



5th September 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

Welcome back

It was a real pleasure to welcome all our students back from their summer break, and especially to greet our new Year 7 and Year 12 students as they joined our school community. Our fantastic new Year 7 cohort arrived full of enthusiasm and curiosity, setting a positive tone for the year ahead. It was equally inspiring to see our new College VI students—a vibrant and energetic group of sixth formers—ready to embrace new opportunities and make their mark on the year.

This week, I had the privilege of speaking to all students during our start-of-term assemblies. My focus was on our Riddlesdown VALUES and the importance of the choices we make—every day and in every moment—shape who we are becoming. I spoke about the impact our decisions have, not just on our own character, health, happiness, and success, but also on the wellbeing and strength of our wider school community.

I encouraged students to think carefully about how they will live out our VALUES—being Kind, Ambitious, Hardworking, Resilient, and Proud—in every aspect of school life. This includes how they carry themselves, how they approach their learning, how they contribute to the culture of the school, and importantly, how they treat one another and what they expect from each other. The start of a new school year is a powerful opportunity to reflect, reset, and refocus—to take meaningful steps towards becoming the best version of ourselves.

Already, I've seen so many students making positive and thoughtful choices. From those who have gone out of their way to welcome and support new students, to those who have made strong first impressions with their teachers—showing resilience, determination, and a real commitment to doing their best. I've also been particularly impressed by the pride students are showing in wearing their uniforms smartly and correctly, and by the confidence and respect with which they are representing Riddlesdown.

Please continue to reinforce these messages at home. When schools and families work together to embed strong values and high expectations, we create the foundation for every student to flourish—not only academically, but personally and socially too.

Attendance Matters

At Riddlesdown Collegiate we know that excellent attendance is one of the most important foundations for every child's success. Being in school every day not only supports strong academic progress, but also helps children to build confidence, enjoy their learning, and make the most of all the wonderful opportunities we offer at the Collegiate. When students attend regularly, they are more likely to:

- Keep up with their learning and achieve their very best.
- Enjoy lessons and feel part of the school community.
- Take part in clubs, trips, performances, and other experiences that enrich their education.

Riddlesdown Collegiate



Every day of learning counts, and even small amounts of missed time can add up quickly. We want every child to leave Riddlesdown Collegiate feeling proud of their achievements and ready for the future, and consistent attendance plays a vital role in making that possible. We truly value your partnership in ensuring that your child attends school on time, every day. If you are experiencing any challenges that may affect attendance, please do get in touch with your child's tutor, in the first instance.

We are here to support you and work together so that your child can thrive. Thank you for your continued commitment to your child's education. With your support, we can help every student enjoy school to the fullest and reach their potential.

The Importance of Co-Curricular Participation

At Riddlesdown, education goes beyond the classroom, and our co-curricular programme plays a vital role in developing well-rounded, confident, and connected young people. We expect every student to take part in at least one club, team, or society this term. Whether it's sport, music, drama, STEAM, or any of the many other opportunities on offer, engaging in co-curricular activities helps students build new skills, form friendships, and grow in confidence. All students will receive details of available opportunities through their Tutor, and the full co-curricular timetable for the autumn term will be published next week. We're also excited to share that auditions for the Whole School Production of *The Addams Family* have already begun—details are attached to this letter. We can't wait to see our students get involved and make the most of everything on offer.

Riddlesdown Collegiate Parents' Fund

As a Collegiate, we are incredibly grateful for the continued support we receive from parents and carers through contributions to the Riddlesdown Collegiate Parents' Fund. These voluntary donations play a vital role in enriching the educational experience we are able to offer all students—helping to fund additional resources, extra-curricular opportunities, and improvements to our learning environment that go beyond what government funding alone can provide. Your generosity makes a real and lasting difference. All families will receive a letter next week with more information about the Riddlesdown Collegiate Parents' Fund and how to contribute, should you wish to do so. Thank you, as always, for your support—it is deeply appreciated and directly benefits our school community.

Gas Works and Traffic Congestion

I am pleased to update you that the gas works on Honister Heights, and Derwent Drive have now been completed, and the surrounding areas are fully cleared and safe for both students and staff. Thank you for your cooperation and patience during this period of disruption at the start of term. Your support in adapting your drop-off routines made a real difference in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our students. While the roadworks have now concluded, we kindly ask that parents and carers continue to drop students off further down the hill, away from the immediate entrance to the school. This will help us to prevent congestion during busy morning periods and maintain a smooth and safe arrival for everyone. I would like to thank parents for not driving to the school gate or onto the site at the beginning or end of day unless this has been arranged for individual circumstances. Having been to the gate in the morning and at the end of the day this week, I have been reminded of the importance of minimising vehicle movement when students arrive and leave.



Finally, thank you for your ongoing support. Let's continue to make this a year defined by kindness, respect, and pride—in ourselves, in each other, and in our community.

Safeguarding Briefing: Keeping Safe on the Journey to and from School

As we begin the new term, it is important to remind all pupils about how to keep themselves safe when travelling to and from school. We would encourage you to speak with your child and reinforce the following key messages:

- Travel with friends where possible, and stick to well-used, well-lit routes.
- Always let a parent or carer know if your journey will be different from usual.
- Do not accept lifts, gifts, or invitations from people you do not know.
- If something does not feel right, move away quickly and tell a trusted adult straight away.
- In an emergency, call 999.

We will continue to reinforce these important safety messages in school, and we appreciate your support in reminding pupils of them at home.

Yours sincerely

Daniel Osborne
Principal