

Dear Parent/Carer

It has been wonderful to welcome Year 11 back to school, for what is the most important year of their educational journey so far. The year group have returned with a quiet commitment to school and are clearly focused on what is needed to make the necessary progress to be successful in the 2026 summer examinations.

I wanted to write to you early in the term to provide an insight into the types of support and guidance we will be providing for you and your child over the coming year, but before this I would like to draw your attention to the stark link between attendance and outcomes.

Our Year 11 results for 2025 were very much a tale of two cohorts. The cohort that attended well performed extremely well and those who had higher absence rates performed below expectation. The data below shows just how important attendance is. Attainment 8 is the combined total of all grades a child achieves, for example if a child achieves 8 Grade 4s their Attainment 8 score would be 32 or if a student achieved 8 grade 6s, their Attainment 8 score would be 48. The data below shows the average score for cohorts with different rates of absence.

Attendance	98% +	95% +	90% +	Less than 90%
Attainment 8	51.2	47.9	44.1	31.0

The link between attendance and outcomes is stark and this has been the case at John Spence and in schools nationally for a number of years.

We have delivered this message to the year group and will continue to do so, but on those mornings where your child isn't feeling their best it is so important to get them into school and remind them that absence will have an impact on the exam outcomes in August 2026.

If your child is not in school not only are they missing 5 hours of learning, but they will also not be able to access the various opportunities for support that we have in place for them.

As a brief summary, this year your child will access:

- Morning intervention/revision sessions during form time across a range of subjects (**arriving to school at 8.30am for an 8.35am start is therefore incredibly important this year**)
- Compulsory lesson 6 sessions (3-4pm) in the spring term
- Specific and targeted intervention sessions for maths, English and science in school time
- English & Maths Booster Days in the summer term
- PSRE curriculum which covers study skills, exam stress / anxiety, and face mindsets
- 1:1 meeting with connexions to discuss post 16 options
- Ongoing support for students with SEN
- Exam support (including for anxiety where needed) can be individual or in groups
- A range of internal and external support available bespoke to individual needs
- Their first port of call is their form tutors and their Head of Year, Mr Crowe

Headteacher Mr Jonathan Heath

John Spence Community High School, Preston Road, North Shields, NE29 9PU.

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Please be aware that Y11 will have their first set of **Snapshot exams from 13th - 17th October**. The timetable for this will be shared with the students on Monday 29th September and will be shared with parents via email / the school website. On the timetable will also be details of the specific topics the students need to revise for each subject. To accompany these, subjects will be setting specific revision materials by Monday 29th September to support your child with their independent revision.

In the meantime, please do get in touch with Mr Crowe or myself if you have any questions or concerns regarding the coming year.

Best wishes

James Redpath
Assistant Headteacher

Headteacher Mr Jonathan Heath
John Spence Community High School, Preston Road, North Shields, NE29 9PU.

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