



Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School

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Success with Care

Headteacher: Mr M. J. Cooper

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Headteacher Update Letter 1 – Term 1 Week 6

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

It has been an excellent start back to the new academic year at Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School. Students have returned looking smart in their uniforms, they are correctly equipped, have an excellent attitude to learning and have participated strongly in the numerous wider curriculum opportunities that are on offer at the school. It has been great to see and many staff have commented how well everyone has settled in after the summer holiday.

A special mention should go to the new students joining us, whether in Year 7 or Year 12 or even in a different year group who have made the transfer to us. These students have settled in brilliantly and have quickly got into the routines and rhythms of life at DHFS. Starting a new school or Key Stage can be daunting but the students have demonstrated effective resilience and responsibility to adapt to the new school setting and make a successful start. You are a credit to your families.

This term saw the publication of the Ofsted report from our July inspection. We are delighted as a school with the report. It illustrates the high standards and effective practice at the school and reflects where we believe we are as a school, including with our strengths and our areas for development. We are especially pleased that the ethos, personality and character of the school was reflected in the comments. We have a special school in our community and are determined to continue to build on previous successes to provide the best education possible for the youngsters in our care.

As is customary with the Headteacher update letter, there are a number of messages below for your attention which provide information about the school. Please do read the sub-headings to access those that are most pertinent for your context.

Yours sincerely

Mr M J Cooper
Headteacher



2023 Exam Results

As celebrated in the summer, we achieved some very pleasing exam results this summer at Key Stage 4 and 5. We are so pleased for all the students who worked incredibly hard to achieve or even exceed their targets. The smiling faces on result days are always a joy to see and this year was no exception. We are very proud of our students and wish them well on their future adventures.

Staffing Name Changes

We would like to pass on our congratulations to Miss Wall (now Mrs Asbury) and Miss Yates (now Mrs Helliwell) who both got married over the summer.

RAAC Buildings Issue

The academic year started against the backdrop of concerns over certain types of concrete with some rather alarming headlines being shared. As communicated at the time, this did not affect us as a school and was therefore a non-story for us. I am sorry for any undue stress or anxiety this may have caused when the news was first released. We have regular surveys on our property and always ensure due diligence with our estate is as it should be therefore if there were any concerns we would share them with parents and carers.

International School Award

We are thrilled to announce that we have once again been awarded the British Council's prestigious International School Award in recognition of our work to bring the world into the classroom and into the lives of children. Scott McDonald, Chief Executive of the British Council, said: 'The school has earned this prestigious award through its inspirational international work and links with schools abroad. The International School Award is a chance for schools to be recognised for their important work bringing the world into their classrooms. This is especially commendable when schools have been deeply affected by the global pandemic. The desire to build on their international work shines through and it is with upmost pride that we celebrate their achievements'.

Successful Audit

During the summer holidays the school was audited by Derbyshire County Council Audit Services as part of our financial inspection cycle. The audit is extremely thorough and has a rigorous inspection of our systems, process, policies and protocols for finance, estates, HR, ICT and governance. We have received the report, which was excellent and awarded us 'substantial' status, which is the highest grading you can get. We are delighted for all the staff that work so hard day in day out to ensure our practices are best practice. Their endeavours certainly paid off!

Parent/Carer Use of the Car Park

A reminder that parents and carers should not be using the school car park to drop students off at the start of the day or collect them at the end of the day, unless they have been given an exemption pass by the school. Ensuring the safe egress of nearly 2000 people at the end of the day is a carefully planned and executed strategy and ensuring their health and safety is important to us. Additional vehicles in key spaces create issues that need to be avoided.

In addition, can we remind students that there is an in and an out gate and for safety reasons parents and carers should not use the gate for the wrong reasons. We have nearly had some accidents where vehicles have entered the exit gate and vice versa.

Pupil Premium+ Students

Previously looked after children are identified as those who were looked after by an English or Welsh local authority immediately before being adopted, or who left local authority care on a special guardianship order or child arrangements order (previously known as a residence order). These children are eligible for additional funding to support the provision of their education. We are encouraging parents to self-declare that they have a previously looked after child to enable us to secure this additional funding for your child. To make this application we will need sight of the legal paperwork, such as a court order or certificate. Please contact Ms Stubbs by email jstubbs@dhfs.uk or telephone (01246) 412372 if you think your child is eligible for this additional funding.

Road Safety

We have unfortunately had a few near misses at the end of the school day when students have not looked carefully when crossing the road or when they have not used the designated crossing points. We remind students about road safety through assemblies and Mentor Time and encourage you to speak to your child to ensure the basics are in place to use the roads safely and avoid any incident.

Home-School Agreement

In the student planner there is a home-school agreement to be signed by students, parent/carers and the school. This is the partnership agreement on how we work together to gain success for the children. These are important responsibilities that we take seriously as a school. Please ensure you have read and signed the document.

Planner Signing

Whilst the ClassCharts App has proved very successful and a more than worthy replacement for our previous App, we still make regular use of the planner as a means of students organising their learning, accessing helpful resources and as a means of recording information. Please check and sign this weekly.

Personal Development

Term 1 sees the launch of ***DHFS News and Views***, in which all students will discuss, reflect and vote on a range of worldly topic and current affairs. Term 1 will also see students celebrate and learn about Black History Month, World Languages Day, Autumn Safety (including bonfires and fireworks) and Hate Crime Awareness. As it's the start of the new school year, it's also another chance for students from all ages, backgrounds and experience to get involved with Student Leadership, either as a Leader, and Ambassador or a House Captain. Special assemblies in week 4 will launch the programme with more details. Please contact Mrs Helliwell (nhelliwell@dhfs.uk) if you'd like to know more about our Personal Development programme.

Clubs and enrichment

Over 60% of DHFS students tried a free club in school last year - is your child one of them? Please have a look at the vast array of opportunities on offer and encourage your child to take part, try something new and broaden their experiences: <https://dhfs.uk/clubs-extra-curricular/>

Careers and Work Experience Update

In keeping with our commitment to provide students with outstanding careers guidance and tailored support when choosing their next steps after school, we have employed Progress Careers to offer bespoke and impartial careers advice for all students across the school.

Mr Jones and Ms Carr will be joining us on Wednesday and Thursday each week, and appointments can be requested via Mr Pickles on kpickles@dhfs.uk. The school will also be making referrals to the service via our House Team system. Parents and carers are encouraged to attend their child's careers interview if they wish to do so. Mr Jones and Ms Carr will also be available on our Parent and Carers Consultation Evenings for bookings to discuss careers related matters.

Also, we have purchased a new online system in order to simplify the Work Experience programme for Years 10 and 12. Unifrog, an award-winning, online destinations platform is now being set up, and students will soon have access to this website. Students in Year 10 and 12 will receive their login first, via email, which will enable them to access the Work Experience Online system. Please watch out for further communication via parent and carer email.

Unifrog is an impartial, universal destinations platform, and is designed to support learners in making the most informed decisions about their futures and has a range of tools that are suitable for all year groups. Each student will have their own account where they can explore all the career and next step options available to them. In addition, students can also find information on everything from managing their workload to writing a winning CV, via a wide range of video and written content, and interactive quizzes and tests.

Vaping

There continues to be concern at various levels about the growth in vaping amongst school-aged children. This is something that all communities, including ours, are facing. Within school we educate regularly

regarding the law and dangers with vapes, and where required put sanctions in place for those that are in possession of or using vapes. It is important to note that there are some growing health concerns regarding their use. An information leaflet is attached which contains useful information for your attention.