



HECKMONDWIKE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

PDR/JDN

17 July 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

As we approach the end of term and indeed the end of this academic year, it is always my pleasure to update you on what we have been doing and some of our plans for next year. As I sit at my desk now, it seems like only yesterday I was writing a similar letter, this time last year – how the year has flown.

I think we are all becoming accustomed to any year not being straight forward and we have all been posed with challenges once again. Clearly the financial uncertainty is causing significant anxiety for all of us, both in our homes and our workplaces. Budgeting for the known with limited funds is always challenging, but budgeting for the unknowns has certainly resulted in a higher level of angst for all of us. However, I'm pleased to report, the school continues to be financially resilient, as a result of prudent management in recent years and we are set fair to invest in our core business of teaching and learning once again next year. At least there is now the promise of public sector pay disputes being resolved, which we recognise have been testing for all of us.

Extra- Curricular

Once again, we have had an extraordinary year. I continue to marvel at how as a school community we have a wonderful balance of academic excellence, supported by exemplary pastoral care and a myriad of extra-curricular activities that students and indeed staff will long remember, which help cement our school values. We now have over 60 clubs/societies, and the challenge is always there to students to add to the list, by starting a new club, with funding available if required.

The last few weeks have exemplified these values, with the exceptional Addams Family whole school musical production last week, the wonderful Sports Day last Friday and the incomparable 2-day House Music competition this week, with a record number of entries, which is the final event of the annual House competition. As we all know, the House competition is so important to the school and the willingness of students, of differing abilities to participate, so that they get a point for their House, is humbling to see. The Lees Cup will be presented to the winning House on Friday.

Heckmondwike Grammar School, High Street, Heckmondwike, West Yorkshire, WF16 0AH
Tel: 01924 402202 | Fax: 01924 418318 | Email: office@heckgrammar.co.uk | www.heckgrammar.co.uk

Headteacher: Mr P Roberts

Heckmondwike Grammar School Academy Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with company number 07348329. Registered office address as above.

Charity and Fundraising

Despite the aforementioned challenges, as a community we have raised over £8500 which is a quite phenomenal amount and surpasses our target. Some of the charities have been the well-known, national/international ones, but some of the others have been our local ones and ones which in many cases are very close to heart for some of our school community. In addition to fundraising, there have been many other worthy initiatives, not least our Eco-committee doing sterling work, making the school more eco-friendly, with litter picks, and clothing and book exchanges.

School Uniform

We are very aware, the cost of school uniform, including PE kit can be quite significant and as such, we have worked with our 3 suppliers to reduce the cost to parents by making some items, particularly the blazer cheaper and reducing the number of branded items.

The schools pre-loved uniform shop is going from strength to strength with an increasing stock list. Please do donate any unwanted items and do take a look to see if there are any suitable items for your son/daughter. If any family is experiencing severe difficulty in purchasing the uniform, please do contact the school.

Attendance

Thank you for your support regarding student attendance once again. As you are aware, we have had a focus on this during the year, as we have come out of the pandemic. I'm pleased to say our overall attendance is now in excess of 96% and back to a level we have always prided ourselves on. We will continue to write to parents at regular intervals with a summary of their child's attendance. The information contained is purely for your information and may help you, when having to make difficult judgement decisions about whether your child should attend school.

Parents' Evenings

Following the enforced virtual protocols due to the pandemic, this year we have trialled a hybrid model which has worked well. However, the overwhelming feedback from parents and staff is the high value and importance of face-to-face meetings. Therefore, from September, all meetings will in school.

Staff

This year we will say goodbye to a small number of staff, who are moving on to exciting new adventures. Mrs Kenworthy is taking the opportunity to spend more time with family, Miss Rattigan is relocating, Mrs Hancock is going to become an Assistant Headteacher as is Mr Mullaney. Mrs Bates is taking the opportunity to further her own passion for art. Mr Currie is moving on after 31 years of loyal service to the school and Mr Barnett is reluctantly giving up the daily commute from Cheshire and is looking forward to a well-deserved retirement.

With excellent appointments already made to fill these positions, we will start September with an outstanding staff team, all graduates in their specialist subjects.

As we close for the year, I would like to publicly thank all of the school staff. Every one of them plays an invaluable part in ensuring that we always provide the best possible education for our students, very often going above and beyond what could reasonably be expected of them, all because they care passionately about every individual student.

However, the real stars of the show have again been our fabulous students – your children. They continue to juggle the rigours of a very academic curriculum, and immerse themselves in the House system, all the while conducting themselves with great respect for one another, acting with responsibility and so maintain the standards that we aspire to at Heckmondwike Grammar School.

None of the above would happen without the unfaltering support from parents. You have worked tirelessly with us and I thank you for the family commitment, which is always very evident and invaluable.

Whilst I am sure there is a level of tiredness in both students and staff, there continues to be a very happy buzz around school and when the final bell rings on Friday, there will be mixed emotions of looking forward to the holiday but also a tinge of sadness that it is all over for another year.

As is our usual custom, school will close early on Friday at 12.15 after a final assembly.

Whatever your plans for the summer, I do hope you have a fabulous time and I will look forward to welcoming back our school community in September.

Yours faithfully,



Peter Roberts

Headteacher