



July 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

As we reach the end of another successful school year and the summer holidays approach, it is the perfect opportunity to reflect on the achievements, growth and experiences of our Year 9 students, whilst also looking ahead to the exciting challenges and opportunities that await them as they move into Year 10. It is difficult to believe that our students have now completed three years of secondary school. Over this year, they have continued to mature into responsible, confident and ambitious young people who have embraced the opportunities available to them both inside and outside the classroom. We are incredibly proud of what they have achieved and of the way they continue to embody the #TeamHeanor values on a daily basis.

Pathways

One of the most significant milestones for Year 9 this year has been the Pathways process. Students approached this important stage with maturity and determination, making excellent use of the additional guidance sessions that were provided in the lead-up to making their choices. They carefully reflected on their strengths, interests, future aspirations and potential career pathways before selecting their options.

We were particularly impressed with the way students engaged in their interviews with members of the Senior Leadership Team. They spoke confidently about their choices, demonstrated thoughtful consideration of their futures and showed a level of maturity that should give them great confidence as they move forward in their education. The recent Take Your Child to Work Day further enhanced this process, providing many students with valuable insights into different careers and helping them to appreciate the links between education, qualifications and future employment. As our students move into Year 10 and begin their GCSE studies, this engagement with future pathways becomes increasingly important. The decisions they have made this year represent an important step towards achieving their long-term ambitions.

Sports and Extracurricular

Year 9 students have also excelled in sport and many have represented the school with distinction throughout the year. A particular highlight was the District Athletics competition, where the Year 9 team played a significant role in helping the school secure an outstanding second-place finish overall. Even more impressively, Year 9 were crowned winners of their own age-group competition. Their success was built upon determination, teamwork and resilience, and we are extremely proud of these achievements. Sports Day was another memorable occasion and undoubtedly one of the highlights of the year. It was wonderful to see students embracing the opportunity to participate in healthy competition whilst proudly representing their house teams. As always, what stood out most was not simply the performances on the track and field, but the encouragement, support and sportsmanship shown towards fellow students throughout the day. Events such as these do a great deal to strengthen the sense of belonging and community that makes our school such a special place.

Outside of lessons, many Year 9 students have demonstrated an impressive commitment to extracurricular activities. We firmly believe that participation beyond the classroom helps students to develop valuable skills, broaden their horizons and build lasting memories. One area in which students have excelled is the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. The recent expedition represented the culmination of many months of preparation, teamwork and perseverance. Students involved should be immensely proud of their achievements and of the resilience they demonstrated throughout the process. Similarly, our students involved in the Combined Cadet Force have represented themselves and the academy with pride throughout the year. Their commitment, discipline and professionalism have been particularly evident during key events such as Remembrance Day, where they played an important role in helping us commemorate and reflect upon the sacrifices made by others.

Many other students have also shown tremendous commitment through their involvement in a plethora of clubs and activities. Whether attending Chess Club, Homework Club, Band, Netball, or one of the many other enrichment opportunities on offer, students have demonstrated enthusiasm and a willingness to contribute to school life. We would love to see even more Year 10 students taking advantage of these opportunities next year, as participation in extracurricular activities often provides some of the most rewarding experiences of a student's school career.

Looking ahead to Year 10

Alongside these memorable experiences, it is important that we recognise the progress students have made in their learning this year. Across the year group, students have continued to develop the habits required for academic success. They have shown resilience when faced with challenges, taken pride in their achievements and continued to improve their knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. As they move into the next stage of their education, these qualities will become more important than ever.

Year 10 marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter in our students' educational journeys. Students will begin studying their chosen Pathways subjects whilst continuing with their core curriculum subjects. This provides an excellent opportunity for them to embrace new challenges with confidence, develop deeper interests in the subjects they have chosen and take even greater pride in their achievements.

With these opportunities comes increased responsibility. Success at GCSE is built upon the positive habits that students develop over time. As students move into Year 10, it is essential that they take greater ownership of their own learning and recognise the important role that independent study plays in academic success. A key part of this will be the consistent completion of homework and consolidation tasks. We know from experience that students who engage fully with these activities place themselves in a far stronger position to achieve their potential when they reach the end of Year 11.

Equipment and Uniform

Another important priority for next year will be ensuring that students arrive fully equipped and ready to learn every day. Bringing the correct equipment not only prevents valuable learning time from being lost, but also helps students develop the organisational skills and personal responsibility that will serve them well in adult life. In particular, we would like to remind parents and carers that calculators form part of the essential equipment list and should be brought to school every day. Replacement calculators remain available to purchase through ParentPay if required.

Similarly, we will continue to place great importance on students taking pride in their appearance. Wearing uniform correctly and with pride reflects positively on both the individual and the wider school community. Maintaining high standards in this area helps foster a positive learning environment and reinforces the sense of belonging that is so important at Heanor Gate Spencer Academy. We would therefore ask for your continued support in ensuring that students arrive at school in full uniform and avoid situations where items need to be borrowed and which result in sanctions being issued. Further details can be found in Mr Jones communication.

Final thoughts

We will be in touch in September with further information about our virtual Learning@ event, which will be an important opportunity to ensure that students get off to the best possible start in Key Stage 4. The event will focus on how students, parents and carers, and school staff can work together to support success throughout the GCSE years.

We would like to thank you for your continued support throughout the year. The partnership between home and school plays a vital role in ensuring that students achieve their full potential, and we greatly appreciate the contribution that parents and carers make to this success. Year 10 promises to be an exciting and rewarding year. We have every confidence that our students will rise to the challenges ahead, continue to demonstrate the #TeamHeanor values and make the most of all the opportunities on offer to them..

Finally, we wish all our students and families a safe, restful and enjoyable summer break, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back in September as we begin the next stage of their journey as Year 10 students.

Yours sincerely



Mr S Shaw

Achievement Leader - Year 9



Mrs H Stewart

Assistant Achievement Leader - Year 9