



15<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

## November Updates

We have had a very busy and productive few weeks since our return from the half-term break. I have really enjoyed speaking to students in assembly about what makes Riddlesdown such a wonderful community and such a special place to learn. I emphasised we all have a responsibility towards our community and that **'if we are to preserve our culture, we must continue to create it'**. It has, therefore, been fantastic to see our students doing exactly this and displaying our VALUES within and beyond lessons. Some of the wonderful events that have taken place this half-term so far include: Year 8 Aquila students completing conservation work on the Downs; the Year 10 Rugby Team participating in a Rugby festival, their brilliant attitude, sportsmanship and respect commended by the tournament organisers; participation in the Institute of Engineering and Technology's The Faraday Challenge, giving teams of students the opportunity to research, design and make prototype solutions to real-world engineering challenges; College VI holding a wonderful celebration of food in recognition of Black History Month; our KS4 and KS5 Art Exhibition which showcased the wonderful artistic talents of our students and the Maths Meme competition. It was also lovely to see so many Year 13 parents and carers at our first ever Year 13 Information Evening. No matter what Year Group your child is in, our partnership must remain strong to ensure your child is successful, safe and happy and I am always grateful for your engagement and support.

## Mock Exams

Both Year 10 and 11 students have sat mock exams over the past two weeks and their conduct, organisation and focus has been excellent. Teachers have begun marking papers and students will receive their results in our Mock Exam Assembly on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November. Following on from this, teachers will then provide students with feedback that will support them to further develop their knowledge and skills and close any gaps identified in the exams. You will be able to discuss your child's progress, mock exam feedback and their next steps at Year 11 Parents' Evening on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December.

## Students contacting home

In line with our mobile phone policy *'on site, out of sight'*, it is vital that no students use their mobile phone to contact home during the school day. Should a student feel unwell or wish to contact home for any other reason it is important that they speak to a member of staff who will be able to support them and arrange for a call home, should that be necessary.

## Behaviour and Standards

Our Riddlesdown Commitment, the outlining of our belief in partnership and our VALUES behaviours, is the well-established foundation for all our work on behaviour and standards. We have used the start of this half term as an opportunity to reset and ensure that students have real clarity on what that commitment explicitly means in terms of expected behaviours. Attached here



is a version of the information students have received so that at home, families can continue to support the same messaging to ensure that we maintain our already well-established outstanding standards. Our successful approaches to this aspect of our work are a combination of our clear and well-established VALUES, a simple set of systems that promote outstanding basics and being Riddlesdown Ready and a culture of unconditional positive regard. In order to promote equity and safety of our students, we want to ensure that all students are adhering to the simple expectation that the only jewellery worn will be a maximum of one small stud in each ear and a watch. Rings, bracelets and other piercings are not permitted. Any jewellery worn beyond what is permitted will be confiscated. Our collective commitment to this approach ensures that our time is spent having conversations about learning and progress and not basic uniform standards. Your partnership and support with our work here is greatly appreciated.

## ***Safeguarding Briefing***

With nights drawing in, please remind your child to take extra care when walking home, remind them to stick to pavements and to be extra vigilant when crossing roads. If your child travels by bike, please remind them to wear a helmet, have lights on their bike and be as visible as possible. Please remind your child that if they are concerned about something they see or encounter whilst travelling to or from school, to report this to a member of staff as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully

Mr D Osborne  
**Principal**