



Monday 23rd September 2024
Our ref: ELO/sjt

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Expectations of students

A warm welcome to the new academic year. I am writing to introduce myself as the new Assistant Head Teacher – Head of Sixth Form at St Bernard's. I have had a warm welcome to the school and the sixth formers have been fantastic as they have started this important academic year, whether they are in year 12 or year 13. I grew up in Southend and left 20 years ago for university, I have been excited to come back to an area which is so special to me and where my family are. I am keen to share my expectations of students, and I look forward to meeting you in person over your child's sixth form career. It is important to recognise that as students move into post 16 education, they are making the biggest academic jump they will ever do, and we will do all we can to support your child pastorally and academically to help them succeed in their chosen courses. The Sixth Form is an exciting time for students, but it is fast paced, and students need to be organised and engaged to take advantage of all the opportunities that are on offer.

Students will be supported to engage in the many leadership opportunities available to them to help encourage and work with the younger year groups and support the school's Catholic Ethos and values of Respect, Justice and Service. They will be supported as they choose what their next steps are, whether this is to university or into employment with the help of the Sixth Form team and our fantastic careers lead. We expect our students to set the example for younger years and expect their behaviour to always be exemplary within lessons, within the sixth form areas and across the whole school. Students will be held to account by our staged behaviour ladder. Attendance and punctuality are critical to be successful at A level as being in front of their teachers is their best resource. All new year 12 students are on probation until the first half term holiday, this was clearly shared with students on the first day and any behaviour or attitude to learning which does not meet our expectations will result in students being placed on further monitoring. You will be asked to come into school for a meeting to discuss the concerns and what the next steps will be for your child at the school. We have high academic expectations of our students including the effective use of their study periods and time outside of lessons. I have introduced an expectation that departments set students at least five hours of academic study outside of their taught curriculum, it is critical that students use their study periods, free periods and time outside of lessons effectively to manage this workload. Please encourage students and check in with them to ask about the work they are doing.

All homework is set on Teams and in student planners and students can use these methods to keep a track of their lessons and extra reading. We are working through a programme called Science for Learning in their tutor time which helps to support effective revision and learning strategies, this is paramount to being successful at A level. Please do ensure that your child is wearing the correct uniform in Sixth Form, no nose piercings or excessive jewellery, no chewing gum around the academy and whilst they can wear make-up this should be natural looking. Students should not have excessively long manicured nails; they should be a natural length and style. I will be in touch again very soon and have had the pleasure of talking to some of you already. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the school.

Kind Regards,

Mrs E Owen
Assistant Headteacher
Head of Sixth Form