



Howden
School



THE CONSORTIUM
ACADEMY TRUST

Howden School
Derwent Road
Howden
DN14 7AL
Tel 01430 430448

office@howdenschool.net

www.howdenschool.net

08 December 2023

Dear Parents and carers,

It was good to see so many musicians performing on Monday evening, with a variety of instruments and plenty of flutes. It is such a lovely instrument to listen to so well done to everyone who performed and my thanks to all the proud parents and carers who turned up. I personally think learning a musical instrument - including how to use your voice – is a fantastic thing to do as you never forget, even if you may get a bit rusty if you don't practice. What I did enjoy was watching a number of parents sat bursting with pride.

Many thanks for your support in ensuring students are wearing the correct uniform. When I went round the ACE period Tuesday morning and into assembly everyone looked smart with just a couple of exceptions – which were sorted quickly. I did the same on Wednesday morning period 4 and again students looked smart. I often call into lessons to check everything is ok and will continue to do so as it gives me a good feel as to how the day is going.

Year 10 parents' evening was well attended which was pleasing to see. It does make for a long day for staff, not only on the evening itself but also all the work that goes into the preparation, so I hope it was a good use of your time as well.

Almost every week I mention attendance, often trying to find different angles to approach the same subject but no matter how I frame it, it comes down to the same thing. Year 11 attendance should be the highest yet for the first time in my headship, going back to 2005, that is far from the case. If a child is not in school, the next day is more stressful as they are going into a lesson behind everyone else. What does help, reading various studies, is the determination of parents or carers to send their child in, even if they are not feeling one hundred percent. When I was in Africa looking at schools, I met some students who had to walk five miles there and back to go to school which they did with pleasure as they saw education as a privilege. I personally think that when something is free - which education is not but to the child it appears to be the case – then it is not valued so much. Thank you to those who always send their child in, they will benefit from it and they will thank you when they get older. Sometimes as a parent, you have to make difficult decisions and if that is getting your child out of bed and into school, then please do it as the link between outcomes and attendance is incredibly strong. To support year 11 and actively encourage them being in, we are now going to give extra weight to attendance in their Prom Passport as from Monday.

In the winter months at Howden the amount of outdoor space for students is quite restricted. I always get very jealous when I visit new schools and see the vast expanse of field and newly designed corridors and classrooms. The hard playing area is quite limited and I have to say that this is the first school I have worked at which seems to have a road running up to some classrooms. Having said all that, it is quirky and we get plenty of fresh air when moving about. Previously we closed the field but to give students a bit more space, we will try to use the field, weather permitting not for playing football but to socialise. Hopefully this will help.

Looking ahead to the next two weeks we have:

13 December - Flu vaccination catch up session

14 December - Christmas dinner & Bite back initiative (Y7 to Y9)

21 December - Reward Events

21 December 3pm - School closes for Christmas

Tuesday 9 January - School reopens to students

I hope you have a great weekend.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Nixon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr Jim Nixon
Headteacher