



July 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: End of term reflection & information for September

As we prepare for the summer, and focus begins to shift to September, it is important to reflect on the year that we have had. There have been many changes and improvements for the vast majority of our students. Year 9 students have shown an increased level of resilience and effort throughout the year in all of their lessons, reflected in many improved end of year reports. This is a trend that is only possible due to the unwavering support of parents and carers, and the close communication between yourselves and the Year 9 Achievement Team.

I have been particularly impressed with the maturity and dedication of Year 9 when choosing their GCSE and Vocational Pathways; they were respectful and thoughtful in their interviews with myself and SLT. Choosing the correct subjects is vital for examination success and for students to feel confident and happy in their school. Linked to this, we visited Derby University during Immersion Day and this gave students the chance to visualise and explore options for Post-16 study.

Sports Day and Spencer Superstars Day also provided a much needed opportunity for students to enjoy their 'downtime' at school and represent their houses well. Year 9 showcased their unity and positive attitudes well on both days.

Attendance

High attendance is vital for academic progress, and recent evidence shows that students who achieve the most also tend to have the highest attendance rates. Following the release of the government's guidance in September 2024, *'Working together to improve school attendance'*, I would like to encourage all parents and carers to maintain close communication with us to support regular school attendance. Excellent attendance not only leads to improved learning but is also recognised and celebrated throughout the year – something my year group has always embraced, and I am confident this will continue as they move into Year 10 and 11.

While we have seen a notable decrease in the number of students identified as persistently absent this year, we will continue to work alongside the Local Authority to address this issue, in accordance with the latest government guidance. Persistent absence has a direct impact on a student's academic performance and future prospects, so tackling it remains a top priority.

Punctuality is equally important and is a value we strive to instil in all our students. Please be reminded that the school gates close at 8:40am, ensuring pupils are present and ready to begin tutor time at 8:45am. Being on time supports effective learning and sets a positive tone for the rest of the day. In Year 10, tutor sessions will be particularly valuable as students begin their GCSE preparation, taking part in activities such as live English lessons, maths revision, and focused exam practice.

On a less positive note, Year 9 attendance has dipped significantly during the summer term, which is worrying due to the amount of term time holidays being taken but also if that trend continues in Year 10, a lot of students will miss key lessons to prepare them for Year 10 GCSE mock examinations - this is the first time students experience the testing nature of assessments using proper examination procedures and following the same routines we will follow for the end of Year 11 terminal exams. I urge all parents and students to ensure that attendance returns to its usual levels for this year group all throughout Year 10.

Behaviour

At Heanor Gate Spencer Academy, we are proud of the excellent standards of behaviour demonstrated by our students. This success is built on a strong foundation of positive relationships, high expectations, and a consistent approach to discipline.

To recognise and encourage positive behaviour, we will continue to follow our Achievement Pathway, which is closely aligned with our core Team Heanor values: Organisation, Respect, Unity, Pride, Integrity, and Resilience. Students will be rewarded through celebration assemblies, reward trips, and the opportunity to exchange their Achievement Points at the end of the year.

For those students who do not meet our expectations, appropriate sanctions will be applied in line with our Behaviour Pathway to ensure consistency and maintain our high standards, as I do not tolerate any lesson disruption or rudeness to staff or students.

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 essential that your child attends school 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:

[Uniform guidance slides](#)

Please be reminded that the rules regarding skirts remain in place: skirts must be black, pleated, and worn to the knee.

A reminder also that all Spencer Academy Trust schools operate some non-negotiable entry level standards that are consistent across all of the schools. These include:

1. No jewellery is to be worn, with the exception of one stud in each earlobe. No necklaces, bracelets, rings or other piercings (including tongue piercings or those in the helix or tragus) will be allowed. Clear piercings are not permitted.
2. students will be permitted to wear 'subtle makeup' but will not be permitted to wear nail varnish or polish. In addition, no extreme or unnatural hair colouring or styles will be permitted.

Year 10 and GCSE success

As we begin to prepare for Year 10 and planning for Year 11 examination success for our year group, I would like to ask you to remind your child of the following, as my priorities for all Year 10 students

- Focus from Week 1 - every lesson counts.
- LTRs as revision tools - they deserve your maximum effort and focus in every subject.
- Consolidation (completed at home) is equally as important as regular learning in classrooms
- Consistent completion of homework will result in better retention of information and improved recall of key facts.
- Attitude makes a big difference; Year 10 will test us but with resilience we can continue to improve and thrive.

Building on this, I will be releasing the 'Learning @' event upon our return in September - this recording will detail our year group specific priorities. The vast majority of Year 9 students showed improvements in their end of year reports. I will continue to push for the very best with our students so that end of Year 10 reports, which feature mock examination results, also reflect another year's improvements.

A reminder that on the final day of term, Wednesday 23 July 2025, students will finish school at 1pm. I hope that you all have a positive summer, with students enjoying the chance to relax and return to school ready for the beginning of Year 10, ready to learn from the very first lesson. My final message to all students is that for Year 10 and 11, progress and learning matter above all else.

Yours sincerely

Mr H Mann
Achievement Leader - Year 10

Miss L Weston
Assistant Achievement Leader - Year 10