



Friday 4 September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you and your children had an enjoyable and restful summer break despite the heat!

We have been very excited to see our Year 9 students returning ready to embark on another year of growth and learning.

The theme for this year is that I am asking Year 9 to “Step up to the Plate” as they commence this crucial year of transitioning towards GCSEs. We will be talking about how students can strive to be the very best versions of themselves, how Year 9 is different to Year 8, how we will be preparing them for GCSEs and what they can do to support themselves to be successful. Mr Lowdell and I have already begun this conversation with students in our introductory assembly.

Year 9 Curriculum and Assessment

During Year 9 students continue to study a broad curriculum as we build on the knowledge and skills taught in Years 7 and 8. Alongside this there is a variety of extra-curricular opportunities including the opportunity to take part in the popular Duke of Edinburgh Award. This year is particularly key in beginning to prepare students for their Key Stage 4 studies and in the spring term students will be supported in selecting their options subjects, which will begin next September. As part of our curriculum journey, Year 9 is the start of the GCSE RE course that all students will sit examinations for in Year 10. Our results for this have been excellent for a number of years, and it provides a fantastic opportunity for students to develop their study habits in preparation for Year 11.

The core curriculum of Maths, English, Science and RE provides a fundamental basis for the future, and these occupy over 60% of curriculum time. As we work towards GCSEs for all students in these subjects, we are going to transition this year to setting targets, and monitoring progress and attainment in these subjects using the GCSE grades from 9-1. This will enable students to become used to these grades and enable even more detailed monitoring of progress. The banding system utilised in Year 7 and 8 will continue to be used across the rest of the curriculum.

A reminder that our Learning Journeys, which contain curriculum information for all subjects, are available on our website within the Learn and Curriculum tab, [Learning Journeys](#)

Tutor Time

In Year 9 PHSE and tutor time sessions students will be covering a variety of topics including extremism and terrorism and how we can combat them and Black History. Students will continue to broaden their literacy skills and their understanding of the world around them through the literacy sessions and current affairs quizzes.

We would like to remind all parents and carers that all attendance, behaviour, timetable, homework and data information for your child can be found via [Go4Schools](#) (G4S) and we very much encourage you to access this regularly. Tutors remain the first point of contact for students in Year 9 if you have any questions and contact details of your child’s tutor can be found in the [Meet the Team](#) section of our website.

Race for Life

Finally, we have a major event upcoming later this month that we are very excited about, and I know Year 9 will be too. On Friday 25 September, we are supporting the Cancer Research UK Race for Life through our annual whole school event (weather permitting). Starting in Tutor Time, students will have the opportunity to run or walk a marked-out route of our school field. Students can come into school in their NLS PE kit and NLS blazer and can wear a pink item of clothing and/or accessory. All students and staff are encouraged to donate £1, either in cash or via [ParentPay](#).

I would like to reiterate what a great pleasure it has been to welcome your child into Year 9, where they will go on to achieve great success with the help and encouragement of the support around them, both at school and at home.

I really look forward to working with you and your child this academic year.

Yours sincerely,



Joseph Piper

Assistant Headteacher – Year 9 Lead