



March 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

After a short but very busy half term, I hope you are enjoying the lighter days as we move into spring. This term, we held our second Ready to Read week, during which students engaged with reading at the start of every lesson. It was wonderful to see so many of them visiting the library, exchanging books with friends, and asking thoughtful questions about vocabulary and language choices. Encouraging a love of reading remains a key focus for us, and students demonstrated a genuine curiosity and enthusiasm for the texts they explored.

Developing a Year Group Culture

As we look ahead, we continue to place great importance on building a positive and cohesive Year 8 culture. Our aim is to create an environment where students feel a strong sense of belonging, take pride in their achievements, and support one another in their learning. Through consistent routines, shared expectations, and opportunities for teamwork and leadership, we are working to ensure that Year 8 is a community where every student feels valued and able to thrive. We appreciate your support in reinforcing these values at home.

Rewards

It is a pleasure to share the range of rewards available to students throughout the year at Heanor Gate. I hope you have already received messages from teachers and tutors celebrating your child's successes. Within Year 8, we also recognise a Student of the Week every Thursday during assembly. Winners receive vouchers and a certificate to acknowledge their effort, progress, and contributions around school.

At the end of each term, students are further celebrated in our rewards assemblies, where departments recognise outstanding effort and achievement. We also highlight exceptional commitment to our Team Heanor Values and acknowledge strong attendance. In addition, students earn A Points for positive behaviours that reflect our values; these can be exchanged for rewards at the end of the year.

Trip Day

Our Trip Day was launched this half term, offering students a fantastic opportunity to enjoy new experiences as a celebration of the school year. If you have not yet booked a place, please visit ParentPay to explore the available options.

Uniform Expectations

As we move towards warmer weather, I would like to take this opportunity to remind families of our uniform expectations. Students should continue to wear black school shoes, black trousers or a black pleated skirt, a white collared shirt, and the school blazer. Blazers are required every day, regardless of the weather.

Hairstyles should be of a natural colour with no extreme cuts. Students may wear a single stud in each earlobe; no additional or clear piercings are permitted. We have also noted an increase in students wearing rings, bracelets, and false lashes. These items are not allowed in school and will need to be removed. Jewellery will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day, and repeated issues may require parents to collect items from school. Can I please ask that you support us by ensuring that students are appropriately dressed each day.

Homework

As we continue to strengthen students' understanding and encourage healthy study habits, homework remains an important part of school life. Please find below the expected Year 8 homework schedule for Term 5.

 **Homework Calendar - Year 8 2025/26**

 **Extra Curricular.png**

I hope you and your family have a restful Easter break and return refreshed and ready for a new term on 13 April.

Yours sincerely

Mrs K Barlow
Achievement Leader - Year 8

Mrs K Preece
Assistant Achievement Leader - Year 8