



# IXWORTH FREE SCHOOL

*"Providing a foundation for life"*

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Monday 10 September

Dear Parents/Carers

We have had an encouraging start to the 2018-19 academic year, with the new students in Year 7, 8 and 9 appearing to settle in very quickly. Those in other year groups have returned with very positive attitudes, determined to make the most of the year ahead. In the first few weeks of term we shall be making very clear our expectations for all students and giving them guidance on how to get the best out of the year ahead.

## **GCSE results:**

To keep pace with universities' and employers' demands from students, the content and the way GCSEs are graded have been reformed. The new GCSE courses have more demanding subject content than required previously. Students no longer receive A\*-G grades as they have in the past. Instead GCSEs are now graded 9-1, with 9 being the highest grade.

Despite these changes to the examination system, we were exceptionally pleased with our results again this summer. OFSTED judges schools on their Progress 8 figures – the 'value' a school adds to its students – and last year's Year 11 achieved beyond target and beyond their perceived potential as shown by national benchmarking. This means that our Progress 8 score will be exceptionally strong for the second year running.

On our Facebook page, as well as the homepage of our website, we have published three student case studies. Other notable successes include:

- 100% 7+ in Triple Science.
- Subjects with at least 80% 4+ include: English; French; German; History; Music and PE.
- Of the 18 GCSE subjects studied, students achieved grade 9s in 15 of them.

The new grade 4 is roughly the same as the 'old' grade C; a grade 7 is the same as the 'old' A grade. Grade 9 is above the 'old' A\*



## **New staff:**

Last week we welcomed the following new members of staff and I wish them the best of luck for their future at our School: Mrs Ward-Ashton (Pastoral Support Assistant); Mrs Hale (Drama & English); Mr Jackson (History); Mr Langford (Technology); Mrs Paterno (Science & Maths); Mr Popham-Carter (Pastoral Support Assistant). They have each settled in very quickly and are already getting to know the students and our systems. This is a tribute to our current staff – who make Ixworth a great place to work – and the pupils whose conduct and personal demeanour make our School a pleasant place to be!

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Aldridge for her service and considerable contribution to life at Ixworth. During the summer Mrs Aldridge took the decision to retire on medical grounds and we wish her well as she awaits her transplant.

## **Plans for this year:**

We are planning a more extensive professional learning programme so that our staff can deliver the best possible lessons and ensure the best possible progress. This will include external speakers, 1:1 coaching and opportunities for all our staff to collaborate with their Trust colleagues and visit other schools. I am certain that investing significantly in professional development is the key to our becoming the best possible school we can possibly be.

Building resilience in our students is still a major aim at Ixworth. Learning to overcome hurdles and cope with setbacks is an important part of their development, as we try to equip them for life beyond school. Where possible, we try to answer questions with questions, to really encourage the students to think and solve problems for themselves. You can help by encouraging them to plan ahead and take responsibility for what they want to achieve each day, which will allow them to become more independent.

If you are interested in the other aspects of our Post OfSTED Action Plan, please click here: <http://www.ixworthfreeschool.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/POST-OFSTED-ACTION-PLAN-IN-A-NUTSHELL-2018-2019.pdf>

## **Social media:**

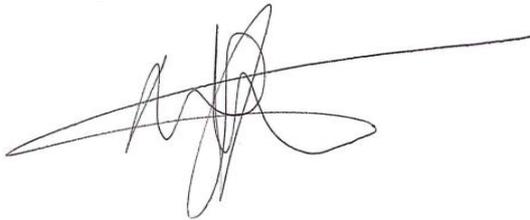
If you haven't already, please keep an eye on our Twitter account - @IxworthFS and our Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/Ixworth-Free-School-246327659112371/>

## **Thanks to parents:**

Progress evening attendance is over 90% for all year groups and very close to 100% in most. We thank you for your attendance and engagement with the School. As you know, we take our home-school agreement very seriously and we're delighted that you do as well. I know on the few occasions where parents have been unable to make it, they've taken exceptional measures to meet with us the next day or soon afterwards. We continue to work in partnership and know that this is the route to success for each of our students.

I would like to thank all parents who have already given up their time to support the School in a range of different ways. The great work of the Friends and the Local Advisory Board makes a massive difference to the enriching experience we can provide for our students, if you are able to help in some small way, do please get in touch.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mr M Barrow  
**Headteacher**