



THE KING'S SCHOOL GRANTHAM

Ref: U:\HOY\Y12 Intro
September 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian

Having been part of a year group who delivered some excellent GCSE results your son is embarking on a particularly exciting and challenging time in his life. The sixth form at King's provides him with a secure and structured environment in which to develop the intellectual, interpersonal and social skills that will lead him towards full independence and success at university and/or in the workplace. We warmly welcome students from other schools this term too - their predecessors achieved strong A-level results last summer and most are taking up their places at leading universities, so they have much to live up to.

The school has made every effort to accommodate the needs of individual students but where the subject blocks preclude this students will have to either study their 'fifth choice' subject or embark on a three academic subject plus General Studies programme of study. The return to fully linear examinations means that all A/S and A2 examinations will now take place at the end of the respective academic years. These examinations will demand that students have a secure knowledge and understanding of greater amounts of subject content than in previous years. I remind you that because of this, and in the light of last year's indifferent A/S results where students underestimated the need for consistent and persistent rigour, more students (up to 50%) will be guided to drop to a three academic subject plus General Studies programme of study earlier than has been the case in recent years and that the balance of *Facilitating* and *Non-Facilitating* subjects should be more cautious too. This process will begin at the first reporting point (CAT1) for any students who are demonstrably struggling in more than one subject and for other students at CAT2. Moreover, the school will be running important Mock Examinations in early February and any student whose results confirm a lack of progress on a course is likely to have an enforced change to their programme of study then. I must stress that these actions are being taken simply in an attempt to ensure that students are appropriately placed and hence secure the best possible results for each of them.

As parents you can contribute very significantly. Your son needs at least as much support and guidance now as he has ever done. Of course, as with us, the art is to provide him with that sense of support and guidance without denying him his sense of growing maturity and independence. Students find that the more responsible, committed and mature they are in the sixth form, the greater the freedoms they will enjoy. Similarly the more diligent, co-operative and academically proactive they are the more relaxed and enriching their relationships with teaching staff tend to become. In short their experiences and successes in the sixth form will be based on partnership.

As a sixth form student your son acts as a role model for younger students. He will in many ways be more influential than parents and staff in shaping their behaviour and attitudes and that is why we value positive examples so highly. This is particularly true after a summer in which the school has continued to re-furbish and improve its facilities to a standard that the whole community richly deserves but which we must now work hard to preserve.

I hope that your son will be keen to contribute to the rich and diverse cultural, sporting and social life the school offers. However, as the demands of university admissions' tutors and employers become ever greater, and the costs of a degree significantly higher, work must be the focus of his life in the sixth form. Experience shows us that if his work is going well, so will your son's life be. It is essential that once the 'honeymoon period' is over he routinely gives each subject his full commitment both in lessons and independent study time. To facilitate this, the Sixth Form Study Centre on the ground floor of the Newton Block is an excellent resource. It is critical that any student with elements of course work or other practical work completes it to the highest possible standard and in a timely fashion. Working ahead of deadlines enables students to receive the greatest allowable support and guidance from subject specialists and I urge parents to monitor the time lines to enable maximum time for the revision period ahead of February Mock Examinations and just before and after Easter.

Many of the difficulties that do arise in the sixth form are directly attributable to poor communication for whatever reason. With this in mind I enclose a slightly adapted copy of 'Expectations of a Sixth Form Student' which students were talked through as part of their induction. It provides an accurate and easy reference point for what your son should be doing which might usefully be kept on a notice board as a reference point without having to seek clarification from school. I am sure that we can depend on your support in reinforcing and meeting these expectations particularly in relation to attendance, punctuality, appearance, independent study and understanding that all Y12 students must remain on site each day (with the exception of Lunchtime and Games) and must 'thumb out' and 'in' at the school gates when leaving or returning to the premises.

We are well aware of the many pressures that young men can experience and firmly believe that the old adages of 'work hard: play hard' and 'you can only try your best' represent as good a way of coping with them as any. It is essential that your son and you all feel confident about approaching us should he experience any difficulties so that we can find ways of resolving them in a timely manner. We look forward to working together to help your son to happily meet his personal, academic and career goals. That process should have already begun.

