



18th September 2026

Dear SNHS Families

A very warm welcome to this week's newsletter as we come to the end of another busy, productive and successful week.

The school continues to be full of energy and opportunity. I am really proud of the way our students represent our values every day, whether through their learning, their involvement in enrichment activities or their contributions to the wider community. It is brilliant that they continue to demonstrate what makes our school such a special place.

What has happened at SNHS this week

Clubs and enrichment opportunities begin

This week saw the launch of our extensive programme of extra-curricular clubs and activities. From Gardening Club and Astronomy Club to Latin, Netball, Rugby and many more, there is truly something for everyone. Alongside these enrichment opportunities, we are also offering a range of revision and academic support sessions to help students achieve their very best.

Personal development is an essential part of life at SNHS. The experiences students gain outside of the classroom help build confidence, develop new skills, foster friendships and encourage students to discover new interests and talents. I would strongly encourage all students to take advantage of the opportunities available and become actively involved in school life. Please see the student bulletin for further details of some of these clubs.

Flu vaccination programme

We welcomed the vaccination team to school this week for our annual flu vaccination programme. The day ran extremely smoothly and our students were a credit to themselves and the school, showing maturity, patience and respect throughout the process.

Thank you to families for supporting this important initiative.

Governors' Meeting

This week we also held our first Governing Body meeting of the academic year. It provided an excellent opportunity to reflect on the school's achievements over the summer, including our positive examination outcomes, and to begin the important work of reviewing our priorities for further school improvement.

Our governors play a vital role in supporting and challenging the school, and I am grateful for their continued commitment to ensuring the very best educational experience for our students.

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Year 11 intervention programme begins

This week marked the start of our enhanced Year 11 tutor intervention sessions in core subjects. These sessions provide an additional layer of support, guidance and expert intervention led by subject specialists and faculty leaders.

As students begin the crucial GCSE year, these sessions form a key part of our strategy to help every student achieve their full potential.

Supporting our community at the Cheese Festival

It was fantastic to see so many families, parents and members of the wider community at last weekend's Sturminster Newton Cheese Festival.

Our students and staff volunteered at the entrance gates, welcoming visitors throughout the event with enthusiasm. They were excellent ambassadors for the school and demonstrated the spirit of service and community.

We are incredibly grateful to the Rotary Club, who provide financial support to both the school and Sixth Form in recognition of the volunteering hours contributed by our students. This funding will help us continue to enhance opportunities, facilities and support for young people across the school.

Events such as this perfectly demonstrate our belief that *It Takes a Village to Raise a Child*. By working together with our local community, we create valuable opportunities that benefit everyone.

What's coming up at SNHS next week

Open Evening 2026

Next week's Open Evening is one of the most important events in our school calendar, and we are looking forward to welcoming Year 5 and Year 6 pupils and their families into our school.

This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase our classrooms, facilities, staff and students, whilst giving prospective families a genuine insight into life at Sturminster Newton High School.

This year we are particularly excited to introduce our new *Passport to Learning* activity. Visitors will be able to collect stamps as they explore different subject areas, with prizes available for completed passports. We will also be hiding four special Golden Tickets across the school, one representing each of our Houses: Barnes, Hardy, Raleigh and Thornhill, with spot prizes for the lucky students who discover them.

We hope the evening will be fun, engaging and memorable, and we cannot wait to open our doors and welcome our community into school. We also appreciate families who support by allowing their child to help out or represent a subject. Our students are our best ambassadors, and I am excited to welcome our visitors and show off all that makes SNHS a wonderful school.

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Special visitors

We are delighted to be welcoming Gia back to SNHS on Wednesday to work with our Year 9 students through an interactive pasta-making workshop. Opportunities like this bring learning to life, allowing students to develop practical culinary skills whilst exploring food, culture and nutrition in a hands-on and engaging way. We know our students thoroughly enjoyed working with Gia previously and are looking forward to another memorable experience.

On Thursday, we are equally pleased to welcome Fiona Campbell, nutritionist, broadcaster and educator, who will be working with our Hospitality and Catering students. Learning directly from industry professionals helps students gain valuable insight into the world beyond the classroom, deepening their understanding of nutrition, food education and career pathways within the hospitality sector. We look forward to welcoming both Gia and Fiona and know our students will enjoy hearing and learning from their expertise.

Year 12 Apprenticeship Show visit

Our Year 12 students will be travelling to Bristol next week to attend the Apprenticeship Show.

Experiences such as this are really important in helping students understand the wide range of pathways available after Sixth Form. Whether students are considering university, apprenticeships, employment or alternative routes, by being exposed to employers, training providers and industry professionals helps them make informed decisions.

Fire drill

We are also planning to hold a fire drill next week.

Whilst these drills cause a brief disruption to the school day, they are an important part of ensuring the safety of everyone on site. They provide an opportunity for students and staff to practise evacuation procedures and ensure that everyone understands what to do in the unlikely event of a genuine emergency.

Students should follow staff instructions promptly and calmly and make their way directly to the courts for registration and roll call.

Attendance Matters

Attendance remains one of the most important factors in determining a student's success in school.

Every lesson matters. Missing just one day of school each fortnight equates to around four weeks of learning lost across an academic year. Those lost lessons add up quickly and can have a significant impact on academic progress, confidence and wellbeing.

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At Sturminster Newton High School, we are committed to supporting every student to attend school regularly and arrive ready to learn. Good attendance not only improves academic outcomes but also helps students build positive relationships, develop resilience and fully participate in the wider opportunities school life has to offer.

As a reminder:

- **100% attendance** means students access every learning opportunity available.
- **95% attendance** equates to approximately 10 days of absence across the year.
- **90% attendance** means around 19 days of learning lost, almost four full school weeks.

Thank you for your continued support in ensuring that your child attends school every day wherever possible. Working together, we can give every student the best chance of success.

Thank you for your continued support of the school. I look forward to welcoming many families to our Open Evening next week and sharing another exciting week of learning and opportunity with our students.

Wishing everyone a lovely weekend.

Warm wishes

Mr M Motteram
Headteacher

