

Dear Parent/Carer

I am very happy to inform you that students have returned from the summer break with an excellent approach to the school year and have made an extremely positive start to Year 8. Feedback from teachers suggest that they are settling well.

In Year 8, students are taught primarily in mixed ability groups but not exclusively with other pupils from their form. In Maths, Modern Foreign Languages and Science students are taught in broad banded groups. Staff encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and approach to learning within their subject areas.

We are expecting the students to use their planner daily in school to record homework and important information. Form tutors will be monitoring and supporting students throughout the year, whilst also delivering PSHE content within registration time. Year 8 students will begin with substance misuse input and move onto work on healthy relationships.

Subject teachers will be writing praise or concern comments in student planners which will be reviewed by form tutors on a weekly basis. Please continue to check your child's planner with them on a regular basis and sign it weekly. Encourage them to have a regular routine for checking their planner and sorting and organising their school bag for the next day. The planner is important for student organisation and parent communication.

Staff have been encouraging students to become involved in the excellent extra-curricular activities that the school provides. Information about our extracurricular provision can be found on the 'Extended Curriculum' section of our school website under 'Parents Info'. We are looking forward to the upcoming Outward-Bound trip to Ullswater and Howtown. Parents/carers will have already received communication about the trip, payments due and some initial information about kit and accommodation. Further information will follow in due course.

The Key Stage 3 Information Evening will take place on Wednesday 19th October and the first Progress Review for Y8 students will be late in December, detailing a performance review for your child where you will be able to see how they are performing in each of their subjects.

I will be in touch regularly throughout the year, in the meantime, please keep in touch in the following ways:

- Check the school website and follow the school on social media for information and reminders about dates and events.
- Contact the Attendance Officer, Mrs Brown, for any matters relating to school attendance. She will pass on concerns.
- Contact the school admin team at admin@staidans.co.uk with any subject concerns or general queries and they will pass these on to the right people.
- Contact me, the Head of Year, Mr Alker, if you have a pastoral concern about your child's wellbeing in or out of school.
- Contact the Assistant Headteacher (Key Stage 3 Progress), Mrs King with curriculum matters.

It has been a fantastic start to Year 8. I look forward to getting to know the students and watching their progress throughout school.

Warm regards

Mr Alker

Head of Year 8