Yours sincerely

N C Barton
Assistant Head
Head of Sixth

N O Whales
Assistant Head of Sixth
Head of PE & Games

Head Master: F. Hedley M.A.

Brook Street, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6RP

Tel: (01476) 563180 Fax: (01476) 590953 Email: admin@kings.lincs.sch.uk / finance@kings.lincs.sch.uk
www.kings.lincs.sch.uk

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Expectations of a Sixth Form Student (Parent Copy) 2016-18

Attendance (absence notes:- Appointments; Holidays etc)	Patchy attendance is the major contributor to poor performance. Your son should only take time off school if genuinely ill. In that eventuality he must produce a self- certification note (available via form tutor) at his next registration explaining the circumstances of his absence. Medical, dental and driving appointments should, where possible, be arranged outside school time or in the lunch hour. Likewise, with external examinations happening throughout the sixth form, holidays of any sort are actively discouraged. If absence is unavoidable your son should as a matter of courtesy speak with the staff concerned and ensure that he can make good missed work as soon as possible.
Punctuality	To be an effective sixth form student your son is expected to be at school for registration at 8.45 am and 1.30pm for a 1.35 start) and ALL timetabled lessons including Independent Study at the prescribed time. As those students who work part time know, it is a minimum expectation of <u>all</u> employers too! (In the mornings, students taught at KGGs must ensure that their Form Tutor is aware for registration purposes).
Deadlines	Deadlines, particularly for coursework MUST be met (Taking time out of school 'sick' to catch up, damages your son's prospects in his other subjects.) As a sixth form student your son will have greater responsibility for organising his independent study time and must ensure that he builds in sufficient time to manage work in ALL his subjects. As a general rule 'little and often' is more effective than the intermittent 'Blitz'!
'Homework'	A good student who works well in class should do the equivalent of <u>about</u> 7hrs homework Monday to Friday and <u>about</u> the same over the weekend.
Appearance	Thankfully the majority of students share a pride in their appearance. They are expected to wear the appropriate school uniform smartly. We particularly welcome parental support in the following areas:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clean, well-groomed hair in accordance with the school rules (no extremes of length, style or colour) If your son is in any doubt he should confirm the situation with NCB or NOW before experimenting. 2. Blazer (NOT topcoat) to be worn in school 3. Appropriate school jumpers (NOT fleeces) to be worn in school 4. Top button done up, tie tied to cover top button and shirt tucked in. In short we expect students to present themselves as they would do in a professional, 'uniformed' organisation.
Employment Extra- Curricular	Work experience paid or otherwise and sporting, cultural and social interests provide invaluable experience and transferable skills. However, it is essential that your son finds the right balance. If there is a conflict of interests his academic work should be given priority.
Games	All students participate in their elected activity on a Wednesday afternoon and will be registered in their respective groups. They should always bring the appropriate kit. Only the Head of PE will decide if a game is affected by bad weather. If a student is certified 'off games' he must present himself with note/certificate to the teacher in charge. Should a student wish to change his games options, he must establish if there is room in his 'new' option, before asking to leave his existing one.
Timetable	It would be most helpful if you were fully aware of your son's timetable and any subsequent amendments if he changes course. In the lower sixth ALL independent study time takes place at school. <u>No</u> student can be legitimately working at home during the school day except during 'Examination Study Leave' when a student is entitled to work at home during the session immediately before any external examination.
Assemblies Tutor Periods Noticeboards	A responsible sixth form student will always be fully aware of what is happening within the school. Essential information is disseminated daily in tutor periods, twice a week in assemblies and on the sixth form notice board outside the main administration block. Ignorance can never be used as a defence!
Telephone	If ever you feel the need to discuss matters with us please contact your son's form tutor, Mr Whales, Mrs Heather Brown (6 th Form Admin Support) or myself via the school office. You <u>should</u> be able to guarantee making contact 8.30 - 9.15 am and 12.30 - 1.30.