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Headteacher:  
Simon Hill BSc MA NPQH



8<sup>th</sup> July 2008

Dear Parents

I'm writing to you all about two pieces of important news. I'm also going to take this opportunity to bring you up to date on staffing and a couple of other bits of information.

### UNISON & UNITE national strike – 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> July 2008

UNISON & UNITE are holding a twenty-four hour national strike next week on Wednesday and Thursday. This is over their pay claim and will affect most schools throughout the country.

As Darton High School's premises staff, members of the kitchen staff & most of our other support staff are members of UNISON; we have no choice other than to close the school to our students for both days. This is a consequence of having conducted a risk assessment to determine whether or not we can safely operate the school and maintain a duty of care to your child(ren).

I'm really sorry about this. I recognise the inconvenience this will cause you and your family but our primary concern is to safeguard your child(ren).

But please note that the two-day residential visit to Leicester University for Y9 & Y10 Aim Higher students will go ahead as normal as this isn't reliant on UNISON members. This will depart from school on Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> and return to school on Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> as planned.

It is important that you confirm receipt of this information by completing and returning the attached tear off slip to school ASAP this week.

**School will open as normal on Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> July.**

### Y9 SATs results

This piece of information only concerns parents of Y9 students.

You will probably have read the news concerning the delays in publishing the results of this summer's English, maths & science SATs results. You can read about this on the BBC website: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/7489510.stm>.

Because of problems with marking we have been told that most secondary schools will not receive these vital results until the last week of term at the earliest. This is a great disappointment, especially to the students who must be very frustrated about the delay.

If we get the results into school before the end of term we will get them home to you straight away. However it is looking increasingly likely that they will come into school over the six weeks holiday, in which case we will issue the results at the start of next term in September.



## Parents' Forum

Next term sees the launch of the Darton High School Parents' Forum. This group of parents will meet a few times a term and it will be an opportunity for the Headteacher and Chair of Governors to discuss any matters directly with parents.

The first open meeting is to be held at school on **5:30 on Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> September 2008**. All parents are warmly invited to this meeting to raise any issue that concerns them. Refreshments will be available. Please put the date into your diary now. It would be good to see you.

## Staffing for September

We have excellent news. When I wrote to you in the middle of June we were making good progress in appointing teachers for next term. Last week we appointed two maths teachers and a languages teacher. This means we are now fully staffed for September and we can look forward to an improved quality of teaching and a lot less use of supply. I'm sure you'll be as delighted as we are.

## E-mail communication

We want to experiment with the use of e-mails as a way of communicating with parents. We are planning to send out all letters (such as this one) and newsletters via e-mail from next term. If you would like to take advantage of this please send a simple e-mail to [d.clapham@barnsley.org](mailto:d.clapham@barnsley.org) with "Letters" as the subject. David Clapham is our Data & Resources Assistant and he'll ensure you are added to our distribution list.

Finally if you have any questions or comments about what I have written please do get in touch with me. You can do this by writing to the school (Churchfield Lane, Darton, Barnsley, S75 5EW) or phoning the school (01226 382568) and asking to speak to me. Alternatively you can e-mail me on [s.hill@barnsley.org](mailto:s.hill@barnsley.org).

With very best wishes. Have a good summer.

Yours faithfully



Simon Hill.  
Headteacher.

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Please return this slip to school (via your child's Form Tutor) by **Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> July**, at the latest.

Following completion of the risk assessment for Darton High School, the governors will be closing the school on the 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> July 2008.

Name of parent / carer: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of child(ren): \_\_\_\_\_ Form(s): \_\_\_\_\_

I confirm that I am aware that the school will be closed on the 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> July 2008 and that I have made arrangements for my child(ren).

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_