organisation and time management.

Young people must remain in education or training until the age of 18. Currently, they will also need to continue to study English and Mathematics if they do not attain at least a grade 4 pass by the end of Year 11. It's really important to work hard and be successful in these and all their subjects at the end of KS4.

Key Stage 4 is an exciting time for students – life changing with plenty of opportunities in which to excel and shine. We hope students are ambitious and aspire to achieve well, to provide a steppingstone to post-16 education and University, to set them up ready for the world of work.

[SLIDE 5: Grade comparisons]

I am sure that you are aware that GCSEs have undergone reforms in recent years with a new grading system being introduced. For the new grades the Government have identified a few key thresholds, a Grade 4 is broadly similar to a grade C and this is known as a 'standard pass'. A Grade 5, considered a 'strong pass' is broadly equivalent to a high C or low B, and a Grade 7 is broadly similar to a Grade A. Grades 8 and 9 are calculated based on a percentage of students gaining 7+ nationally.

[SLIDE 6: Future and Sixth Form]

Currently, students are required to attain at least Grade 4s in English and Maths and 3 other subjects to progress to A-Levels, although individual subjects may have higher entry criteria. As part of any post-16 arrangement, currently if a student doesn't attain a grade 4 in English or Maths at the end of Year 11, then they need to continue retaking until they do. Of course, we want our students to work towards attaining at least the strong pass in all their subjects and to aspire to attain 7+.

[SLIDE 7: What makes you successful?]

So, how can students be successful?

[SLIDE 8: Revising hard?]

You definitely want to revise well, regularly, start early and ensure you are focused and active in your revision.

[SLIDE 9: Exam preparation?]

You need to make sure you are well-prepared for your exams and that's not just about revision. Ensure your notes are in a good useable condition from day one, and keep them that way. Ensure you make good use of Personalised Learning Checklists to self-assess your strengths and be dedicated to working on the areas you are less confident or certain about. Make good use of all the resources provided for you and the opportunities that present themselves over the next two school years.

[SLIDE 10: Work hard]

Anyone can achieve anything if they put their minds to it and work hard at it. In his book *Bounce*, Matthew Syed, former Commonwealth Table Tennis Champion from Reading, talks about hard work vs talent.

[SLIDE 11: Talent]

Well, here are a list of things which require zero talent but could make a lot of difference to your success at the end of Year 11. Being on time, having a positive work ethic and an ethic of excellence. Giving your work everything and taking on board advice and acting on feedback.

[SLIDE 12: What makes a good learner?]

As you can see, there are lots and lots of ideas here which you can look at on the presentation on our website. A successful learner demonstrates GRIT – determination to succeed even when the challenge is great or a test mark has

not come back well. They demonstrate GRAFT – putting in the hours. They know the GAPS in their knowledge and understanding and have the courage to do something about it. And they have a GROWTH MINDSET – they have a ‘can do’ positive approach to their learning. Rather than thinking ‘I can’t do this’ they think ‘I can’t do this YET’ and then do something about it. They have self-belief.

This evening we are going to hear from a range of key staff. Miss Clark, Head of Achievement for Year 10, will talk about how we will support your son or daughter through our pastoral care over the next two years, and then Miss. Salmon, Curriculum Leader for English, Mr. Dinely, Curriculum Leader for Maths, Mrs Elliot, Curriculum Leader for Science and Mr Hampson, Curriculum Leader for Re & Citizenship will talk about the content and focus of their subjects, how these are assessed and how students can make sure they are successful.

There will be an opportunity for any individual questions at the end of the evening and I hope you find the information shared this evening useful.

I will now hand over to Miss Clark.

[Slide 13 – Pastoral care at Highdown]

Hello. Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I am Miss Clark and I have taken over as Head of Achievement and have the pleasure of leading this wonderful year group.

It has been lovely to welcome students back at the start of this academic year on the next chapter of their education, and what a great start they have made.

I have had nothing but positive feedback from teachers about students working hard in lessons and being attentive to the learning and showing an excellent GCSE mindset.

[Slide 14 – Year 10 Team]

As Head of Achievement, I am ably supported by a fantastic group of people who are totally committed to the success of your children.

The Year 10 team aims to inspire and will work tirelessly to support your children's learning within and beyond the classroom to ensure that all are successful in their studies.

