



11th September 2026

Dear SNHS Families

As we reach the end of our first full week of lessons, I wanted to share that we have had a busy and positive start to the term. There has been a strong sense of energy around the school, with students settling into new routines, learning their new timetables and demonstrating the values that make our community so brilliant.

On a personal level, I have really enjoyed speaking to a great many of our students and catching up with them after the summer break. Similarly, I have spoken to several families, and it has been wonderful to get back into the groove of a new school year.

At Sturminster Newton High School, we often talk about our belief that "it takes a village to raise a child", and this week has provided many examples of that philosophy in action.

What has happened at SNHS this week?

Meet the Tutor Evening

Thank you to all parents and carers who attended our Meet the Tutor event on Tuesday evening. This event is a key part of strengthening the partnership between school and home and ensuring that every family has an opportunity to build positive relationships with the adults who will support their child throughout the year.

This year, we were delighted to extend the event beyond our traditional Year 7 and Year 12 cohorts, opening it up to tutors across all year groups. Seeing so many parents, carers and staff engaging in conversations was a fantastic reminder that when school and home work together, students benefit enormously.

Read to Succeed Launch

This week also saw the launch of our exciting Read to Succeed initiative. Reading remains one of the most important habits young people can develop, opening doors to knowledge, creativity and future success.

We are looking forward to seeing students embrace the challenge and discover new books, new ideas and a lifelong love of reading. Thank you for supporting us in making reading a central part of school life, using the new bookmarks and resources in their tutor time sessions.

School Photographs

This week saw the return of our school photographer. We were delighted to capture photographs of our new Year 7 and Year 12 students as they begin their journey at SNHS, while also providing updated photographs for our Year 9 students, many of whom have not had a school photograph taken for several years.

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A Positive First Full Week

Most importantly, I would like to praise our students for the way they have approached their first full week of lessons. New timetables, new classrooms, new teachers and returning to our expectations inevitably take some adjustment, yet I have been incredibly impressed by the maturity, resilience and positivity that students have shown throughout the week.

The start of a new academic year sets the tone for the months ahead, and our students have made a fantastic start.

What's coming up at SNHS next week?

Flu Vaccinations

The annual flu vaccination programme will take place on Monday for those students whose families have provided consent. Relevant information has already been shared directly with families.

Supporting Year 11 Success

As we begin another important year for our Year 11 students, a range of support opportunities will be launching over the coming weeks.

Tutor time interventions in English, Mathematics and Science will begin shortly, ensuring students receive targeted support where it is needed most.

We will also be launching our programme of after-school revision sessions, providing additional opportunities for students to strengthen their knowledge, develop exam confidence and prepare effectively for the months ahead.

Alongside these academic opportunities, Year 11 students will also have the chance to earn Golden Tickets through attendance, revision, homework completion, positive contributions and demonstrating our school values. Each week there will be a prize raffle, with a range of rewards on offer throughout the year.

Parents and carers can play a huge role by encouraging attendance at revision sessions and supporting students in taking advantage of every opportunity available to them. Every session attended can make a difference.

Governors' Meeting

Next Thursday evening, we look forward to welcoming our governors for their scheduled meeting.

Governors play a vital role in the life of our school. They provide challenge, support and strategic oversight, helping to ensure that we continue to offer the very best education and opportunities for our students. Their voluntary commitment, expertise and dedication to our community are greatly appreciated.

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Strong governance is an essential part of a successful school, and we are fortunate to have a governing body that shares our ambition for every child to flourish and succeed.

Attendance Matters

Every school day matters.

Excellent attendance remains one of the strongest predictors of academic success, wellbeing and future opportunity. Students who attend school regularly benefit not only from lessons but also from friendships, enrichment opportunities and the wider experiences that help them develop as young people.

As we begin a new year together, I would encourage all families to make attendance a priority. Establishing strong attendance habits early in the year can have a significant impact on outcomes later on.

Community Spotlight: The Cheese Festival

Finally, I would like to wish everyone involved in this weekend's Sturminster Newton Cheese Festival a fantastic event.

We are really proud to support such an important community event. Throughout the weekend, members of our staff team and Sixth Form students will be volunteering on the gates, so if you are attending, please do stop and say hello.

We are especially grateful to the organisers and the Rotary volunteers who make this event possible. Funds generated through our volunteering efforts are invested directly back into the school, helping us provide additional resources, opportunities and experiences for our students, including support for our Sixth Form provision and wider educational projects.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support and I wish all our families a lovely weekend.

Warm regards

Mr M Motteram
Headteacher

