

Ref: SSA/KDE

08 September 2021

Dear Student

Re: Welcome to Plume College

Welcome to Plume College. I would like to thank you for selecting Plume College as your post-16 provider for what is an important stage in your life. I extend a particularly warm welcome to those studying with Plume for the first time and hope that your time will be both enjoyable and highly successful.

At Plume College, we are proud of our small and inclusive environment. Whether you are aiming to go into further education, a higher apprenticeship, a School Leavers Programme or employment, we offer a range of courses to suit your needs.

With an intake of approximately 140 students we aim to provide a personalised Sixth Form experience where all staff and students are known to each other. Learning Group Leaders support students on a one-to-one basis and monitor their progress and attainment. **Mrs. A Pipe** is available as your Student Achievement & Progress Manager and acts as the first point of contact with home should you have any questions at any point.

Learning and teaching focuses on developing creativity and independent thought. Our students are encouraged to get involved around the college and local community. We support students in planning for their future after college, be it progressing towards employment, moving onto a School Leavers Programme, a higher apprenticeship or applying to university. Our aim is to provide high quality Career Education, Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) to our post-16 students throughout their time with us.

An update with regards to work shadowing will be released as soon as we are clear about the direction that the DFE and the government would like us to follow.

I, as the Head of College, am available to discuss suitable career pathways and post-18 options. We also recommend that you make an appointment with Louise Brazier at Directions (directions@plume.essex.sch.uk or 07564 528 323) if you are interested in undertaking an apprenticeship or employment at the end of your studies.

Please be aware that changes dating back to **September 2014 for post-16 learners no longer permit the retaking of subjects** and/or resitting of a Sixth Form College year following poor examination results. This is a government initiative and part of their drive to raise standards. The government wishes to abolish what it regards as a 'resit culture' at post-16 and ensure learners only sit each exam once. From September 2014 funding is **no longer provided for resitting subjects or restarting year 12**, therefore post-16 providers, including Plume, are no longer able to offer this opportunity to their learners.

It is a condition of studying an A level course that you pass the subject at AS Level. AS pass grades are on a scale of A to E. If a student attains a 'U' grade at the end of Year 12, it will be necessary to review their position at the College. Similarly, if a student obtains two 'U' grades or more their place at College will be considered as unviable.

Therefore, you must ensure every effort is applied to your studies throughout the year to ensure you achieve the outstanding results that you desire.

Please also note that the government has set a mandatory requirement for GCSE English Language and/or Mathematics. Changes dating from September 2013 now mean, students who fail to achieve a grade 4 in GCSE English Language and/or GCSE Mathematics must continue to study it until 18 years old. This follows national concerns that too many teenagers leave education without adequate skills in literacy and numeracy required by employers. Therefore, students without a grade 4 in either GCSE English Language, or Mathematics will be expected to continue with resit lessons and sit the relevant examination until a grade 4 is achieved or until they complete their study programme at College. Failure to attend these sessions or comply with this expectation will put your College place in jeopardy.

Throughout September staff will be monitoring your progress and attainment during our '*suitability month*' to ensure your study programme is appropriate. During this time it may be possible to change options if places are available and you have the entry requirements. Please remember that option changes cannot be made after **Wednesday 22 September** and we operate a 'No Drop' policy from **Monday 27 September 2021**.

Please note that because you have joined a new phase of Key Stage 5 education, your parents must re-apply for Free School Meals if required (please see attached documents).

As you are no doubt aware, Plume College has a dress code policy in place. This dress code has been developed to help ensure equality within our community and to assist students and their parents/carers in the purchasing of the agreed attire for college use. The dress code also helps to keep the cost of the required clothing down as the variation in outfits is much less excessive and therefore, less costly. Students are expected to be in the stipulated dress code when at College and should always ask a member of the College team if they are unsure about any item of clothing. The dress code for Sixth Form students should consist of the following:

- Students are expected to wear clean, safe and functional clothing which is always appropriate to the study they are undertaking and environment in which they are learning. Decisions are at the discretion of the Joint Head of Academy (Mrs Clark) and Head of College (Mr Saunderson).

**Please note that students have the right to dress in accordance with their gender identity, religious requirements, and within the constraints of the dress codes adopted by Plume College.*

All Students

- Outdoor hats, scarves and coats should not be worn in lessons
- Hair colourings and extensions should only be in natural shades e.g. no blue, green or pink
- The wearing of jewellery is a Sixth Form privilege and should be discreet
- No facial piercings are allowed and other body piercings should be covered at all times
- Tattoos should be covered at all times
- Plume College Lanyards should be worn at all times

This is an important crossroads for you and as Head of College I would like you to know that I am available throughout the year to meet with you to discuss any issues should they arise. I would like to take this opportunity of wishing you every success in your studies and if I can be of assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me or a member of the College team.

Yours sincerely,



Steven Saunderson BA PGCE DipBPL CertTh.
Head of College & Teacher of History.

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'Plume - Maldon's Community Academy' is the trading name of Plume School

