



September 2018

Welcome to Year 9

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you and your child have had a safe and enjoyable summer. I am writing to welcome you back to the start of a new academic year at Lymm High School and to give you some important information for the year ahead. Our role as a school is to ensure that your child is safe and happy in school and to support them in achieving their academic and personal potential. I am delighted to say that Mr M Gallagher is the Student Support Officer who will be linked with Year 9 this year. Mr Gallagher is vastly experienced in the role and I know that his skills and knowledge will be invaluable throughout the year in supporting the Year 9 students.

We had a very successful year last year. I was absolutely thrilled by the levels of commitment, hard work and energy the students put into the year, both inside and outside of the classroom. I hope you feel that this was reflected in the progress report and exam results that you received at the end of the year. Year 8 was a vital year as students went from being in transition to high school to laying the foundations for a successful time as they move towards GCSE studies.

Year 9 is an extremely important year for your child. Later on this year they will choose their GCSE options which will shape the education they receive in Key Stage 4 and beyond. I have already spoken to students about the importance in making informed choices about what they wish to pick for GCSEs, bearing in mind that future course and career choices could depend on the GCSEs they sit. Please could I ask that you spend some time discussing options with your child over the next term so that they feel confident in the decisions they make.

It is also going to be vital that they maintain excellent attendance to ensure that they do not fall behind in their studies as absences may pose a greater challenge to them this year than in previous years. At Lymm High School, we strive for students 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. 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, which, especially as we move towards students GCSEs, can make the difference between a grade they want and one they don't. If a student's attendance drops to 90%, they will have missed approximately 95 hours of lessons by the end of the year – a not insignificant amount of learning.

There are some key dates at the end of this letter which include those related to Year 9 Choices but please do not hesitate to contact me at any point over the course of the year if you wish to discuss this further. Your child will also begin some of their GCSEs this year, including their Maths and English Literature. Whilst the exams may seem a long way off, it is important that students are on top of their work and keeping their knowledge up-to-date. I ask for your continued support in ensuring that

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your child is managing their study commitments including homework and revision properly. Could I also take this opportunity to ask you to look out for your child bringing Knowledge Organisers home with them, which is a strategy that we are increasingly making use of as a school. You will receive further information about these, and how they support your child's learning, over the coming week.

Whilst academic success and rigour is of the 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, including where possible any trip opportunities, that are on offer and to use the Leadership Ladder to develop those all-important qualities that are vital in today's world. 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 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.

I'm sure there will be some occasions when you need to contact the school. The table below will hopefully help to identify the best person to contact.

Subject specific query/concern	Head of Faculty for that subject
Student welfare query/concern	Mr Gallagher (Year 9 Student Support Officer)
General progress query/concern	Form tutor
More serious/complex concerns	Mr Eyres (Head of Year)

Finally, I'd just like to draw your attention to some key dates for this year so that you can plan ahead.

Year 9 Core Assessments (Maths and English)	Friday 4 th January 2019
Year 9 Option Choices evening	Thursday 17 th January 2019
Year 9 Parents Evening	Thursday 24 th January 2019
Year 9 Option Choices deadline	Friday 8 th February 2019
Year 9 Assessment fortnight	Monday 29 th April – Friday 10 th May 2019

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.

Yours faithfully,



Mr D Eyres, Head of Year 9

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