



Friday 9 January 2026

Dear Parents/Carers

I would like first to wish you all a Happy New Year. I hope that you and your families enjoyed a restful break. It has been wonderful to welcome Year 8 back into school for 2026, and the cohort have hit the ground running, ready to make the most of this new term. Mr Lowdell and I held an assembly with Year 8 this Wednesday, focusing on the year ahead and the positive habits and choices we can all make. Year 8 were exemplary for assembly; I truly hope that they can take this message on board and have a fantastic 2026.

As we move into a new term, I would like to take the opportunity to reinforce our World Class Basics of uniform, attendance and punctuality with our Year 8 students. Standards in all of these areas are generally very strong, and it is important that we continue to hold the year group to this standard. Wearing the correct school uniform helps to promote pride in our community and supports high expectations, and we will be reminding students over the coming weeks of what this looks like through assemblies and tutor time. The student dress code is outlined in our uniform policy, available on the Uniform section of our website here: [Uniform Policy](#).

Similarly, punctuality and excellent attendance are key parts of being ready to learn; students will continue to be encouraged to arrive on site before 8.45am so they can begin the school day calmly and on time for lesson 1. It is my pleasure to be on duty at the Year 8 gate most mornings, and I am pleased to report how positive the year group are at the beginning of each day.

Looking ahead to Tutor Time during this half term, Year 8 will be exploring gambling in their PSHE content and will be doing specific sessions for Children's Mental Health Week. Students will also have opportunities to discover a range of apprenticeships that are available in the different subject areas during National Apprenticeship Week towards the end of this half term. We are very proud of our Careers provision, and it is never too soon for Year 8 to think seriously about their future choices.

This half term will see our next whole School Student Cabinet meeting where each year group get to feedback to the Senior Student Leaders in Year 13 on behalf of their cohort. I will be seeing Form Reps very soon and selecting Student Cabinet members to give feedback on behalf of the views collated from the whole year group. This is always an exciting opportunity and I am looking forward to hearing vocal, confident opinions from each Tutor Group.

Digital Literacy remains a key part of educating young people and we have just released our latest Online Safety Newsletter. This contains a wealth of information about Gaming, Instagram and Snapchat as well as links to further resources to help you to keep your children safe online. The newsletter is available on our school website here: [Online Safety Newsletter](#)

I also want to take this opportunity to thank all the parents and carers who have booked appointments at Year 8 Subject Evening, this Monday 12 January. This is a key opportunity review progress and attainment with both your children and their teachers. For those who haven't as yet made an appointment a reminder you can do so up to 9.00am on **Monday 12 January** via SchoolCloud. I will be conducting appointments myself, and I am looking forward to seeing all of you there. If you have any final issues or queries with booking appointments then please contact data@etmat.co.uk.

Thank you, as always, for your support of the school and of your children. I wish Year 8 all the very best for this term to come.

Yours sincerely,



Joseph Piper
Assistant Headteacher – Year 8 Lead