



17th April 2026

Dear SNHS Families

A very warm welcome to this week's newsletter. I appreciate that I sent start-of-term letter earlier this week, but I am always keen to maintain and reinforce regular communication within our school community - something I know is appreciated by our families. I am therefore delighted to be writing to you again so soon to share just how busy, positive and immersive the start of the summer term has been here at SNHS.

It has been a joy to welcome students back, speak and catch up with our young people and see learning well and truly underway.

What has happened at SNHS this week

We have been delighted to welcome all students back to school, and attendance has been particularly strong in the opening days of term. Tuesday saw attendance at 95%, followed closely by 94% on Wednesday — an excellent start to the summer term. Well done to our students and families for prioritising attendance so positively. A strong start like this now needs to be sustained.

Monday's INSET

Monday's INSET day was a real highlight. Year 11 and Year 13 students attended targeted core and option revision sessions, and their engagement, focus and appreciation of the opportunity were really positive. Staff support on the day was excellent, and I am appreciative of the efforts after a two-week break. We were also incredibly fortunate to receive complimentary pizza from one of our close community partners, Gia from The Box (Mamma Italia), who generously gave his time and resources to provide a pizza lunch for students and staff. A wonderful example of community support — *grazie, Gia!*

Year 10 Mocks/PPE

Year 10 mock examinations (PPEs) have now begun, and we are incredibly proud of how students have approached these important assessments. They have lined up and entered exam spaces with discipline, focus and purpose, conducting themselves with respect. It is clear that students are revising, applying themselves, and giving their very best. Well done, Year 10 — a very strong start.

Summer Uniform & Expectations

As we move into the summer term, summer uniform has begun, and it has been lovely to see students return in polo shirts. We hope this provides additional comfort and practicality as the warmer weather arrives (when it eventually does!).

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With this change, I attach an additional letter outlining our uniform standards and expectations, particularly regarding jewellery. Unfortunately, we have seen an increase in non-compliant items such as necklaces, bangles and earrings. Students and families are being given a week to familiarise themselves with expectations; however, from Monday 27 April, any jewellery that does not meet our uniform standards will be confiscated until the end of the school day. To avoid unnecessary confrontations or pressure points, we strongly ask that families support students in ensuring they are fully compliant. These messages will also be reinforced in assemblies and tutor time next week. Thank you and we appreciate all your support with this.

Student Entrance to the School

From Monday 27 April, we will also be slightly amending our morning entry arrangements. The bottom entrance near the Sports Centre will no longer be open in the morning, and all students will enter via the top student gate in the main car park. This change allows us to ensure a consistent, warm welcome for every student, offer support where needed, and make sure students are entering school smart and ready for learning. Students who currently use the lower entrance are asked to factor this into their morning routines.

Assemblies - Our Legacy

I was delighted to lead this week's assemblies, focusing on *custodianship of the school* — who we are, where we have come from, and the legacy we are collectively shaping at SNHS. Students explored the history of the school, the meaning behind our badge, and reflected on how they contribute to the school's future. Engagement was excellent, with students particularly enjoying a treasure trove of images from previous years that strengthened their sense of pride and belonging.

Dorset's Second Most Improved School

We were incredibly proud to see Sturminster Newton High School recognised as the second most improved secondary school in Dorset in a recent newspaper article. This recognition reflects the hard work, determination and spirit of our entire community. Over the past year, our students have achieved so much — in classrooms, on stages, on sports fields, and in the wider community. Their success is built on the unwavering support of our staff, families, local partners and the brilliant town we are so fortunate to be part of. Thank you to everyone who continues to believe in and support our school. You can read this article here: [Dorset's most improved state secondary schools revealed | Bournemouth Echo](#)

UCAS Discovery Day

This week, Year 12 students visited Bournemouth University for a UCAS Discovery Day, giving them the opportunity to experience a university campus, explore post-18 pathways and consider next steps. Thank you to the staff who supported this valuable visit.

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Ten Tors Update

A huge well done to students involved in Ten Tors, who have been training on Dartmoor over the Easter break across two challenging weekends. Despite difficult weather conditions, students have shown real resilience and determination. There is just one training weekend remaining — the dress rehearsal on 26–27 April — before the final expedition on 9th & 10th May. We are incredibly proud of everyone involved.

Attendance matters

Strong attendance is essential to strong outcomes. Please see below for the most recent week's attendance figures:

- Year 7 – 96%
- Year 8 – 92%
- Year 9 – 90%
- Year 10 – 89%
- Year 11 – 87%

Remember that as we move into an assessment-heavy term, it is vital that Year 10 and Year 11 continue to focus on attendance. Every lesson matters, especially during mocks, revision and final exam preparation. Being in school, every day, has a direct impact on confidence, readiness and success.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support in reinforcing the importance of excellent attendance.

What's coming up at SNHS next week

- Year 10 mock examinations (PPEs) continue – we encourage students to build on their strong start, maintain resilience, revise effectively, and approach each paper with confidence and care.
- Year 13 Assembly – Thursday 23 April – a celebration of their time at Sturminster Newton High School as they move closer to the next exciting chapter of their journey.

Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support. I remain proud to work in partnership with such a supportive and committed school community.

Warm regards

Mr M Motteram
Head of School

