



17th November 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing with an update on the most recent steps in our improvement journey with Northern Education Trust. I certainly feel like a new culture is developing at Denton Community College and hope you are starting to sense this too.

I would like to start by saying how proud and impressed we have all been with the way in which Year 11 students have approached the Step 2 assessments this week. We have had over 120 students stay every night this week for revision sessions and similar numbers arrive every morning before 8am for booster sessions with their teachers. The students have shown resilience throughout each assessment, have behaved impeccably and there is a growing feeling of belief and confidence amongst them.

We have another week to go in this assessment round and I am genuinely excited to find out what the results will be and what is being predicted for the summer exams. If your child is in Year 11 and is not yet taking advantage of the extra enrichment opportunities our staff are offering, I would encourage you to make sure they do so next week.

We have also made significant changes to our SEND team. We have a new strategic lead for SEND and, importantly, created a new way for families to communicate with us on all matters related to SEND. If you have a question or concern about any SEND matters, please email SEND@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk

The SEND email account is monitored throughout the day and I hope it will reduce any frustrations around getting in touch with us. We are also expanding our staff team, developing new strategies to support SEND learners and getting significant support from the SEND specialists within Northern Education Trust.

Our new approach to teaching reading has also begun. It has been wonderful to see students working with our specialist staff on this. Reading is fundamental to being able to access the curriculum and the progress the students make will be celebrated. This is just the first strand of the NET reading strategy and I am looking forward to sharing more information about the whole strategy with you in the coming months.

Students in all year groups are now on the Expectations for Learning policy. This is our new approach to improving behaviour in the classroom and gives students three opportunities to regulate and improve their behaviour before there are any formal sanctions. If a student continues to disturb learning after their third warning they have 'C4-ed' themselves and will be asked to go to the Matrix room for that lesson. If your child ever gets themselves to a C4 it is essential that they attend their one-hour detention the next day. They will come home with a sticker in their planner to show the day of detention and a letter explaining their detention, which will give you an opportunity to ask them about the four opportunities they will have had to improve their learning, and to reinforce the importance of good behaviour in lessons.

We are also raising the bar when it comes to our expectations of organisation. The Need to Know books must be brought every day, basic equipment is required and planners will be used in every lesson. As we move away from Class Charts, the planner will also become ever-more important when it comes to communicating with us. Checking your child has their bag packed correctly every day makes a difference and is appreciated.

HEADTEACHER: Mr G Rule

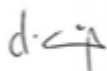
However, the vast majority of our students will never get to that C4 point and will continue to benefit from the praise culture that has rapidly developed across the school. They may have their name on an 'extra applause' board, be given a PROUD sticker for work that is of the highest quality, be given a round of applause by classmates for an excellent answer or have a member of the senior team sit and do some live marking with them in a lesson. The highlight of the week remains PROUD Tuesday, when students bring their best work at lunchtime and are given praise and a certificate. We had an amazing 157 students come this week, from all year groups, and the sense of pride was palpable. We even had a guest come over from a school in Yorkshire to see the praise culture in action!

Finally, I will finish with my regular message about the importance of good attendance to school. Students need to be in school, in order to develop the knowledge they need to pass their exams. Research by the Department of Education shows that students with good attendance have a far higher success rate than students with worse attendance:

- 55% of students with over 95% attendance achieved grades 5 and above in English and Maths but only
 - 17% of students with attendance below 90% achieved grades 5 and above in English and Maths
- Put simply, students who attend school for more than 95% of the year have more than triple the chance of passing their English and Maths GCSEs with a grade 5 or above. This speaks for itself about the vital importance of attending school, and the positive impact it will have on the life chances for your child.

It is also important to thank you, parents and carers, for the important role you are playing in supporting the work of the school. Whether it be getting a reluctant teenager out of bed, checking their homework is done to the correct standard or listening to them read each day – it all counts and that close partnership between home and school will really help them achieve their very best.

Yours faithfully,



Donald Cumming
Acting Headteacher