

September 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian

**Principal:** Mrs K D Hardy B.Ed (Hons) MA NPQH

Over recent years we have seen growing numbers of our students seeking part time employment alongside their A Level studies. Part time employment can be incredibly beneficial to students as not only does it provide them with an income to support themselves in becoming more independent, the roles and duties they are carrying out are developing important transferable skills such as being responsible, organised, managing their time and communication.

However, we have also seen the pressure employers are putting our students under to increase hours, calling them in at the last minute and being inflexible when it comes to changing shifts; we have seen the additional stress this has put on our students and the impact it has had on their academic studies.

The pool system we use to create the Sixth Form timetable means many of our students will have a day with no timetabled lessons; I am concerned that this will create further temptation for students and employers. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to outline our expectations with regard to our Sixth Form working week, along with some guidelines to consider when pursuing part-time employment.

Students must be available throughout the academy week whether they are in timetabled lessons or on non-contact time. The academy week is defined as Monday to Friday 8.55am to 3.20pm\*. Students may be requested to attend the academy in their non-contact time for additional study sessions, mentoring sessions or educational trips and therefore must not be pursuing part time work during this time.

\*There is also a programme of Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOs) that will run pre and post Academy and therefore we would strongly advise that students are available from 8am to 4.30pm. Whilst many of these sessions are voluntary we hope that all students will see the benefits in attending and not be compromising their academic progress for part time work. We may make these sessions compulsory for students who are yet to be working to their full potential, therefore students must be available to attend when required.

As a rough guideline students should be engaged in a minimum of 5 additional hours of independent study **per subject**; for example if a student is studying 3 Levels they will have a total of 15 hours of taught lessons each week which should be matched with 15 hours of independent study each week, they will also have a compulsory hour of Enrichment making 31 hours per week. There will be times of the year when students will be required to put many more hours in e.g. for coursework deadlines, internal assessments and exam periods so 'minimum', really does mean minimum! Teaching staff will be very clear about the work that should be completed as part of their 'independent' study time.

If a student must seek part time employment, we would strongly advise on a maximum of 10 hours per week. We would also advise against late shifts as this really does affect a student's ability to focus in the morning, and this is when the brain should be most effective and productive. Night shifts are not conducive to A Level success and we would therefore need to review a student's place in the Sixth Form if we were to discover this was happening.

We would really appreciate your support to ensure students are making the very most of their time in the Sixth Form and are fully focussed on their long term goals.

Yours sincerely



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Vice Principal - Head of Sixth Form

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