



22nd July 2026

Dear SNHS Families

As we reach the end of another academic year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support of Sturminster Newton High School.

This year has been one of achievement, growth, challenge and success. Together, students, staff and families have contributed to making SNHS a school community of which we can all be proud. Before we look ahead to September, I would like to share some highlights from our final week of term and reflect on another memorable year.

What has happened at SNHS this week?

Year 10 Sixth Form Experience Day

On Monday, our Year 10 students took part in a Sixth Form Experience Day designed to give them an insight into post-16 education and the exciting opportunities available to them in the future.

Students participated in a range of sixth form taster lessons, explored study skills and independent learning, familiarised themselves with sixth form facilities and resources, and learned more about the increased responsibility and independence that comes with Sixth Form study. The day provided a valuable opportunity for students to begin considering their next steps and preparing for the exciting journey that lies ahead.

Sports Day 2026

On Tuesday, we enjoyed one of the highlights of the school calendar: Sports Day.

The weather was kind, the competition was fierce and the atmosphere throughout the day was fantastic. Students from Barnes, Hardy, Raleigh and Thornhill competed across a wide range of track and field events, demonstrating determination, resilience and excellent sportsmanship.

What stood out most was the way students supported one another. Whether competing, officiating, cheering from the sidelines or encouraging friends to give their best, the sense of community and house pride was evident throughout the day.

One of the biggest talking points was the highly competitive Staff versus Sixth Form Tug of War, which was enjoyed by participants and spectators alike!

I would like to extend my thanks to the PE Department for the enormous amount of planning and organisation involved in delivering such a successful whole-school event. Sports Day remains a wonderful celebration of participation, teamwork and school spirit.

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Sixth Form Information Evening

On Tuesday evening we welcomed families to our Sixth Form Information Evening.

It was wonderful to see so many parents, carers and students in attendance as we shared information about our growing Sixth Form provision, subject choices, enrichment opportunities, careers guidance and the many pathways available to students after Year 11.

The evening provided families with the opportunity to meet staff, ask questions and gain a greater understanding of what life in our Sixth Form can offer. Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to such a positive event.

Reward and Praise Assemblies

Today, we concluded the term with our Reward and Praise Assemblies.

These assemblies provide an opportunity to celebrate the many students who consistently demonstrate excellence through their hard work, commitment, attendance, attitude to learning and contribution to our school community.

As always, it was a pleasure to recognise the achievements of so many young people. Whether through academic success, personal growth, leadership, kindness, resilience or service to others, our students continue to make us incredibly proud.

A Year to Remember

As we look back on the academic year, it is remarkable to reflect on just how much our students have achieved, experienced and contributed to school life.

During the last twelve months, SNHS students have:

- Achieved some of the strongest GCSE and Sixth Form examination outcomes in recent school history, including our best progress outcomes for many years - amongst the very best in Dorset and better than national averages.
- Helped showcase our school during a successful Ofsted inspection.
- Taken part in two educational visits to France, developing language skills and cultural understanding.
- Challenged themselves through PGL, Duke of Edinburgh and Ten Tors experiences.
- Participated in Activities Week and work experience placements.
- Taken part in Geography fieldwork, Business masterclasses, visited the Houses of Parliament alongside a wide range of curriculum enrichment opportunities and trips
- Visited locations across the country to support their learning and broaden their horizons.
- Performed in concerts, community events and our outstanding production of *Romeo and Juliet*.

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- Competed in debating competitions, MasterChef challenges and Poetry by Heart events.
- Represented SNHS in football, rugby, cricket, netball, athletics and many other sporting fixtures.
- Competed in Sports Day and numerous inter-house competitions.
- Developed leadership skills through student leadership opportunities and mentoring programmes, including Primary School Visits
- Raised money for charity and contributed positively to our local community.
- Demonstrated our core values of **Respect, Responsibility and Resilience** each and every day.

Most importantly, our students have grown as young people and developed real character.

They have discovered new interests, developed confidence, made lasting friendships, overcome challenges and created memories that will stay with them for years to come.

