

# KEY DATES

# 2020 - 2021

## SEPTEMBER

- 09-15 Induction Days
- 16 Teaching starts (all students)
- 28 UCAS internal deadline for Oxbridge & Medicine/Vet/ Dentistry applications
- 26 College Open Day

## OCTOBER

- 15 UCAS external deadline for Oxbridge & Medicine/Vet/ Dentistry
- 15 Virtual IB Information Eve
- 19-23 Reading Week - all students Subject Progress Reviews for Year 1 & Level 2 students
- 21 & 22 College Open Evenings
- 26-30 Half Term

## NOVEMBER

- 09 Autumn Report Card Live
- 20 UCAS internal deadline

## DECEMBER

- 17 & 18 Parent Days
- 18 Last day of Autumn Term

## JANUARY

- 04 Teaching starts
- 15 UCAS external deadline
- 18-29 Internal Assessments for Level 2 & Year 2

## FEBRUARY

- 15-19 Half Term
- 22 Spring Report Card Subject Progress Reviews Consultation Evening Year 1 - A-K

## MARCH

- 02 Subject Progress Reviews Consultation Evening Year 1 - L-Z
- TBC Higher Education Evening for parents

## APRIL

- 01 Last day of Spring Term
- 19 Start of Summer Term

## MAY

- TBC A Level Exam period
- 31May Half Term -04Jun

## JUNE

- 21 Summer Report Card
- 28Jun Year 1 - Pre Public Tests -09Jul

## JULY

- 05 International Baccalaureate Results released
- 14 Teaching ends

## AUGUST

- 19 A Level Results Day
- 26 GCSE Results Day

# CONTACTS

### Absence Hotline:

Text: 07481 342441  
 Email: registry@varndean.ac.uk  
 Tel: 01273 546645

All other contacts: 01273 508011 or email office@varndean.ac.uk for the attention of:

**Principal & CEO:** Donna-Marie Janson

**Deputy Principal (Curriculum):** Pete Bailey

**Vice Principal (Student Services):** Lisa Watkin-Stevens

**Vice Principal (Resources):** Elaine French

**Additional Support & Wellbeing:** Jen Neal, Head of Learning Support  
 Sheila Sword, Wellbeing Co-ordinator

**Mental Health First Aider:** Helen Chong

**Welfare:** Daniela Sramova

**Careers:** Alison Voas

**Work Experience:** Lee Abbott

**Exams Officer:** Susan Heritage

**Counsellors:** Kara Smith & Rachel Cooper

**Mental Health Practitioner:** Becky Wood  
 Email: therapyteam@varndean.ac.uk

**Designated Safeguarding Lead and for Children in Care & Care Leavers:** Lisa Watkin-Stevens

**Deputy Safeguarding Lead:** Jen Neal

### Heads of Schools

**Pre-Advanced Programme:** Jo Hambleton

**English, Psychology & Geography:** Steve Villanueva-Last

**Maths & Science:** Alison Frost

**Humanities, Social Sciences & Modern Foreign Languages:** Avril MacKenzie-Parr

**Arts, Film, Media & ICT:** Julian Bowker

**Business, Vocational & Sport:** Jenny Soulbey

**IB, ILT & Quality:** Lee Finlay-Gray

### Parent Portal Queries:

Janine Hatcher  
 parents@varndean.ac.uk



# PARENT/CARERS' GUIDE 2020



Surrenden Road  
 Brighton  
 East Sussex, BN1 6WQ  
 Tel: 01273 508011  
 www.varndean.ac.uk



## THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

College is different from school and the differences reflect the greater responsibility that we expect our students to take. A smaller number of subjects and a greater degree of self-directed study means that no two days will be the same from the timetable point of view.

There will be spaces on the timetable to allow students to read and complete tasks outside the classroom. This is a big step on the journey to independence which some will find easy and others more challenging; we know that working with you in partnership will help all our students to succeed.

Our students come from many different schools across Sussex and you will be used to as many different approaches. What follows is how we do things at this College and we hope that you find what follows useful. If there is anything you think we should have included here, please let us know.

### Tutorial

All students have a specialist Personal Tutor to guide them through college, and work with them to help them improve their learning.

The tutors help students to access the opportunities and support available in college. All students have a Head of School to support them through more difficult issues. Students have Tutorial every week for a session which includes thought-provoking activities to help students become better learners, improve well-being, and explore issues such as citizenship and managing money. Students also have regular Individual Progress Reviews (IPR) to discuss what action they need to take in order to improve their performance.

