



Bay House

School & Sixth Form

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To all parents/carers of Upper Sixth students

Dear Parent/Carer

As we approach the critical remaining weeks of the Upper Sixth year, I should like to take this opportunity to update you on some of the current issues affecting your son/daughter and to provide you with some important dates.

Student Finance Information Presentation

A representative from the Student Finance Team at the University of Southampton will be giving a presentation to students and their parents/carers on **Tuesday 10 March**, at 6pm in the Main Hall here at Bay House, to explain the student finance process for those planning to start university in September. A separate letter will be sent home nearer the time regarding this.

Parents' Evening

The Upper Sixth Parents' Evening will take place on **Thursday 2 April** from 4.30-7.30pm. We will again be using the online Parents' Evening Appointment Booking system for this evening. A separate letter and additional guidance on how/when to access the system will follow nearer the time; if you have any problems, please do not hesitate to get in touch and we can make appointments on your behalf. I hope that you will be able to take advantage of this valuable final opportunity to meet with the teachers of your son/daughter; students are also strongly encouraged to attend. Topics for discussion are likely to include performance in the mock examinations and preparation for the final A Level examinations.

Independent Learning

At this comparatively late stage in their A Level studies, we hope that the vast majority of students have become successful independent learners. In order to encourage students to develop the ability to study independently, and to take greater responsibility for their own learning, we encourage the use of Bay House Learning and Google Classroom, excellent on-line facilities that students can access from home. They contain exemplar answers to examination questions as well as mark schemes and examiners' reports, and as such are invaluable aids to revision. It is essential that students complete sufficient study outside of the classroom – **at least** 20 hours per week – and make use of the various resources at their disposal as they prepare themselves for their final examinations. The Easter holidays will provide a useful opportunity for students to revisit the areas of their courses that they feel less confident about; it is obviously important that students make productive use of this time whilst also 'recharging their batteries' to prepare them for the weeks ahead. A sensible balance will be required; students who decide to take a 'minimalist' approach to study at this important time are unlikely to fulfil their potential in their A-Level examinations.

Paid employment

An issue which sometimes gives cause for concern at this time of year is that of paid employment. It is perhaps worth reiterating our view that whilst we acknowledge that many students will want, and usually benefit from, Saturday employment, evening jobs requiring a mid-week commitment are not encouraged. In our experience,

such jobs place unfair strain on students who then struggle to meet their academic commitments. We regard 10 hours of paid employment per week as the absolute maximum commitment that a student should undertake. Students will clearly want to think very carefully about their work commitments as they prepare for their final examinations. Hopefully employers will be understanding and will not expect students to fulfil substantial work commitments in the days prior to examinations. If students wish me to negotiate on their behalf and talk to their employers I am always more than happy to do so!

University applications

Students who have received decisions from all their UCAS choices by *31 March* have until *5 May* to make decisions about their firm and insurance choice universities (later dates apply to those whose offers aren't finalised until after this date). Students who have used all five choices and are not holding any offers, or those who have declined all offers received, may be able to apply for additional courses through *UCAS Extra* which goes live on *25 February (deadline – 5 July)*; students should check the 'Your choices' section of Track for further details if they believe they are eligible.

Important dates

Students have recently been issued with a calendar containing important dates, providing an overview of the remainder of the academic year. A copy of the calendar is enclosed with this letter for your information.

Most A Level examinations are scheduled for the week before and the 3 weeks after half term, between *Monday 18 May* and *Thursday 19 June* inclusive, although there are a small number of exams outside of that window. A full examination timetable will be issued in due course; Upper Sixth students will be on suspended timetable from *12:20pm on Friday 22 May*.

Examination results will be issued on **Thursday 13 August** and will be available for collection from 8.30-9.30am in the Main Hall or from 9.30am in the Sixth Form Office; the Sixth Form Team will be available on *Thursday 13 and Friday 14 August* to deal with Upper Sixth exam/UCAS-related queries. Students who have submitted a UCAS application should ensure that they are not on holiday at this time.

Attendance and punctuality

As you will be aware, we monitor students' attendance and punctuality very closely in the Sixth Form, believing it to be a crucial factor in determining success at advanced level. We always appreciate telephone calls from home notifying us of a student's absence and can, for periods of unavoidable prolonged absence, arrange for work to be sent home. Please also be aware that where a student's attendance gives cause for concern, or where they have been absent for a total of more than ten days during an academic year, we ask that all absence notes are written or countersigned by a parent.

You may be interested to know that Bay House Sixth Form has once again performed outstandingly well in the various league tables recently published; the value-added DfE progress data places us within the top 1% of schools and colleges nationally. When compared with state providers with more than 100 students, Bay House Sixth Form is now ranked joint second in the country. We look forward to the current Upper Sixth continuing this impressive tradition. Attendance at the various after-school and lunchtime revision classes that many staff choose to provide in the closing weeks should greatly enhance their chances.

I hope you have found the information within this letter helpful. I look forward to seeing many of you at the forthcoming Finance and Parents' Evenings and hope that you find the evenings productive and informative.

Yours sincerely



Mr R Dadd
Head of Sixth Form