Other support that is available includes the staff in our star centre, our designated safeguarding offices and our inclusion team.

[Slide 15 – Excellence]

The focus of this presentation is how we can together support students to be successful and how they can excel in year 10.

As head of achievement, I have the highest expectations of students where everyone, no matter their starting point, is expected to work as hard as they can and behave as well as they can without qualification.

Excellence is being your best, striving to improve, doing more than expected and working hard.

[Slide 16 – Uniform]

One aspect of being excellent is wearing the right uniform. Students are expected to wear their uniforms with pride. Our uniform signifies belonging. It is who we are.

Our uniform unites us as a school in the same way that a sport team wear their kit with pride, it's because they're a team: they have the same goals. A uniform makes our school stronger and gives us all a sense of purpose, which will enable our students to be more resilient and more determined later in life.

The expectation is that all students comply with our uniform expectations. We hold them to account if they do not. Parents must support us with this. Let us work together - the Highdown Way.

[Slide 17 – Learning journey]

Here at Highdown we are all of us together on the Highdown Learning and Development Journey.

Year 10 is an exciting time in your children's academic journey. It is, as I have been saying to the year group, a new chapter for them in their education. It is a time for them to develop their learning from key stage three and progress towards their aspirations and future successes. This slide highlights the steps that have already been taken and will be taken while studying here at Highdown.

[Slide 18 – Journey from 9-10]

Let's remind ourselves of the path year 10 students trod over the last academic year and the footprints they left behind.

Amongst other things in year 9 students began the initial stages of their journey towards successful GCSE examinations.

They considered possible future careers and pathways and they began the process of choosing GCSE options and alternative pathways

[Slide 19 – Journey from 10-11]

We want students to ensure they start the academic year strongly and make a positive start to their GCSEs, their new chapter.

Year 10 is full of exciting opportunities inside and outside of the curriculum, and we expect our students to take full advantage of them; challenging and enjoying themselves with new knowledge, skills and experiences along the way.

Taking part in experiences outside the classroom such as DoE and the many extra-curricular opportunities open to students across many subject areas such as sport teams; music, dance and drama productions; computer club and art club to name but a few. Aiming for excellent by seeking out information about future careers and applying for roles within the Student Leadership Team.

[Slide 20 – PSHCE]

Through the PSHCE program, students will continue with their personal, social, health, citizenship and economics education giving them the knowledge, skills, and attributes they need to keep themselves healthy and safe and to prepare them for life and work in modern Britain.

[Slide 21 – PiXL Edge]

On the learning journey slide, you may have seen the PiXL Edge Graduate level. Most of our students have completed the apprentice level and some took on the pioneer stage during Year 9. It is now time to go up a level and improve their LORIC skills further. These skills will be developed during weekly Personal Skills Development Sessions in mentor time where students will be exploring the 5 logic skills. The development of these skills and the completion on the PiXL Graduate Level allows our students to stand out from others when applying for jobs in the future. It will provide skills that employers want.

[Slide 22 – Readiness to Learn]

One of the most critical factors in student achievement is behaviour.

Down the left hand side you will see key aspects for learning. On the right hand side you can see how students can be excellent in each aspect. These posters are in all classrooms and students should take time to ensure they are behaving in a way which will help them succeed. There is a clear correlation between behaviour and academic success. The more achievement points awarded to Highdown students the more GCSEs gained and at a higher grade. The more behaviour points the fewer GCSEs gained and at a lower grade.

The skills and habits of successful students are not gifted to them at birth they are nurtured through infancy and childhood. As a school, we have a duty to provide a behavioural, as well as an academic curriculum. To ensure your child's success please support us to support your child to have excellent behaviour and readiness to learn, developing that GCSE mindset.

[Slide 23 – Attendance]

Attendance is a serious matter and we aim for 100% attendance. Anything less than 96% attendance is worrying as it impacts negatively on progress. The less students attend school the more difficult it becomes to make progress. Students who attend school on a regular basis can access the high-quality teaching and learning opportunities, enabling them to leave school with qualifications and access to greater employment opportunities. As you can see on the slide, the links between attendance and achievement are strong, and high levels of attendance at school should be a right of each student.

