



New Mills School

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Friday 13th February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of this half term, I would like to thank you for your continued support and take the opportunity to share some of the many positives from across the school.

It has been another busy and productive period, and I am delighted by the engagement, effort, and achievements shown by students across all year groups. Our Year 7 students thoroughly enjoyed their recent dropdown day, which was very well received and reflected the curiosity and enthusiasm we hope to nurture. Across the school, the majority of students continue to demonstrate positive attendance and punctuality, and we have seen strong levels of engagement in after-school activities - clear examples of students embracing our values of **Thinking Big** and showing **Team Spirit**.

Year 8 students along with others from our student council benefited from the opportunity to meet and question our local MP, Jon Pearce, gaining valuable insight into the role and responsibilities of public service. This experience encouraged thoughtful discussion about citizenship and responsibility - very much aligned with our aim of supporting students to **Do the Right Thing** both in and beyond school.

Year 9 students have completed their formal assessments with maturity and focus, begun the important options process, and demonstrated excellent leadership skills while supporting primary school sports events. These are important milestones as they start shaping their futures and continue developing confidence and responsibility.

Year 10 students have begun coursework in many of their option subjects and have shown great effort and commitment. Several students volunteered their lunchtime to meet with Jon Pearce to discuss local issues, including campaigning to improve road safety along Church Road. Students also engaged extremely well with the visiting "Big Red Bus", exploring post-16 courses and apprenticeships, and enrichment participation has been strong - particularly in the new darts club, where congratulations go to George L for winning the overall tournament. Behaviour across the year group continues to be positive.

Year 11 students approached their second round of mock examinations with a superb attitude, and their commitment to attending Period 6 sessions after school has been outstanding. It has also been fantastic to see so many students securing college offers and confidently planning their next steps after NMS - an important milestone that reflects both their hard work and ambition. We are extremely proud to celebrate individual achievement beyond the classroom as well — huge congratulations to Poppy B, who finished second in the Derbyshire Schools Cross Country Trials and will represent Derbyshire at the England Schools Championships.

Across the school, enrichment continues to flourish, with unprecedented numbers signing up for the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Careers engagement has been enhanced through events linked to apprenticeship pathways, and we wish those travelling on the Italy ski trip over half term a safe and enjoyable experience. As we reach the halfway point of the academic year, it is wonderful to see rehearsals underway for the school show and our transition work with Year 6 pupils already progressing well as we prepare to welcome them in September.

Thank you again for your ongoing support and partnership. I hope students enjoy a well-earned break, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back refreshed and ready for the next half term on Monday 23rd February for 8.25am.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'H. Watts'.

Heather Watts
Headteacher