



HECKMONDWIKE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

PDR/JDN

10 July 2025

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.

Secondary School of the Year 2024 and 2025

Just before Christmas, we were informed we had been recognised as Secondary School of the Year in the North of England, in the prestigious Sunday Times Parent Power Guide, for the second year running. This time achieving a second award for academic excellence. This was a great way to start the new calendar year and was just reward for the years of hard work from staff, students and parents. With anticipated excellent results again for this summer, we look forward to the new ranking later in the year.

New Building and Site Developments

Many of you will have seen we have had contractors on site for most of this year. We are now eagerly anticipating, ready for September, our new extension to the Powell building. This has been a £2.3M investment which will house our Economics and Business department, joining their Maths colleagues in the same building.

Again, ready for September, we are re-modelling the middle yard, which at long last has had the 20 year 'temporary' building removed. The new courtyard will include an additional access to the Crellin building, an outdoor catering facility and tiered seating, which will facilitate outdoor performances for performing arts.

These capital investments have prompted a long-awaited rationalisation of academic subjects, to ensure a more cohesive layout to the school. Some highlights include, all 3 sciences being in the same building and a brand-new fitness suite/gym being developed.

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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 around 100 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. These opportunities are complemented by the ever-growing Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme at all 3 levels.

The last few weeks of the year are always very special with large scale performing arts showcases, culture day, House music and the final event of the annual House competition, sports day on Thursday. 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. In mentioning performing arts showcases, at the time of writing, tonight is the closing night of Shrek the Musical. This is one of the largest productions in memory and many months in the making, with phenomenal reviews.

Charity and Fundraising

The last year has continued to pose challenges for us all financially, but as a community we have raised nearly £11,000 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.

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 school pre-loved uniform shop is going from strength to strength with an increasing stock list. Please do donate any unwanted items and 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. I'm pleased to say our overall attendance is in excess of 96% which is a pleasing statistic and significantly above local and national benchmarks. 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.

End of Year and New Year Arrangements

As is our usual custom, school will close early on Friday 18 July at 12.15 after a final assembly.

School reopens on Tuesday 2 September at 8.40am for years 7 and 12 and Wednesday 3 September for all other year groups.

School will finish at 2.25pm on Friday 12 September to enable us to prepare for the entrance examination, which will be held on Monday 15 September, when the school will be closed to students all day.

Our Expressions of Gratitude

As we close for the year, I would like to publicly thank all 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, so maintaining the standards that we aspire to at Heckmondwike Grammar School.

None of the above would happen without the unfaltering support from parents and carers. 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 next 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.

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,



Mr Peter Roberts

Headteacher