Looking back over the year, I am incredibly proud of what we have achieved together as a school community.

We celebrated excellent examination outcomes. We welcomed Ofsted into our school and proudly showcased the ambition, belonging and community that sit at the heart of SNHS. We continued to strengthen our curriculum, developed our Sixth Form provision and expanded the opportunities available to our students both inside and outside the classroom.

However, what makes me most proud is not any single event or outcome. It is the everyday moments that often go unnoticed: students showing kindness to one another, overcoming setbacks, supporting friends, representing the school with pride and demonstrating respect for those around them. It might be holding a door open for a staff member or asking them how their weekend was or whether they had seen the sports result over the weekend. These moments remind me that Sturminster Newton High School is far more than a collection of buildings or examination results. It is a community.

Our school vision is that *"it takes a village to raise a child."* This year has once again shown how true that is. The successes we celebrate belong not only to our students and staff, but also to the families who support learning at home, encourage ambition and work alongside us as partners in education.

Thank you for the role you have played in supporting your child and supporting our school this year.

Staff Farewells

As we reach the end of the academic year, we also say goodbye to two highly valued members of our school community.

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Mrs Payne

Many families will know Mrs Payne through her work supporting Year 7 students during one of the most important periods of their educational journey: the transition from primary to secondary school.

Over the years, Mrs Payne has helped countless young people settle into life at SNHS. Through her warmth, care, humour and unwavering commitment to students, she has supported children through challenges, celebrated their successes and helped them develop confidence and a sense of belonging.

Her impact on students and families has been significant, and many young people have thrived because of the support and guidance she has provided.

On behalf of the entire school community, I would like to thank Mrs Payne for her dedication, care and service to SNHS and wish her every success in the future.

Mrs Hoffmann

We also say farewell to Mrs Hoffmann after many years of outstanding service to Sturminster Newton High School.

Throughout her time at SNHS, Mrs Hoffman has served as SENDCO, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Senior Leader and English teacher. However, beyond any job title, she has been a tireless advocate for children and families.

Her commitment to inclusion, safeguarding and ensuring that every student feels valued and supported has helped shape the culture of our school. Many families have benefited directly from her expertise, compassion and determination to secure the very best outcomes for young people.

Much of the work associated with safeguarding and supporting vulnerable children happens quietly behind the scenes. Yet the positive impact of that work is immeasurable.

Our students are safer, our provision is stronger and our school community is better because of Mrs Hoffmann's contribution.

We thank both colleagues for everything they have given to SNHS and wish them happiness, success and fulfilment in the next chapter of their lives.

September Return Arrangements

A reminder of our arrangements for the start of the new academic year.

Tuesday 1st and Wednesday 2nd September - no students attend school

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STAFF INSET/TRAINING DAYS. Students do not attend school.

Thursday 3rd September - Year 7, 11 and Sixth Form only attend school

Year 7 students will attend a dedicated induction day focused on transition, team-building, school routines and the SNHS Climate and Character programme.

Year 11 students will attend a preparation day designed to support them as they begin their GCSE year. This will include revision resources, subject workshops and guidance on achieving success in their examinations.

Sixth Form students will return for a special enterprise and entrepreneurship programme focused on leadership, teamwork and future aspirations.

Years 8, 9 and 10 students do not attend school on this day.

Friday 4th September - all Year Groups attend school

All students in Years 7–13 return to school.

Students will take part in welcome assemblies, receive key information about the year ahead and then begin their normal lessons.

Sixth Form students will continue their enterprise programme and induction activities.

We hope that sharing this information now allows families to plan ahead and start the new academic year smoothly.

Finally, I would like to thank all our students, families, governors and staff for their support throughout another successful year.

I feel incredibly privileged to lead such a wonderful school community and remain immensely proud of the young people who represent Sturminster Newton High School each day.

Have a safe, restful and enjoyable summer break. We look forward to welcoming everyone back in September for another exciting chapter in the SNHS story.

Warm regards

Mr M Motteram
Headteacher

