



# THE DOWNS SCHOOL

Learning together, learning for life

## The Downs Sixth Form Information Evening Pre-event FAQs

### General:

#### 1. Can students leave school early if they have no lessons in the afternoon?

We have been reviewing our procedures regarding students leaving school when the lessons have finished for the day. From next week all Sixth Forms will be able to leave school after Period 3 if they have no further lessons. Our expectation is that students go home and study independently for the remainder of the day. We will be writing to parents to confirm these details next week.

#### 2. If students are not allowed to leave school when they have no lessons is there somewhere quiet on site for them to study?

In addition to a change in the procedure regarding students leaving school, we are also adding additional capacity for students to study in silent study rooms, in addition to the facilities that are already available. These rooms will be made available once we have completed the Year 13 and Year 11 exams next week.

#### 3. Can students drive themselves to school?

Yes, we have a small Sixth Form car park or students can park in the surrounding road. It is essential that students park in a manner which is legal and in keeping with us retaining a positive relationship with the local community. Irrespective of where students park, they must complete a car registration form so that we have a record of their car details. These forms are available in both common rooms.

#### 4. What is procedure if a student is going to be absent?

If a student is ill, a parent or carer needs to call the Student Absence Line 01635 270000 before 9.00am. A parent will need to call each day the student is absent.

If a student is going to be absent for a whole day for any reason apart from illness, an Absence Request form must be obtained from the Common Room and completed and signed by the student and parent, and returned to the Common Room Post Box, in advance of the day of absence.

If a student is going to miss part of a day including AM registration for a non-illness reason, they must inform their tutor in advance and sign-in in the Common Room immediately upon arrival.

If a student has to leave early during the day for a non-illness reason, they need to inform their tutor in advance and sign out in the Common Room before leaving.

An Absence Request form is only needed for a whole day off.

#### 5. Is it possible for a Year 12 student to change subjects?

Yes, however, the deadline for subject changes is Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

#### 6. What should I do if I wish to discuss issues relating to my child's wellbeing?

The first point of contact is their tutor, who will be happy to discuss any issues or concerns you may have. They may decide to refer the matter to our dedicated Student Support Manager, Mrs Peppiatt, who can offer further support and guidance to you and your child.

## **7. What should I do if my child has arranged work experience during term time?**

It is essential that all students complete some form of work experience during their time in the Sixth Form. For Year 12 we have a dedicated Work Experience Week starting on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021. However we appreciate that it is not always possible to arrange work experience for that week, and therefore if your child has already, or would like to arrange it at an alternative time, we are happy to consider this and they should speak to their Head of Year to discuss it further.

### **C19 specific:**

#### **1. Is there an expectation that some lessons will be taught via Teams? Or is this a contingency in the event of a further lockdown?**

Lessons will not be taught by Teams unless individual staff members are required to self-isolate, in which case lessons will be delivered via Teams unless there are specific reasons relating to a teacher's individual circumstances that require another approach to be taken. In the event of full or partial lockdown, teachers will teach their curriculum using a blended learning model combining live lessons delivered via Teams with shared online resources, supported by teacher feedback.

#### **2. What provision will be in place for students who need to self-isolate at home but are still well enough to work?**

Our aim is to be able provide a program of blended learning, where the teaching will continue and be a blend of live (or sometimes recorded lessons) lessons together with resources being provided on Sharepoint for students to access. Teachers will be available for feedback both during the lesson and through the Teams chat function. Work would be set and marked on Teams Assignments.

#### **3. Can you clarify whether Year 12 students are allowed to leave school if they have no lessons as stated in the Covid 19 documentation? Form tutors have communicated that they can only leave at break and lunch times?**

During the planning stage in the summer term we had originally anticipated that we would not be able to cater for the normal volume of sixth form students on site at any one time, hence the advice that sixth form students would be able to leave when not in lessons. However, subsequent planning allowed us to create an additional common room and meant that we were able to accommodate more students during study periods, so we reverted to our normal way of operating, subject to changes regarding students being able to go home after Lesson Three if they have no further lessons. Please see the answer to Question 1 for information on our revised plans.

### **UCAS:**

#### **1. Please could you cover the procedures for applying to university with the possibility of deferring the place for a year.**

Many university welcome deferred applications or applications from students who have had a gap year but it is important that you check with the university before making this decision. When a student enters a university and course choice onto their UCAS application, they must confirm which year they would like to start, which allows students to indicate that they are applying for a deferred entry. The alternative is to apply to UCAS during their gap year, which we are happy to support them with, as an ex-student.