



October 2017

Dear Parents and Carers

As we end the first half-term of the academic year, I wanted to take this opportunity to keep you updated with the latest news and events from Newsome High School. We continue to strive towards making effective progress and ensuring our students attain their highest possible grades and this summer saw an improvement in the school's Progress 8 score and we hope to see a further increase next summer.

Recent data shows progress is being made academically. In terms of school improvement we continue to work very closely with the Local Authority and The Mirfield Free Multi-Academy Trust, focusing on the recommendations left for us by Ofsted. We await another monitoring visit and are keen to share with them the progress we have made.

Improving Academic Progress and Learning

Over the past seven weeks, staff have been working hard to implement challenging targets for your child. Every student has a pathway with a clear progression route for each year they are in. These are on every class book. To accompany this, teachers assess class work regularly using assessment stickers. This puts a focus on student reflection time and gives an opportunity to modify work, acting on teacher feedback, in order to show progress. In addition to the new assessment systems introduced, Teachers have been exploring new methods of lesson delivery in an attempt to ensure support for all learners and their abilities.

Year 11 students already started to sit their mock exams whilst all students have been completing assessments in their subjects, in-line with our new assessment policy called Creating Futures. There is clear evidence to show that the quality of student's work is improving massively and students and teachers are working towards the new target grades and pathways assigned to each student, depending on their starting points. This has been challenging for some, as we start to stretch students more academically, but please let us know if we can support in any way.

We have introduced a new homework system which simplifies the setting and recording of homework, along with other systems that are used in school. This system is called Class Charts and monitors all aspects of teaching, rewards and behaviour incidents. You will be receiving specific log-in details over the coming weeks but in the meantime, we have a live homework calendar published on our website. This can be accessed under the students > homework menu.



Improving Behaviour and Safeguarding

With safeguarding always at the top of our agenda, the final stages of securing the school site in the form of a fence to the rear of the building is nearing completion. This sections off areas of the school, making it easier to monitor during social times.

We have recently introduced more stringent time management models to ensure that students are being challenged to be 'exceptional, every day'. This means they must be in lessons learning. Too many students were wanting to use the toilets during lesson time after break and lunchtimes, missing lengthy periods of learning. This is not to say any medical issues will not be viewed sympathetically and students will be supported in their welfare at all times. What cannot be allowed is lesson avoidance. As ever with change, there will be some 'urban myths' and stories of draconian measures and staff being very unfair. All we want to do is maximise student engagement with learning. If your child has a medical issue, please don't hesitate to write a note in a planner for their tutor explaining the special circumstances involved and we will adjust things accordingly.

Our new Student Senior Leadership team have met to begin work on a variety of ideas to make our school a better place to learn. This team consists of students from all year groups and gives a voice to the student body and an opportunity to work together to make changes. I look forward to the work that this group will carry out and it is a pleasure seeing students proudly sporting their gold ties – celebrating those who show dedication and commitment to their school and indeed their own success of achieving this highly-acclaimed status.

School News, Events and General Communication

I am committed to ensuring our school gives the best possible education in the area and with this comes change. I hope you are visiting our website to see the regular updates on what we doing to improve the quality of provision we offer. Please also see the letters section to see key information for specific year groups.

Have a lovely half-term break and I look forward to welcoming our students back to school, ready for a prompt start to learning.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Watkin'.

Mr Dean Watkin
Headteacher