



July 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

As we reach the end of another successful school year and the summer holidays approach, it's the perfect moment to reflect on the incredible progress and achievements our students have made, whilst also looking ahead to the exciting opportunities that Year 9 will bring.

It's hard to believe that our Year 8 students are now coming to the end of their second year with us. Over the past year, they have shown impressive growth, not just academically, but in their dedication to the #TeamHeanor values. We feel an immense sense of pride in how far they have come and look forward to seeing the progress continue next year. The final half term, in particular, has flown by, filled with a range of special events and activities that truly showcase what makes our school such a vibrant and unique community.

A clear highlight for Year 8 was certainly Graduation. The graduation ceremony and celebration event on 19 June were an excellent chance for us to recognise the effort and integrity of our students. Students had worked hard throughout the year to build up a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate that they met some demanding criteria for the different levels of award. I want to repeat my thanks to all the parents and carers who were able to attend the ceremony and share this special moment.

Earlier in the year we launched the Year 8 Pathways and our students will be keenly looking forward to studying more of the subjects that they most enjoy next year. The smooth process of making these choices was supported not only by our students' mature approach but also by the well-informed discussions that they had at home. Learning how to consider carefully what they want to focus on and how this can set them for the future they want, stands them in good stead for making further choices about what they will study into Year 10 and Year 11. Our students will have the opportunity to make further choices when we launch the Year 9 Pathways process in January 2026. We will be in touch nearer the time to share key information about this.

Each year, Spencer Superstars Day and Sports Day shine as two of the most memorable and uplifting events in our school calendar, truly reflecting the spirit of our community. During Spencer Superstars, it was inspiring to see students actively supporting a meaningful cause that will have a positive impact beyond the school gates. Sports Day is always a much-anticipated highlight for both students and staff, and our students showed excellent resilience in the hot weather. What really stood out was the enthusiasm with which students embraced the friendly competition, all while demonstrating outstanding encouragement and team spirit toward one another.

Of course, it is important that we recognise how well our students have done in respect to their learning and progress this year. Looking at the end of year reports, we were delighted to see that many students made excellent improvements in terms of how they complete homework and consolidation tasks. This is rewarding to see as getting these aspects of learning right now will help set up future GCSE success.

To help everyone start the new academic year in September smoothly, we'd like to share some key reminders and important updates.

Attendance

Good attendance at school is a significant predictor of success at GCSE, and I want to thank you for your support in ensuring that the attendance for Year 8 as a whole has been significantly above the national average. If students are struggling with any issues, we are best placed to help them when they are in school as there is an abundance of staff who can offer support, from the Achievement Team and tutors to the wellbeing team.

In line with the government guidance published in September 2024, '*Working Together to Improve School Attendance*', I encourage all parents and carers to continue partnering with us to support consistent school attendance. Regular attendance not only supports your child's academic progress, but it is also something we take pride in recognising and celebrating throughout the year. While the number of students classified as persistently absent has significantly decreased this year, we remain committed to working alongside the Local Authority to address ongoing cases, in line with government guidance.



Punctuality is another key value we aim to instil in our students. Please note that the school gates close at 8.40am to ensure students are ready to begin tutor time promptly at 8.45am. Arriving on time supports effective learning and helps set a positive, focused tone for the day ahead.

Behaviour systems

The strong sense of belonging that our students have at Heanor Gate Spencer Academy is underpinned by the #TeamHeanor values. We are proud of the excellent standards of behaviour demonstrated by our students. Key elements to this success are positive relationships, high expectations, and a consistent approach to discipline.

To promote and celebrate positive behaviour, we will continue to implement our Achievement Pathway, which reflects our core Team Heanor values: Organisation, Respect, Unity, Pride, Integrity, and Resilience. Students will have the opportunity to earn rewards through celebration assemblies, reward trips, and by exchanging their Achievement Points at the end of the year.

Where expectations are not met, clear and consistent consequences will be applied in accordance with our Behaviour Pathway, helping us uphold the high standards we expect from all members of our school community.

Uniform and equipment

One of our core TeamHeanor values is Organisation, and a key part of this is ensuring students are properly equipped and dressed for school each day. We take great pride in our students being well-prepared, looking smart, and ready to learn.

It is imperative that your child attends school every day in full, correct uniform. Our uniform policy is clear and comprehensive, and we make no apology for upholding high standards of appearance. For detailed guidance on what is and isn't acceptable, please refer to the following link:

[!\[\]\(6059a5aa8b4ca7bb793408023d6c6e42_img.jpg\) Uniform guidance slides](#)

We would also like to remind you that the rules regarding skirts remain in place: skirts must be black, pleated, and worn to the knee.

Please ensure you do not send your child to school with any prohibited items of jewellery or make up. Failure to meet the correct uniform standards will result in your child needing to be collected from school to rectify any issues.

To support learning and maintain high expectations, it is essential that all students arrive at school fully equipped and ready to learn each day. As a minimum, every student is expected to bring the following items: a reading book, pen, pencil, ruler, maths set, and calculator.

In addition, all students are issued with a mini whiteboard and pen, which must be brought to school daily in their school bag. If these items are lost or need replacing, they are available to purchase at a small cost via reception or ParentPay.

Students should carry all required equipment and school books in an appropriate school bag. As part of our morning routine, equipment checks are carried out regularly, so we kindly ask for your support in ensuring your child packs their bag accordingly each day.

Year 9 is all about building on the foundations of the first two years of secondary school and we are looking forward to sharing this journey with our students.

Finally, we want to wish you all the best of summer breaks and we look forward to seeing everyone again in September.

Yours sincerely

Mr S Shaw

Achievement Leader - Year 8

Mrs H Stewart

Assistant Achievement Leader - Year 8