The Tutorial programme enables students to develop study skills, resilience, resourcefulness and reflectiveness as a learner and enhance their opportunities of progression to employment or higher education. This programme will help students challenge assumptions about

effective learning and intelligence, as well as what steps they can take to become more successful.

### Sports & Societies & NUS

Students are encouraged to participate in college life beyond their courses through the opportunities on offer. These include Politics Society, Journalism, Duke of Edinburgh, Basketball, Environmental Studies, Christian Union, Rainbow Alliance, Muslim Student Support and many others. This is an excellent way for students to make new friends, as well as develop their skills and understanding. The National Union of Students (NUS) exists to let students make their views known and be represented in the college. Varndean College Student union (VCSU) is involved in arranging events such as Freshers' Party, supporting charities and meetings with the Vice Principal to raise issues on behalf of students.

### Student Tracking System

The Parent Portal is the quickest, easiest way for all parents/guardians/carers to access information about individual student attendance, report cards, course details and how to contact tutors. We would like all parents to register for the Parent Portal. Registering for this is simple: you will need your son/daughter/ward's student number. Once you visit the Parent Portal section of the Website, we will guide you from there.

### Student Support System

These procedures are used to support students who are finding it difficult to meet expectations laid out in the student contract. They are also used to ensure that we maintain the standards which allow everyone in the college community to flourish. The procedures apply to attendance, punctuality, classwork or homework and behaviour. We operate a RAG (red, amber, green) risk system. All students are on green to begin with and only move to an amber or red action plan if they need support because they have not met college expectations. Students move back to green when they successfully fulfill their action plan. Their RAG status is clearly marked on STS. You will be involved if a student is at risk of moving to a red action plan.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

### Additional Support, Wellbeing & Safeguarding

Varndean College provides targeted support to help your child grow in confidence and be successful at college. We have a team of well qualified professionals with particular expertise in this area and they work collaboratively so that students can study in a safe and supportive environment.

The **Safeguarding Team** is led by Lisa Watkin-Stevens (Vice Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead & for Children in Care & Care Leavers). She is supported by the Heads of Schools, who are all part of the Safeguarding Team.

The **Additional Support & Wellbeing Team** is based in room 14.2 and is led by Jen Neal, Learning Support Manager. Jen Neal leads on learning support; Sheila Sword leads on wellbeing. The Wellbeing team includes:

- Helen Chong, who recruits and trains the Mental Health First Aiders team, offering one to one mentoring to students who may need some informal support at any time during the college year.
- Our Welfare Officer, Daniela Sramova, who provides a supportive information service to students, helping sort out problems with finance, accommodation, travel and any other practical difficulties.
- Our Counsellors (Kara Smith & Rachel Cooper) who are accredited members of the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP) and the service is run according to BACP ethical guidelines.
- Our Mental Health Practitioner, Becky Wood, who is an accredited clinician.

### Discretionary Learning Grant

Application forms are available from the Registry. Priority is based on family income. Bursaries are available for those students who are in or leaving care or live independently.

### Careers

The Careers team is based in The Loft and are available to answer general queries about further/higher education/apprenticeships/employment on a drop-in basis, or by appointment.

## WHAT TO DO IF..

### My child; is unavoidably absent?

- Text the Student Absence Hotline **07481 342441** before 10.00am.
- You can also email: [registry@varndean.ac.uk](mailto:registry@varndean.ac.uk) or telephone 01273 546645
- You will receive an automatic email at the end of the day of both authorised and unauthorised absences.
- Our full absence policy and procedures are on the college website: <http://www.varndean.ac.uk/?q=policies>

### is taken ill during the day?

- Students should sign out by text (**07481 342441**) and you will receive an automatic email at the end of the day.

### has a hospital,orthodontist appointment etc. (not dentist or doctors)?

- Complete a future absence form and return to the registry with evidence 5 days before the absence.

### I am unhappy about anything?

- Contact the College office or speak to reception and ask for Janine Hatcher.

### Relationship with Parents/Guardians/ Carers

We value the relationship that Varndean College has with our parents/guardians/carers. We will always endeavour to further build that relationship through trust, openness and mutual respect. We ask parents/guardians/carers to reciprocate in their dealings with the College and exhibit the same values.