

July 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of another busy and successful year at Drayton Manor High School, I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation for the active involvement of our parents and the professionalism and support of our staff. I also want to thank our students for their hard work and excellent conduct throughout the year.

Our newsletter showcases the considerable success our students have achieved both inside and outside the classroom. Highlights include impressive accomplishments in the Arts, Sports, and Mathematics departments. However, the stories behind these achievements are equally inspiring, demonstrating the hard work and determination our students have shown to improve their studies and overcome challenges. I encourage you to read the newsletter via the link below, and I am confident you will share our pride in our remarkable students.

[NEWSLETTER LINK](#)

### **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS**

I am pleased to announce that Drayton Manor High School has been recognised by SSAT (The Schools, Students and Teachers Network) for excellence in their Educational Outcomes Awards. This award places our school among the highest performing secondary schools in the country based on 2023 performance data and information from OfSTED.

Drayton Manor High School received awards in two categories: top 10% nationally for student progress and top 20% of non-selective schools for student attainment in the 2023 end-of-KS4 exams. The SSAT Educational Outcomes database compares all state-funded schools in England, and receiving this award is a significant achievement that reflects the dedication of our entire school community.

Additionally, we have been recognised within the SSAT Framework for Exceptional Education for 'transforming practice' in leadership through moral purpose. This award acknowledges our practice in this area as among the best nationally.

### **NEW SIXTH FORM BUILDING**

We are thrilled to announce that our new Sixth Form building is nearly complete, with the final design touches and technology installations underway. Over the past few weeks, we have been inducting our current Year 12 students into the building, and the feedback has been incredibly positive.

The building is designed to meet the evolving needs of Sixth Form life, providing students with spaces to work, study, and relax, while also serving as a hub for academic, business, technology, entertainment, and leisure activities. This cutting-edge facility aims to give students a taste of the best universities and companies, building their confidence and preparing them for their future journeys.

We are grateful to our hardworking and talented Facilities and Premises team, who have collaborated with the construction company to bring our vision to life. We look forward to showing you around soon and plan to host several parent events in our new building starting in September. In the meantime, please click the link below to enjoy a short film highlighting what this new space has to offer.

## SIXTH FORM VIDEO

### UPDATES FOR THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR

Drayton Manor continues to strive to enhance our provision and the educational experience for our students. As such I want to draw your attention to some updates which are intended to improve the experience of all members of the school community.

### STUDENT PASSPORT

As a school, we pride ourselves on offering a wide range of extracurricular experiences across the curriculum. Next year, we plan to extend the offer even further and will be running an even broader range of workshops, speakers, trips and visits, including more international trips to help our students be at their best.

To support with this, we will be launching a Student Development Passport linked to the school's values of Ambition, Character and Civic Virtue which staff and students will use to track their extra-curricular experiences both within and outside of school throughout their time with us. By demonstrating involvement in a range of activities, students will be able to achieve a Bronze, Silver, Gold or Purple Award which they can take away with them at the end of their school career. These can be linked to applications for university, apprenticeships or employment in the future. We look forward to sharing more details with you at the start of the Autumn term.

### MOBILE PHONES (YEARS 7 – 11 ONLY)

As you will be aware, our school does not allow mobile phones on site in any form for students in Year 7 - 11. They are permitted for Sixth Formers in agreed Sixth Form areas only. While we recognise that technology can have many benefits, we adopt this approach as we know our students thrive when they are not focused on their mobile devices and can instead concentrate on their studies, engage in extra-curricular activities and build face-to-face friendships throughout each day.

However, we have listened carefully to the feedback from our school community and recognise that parents and carers may also wish to contact their child for safety reasons on their way to and from school. Therefore, we have considered our approach to balance the needs of our community, whilst ensuring that our school remains a mobile-free environment and one in which students can concentrate on their education and succeed.

Therefore, from September 2024, students in Years 7-11 will be permitted to carry a basic school-approved mobile phone, often referred to as a 'brick phone' providing that it is switched off and remains in their bag during the school day. They are not permitted to be used in school or in the near vicinity of the school. The school recommended mobile phones are the Nokia 105 and the Nokia 106. Both mobile phones are affordable and serve the primary function of calling and texting.

There are growing concerns about the risks associated with smartphone use among young people, including impacts on mental health, exposure to online exploitation, and distractions from studies. The latest research continues to underscore the alarming rates of online abuse and exploitation affecting children. You may have been made aware of news coverage regarding a campaign called "Smartphone Free Childhood" and some Boroughs taking an approach to schools working together to ban smart phones from schools. By "smartphones", we refer to

phones that can access the internet, as opposed to mobile phones that can only text and make phone calls. This nationwide movement raises critical questions about the repercussions of social media apps and unsupervised internet use in children - and how this can be unhealthy for their development, both in the short and long-term.

We understand the importance of being able to contact your child as they become more independent and therefore, we trust that this adjustment to the school's approach will support you with this. Our school's aim is to maintain our safe and focused learning environment by minimising distractions and mitigating the risks associated with smartphone use, whilst ensuring parents can contact their child when they are not on the school site. Students must not bring Smart Phones to school. Please note that there is no change to our position on the use of mobile phones during the school day. If you need to urgently contact your child for any reason during the school day, please continue to do so by contacting the school directly on 0208 357 1900.

We understand that providing a mobile phone may pose a financial challenge for some families. If you require a school recommended phone for your child due to financial constraints, please contact our school office at [adminoffice@draytonmanorhighschool.co.uk](mailto:adminoffice@draytonmanorhighschool.co.uk) to arrange for one to be provided for September 2024, on a 'no charge' loan agreement. If you have any questions about this or our new approach, please contact Mr Black at [adminoffice@draytonmanorhighschool.co.uk](mailto:adminoffice@draytonmanorhighschool.co.uk) the school and a member of Senior staff will be happy to contact you later this week, on results days in August or at the start of term to discuss.

Detailed information, including the Mobile Phone Policy and guidelines, will be provided during end-of-term assemblies and orientation sessions. We ask that you review these guidelines with your child to ensure a smooth transition. Please note that the mobile phone policy for Sixth Formers will not change and they will continue to be able to use their usual devices in the Sixth Form Building only. We thank you for your cooperation and support with this very important step in supporting our students.

#### **PTA**

Last year, the PTA raised over £3,000 for the school, funding new software for Media Studies, equipment for Design and Technology, visualisers for MFL, and student reward events. The PTA also organised informative events for parents, including sessions on supporting student revision and summer activities.

The PTA relies on the commitment of parents to support its fundraising activities. Interested parents are invited to attend the first meeting of the new academic year. Dates will be sent at the start of the term.

On behalf of the staff, I wish you all a very happy summer, and we look forward to seeing you in the Autumn Term.

Yours sincerely  
Mrs L Mills  
Headteacher