

To all parents/carers of Year 8 students

18 September 2017

Dear Parent/ Carer

Re: Transfer to Upper School in September 2018
Vandyke Upper School Open Evening – Thursday 28 September 2017 from 6.00pm

The choice of upper school is of course a very important one. On Thursday 28 September, from 6pm, we hold our Open Evening and, in the fortnight beginning 25 September, we hold our Open Mornings. I hope that you will visit our school as part of the process of making this decision.

At Vandyke we put students at the heart of our school. This is something frequently commented on by visitors. I have been Headteacher here now for some years and I know that it is a school with a special atmosphere, where students enjoy school because of excellent teaching and care, guidance and support. This special atmosphere is built on the very positive relationships in school between students and staff. Students work hard and achieve highly in their studies but, more than this, they grow into young people with the personal attributes ready to make the next step beyond school. Our extensive programme of extra-curricular opportunities plays an important role in this and includes a wide range of trips and visits that both support students' learning and also provide opportunities to develop leadership skills and for personal growth. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme is just one example, with over 100 students from all year groups engaged in this.

Gaining the best qualifications is an important part of school of course. I am proud of our students and their achievements. We have high expectations of our students, we aim to challenge students to aim high and strive to achieve their very best, while recognising that we all need support if we are to do this. Exam results at GCSE and A Level again this Summer were exceptional. Academic standards are high and students make very strong progress in their time with us. Full details of exam outcomes are in the prospectus enclosed here and on the school website.

In addition to the Open Evening, we welcome visits by parents and prospective students to tour the school on a normal school-day visiting lessons. We have Open Mornings every day in the week of the Open Evening and the week afterwards, each day from 9am-11am. If you would prefer to visit at a different time, do not hesitate to call the school office to arrange a day and time. You will be most welcome.

When OFSTED's inspectors last visited in 2015 they stated that, "Students are very proud of their academy. They behave well and display highly constructive attitudes to their learning" and "Students say that they feel safe at the academy and, without exception, parents and staff alike believe that all students are safe and well cared for."

As a popular and successful school, Vandyke was asked by Central Bedfordshire Council to expand to accommodate more students and consequently a significant building programme has been completed, further enhancing our wonderful facilities.

If you live a little further away from Vandyke, we provide subsidised daily transport between home and school from Linslade and Sandhills.

This is a particularly exciting time at Vandyke as the school goes from strength to strength with a clear focus on high standards and our firm belief that "*Everyone Matters*". I look forward to meeting you and your son/daughter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Carroll', with a stylized, cursive flourish extending to the right.

Tim Carroll
Headteacher