

22 September 2023

Dear parent/carer

In brief

I am writing to you to clarify the expectations around Year 11 behaviour and attendance. There is a very strong link between students who do well in their GCSEs and high attendance. It is the single most important thing a student can do to improve - have high attendance - missing a maximum of five school days this year. Additionally, students who meet our expectations around behaviour will be invited to our Prom and Leavers' assembly and other celebration events. Those that don't meet our behaviour expectations will not be invited to these events which are a privilege not a right. Finally, vaping is a particular concern and there is special mention of this later in the letter.

The detail

As we now come into the final year of your child's education here at Carisbrooke College, we wish to take this opportunity to say how proud we have always been of this cohort and how we want this year to be the best year possible for them.

Good attendance is the single most important factor in a student achieving their potential in school. This is proved nationally through studies and locally if we look at those students over the years who achieve their potential and those who attend well. Clearly we aim for 100% attendance and students need to have this mindset. If a student misses more than five school days in a year it starts to have a negative impact on their GCSE results. This is just a fact. The message is clear for students - attend and you do well - miss school and you do much less well. Interventions and catch ups can help but being here every day is the best way to achieve your potential.

This year will see our year 11 cohort challenge themselves like never before and will undoubtedly be a year in which many of our students will feel the pressure at times to work harder and more efficiently with guidance and support from our fantastic set of teachers and support staff. All students will have targets set across all subjects which we want our students to aspire to. Not just simply reach but to surpass in order to highlight to themselves what they are truly capable of achieving. A target should be seen as a minimum expectation because our targets will be based on work they have produced through their education journey.

With that being said, it is vital for your child's education and future success that we - as staff, parents and the students - work together to create a positive atmosphere in which all students can thrive and excel. This can only be achieved through everyone understanding our expectations and fully accepting that a positive attitude and positive behaviours will support in achieving this goal whilst also accepting that poor behaviour and attitudes cannot be tolerated.

Year 11s will be looking forward to personal milestones, not only linked to their educational progress, such as external exams in the summer but also events linked to year 11 such as the end of year prom, leavers assembly and other school related activities in addition to their usual school day. Therefore, this is where we wish to further highlight that these events are not a compulsory part of education and are in fact a privilege which is earned by those who are respectful to all others in their lessons by behaving positively and not disrupting the learning environment. *Failure to demonstrate the behaviours we expect to see can, and will, result in a child missing out on these additional experiences.*

We have always been very clear about our high expectations and yet young people can sometimes be tempted in their teenage years to act in ways or behave in ways that are not acceptable in our school environment.

A good example of this would be the use of vaping. The school has a zero tolerance to these items being brought onto school grounds as we need to ensure every child is safe and not exposed to them. Vapes are on the list of banned/prohibited items in our behaviour policy [IWEF Behaviour Policy](#). Bringing in prohibited items is very likely to lead to serious consequences, including missing key Year 11 events such as Leavers' Assembly and the Prom, to name a couple.

I am really encouraged though that the vast majority of Year 11 students show good attitudes to learning almost all of the time and we continue to focus on these positive behaviours as much as we possibly can.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen Begley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Miss Begley
Executive Deputy Headteacher/Head of School