

September 2025

Dear Parent

I hope you and your family have had a good summer and that you feel well prepared for the year ahead in your child's education. Year 9 is a vitally important year as options for GCSE are chosen in the Spring Term and further information will be available regarding this process later this term.

I'm sure you will agree that it is vitally important that our Year 9 students maximise every learning opportunity and I would like to thank you for your ongoing support with attendance. Last year, 7 students in the year group achieved 100% attendance. The average attendance for Year 8 was 91.3%, which highlights that a significant number of students had attendance hovering around 90%. While 90% may sound reasonable, it equates to approximately 20 missed school days, or four full weeks of lost learning. Research from the Department for Education clearly shows how even modest absences can have a lasting impact on both academic outcomes and future opportunities. We strongly encourage all parents to aim for attendance of 96% or higher. You can monitor your child's attendance in real time using the Synergy app, which provides live updates throughout the year. If your child is genuinely unable to attend College, please use the Synergy Parent app to notify us.

It is always a pleasure to see that the Year 9 students have returned to school smart and well prepared for their learning this year. Following our message last year regarding boys being allowed to wear knee-length shorts, I would like to take this opportunity to ask for your support with a few other uniform matters. We have noticed a growing number of students wearing the old-style college tie. These ties, which are no longer available from Monkhouse, appear to have gained a kind of 'fashion status' and are often passed down from siblings. However, our uniform policy clearly states that only the official college clip-on tie may be worn. From September, we will be enforcing this policy, and any non-clip-on versions of the tie will be confiscated. These will be returned to you upon request. In addition, we have seen a trend among some of our female students to wear sports socks over tights. If your child chooses to do this, please ensure the socks are plain black with no visible branding, such as Nike ticks or Adidas stripes. Finally, a reminder for all male students: black socks must be worn each day as part of the standard uniform. White socks are only permitted during PE lessons as part of their PE kit. We appreciate your support in helping us maintain high standards of uniform. Our intention in enforcing these rules is to promote fairness and consistency for all our students. Thank you as always for your understanding and support. If you have had difficulty obtaining any items of uniform, please inform me as soon as possible and we will see what we can do to help. If you have any queries regarding uniform, the policy is on the Parents section of the website.

With regards to equipment, it is obviously a priority that students' learning in lessons goes smoothly, and you will be contacted as a matter of urgency if they are not well organised with essentials such as pens and Maths equipment.

Please continue to contact Form Tutors initially regarding queries or concerns about your son or daughter, as they play a vital day to day role in the pastoral care of your child. Our primary method of communication is via the Synergy Parent App so, if you have not already done so, please do download the app as this contains lots of useful college information. Please use the Synergy App to contact Form Tutors directly with any questions that you have. Messages sent to General Enquiries will be directed to the relevant Form Tutor and they will respond to you as soon as possible. There has been one change to the Year 9 Form Tutors this year, with Mr Cottrill now sharing 9 Ashley with Mr Hewitt.



Important dates for your diary:

Friday 12th September: Year 9 Welcome back Mass.

Thursday 25th September: College Open Evening, students leave at 12.30pm (further details to follow)

Thursday 16th October: Staff training afternoon - students leave at 1.35pm (further details to follow)

Friday 24th October – College finishes for the October half term at 3.20pm

Monday 27th October: Half Term week.

Monday 3rd November – Students return to college after the Autumn Half Term.

Friday 28th November – Teacher Education Day, college is closed to students.

Wednesday 3rd December – Year 9 Imperial War Museum History visit

Thursday 18th December - Carol Service 7.00pm

Friday 19th December – End of Autumn Term, students leave at 12.30pm (further details to follow)

Finally, we believe communication is the key to building good relationships between school and home and are always keen to meet with parents to resolve matters face to face. We fully understand that urgent issues can arise but please bear in mind that it is unlikely that we will be able to see parents who arrive without notice during the school day, because staff are teaching or in pre-arranged meetings. Please call ahead to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet, rather than arrive at school unannounced and risk disappointment if no one is available. Many thanks for your understanding on this matter and thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mr Dobson

Head of Year 9

