



22nd May 2026

Dear SNHS Families

As we reach the final day before we enter a well-deserved break, I would like to begin with a warm welcome and a moment to reflect on what has been another busy and successful half term at Sturminster Newton High School. The recent warm weather has certainly been a welcome change, and it has been fantastic to see so many students making the most of social time on the field—playing some sport, spending time with friends and enjoying one another's company. These moments are really important in building our strong sense of community, teamwork and belonging.

What has happened at SNHS this week

This week we were delighted to welcome so many of our Year 10 parents and carers into school (and online) for our Year 10 Parents' Evening. This was a particularly important milestone following last week's mock examination results. It provided a crucial opportunity for families and staff to come together to discuss progress, celebrate successes and reflect on areas for further development. Conversations focused on attainment, attitude and effort—key ingredients for success, as students prepare to enter the most important time of their school journey in Year 11. Thank you to all who attended and supported this crucial stage in their education.

We also held our Year 8 Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Drop Down Day. This forms an important and statutory part of our curriculum, ensuring that students are well-informed about health, wellbeing and relationships. I would like to extend my thanks to the staff who delivered these sessions with such integrity, care and professionalism. A huge well done also goes to our Year 8 students, who approached the day with maturity, openness and a positive attitude, demonstrating our core values of Respect, Responsibility and Resilience in action.

Our Year 11 and Year 13 students have continued their public examinations this week, with a number of core subject papers taking place. Friday offered a well-earned respite for Year 11 students from formal exams; however, it was extremely pleasing to see them continuing to engage in lessons, demonstrating a commitment to learning, revision and preparation, along with their school attendance. We are incredibly proud of all students for the hard work and determination they have shown. As we move into half term, we hope this provides an opportunity for rest and recovery, but we also encourage students to maintain momentum and continue that final push as they approach the last phase of their examinations.

This week we were also delighted to celebrate those students recognised in our 100 Club for this half term. Congratulations to all students who met the criteria, and especially to those recognised as 'most improved'—your progress and commitment are something to be proud of. Well done!

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Finally, on Friday we reflected on our wonderful Year 13 students as they had their leavers' assembly. It was a poignant and emotional occasion, filled with memories, gratitude and a few cringy pictures! They are a tremendous year group who have contributed so much to our school community, and we know they are working incredibly hard in their examinations. We wish them every success and happiness as they take their next steps beyond SNHS and look forward to seeing a great many celebrate at their Prom later in the term.

Attendance matters

Attendance remains a key priority at SNHS, as every lesson counts and supports students in achieving their very best. This week's attendance figures are:

- **Year 7:** 96.1%
- **Year 8:** 91.3%
- **Year 9:** 90.8%
- **Year 10:** 89.0%
- **Year 11:** 86.8%

It is encouraging to see Year 7 maintaining such strong attendance—well done! As always, we continue to work closely with all year groups to ensure that attendance improves further. Excellent attendance is fundamental to academic success, but also to building routines, resilience and a strong sense of belonging within our community.

What's coming up at SNHS next half term

Looking ahead to the first week back after half term, there are a number of important updates:

Over the break, we will be installing speed ramps in the main school car park. This is part of our ongoing commitment to ensuring safe and sensible driving on site. We ask all visitors to please be mindful of these changes and adhere closely to the speed limits in place to help keep our whole school community safe.

We will also be hosting our Year 8 Parents' Evening on the first Tuesday back. This is another important opportunity for parents and carers to meet with teaching staff to discuss progress, celebrate achievements and identify next steps in learning. We strongly encourage all families to attend and engage in these valuable conversations as we continue to support our students to succeed.

On Wednesday, we are inviting a number of Year 10 students and their parents/carers into school to have a series of one-to-one meetings with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. This follows from the mock results and presents an early opportunity to identify how we can best work together to support Year 10 and ensure they achieve their full potential as they enter the last half term and move into Year 11.

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In addition, we are excited to open our new Pod Provision, further enhancing the support we are able to provide to students, but particularly those with SEMH. Please refer back to last week's newsletter/letter home for further details, and we look forward to sharing more as this develops.

A fond farewell to Mrs Cavalier-Hirth

This week also marks a very special and significant goodbye as we celebrate the retirement of Mrs Cavalier-Hirth, our much-loved RE Teacher and Tutor.

"Mrs Cav," as she is affectionately known, has been an exceptional colleague who has given so much to Sturminster Newton High School over many years of dedicated service. She has inspired countless students through her teaching of Religious Education, bringing the subject to life with her warmth, enthusiasm, deep subject knowledge and unwavering passion.

Her integrity and professionalism have been evident in everything she does. She has built outstanding relationships with students, creating classrooms where young people feel valued, supported and challenged to achieve their very best. Her high expectations, combined with her kindness and care, have led to consistently strong outcomes over many years.

Our students have been really sad to see her leave, a true testament to the impact she has had on their lives. We are delighted, however, that she already has plans to remain connected to the school through voluntary work, something we know will be greatly valued by us all.

Mrs Cav leaves with our deepest thanks, admiration and very best wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. I wish all of our students and families a restful half term break. We have much to look forward to on our return including Proms, Activities Week, Work Experience, Sports Day, more trips and our Year 6 Induction Events. It promises to be a busy, eventful but ultimately fulfilling final half term and I look forward to welcoming everyone back on Monday 1st June.

Warm regards

Mr M Motteram
Headteacher

