Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School

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Success with Care

Headteacher: Mr M. J. Cooper

21st October 2026

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Headteacher Update Letter – Term 1

Following a period of absence during Term 1, I will be resuming Headteacher responsibilities from the start of Term 2. For the last week, I have been back on site for some sessions preparing for the handover. It has been extremely enjoyable catching up with students and staff and I am very much looking forwarding to returning to school. There are occasional days for the first two weeks of Term 2 where I will be off site, however I will retain oversight.

I would like to thank all the staff, particularly Mrs Davies as Acting Headteacher, who have stepped up in my absence, and the wider community for their understanding. I appreciate the challenges and impacts that a period of absence creates and value the hard work, dedication and skill that so many have displayed over the past two months. As you are aware, a family member has been significantly ill, which required a major procedure over the summer with a long period of recovery and rehabilitation. Whilst this is ongoing, we are in a position where I can return to work. On behalf of my family, I thank you for your patience and support.

Term 2 is an exciting term with a number of events in the calendar, such as the Remembrance Day service, Iceland field trip, Christmas food hamper collection, school productions and national competitive sporting fixtures, to name a few.

Away from the events, there will be a focus on ensuring everyone is showing their best at all times so that they can maximise the opportunities available. This will include reinforcing the core basics of school life that are the very foundations of success. This includes, attendance, punctuality, uniform, equipment, attitude to learning, conduct, and meeting, then exceeding, the expectations of the school. For those that show the true DHFS ethos, there will be recognition, reward and celebration. For those that don't, there will be consequences.

We wish you well for the half-term break and look forward to your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M J Cooper
Headteacher

Celebrating Term 1
It has been lovely to meet our new Y7 and Y12 students this term and watch them settle in so successfully. As always it has been busy with an oversubscribed Y6 Open Evening which saw over 100 Y7 students acting as ambassadors, the UKMT Senior Maths Challenge with our students competing with the best in the country, Camps International assemblies about a trip of a lifetime to Cambodia, Black History Month assemblies focusing on community, Period Poverty focus enabling free period products accessible in toilets, a Y11 trip to the medical Thackray Museum, a Y11 Interview Day with local employees and the current MUNOG (Model United Nations of Goldberg) in our twin town of Sindelfingen where 10 Sixth Form delegates are making our school proud.

Uniform

- All uniform expectations for students in Y7-Y11 are outlined in the planner
- Leggings and Jeggings are not acceptable
- Minimal jewellery is allowed - single ear lobe stud piercings and one ring. No bracelets or necklaces
- Blazers must be worn, and a black V-necked jumper can be worn in addition, but not instead of a blazer

We have a successful 'pre-loved' uniform service called Uniformd thanks to the kind donations made by our families. If you are interested in donating uniform, please drop it off at reception. If you are interested in using the service, please see the website Uniformd.

Attendance
We expect students to attend at least 95% of the time to maximise their chance of success. Every year we see the correlation between high attendance and high success rates. Last summer students who attended over 95% of the time outperformed other students by over 1.5 grades in every subject. For some students this was the difference between being accepted or not on to their chosen Sixth Form course, College course or Apprenticeship.

We are also concerned with the amount of learning being missed by students using lesson time to visit the toilet. Unless a student has a medical issue, we expect students to only visit the toilet at break or lunchtime. Please speak to your child about the importance of doing this. Students will only be allowed to visit the toilet if the member of staff deems it an 'exceptional circumstance', rather than students 'expecting' to always be able to leave lesson.

Mobile Phones
As per the statutory expectations set by the DfE, students must not have access to mobile phones during the school day, so must have their phones turned off and in school bags rather than on their person. Staff no longer ask Y7-Y11 students to use their mobile phones in lessons, so there is no reason for a student to access their phone during the school day. If a student needs to contact home, they must go to Student Services who will let them contact home. Likewise, if you need to contact your child then please ring Reception.

We have seen some students having their phones confiscated but the vast majority are following the expectations, which means at present we have no intention of having to invest in phone pouches, the cost of which many schools have passed on to parents and carers.

Y11 Students
Our Y11 students have reacted maturely to their privilege of being allowed off-site at lunchtime, and we have received positive feedback about how helpful some students have been. We would remind them that Dronfield Railway Station is out of bounds and students should not congregate in the Station shelter at lunchtime.

With respect to GCSE examinations which start on 8/5/27, Y11 students will be supported in school until May Half Term to allow staff to maximise their learning and rely less on students structuring study at home. From 8/6/27, Y11 students will only be on site for exams. More information will be sent out closer to the time.

Y11 Prom will take place in July, and students will need to have more achievement points than behaviour points for them to receive an automatic invite. Please discuss this with your child and the reason for any behaviour points they are accruing.

Safeguarding Support During the School Holidays
Although school is closed during the holiday period, support remains available for any child or family who may need help. If you have concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child, or if you require advice, please contact Derbyshire Starting Point on 01629 533190 or visit Starting Point contact and referral service - Derbyshire County Council

For families living in Sheffield, the Sheffield Safeguarding Hub can be contacted 24 hours a day on 0114 273 4855 or visit Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership -
If you have any safeguarding concerns relating to a DHFS student, you can also contact the DHFS Safeguarding Team mobile on 07885 817860. Please remember that safeguarding support does not stop when school closes, and professional advice and assistance are available throughout the holiday period for anyone who needs it.