



September 2018

## Welcome to Year 8

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you and your child have had a safe and enjoyable summer. I am extremely pleased to be continuing as your child's Head of Year and look forward to building on the success the year group had in Year 7. I have been really impressed with how our Year 8 students have conducted themselves since returning to school and their positive attitude, work rate in lessons and determination to do well has been admirable. I trust that by now your child has settled back into life at school and is comfortable and confident with how the school operates, the expectations that are placed on them, and that they've coped well with what can be a challenging transition from primary to secondary school.

This year is an extremely important one as we start to build momentum towards GCSE options choices in Year 9. GCSE studies and Year 11 can seem a very long way off, and whilst 4 years is a substantial amount of time, it is crucial that your child makes the most of every opportunity in lessons to develop understanding and accelerate their progress. The knowledge and skills that they acquire at this stage underpin everything they will learn for their GCSEs and it is true that excellent GCSE results are forged in Key Stage 3.

Of course, it goes without saying that students need to be in school in order for them to make excellent progress. Sadly, for every 5% of absence, on average a child drops 1 GCSE grade per subject. At Lymm High School, we strive for every student to have attendance above 97%. Whilst we understand that illness is sometimes unavoidable, we urge parents to consider carefully whether their child can be sent into school and wherever possible schedule medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. Often differing to the advice from primary schools, we are more than happy to have students in school if they are feeling slightly 'under the weather' and we can support them in Student Services if necessary. Sending them into school means they don't miss out on crucial lessons and do not fall behind their peers. If a student's attendance drops to 90% (termed a Persistent Absentee), they will have missed approximately 95 hours of lessons by the end of the year – a not insignificant amount of learning, and this will severely harm your child's chances of success.

Whilst academic achievement and rigour is of utmost importance, we see our role as being more than that. It is for that reason that we place great value on ensuring our young people grow into socially responsible and well-rounded citizens. I would ask you to support us in this by encouraging your child to make the most of the extra-curricular activities that are on offer and to use the Leadership Ladder to develop those all-important qualities that are vital in today's world. There is now a new tracker in the planner to record any extra-curricular activities whereby students can earn additional Hall Points for taking part. Wearing the correct uniform, coming to school well-equipped and behaving in an exemplary manner are expectations that we hold for all our young people and I make no apology in

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saying that the expectations we have are extremely high. I thank you for your continued support in ensuring that your child meets and exceeds those expectations going forwards.

You may find that your child is bringing home Knowledge Organisers for their subjects this year, which is a new strategy in school related to the knowledge-based curriculum. More information about these and how you can support your child's learning will be made available in the next few weeks.

Finally, a few dates for your diaries:

Year 8 Core Assessments (Maths and English)	9 <sup>th</sup> January
Year 8 Parents Evening	7 <sup>th</sup> February
Year 8 Assessment/Exams fortnight	29 <sup>th</sup> April – 10 <sup>th</sup> May

Once again, thank you for your continued support. If you have any queries or wish to speak to me about anything, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Mr M Gallagher and Mr L Guatella are also the Student Support officers for KS3, please feel free to contact either of them with any queries in addition. May I take this opportunity to wish your child a most successful and enjoyable school year.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs J Wagstaff

Head of Year 8

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