



'RESPECT RESPONSIBILITY EXCELLENCE'

# NEWRY HIGH SCHOOL

September, 2017

Dear Parent / Carer

## **New Academic Year 2017 – 2018**

I very much hope that you and your family had a good summer break. It has been a pleasure to start the academic year and welcome our new Year 8 and Year 13 students. All students returned with a very positive approach and it is our intention to build on this.

Our priorities this academic year all relate to ensuring that the students continue to enjoy their school life and achieve their full potential. All those associated with the school know and understand the high expectations that are set on a daily basis. These standards and expectations cover all aspects of school life from effort, work-rate and ethos to conduct, behaviour and manners. We will continue to have a strong emphasis on the basics within the school as the climate and ethos for learning is fundamental to success. We want to ensure that we make a good start to the new school year. Therefore, we ask parents and carers to ensure:

- your son / daughter is dressed in full and appropriate school uniform, paying particular attention to the standards required in terms of hair styles, jewellery and footwear.
- your child arrives at school on time, is fully equipped and ready to learn

I am enclosing information which I hope will be of general interest and of help during the year ahead. In order to help improve our communication with parents and pupils we have developed our own **Newry High School app**. **This app will be our main form of communication so it is vital that parents download the app**. An information leaflet is enclosed. Please note dates & times of parents' afternoons. Parental attendance is vital in ensuring we are all working together to support student progress. Thank you for your continued support and I look forward to working with you throughout this coming academic year.

Yours faithfully

Mr I Brown  
Principal

## General Information for Parents

### New Staff

We are very pleased to welcome Mrs E Burlow (science), Mrs W Bennet (maths) and Mr Toman (geography & motor vehicle studies) who have joined us as permanent members of staff. We would also like to welcome back Mrs G Spiers (business, IT & RE) following her career break.

### Homework

We consider homework to be a vital part of a pupil's educational development and an important link between home and school. Homework promotes and develops independent learning and forms an integral part of learning and teaching within Newry High School. **The homework timetable has been issued to all pupils and copies are available in policies on the downloads area of our website.**

Please support your son or daughter by discussing the homework set, checking it upon its completion and monitoring the quality of the work done. **Please also ensure you sign the pupil planner each week.** If you have any concerns relating to homework, please do not hesitate to contact the appropriate teacher or Head of Department or Head of Year. The responsibility for the completion of homework rests with the pupil. **A supervised homework club is available for all students from Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September onwards (Monday – Thursday 3.00pm - 4.15pm)**

### Attendance and Punctuality

**School starts each day with registration at 8.35am.** I would be grateful if you could ensure your son or daughter aims for full attendance and is punctual throughout the year. We expect all pupils to maintain an attendance **rate greater than 95%**. Please be aware that if a pupil's attendance falls below 95% we will take appropriate action and if a pupil's attendance falls below 85% we are legally obliged to inform the Educational Welfare Officer.

### School clubs and activities

Information about the sporting clubs we have on offer at lunch time and after school have been circulated to the pupils. We are also in the process of organising a range of additional activities to take place after school this will include:

- Eco / Science club
- Cookery Club
- Golf
- Table Tennis
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Art enterprise
- Range of GCSE revision classes e.g. Maths, Science etc.

This information will be made available to students & parents by the end of next week.

### Detention

I would specifically draw your attention, specifically to the following arrangements. After school detention will take place on a **Tuesday and Wednesday from 3.00pm to 4.00pm**

If your child is put into detention and misses the school transport it will be your responsibility to make the appropriate travel arrangements to get your child home. A minimum of 24 hours notice will be given for detentions.

## **Non-Smoking Policy**

The school is a non-smoking site. Pupils must not bring cigarettes or smoking related equipment to school this includes e-cigarettes. Any student who breaks this rule will automatically receive a letter home and an after school detention. A second offence will automatically lead to a parental interview and be followed by agreed disciplinary action e.g. time in supervised support.

## **School Calendar**

A final version of the school calendar for this term is enclosed for your information. The calendar provides details on key activities throughout the first term. Please take careful note of the key dates as there have been a number of changes to the provisional calendar previously issued.

## **Mobile Phones & Electronic Devices Policy**

The widespread ownership of electronic devices and mobile phones among young people requires that all staff, students, and parents take steps to ensure that they are used responsibly at school. It is the responsibility of students who bring electronic devices and mobile phones to school to abide by the school policy. Parents should also be aware and understand the policy if their child takes an electronic device or mobile phone to school. The policy is available on our website. If you would prefer a hard copy please contact the main office.

Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school reception remains a vital and appropriate point of contact as it will ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in an appropriate way.

Unless permission is granted by a member of staff, mobile phones and electronic devices belonging to students **should not be** used to make calls, send SMS / text messages, surf the internet, take photos or use any other application during school lessons and other educational activities. Any student/s caught using a mobile phone to cheat in exams or assessments will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Principal and/or examination board.

It is forbidden for students to use their mobile phones and electronic devices to take videos and pictures to denigrate and humiliate any member of the school community, and/or to send the pictures to other students or upload it to a website for public viewing. This includes using mobile phones to photograph or film any member of the school community without his/her consent. Students using mobile phones to bully other students will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Principal. It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. If appropriate the PSNI will be contacted.

To reduce the risk of theft during school hours, students who carry mobile phones are advised to keep them well concealed and not 'advertise' they have them. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.

## **Car drop off and collection points**

Traffic in and out of the school can be very busy, especially at the end of the school day. The safety of our students is our primary concern therefore can I kindly remind parents:

- to drive cautiously when entering and exiting the school premises
- the speed limit is 5 miles per hour
- cars will be stopped from exiting the school site as the buses leave (3.05 approximately)
- parking is not allowed in the yellow grids near the bus park
- use the drop off area as appropriate when collecting or dropping off pupils

## **School Contacts**

I am conscious that parents are not always clear as to which member of staff to contact on particular issues. The first point of contact on many issues is likely to be your son or daughter's form tutor. Heads of Year are also likely to be points of contact on overall progress and general issues:

Head of Year 8 – Mr D Strong  
Head of Year 10 – Mrs S Edgar  
Head of Year 12 – Mr P Sands

Head of Year 9 – Mr G Millar  
Head of Year 11 – Mr C McKee  
Head of Years 13/14 – Mrs S Young

If the matter relates solely to a subject specific issue, then it would be more appropriate to contact the relevant subject teacher or subject Head of Department. Queries on specific issues should be addressed as follows: -

- External examinations – Mrs C Lutton or Miss J Patterson
- EMAs – Mrs S Young
- Careers – Mr C McKee
- SEN – Mrs H Shields

It may, on occasion, be easier to contact the school via email rather than any other form of communication. The main e-mail address which should be used is [info@newryhigh.newry.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@newryhigh.newry.ni.sch.uk). Your e-mail will then be forwarded to the appropriate member of staff. The school's website holds a wide range of information relating to school activities and I would encourage everyone to explore it.

Should you, at any time wish to speak with or meet with Mr Melaniphy or me, please do not hesitate to contact us. If we are not immediately available, please speak with Mrs Cathy Armstrong, Executive Officer or Mrs Dawn Dunne, Admin Officer who will happily arrange an appointment.

## **School Development Plan**

The school development plan is a vital document that drives school improvement and change. We have 4 key priorities:

1. **No child is left behind**
2. **Effective Pedagogy, Practice & Curriculum**
3. **Happy, Safe & Secure**
4. **School at the heart of the community**

All School priorities to be led, driven & managed within a culture that:

## **Supports, Challenges & Celebrates**

The 2017-18 school development plan will be available to all parents on our website from November 2017.

## School Fund

Every year we invite parents to make a contribution towards the School Fund. This fund is used for providing the many 'extra' facilities and activities from which all our pupils benefit, but are beyond the essential costs which are all met through the SELB's school budget allocation. Without the school fund many of the activities below would have to be cancelled

We need it to fund / subsidise:

- School minibus
- School productions
- Prizes / rewards
- Activity Day
- School trips
- Extra-curricular activities

**£20 per pupil or £25 per family**

**The deadline for School Fund contributions is 22<sup>nd</sup> September**

We guarantee the fund will be spent directly on supporting activities involving our pupils. The accounts are externally audited every year by the Governing Body.

Please return your contributions via the Drop Box outside the main office and a receipt will be issued. Cheques should be made payable to Newry High School.

The generosity shown by parents in previous years certainly has made a difference so we would like to thank everyone very much for their previous contribution and we thank you in anticipation of your support.

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Please tear off and return.

Pupil's Name ..... Form .....

Please delete as appropriate.

1) Please find enclosed £..... towards the School Fund

2) I do not wish to make a contribution to the School Fund

Signed: ..... (Parent/Guardian)