



New Mills School

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Headteacher:
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Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of another busy and successful term at New Mills School, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and partnership. It has been a term full of learning, achievement and community spirit, and I am incredibly proud of how our students and staff have lived out our school values of Think Big, Do the Right Thing and Team Spirit each and every day.

Personal Development and Careers

This term has been an exciting and enriching one for careers education at New Mills School. Students have benefited from inspiring college assemblies, which have sparked curiosity and ambition, alongside our bustling Careers Fair where a wide range of future pathways were explored.

Year 10 students have begun their work experience journey, an important step in developing real-world skills and confidence, while Year 11 students have been busy preparing applications and considering their next steps into college, apprenticeships and beyond. With further university visits, employer workshops and tailored guidance planned for the spring and summer terms, there are many opportunities ahead to help our students discover and achieve their ambitions.

Looking ahead, the spring term will also mark the start of the options process for Year 9, an important milestone as students begin to shape the next stage of their education. We will ensure families are fully supported and informed throughout this process.

Attendance

Attendance continues to be highlighted nationally as a significant concern, and we know how closely linked regular school attendance is to academic success and future outcomes. Thank you to all families for your ongoing commitment to sending students into school wherever possible.

Our attendance initiatives this term, including *No Days Off in November Bingo* and the *12 Days of Christmas*, have been very successful, and a further initiative will launch in January.

As a reminder, the Government asks all schools to share the NHS guidance on when children are too unwell to attend school. The following resource may be helpful when making decisions about attendance: "Is my child too ill for school?" – NHS ([Is my child too ill for school? - NHS](#)).

Supporting Families

We are extremely grateful to Youth Matters for their kind donation of food hampers to support families over the Christmas period. If you are experiencing difficulties and would like to access additional support, please see the options below:

- Household Support Fund – This government scheme can help with food, essential items, or energy and water bills. The school can apply on behalf of eligible families. If you would like support with an application, please contact safeguarding@newmillsschool.co.uk.
- New Mills Helping Hands Foodbank – Serving New Mills and surrounding areas. Contact: 07425 177999 (text or call-back service) or helpinghandsnewmills@gmail.com. They can also be found on Facebook at *HHNewmillsFoodbank*.

Celebrating Our Year Groups from our Year Managers:

Year 7

What a fantastic first term of “big school”! Year 7 students have:

- Become High Peak Cross Country Champions (both boys’ and girls’), with outstanding performances from Teddy Morgan and Lexi Jodrell
- Enjoyed a very successful residential visit to Gulliver’s
- Forged new friendships
- Shown excellent engagement in extra-curricular activities, particularly Science and Dance clubs
- Achieved the highest attendance in the school

We are incredibly proud of how confidently they have settled into secondary school life.

Year 8

Year 8 students have approached the academic year with confidence and enthusiasm. They have adapted well to new expectations and routines, including changes to teaching groups, showing maturity and resilience as they continue to develop as learners.

Year 9

Well done to Year 9 for such a positive start. It has been wonderful to see students settling into new groupings, engaging enthusiastically with new topics and demonstrating growing independence. We have also celebrated excellent sporting achievements, including strong performances in cross country and impressive teamwork from the girls’ football team.

Year 10

Year 10 students have made an excellent transition into their GCSE courses, approaching KS4 with maturity and focus. Behaviour has been outstanding, making Year 10 the second-best year group in the school, and students consistently demonstrate positive attitudes to learning across lessons.

Year 11

Year 11 have made a strong and promising start to this crucial year. College visits have supported students in planning their next steps, and they represented the school superbly at our Open Evening. Sporting achievements have continued, with excellent performances in netball and strong attendance at football practice. Students have also engaged enthusiastically with morning and Period 6 interventions, recognising the importance of sustained effort as they prepare for mock examinations and beyond.

Whole School Highlights

Across the school, we are delighted with how well students have settled this term. It has been a pleasure to see so many arriving each day on time, fully equipped and ready to learn, helping to create a calm and purposeful learning environment.

We have also enjoyed introducing our new rewards badges, and it has been wonderful to see students wearing them with pride in recognition of their effort, achievement and positive contributions to school life.

Fond Farewells

As the term draws to a close, we also take time to say farewell and thank you to several valued members of staff who are moving on at the end of this term.

After over 22 years of dedicated service, we say goodbye to Mr Worsley, who has been a hugely influential figure at New Mills School. As a PE teacher and Primary SSCO for many years, Mr Worsley has taught, coached and supported *thousands* of students during his time with us. He has inspired generations of young people to value teamwork, perseverance, fair play and resilience. Mr Worsley's commitment to school sport and students will be remembered fondly by students, staff and families alike. We are grateful for his dedication and the contribution he has made to our school community over more than two decades and we wish him well in his new Head of Department role.

We also thank Mr Key, who leaves after over five dedicated years as a Computer Science teacher. Mr Key has supported students through an increasingly important and evolving subject area. Mr Key has also been instrumental in developing our games clubs in the library at lunchtime and we wish him every success in his new role - along with a much shorter commute!

Finally, we say goodbye to Mrs Sue Perkins, our much-loved Catering Manager, who is retiring from Derbyshire County Council after 30 years of devoted service at New Mills School! Sue has been a central part of daily life at New Mills School, always ensuring students and staff were well fed and well cared for. We extend our heartfelt thanks to her for her years of commitment and for leading the catering team in providing a wonderful Christmas lunch for our school community last week.

We wish all three colleagues every happiness and success in the next chapter of their journeys, and we thank them sincerely for the difference they have made to New Mills School.

Finally, I would like to wish you and your families a restful and enjoyable break. Thank you once again for your continued support. We look forward to welcoming all students back on Tuesday 6th January, ready to build on this strong start and continue living our values of Think Big, Do the Right Thing and Team Spirit.

With best wishes,



Heather Watts

Headteacher

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#thinkbig #dotherightthing #teamspirit #thisisnewmills



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School**