

Dear Parent/ Carer,

It is a pleasure to have welcomed all our students back into the building on Monday, after a well-earned summer break. Students look exceptional in their uniform and have made a fantastic start to the term. This week I have seen many examples of students working hard and being kind. For example, in English year 9 students have been looking at the complex relationship between poetry and identity for their unit on 'Poetry of the Other'. In Personal Development students have been looking at their goals and aspirations and in Music students have been learning to read staff notation and performing 'In the Hall of the Mountain King' by Grieg.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the Key Stage Three Culture for Learning Lead. My role is to ensure that every single student can achieve and thrive at The Suthers School. I will be working closely with Senior Leaders, the Pastoral Team and Heads of Subjects to support pupil progress and achievement. I will also be reviewing our Approach to Learning reflection process that will support both students and parents to know how students can continue to progress.

Planners

As it is the start of a new year, every student has been given a brand new planner this week, which is an essential part of their equipment. The planners will be used in all lessons through the use of their green, amber and red cards. We encourage all students to place their planners on green at the start of all lessons and then use amber and red when they need to indicate to their teacher that they are unsure in lesson. Working in partnership with parents and carers is a priority at The Suthers School and we have therefore drawn up a home school agreement document that is printed at the front of student planners. This agreement has been written in response to the feedback from students, staff and also parents and carers. You will see that the document reflects our high expectations and outlines the commitment needed from all to ensure that students achieve their very best potential when at school. We ask that you read through this document and sign it alongside the student and form tutor signatures that have been completed this week.

When students receive homework, it is our expectation that students record this in their planner to act as a reminder for what has been set and when it is due. Students are given time to do this in their lessons, when the homework is clearly explained. We also ask that at the end of every week, you discuss any homework your child has received to support them in making sure they have completed it and submit it on time.

There is also a weekly signature spot for all to sign: students, parents, carers and form tutors. Students will be expected to show this in their form time every week and we would therefore appreciate your support in checking and signing this each week.

Further communication will be sent regarding our homework strategy and teaching and learning agenda. Approach to Learning Scores (AToLS) - changes made

Over the last academic year, we have been working hard to improve the way that student progress and approach to learning scores are communicated home. I would like to take this opportunity to outline some of the changes that we have made, after listening to parent and carer feedback.

The timing of when our Approach to Learning reports (AToLS) are released has been changed to allow parents and carers to have adequate time to contact the relevant members of staff to discuss their child's report if need be, upon release. The first AToL report will therefore be released on the week beginning 31st October 2022.

This year, we will be introducing a fourth number to our approach to learning scores, which will be a 'working towards' category meaning students are working towards the bronze standard or above that is expected of them. This has been implemented to support parents and carers who have been concerned that the bronze standard (3) is the lowest standard and therefore indicates their child is not performing as well

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as they could. A working towards category (4) also enables us to highlight where students may need further support to ensure they are able to perform to the best of their ability in lesson.

A final change is with the progress checks which highlight if your child is working above the expected level, expected or working towards. With each statement, students will now receive two bullet points from each subject area which indicates what students can do in order to continue to develop and make more progress. This addition will allow students to take charge of their learning and the progress they can make and also support parent and carers at home who want to know how they can support their child in the different subject areas.

Clarity will be provided to all students this half term to ensure they understand the Approach to Learning process and will be supported to make reflections from their report to ensure they are aware of development areas to help them continue to improve and progress throughout the year.

Half Term 1 Key Dates

28/9/2022	Year 9 Information Evening (save the date)
30/9/2022	MacMillan Cake Sale
01/10/2022	MacMillan Coffee Morning. Students and parents and carers welcome 10am-12noon

I am really excited to watch Year 9 continue to grow in maturity and show their TORCH characteristics to students in younger years. I look forward to celebrating the achievements of our Year 9s as the year goes on.

Should you have any queries or would like to discuss anything further please get in contact with me at zallen@suthersschool.co.uk.

If you have any pastoral concerns regarding your child, please contact the pastoral lead for Year 9 Mr Moon at pmoon@suthersschool.co.uk

Your sincerely,

Zoe Allen
Head of History and KS3 Culture for Learning Lead