

18<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you back to a new academic year. I hope you all enjoyed a wonderful summer break. Whether your child is joining us for the first time this September or returning to Farlingaye, I hope the transition has been smooth. I wanted to update you on a few developments at school and outline our plans for the 2024/25 academic year.

### **Changes to the school site**

While much of our community was enjoying a well-earned summer break, our site staff were working hard to oversee contractors and lead improvements. As a result, the school has seen significant enhancements in just a few weeks. We have remodelled the reception area, so when you visit the school, you'll notice a fresh look and a more secure entrance. In the past, the entrance could feel a little chaotic during busy times, so we've made these changes to improve the experience. Students will no longer use the front entrance; if they arrive at the front of the school, they should proceed around the main building towards the picnic area.

We have also installed access gates on the school site, which will be fully operational later this term. I will share more details when they are in use. Along with these security measures, we've added a new paved area behind the English block, which will soon be furnished with picnic tables. Perhaps most excitingly, work has begun on a new multi-sport artificial surface for PE. This project should be completed by the end of September and available for use immediately afterward. None of this would have been possible without the funds raised through your generosity, so I want to thank you for your support in improving our students' facilities.

### **RAAC update**

It's hard to believe it's been a year since we faced the devastating news that much of our site was unusable due to the presence of dangerous concrete. Last year was logistically challenging, and we had to find creative solutions to keep the school running smoothly. I am pleased to report that while we are still using those solutions, there is now light at the end of what has been a long tunnel. Our contractors have worked tirelessly over the summer, and we are hopeful that, as outlined in our "24 for 2024" pledge earlier this year, all blocks, toilets, offices, and even the library will be back in operation—looking better than ever—by early 2025.

### **School priorities for the year**

This year, we are focusing on three key priorities that we believe will greatly enhance our students' experience and success.

**1. Promoting a Culture of Praise:** We want to ensure that all students feel valued and recognised for their efforts, both academically and personally. By fostering a positive environment where praise is regularly given and celebrated, we believe we can encourage greater motivation, resilience, and a strong sense of belonging within our school community.

**2. Maximising Academic Achievement:** We were thrilled by the outcomes at both GCSE and A Level in the summer. Both cohorts had extremely challenging secondary school experiences, with a pandemic and the after affects, RAAC, and other challenges. For our GCSE cohort to exceed the key indicators of 4+ and 5+ grades compared to 22/23 is a massive achievement. Our aim for this year is once more to exceed these outcomes, but also to continue the focus on achievement at the highest level. We will continue to provide high-quality teaching, targeted support, and intervention where needed to ensure that every student reaches their full academic potential.

**3. Strengthening Anti-Bullying Measures:** The safety and well-being of our students are paramount, and the school has a strong pastoral structure throughout all years. We have always been committed to making sure that our anti-bullying policies are not only in place but actively enforced. This year, we are enhancing these measures, ensuring that students continue to feel confident but also ensuring they are helping create the community we want here at Farlingaye.


#### **A few other quick reminders:**

- Driving onto site: Please remember that, unless attending a meeting or for mobility reasons, cars should not be driven onto the site at the beginning or end of the day. With over 1,900 students arriving and leaving the school in various ways, we must do everything possible to ensure their safety. If you are dropping off or collecting your child, please arrange to meet them away from the school site to avoid congestion on Ransom Road and to help keep our community safe.
- Fixtures: Competitive fixtures are an integral part of our PE curriculum, and we always appreciate parents coming to support. If you plan to spectate, please sign in at reception so you can be escorted to the relevant field. Aim to arrive 10 minutes before the scheduled start of the game.
- Join our Fantasy Football League! Building on the recent success of Ipswich Town, we are excited to launch the inaugural Farlingaye Fantasy Premier League (FPL) this season. Our mini-league is called 'Farlingaye FPL,' and we would love for you to join. The league code is 5rcxvo (though I don't expect my selected team to be challenging for the top of the table!).

#### **Some key dates to note:**

- 2<sup>th</sup> October - Year 12 Parents information evening
- 10<sup>th</sup> October – Open Evening
- 15<sup>th</sup> October – Year 10 Information Evening
- 17<sup>th</sup> October – Mental Health Evening
- 24<sup>th</sup> October - FHSF AGM

I hope you find all of this information useful, and I look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming events. In response to your feedback, we have made our parents' evenings in-person this year, as we believe this offers the best opportunity for meaningful conversations between staff and students. Farlingaye is proud to be part of its community, and we want everyone associated with the school to feel that it is "their school" and take an active interest in its ongoing improvement.



Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you need any assistance or support (I much prefer face-to-face conversations or phone calls over email).

Wishing you all the best for the rest of September and beyond,

**Mr P Smith**  
Headteacher