

July 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

**Re: Standards and Expectations**

I hope your child has enjoyed the opportunity to attend our recent transition events and is looking forward to starting at Heanor Gate in September. As with all year groups in the school, I am just writing to remind everyone of some key standards which are in place and some changes to expectations for the next academic year.

As a school we are immensely proud of our achievements this year; of course we are proud of the external accolades such as the GOOD Ofsted judgment received back in March, but more pleasing to me is the tangible feel you now get, being part of the school in terms of the ethos and ambition of all involved.

It is especially pleasing to see that this positive reputation is now building both inside and outside of the school community with over 75% of our current Y11s and over 40 students from surrounding schools applying to stay on into the new vibrant sixth form, supporting the vision that our students are getting a 'good deal'. As always, we are striving to improve further to become an outstanding school and help your children gain even higher/better qualifications and the best possible experiences during their schooling.

Moving forward the school needs to embed and evolve the great work that we have achieved this year and remain resolute on the changes which have been implemented. As such our School Improvement priorities will remain the same;

1. DEVELOP ALL LEARNERS TO ACHIEVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL
2. CREATE A CULTURE OF ASPIRATION

This is what we all firmly believe in and will strive to achieve at all times.

Our ethos of 'Aspire, Learn and Achieve' will continue to permeate throughout everything we do and has become a shared vision for the school community. We will always insist on the very highest standards for all of the students in our care at all times.

We feel students will go on to do even better at Heanor Gate in the coming years and we want you, as parents/carers, to work alongside us in securing the best futures possible for your children. There are a number of aspects that I would like to draw your attention for the next academic year:

ATTENDANCE

School attendance has been proven to have a huge impact on achieving good grades.

Every student at this school is expected to maintain an attendance level of at least 96%, in line with the Government's expectations. Whilst it is appreciated that children are unwell from time to time, and there may be exceptional circumstances for absences, please think carefully about taking your child out of school as persistent absence is proven to have a significant impact upon a child's educational attainment. We will continue to work with the local authority in terms of tackling persistent absence.

## PUNCTUALITY

Being on time is not only an essential life skill, but also something which has a huge impact on learning. Being on time to school provides a positive routine which sets students up for the day ahead and being on time for lessons allows teachers to maximise time available to help students learn. Students should be through the main gates no later than 8.45am to enable them to arrive at their classroom by 8.50am. Late marks are collated and sanctioned accordingly.

## TERM TIME HOLIDAYS

Since September 2013, holidays in term time are no longer authorised unless they are for exceptional circumstances. This is Government law in partnership with the Department for Education.

## LUNCHTIMES

The lunchtime arrangements for next academic year will remain the same:

Period 4a - Years 8 and 9

Period 4b - Year 7

Period 4c - Years 10 and 11

Sixth form students will take their lunch at the discretion of the teacher and will continue to have access to their own dining facilities, to allow independence and prevent other lunch periods becoming congested.

## UNIFORM

At Heanor Gate we pride ourselves on being prepared for school and looking extremely smart and ready to learn. It is paramount that your son/daughter comes to school in the correct uniform. **The uniform policy states that the following uniform must be worn:**

- Black blazer with school badge
- Plain white shirt **tucked in at the waist and buttoned at the top**
- Plain black **tailored** trousers or **tailored** knee length skirt
- Clip-on school tie - house colours
- Boys: black socks
- Girls: black or white socks / black or flesh coloured tights
- Plain black shoes (no boots, open toes shoes, pumps or trainers)
- Jewellery should be kept to a minimum. **No more than:**
  - o One pair of earrings in the **lobe of the ear**
  - o One ring
  - o One watch
  - o One charity wristband

Students will **not** be allowed any other visible piercings, this does include nose studs and piercings in the Helix or Tragus.

Failure to wear the correct uniform will result in students being away from the classroom and out of general circulation. Please note, the major change to school uniform policy is that **jumpers are now optional.**

A full list of items can be found in the Uniform Policy on our website.

## EQUIPMENT

It is essential that all students have the correct equipment so they are 'ready to learn.' Our minimum expectation is that all students will always have a pen, pencil, ruler, a maths set and calculator. Equally we expect this equipment to be carried in an appropriate school bag. Having the correct equipment is a compulsory requirement of attending Heanor Gate.

## ACHIEVEMENT AND BEHAVIOUR POINTS (A & B POINTS)

The school has a new achievement and behaviour monitoring system to enable us to reward student's success and monitor incidents of poor behaviour across the school.

The achievement points are distributed by all staff in recognition of students' progress across a range of key 'Behaviour for Learning' attributes. Behaviour points are similarly distributed by staff when behaviour falls short of basic expectations. On these

occasions, students will also receive a sanction which is consistent with the behaviour issue in question and this will be communicated by the Teacher and/or Achievement Leader.

#### USE OF MOBILE PHONES

We have a zero tolerance policy regarding the use of mobile phones during lessons. I understand the need for students to carry phones for their safety when travelling to and from school however in lessons it is not necessary for mobile phones to be switched on. The school will hold a firm stance on this and will confiscate any phones which are visible in lessons, unless a teacher directs this for educational purposes. Repeat offences will be taken very seriously.

#### 'CASHLESS' & 'PAPERLESS' SCHOOL

We have made the decision to become a cashless school therefore, from September, all transactions (school meals, trips etc.) must be paid for via ParentPay. Further details are included in the letter you will have received earlier in the year. Please contact the school if you require a copy.

We are also trying to become a paperless and more eco-efficient school, whilst also trying to maximise increased popularity of social media and mobile communication. As such, **we are now using e-mail as our method of communication to home** therefore please ensure we have an accurate and accessible e-mail address for you.

For those of you who use Twitter, please follow us @HeanorGateSC for updates on school's key events and notices.

#### KEY DATES FOR SEPTEMBER

Tuesday 5 September	School opens to Y7 and Y12	Year 7 at 8:50am (Hall) Year 12 at 8:50am (Sixth Form Common Room)
Wednesday 6 September	School opens for all year groups	All students go to tutor bases
Monday 11 September	Learning @ HGSC Post 16	6.00 - 7.00pm All parents and students invited
Tuesday 12 September	Learning @ HGSC Year 8 & 9	<b>Year 8</b> 6.00 - 6:45pm <b>Year 9</b> 7.00 - 7:45pm All parents and students invited
Wednesday 13 September	Learning @ HGSC Year 10 & 11	<b>Year 10</b> 6.00 - 6:45pm <b>Year 11</b> 7.00pm - 7:45pm All parents and students invited
Thursday 21 September	Main school open evening 2018 intake	Year 5/6 5.00 - 8.00pm
Thursday 28 September	Year 7 personal tutor evening	4.00 - 7.00pm All parents and students invited

Key dates for the year ahead will be available on our website.

If you feel there is anything further we can do to support you or your child, or you would like to discuss any of the matters in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Personal Tutor or Achievement Leader Mrs Pearse ([kpearse@heanorgate.derbyshire.sch.uk](mailto:kpearse@heanorgate.derbyshire.sch.uk))

I wish you a pleasant summer break and look forward to working with your children in the new academic year.

Yours sincerely,



Mr S Huntington  
Principal