What can you do?

- Contact school to explain you children's absence.
- Endeavour not to take children out of school in term time e.g. book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours and avoid taking family holidays in term time.
- Notify the school as soon as problems arise with your child's attendance.

[Slide 24 – Punctuality]

Good punctuality matters too. As it says on the slide, lost minutes equals lost learning. Good punctuality at school is essential for students to achieve their full educational potential. Punctuality records also form part of references passed on to employers or higher educational institutes, therefore it is vital for students to form good habits now for later life.

All students are expected to arrive punctually for all their lessons and also for school in the morning for mentor time.

Mentor time is so important as students' mentors are their constant at the start of each day. It helps settle students, prepares them mentally for the day ahead and focuses their attention so that they are ready to learn. Essential information is given out as well as weekly sessions developing students' personal skills and independent learning skills. Weekly assemblies also reflect on issues of a moral, social and cultural nature.

Give your child the best possible chance to succeed - ensure they arrive on time each day.

[Slide 25 – Core values]

We expect Year 10 students to demonstrate day by day that the need for ambition, commitment, determination and resilience are necessary to be successful students who excel and achieve their goals.

We expect year 10 students to be prepared to challenge themselves through the breadth of experiences on offer, developing a curiosity for learning, a desire to be the best version of themselves that they can be and at the same time supporting others to achieve the same.

We work hard every day to ensure everyone in our Highdown community develops and exhibits these values and that our relationships are based on mutual respect, on tolerance, honesty and courtesy.

[Slide 26 – The Highdown Way]

The Highdown Way refers to staff, students and parents. Ensuring that we are all playing our part to be respectful, have high aspirations and to strive to be excellent.

[Slide 27 – The Highdown Way]

Referring to our Highdown Way and talking to your children about this will support you in ensuring your child is successful and excels in their learning.

Please take the opportunity to read the student passport with your children and refer to the student handbook that you can find on the website.

Students are expected to demonstrate these great learning and behaviour habits.

The habits that support success must be demonstrated in **every** lesson **every** day.

Please support your children to follow the Highdown Way and support us to aim high to give themselves the best possible chance of being successful

[Slide 28 – The Highdown Way]

Everyone will demonstrate our core values of aspiration, respect and excellence

By being ready to learn

By being kind and respectful and

By working hard

This is the highdown way. This is who we are.

[Slide 29 – ClassCharts]

As you will know we use ClassCharts, an online system to track achievement and behaviour throughout the school day. We also use it to set home learning and send out announcements. Students timetables can now be viewed within the app as well so you can see all the lessons your child will be attending each day.

We believe in working closely with parents and carers and one of the key benefits of using ClassCharts is that we are able to securely share your child(s) achievement and behaviour report with you and so keep you up to date in real-time.

If you require parental login details please do contact your child's mentor.

[Slide 30 – Key Dates]

Finally, here are some significant dates for your diaries, which I will also share via classcharts tomorrow.

I will finish by saying thank you so much for listening and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate in contacting me. I will now pass you over to:

CLs – slides 31 to 67

English – Miss Salmon 31-38

Maths – Mr Dineley 39-43

Science – Mrs Elliot 44 - 58

Re/Citizenship – Mr Hampson 59 - 67

[SLIDE 68: Butterflies and Hurricanes]

In the presentations by our core curriculum leaders you will have seen some consistent themes being referred to relating to how your son or daughter can be successful in all their GCSEs and Technical subjects. There will be real challenges along the way where character will be more important than cognition and ability. Chaos theory often refers to how a tiny butterfly flapping its wings in one part of the world can cause a hurricane in another part of the world. In studying at Key Stage 4, even the smallest action can cause a chain of events leading to significantly better outcomes at the end of Year 11. Students really are the creators of their own destiny. Students who live an ethic of excellence will write themselves a future they can be really proud of.

The most successful students are those that demonstrate an ethic of excellence through having an excellent attitude to their learning, through taking care over the quality and standard of their written work, who demonstrate excellence in their spoken language, who take advantage of extra-curricular opportunities and support from the team around them, and who put in the hours of practice, practice, practice, so that they achieve excellence in their results. Year 10, I wish you all excellence and success over the next two years.

Thank you for joining us this evening.