

4 November 2025

Dear Parent / Carer

I am delighted to begin by reflecting on what has been a truly successful start to the academic year. Following the excellent set of exam results our students achieved over the summer, we entered this half-term with a real sense of pride and momentum. I am pleased to say that our Y11 and Y13 students have built on that success with maturity, enthusiasm, and a genuine commitment to their learning.

From the very first day back, they have come into school with purpose, positivity, and a strong readiness to engage – not only in the classroom, but in every aspect of school life. Their attitude has set a tone of ambition and respect across the whole community, and it has been a joy to see. I would like to thank you, as parents and carers, for the support you continue to give. We are looking forward to building on this excellent start as the year progresses.

Please note, good attendance is going to be crucial to your child's success this year. Education research suggests, a student who has near-perfect attendance is *almost twice as likely* to achieve key grade outcomes than a peer attending 90-95% of the time. Missing just 10 extra days a year can reduce those chances by around 50%. Every day in school matters!

Quality of Education (Ms Furness)

- Students are in the second week of their trial exams this week. We have been hugely impressed by the preparation put in by the majority of students and have had excellent feedback on behaviour from our invigilator team.
- Students will receive the results of these exams in their lessons. You will also receive the results in December once our data capture is complete. For Year 11 students, this will also include a comment from their form tutor.
- Year 11 students who study Art and Photography will have a full day mock exam on Wednesday 12 and Thursday 13 November 2025 respectively.
- Our GCSE Spanish students will undertake a speaking mock exam between Tuesday 25 and Thursday 27 November 2025.
- Year 11 Hospitality students will complete their real practical exam on one full day across the window from Monday 01 to Wednesday 10 December 2025. Please note, this is **not** a mock exam and makes up 60% of students' grades.
- **Our after school Get Exam Ready sessions for Year 11 start up again from Monday 24 November to Friday 12 December 2025, and then again from Tuesday 06 to Friday 16 January 2026.**

- The second round of trial exams begins on Wednesday 14 January 2026 for Year 13 and Monday 19 January 2026 for Year 11. This will be the final opportunity for students to practise ahead of their final exams starting in May 2026.

Dates for your diary:

- Year 13 Progress Evening - Tuesday 10 February 2026
- Year 11 X Progress Evening - Tuesday 24 February 2026
- Year 11 Y Progress Evening - Tuesday 03 March 2026

Personal Development and Extra-curricular Activities (Mrs Graham)

We have a whole host of extra-curricular opportunities available to our pupils - from physical activity to therapeutic mindfulness and everything in between! These are vital for our pupils' mental wellbeing and happiness as they help to boost mood, combat stress, promote relaxation, help social interaction and develop new skills - all of which will help them in later life. We would appreciate your support in encouraging your son/daughter to attend our extra-curricular clubs. For this half term we have planned trips to: Whitley Bay Playhouse to see A Christmas Carol, York and Seaton Delaval Hall (History trips), and a musical at the Tyne Theatre.

Behaviour and Attitudes (Mr Walton)

The first half-term was a very pleasing term for the vast majority of our student who have shown real resilience and determination to do well. Indeed, last half-term there were 42690 positive rewards points awarded to our students, more than double the amount that were awarded for the same period for these students when in Year 10. This really demonstrates what an excellent start our students have made. In particular, I would also like to express my delight with how well the young people have behaved during their trial exams and the seriousness with which they took these exams. Obviously, it is still early in the year, and we will have a second set of trial exams in the spring term which the young people will need to be revising for.

Once again, I would just like to draw attention to the importance of uniform. The vast majority of our students have returned in the correct uniform and with the correct equipment. The uniform list was sent out last term to all parents and can be seen clearly on our school website. In particular I'd like to remind everyone about jewellery and make-up. For safety, only studs should be worn and must be taken off in PE lessons; fake nails and excessive amounts of make-up are not permitted. Equipment as well is very important. For example, calculators. This has presented as a problem in the trial exams where young people have turned up without calculators to exams. Although we can provide them, it should be noted that the way that different calculators work means they can operate slightly differently; this can sometimes confuse students when in exams.

Meet the Tutor Evening (Mrs Orr)

Thank you to all parents and carers who attended our recent Meet the Tutor evening. It was a pleasure to discuss your child's progress and achievements with you. If you were unable to attend and would like to talk about your child's attitude to learning report, please contact the school office to arrange a convenient telephone appointment with either your child's Tutor or Year Leader. We value your ongoing support and look forward

to continuing to work together to help your child achieve their best in this important exam year.

Sixth Form (Mrs Orr)

UCAS applications are now well underway, and we are delighted to share that those students who have already submitted their applications have already begun receiving offers from universities. A reminder that the internal deadline for UCAS submissions is **Monday 1st December 2025**, which allows time for school checks and references to be completed before the national deadline. Any applications completed after this date are not guaranteed to be sent to UCAS before the external deadline.

Alongside this, students are exploring employment and apprenticeship options through their tutorial programme and are encouraged to book an appointment with our Connexions Adviser, Angela Towes, at any time for personalised careers guidance. This week we are delighted to welcome Newcastle University, who will be speaking to students about their Partners Programme – a widening participation scheme that supports eligible students through an online module and short summer school, and can result in a reduced offer (typically two grades lower) for their chosen course. In the coming weeks, TyneMet College will also be visiting to discuss Higher Technical Qualifications. Later this half term, students will have the valuable opportunity to take part in mock interviews with local employers, helping them to build confidence and prepare for their next steps beyond Sixth Form.

Other key dates:

- Students will be having their School Christmas Dinner on Wednesday 10th December 2025
- Christmas Community Event – Thursday 11th December 2025 @ 6:30pm
- Friday 19th December 2025 – school closes for the Christmas Holidays. As in previous years, students will be dismissed around 1:50pm
- Monday 5th January 2025 – Teacher Training Day
- Tuesday 6th January 2025 – school re-opens for the Spring Term

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Best wishes

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deon'.

Deon Krishnan
Headteacher