

SJH/JY

15th June 2009

Dear parent/carer

What I want for your child

As Headteacher of Darton High School I want the school to offer the best possible education for all local young people. This includes ensuring that each boy & girl learns to the best of their ability and achieves excellent examination results at the end of Year 11. It also includes insisting on the finest behaviour and helping them develop into caring & polite young adults. Anyone who has seen me working with students will realise how important this is to me. Amongst other things, I will not tolerate rudeness or bad language.

Everyone who attends Darton is expected to conform to good standards of behaviour, including wearing our school uniform.

I know from our annual survey and speaking to many of you, that the vast majority of Darton High School parents want exactly the same things. You want what I want: High academic standards and good behaviour. I also know that you want the school to enforce its policies. For example you want me to ensure that all students look smart and are appropriately dressed.

Uniforms ...

Just over a week ago (Monday, 8th June), we 'tightened' our monitoring of student uniform, as we were aware that an increasing number of students were coming to school without the full uniform.

On that Monday, we spoke to every student not in uniform and made a decision to send some of them straight home to change into the correct dress. Unfortunately a number of students were sent home without the school first contacting their parents; this was a mistake, for which I apologise. We will do our utmost to prevent this happening again.

However, we remain committed to keeping working on improving student uniforms.

Our expectations for uniform have not changed. They are described in the school prospectus we send to the parents of all prospective students. They are also illustrated in the DVD we sent to all parents last September. Other places you can check on our uniform are in the Student Planner and on our website (<http://www.dartonhigh.org/schoolinfo/uniform.php>).

As I write this (Friday, 12th), we have just held a Bretton House assembly. The two-hundred or so students in the assembly looked superb. To my knowledge, only one student was not in full school uniform, and they were spoken to immediately. Clearly our 'tightening' is working. Thank you for your support.

What's happening in school?

If your only source of information about Darton High School is the Darton Edition of the Barnsley Chronicle, you could be forgiven for having concerns about the school. However the reality is much more encouraging. Two particular highlights are worth mentioning:

- Each spring we carry out a two-week review of the quality of teaching in the school. We look at every teacher in every department. This detailed piece of monitoring is reported to the Governors and they naturally want to know if the school is improving. For the third year in a row, the quality of teaching has continued to go up. We now have 70% of all lessons graded Good or Outstanding, using Ofsted's grading system. That is a big change since I became Headteacher in 2005 when we first started to monitor lesson quality. I know that most of you have realised this through the positive comments you now make about our teachers.
- In the summer of 2008 we achieved the school's best-ever GCSE results. The summer of 2009 looks set to be even better still. We are now very confident that our Y11 students will leave Darton with very good results indeed. This is not a matter of hope; we have already seen some of the results and they are superb. We think when you read the results in a few months time you will be impressed.

Arrangements for the last day of term – Monday, 20th July 2009

The last day of the academic year, that is Monday, 20th July, will be a special one. The morning will be a Sports & Activities Day. This will involve a range of individual and team competitions; with the House Cup at stake. Students will be required to be in their Games Kit for the whole day.

For most students the school day will finish at 1:45 after lunch and a short afternoon Form Period. Unfortunately, the bus companies can't send the school buses until the normal time at 3:25. If you would like us to look after your son or daughter until that time, we can easily do so. Please simply indicate that on the tear off slip at the end of this letter.

Finally

It's been a year of hard work and steady progress for all at Darton High School. Can I thank you again for the way you have worked with the school to ensure your son or daughter achieves their potential. Partnership is part of a good school. We feel we have an excellent partnership with you.

I hope you have a good summer and I look forward to meeting you in September.

Yours faithfully,

Simon Hill

Headteacher

Please complete and return to your child's Form Tutor by Monday, 22nd June 2009

Name of student _____ Form _____ Form Tutor _____

Please carefully delete one of the following statements:

On Monday, 20th July 2009, my child can leave school at 1:45 / my child needs to be supervised until 3:25

Signed _____ Relationship to student _____