

December 2023

Dear families

There have been many achievements to be proud of this term.

Our students have settled back into school eager to do well, foster new friendships and enjoy new learning. Currently, our overall student attendance is over 4% higher compared to this time last year. This is because our students enjoy school and are happy receiving high quality teaching from their specialist teachers. **Whilst we can see improvements in student attendance, this remains our number one priority.** If students are not in the building, they cannot learn or achieve their potential. Please encourage your child to attend school every day and build their resilience for employment.

When I began my Headship back in June 2023, parents raised concerns regarding the high level of supply staff at school. There were several reasons for this. Families will be aware from media the shortage in teaching staff in some subject areas. This is a national issue. To mitigate against this, we have put in place 'merged' teaching of two or three classes, whereby students are taught by a subject specialist and supported by a member of the senior leadership or pastoral team. This has worked well, and we will continue to implement this strategy rather than to use daily supply staff. We have also made changes to student timetables from January 2024. This is to ensure that we can provide the best quality teaching with subject specialists. **We believe our young people should get the best possible teaching, because a good quality education can change lives. We are 100% committed in putting students first.**

We have had several external visits this term from Ms Shirley Watson (CEO) and her team. There was a further visit by our Chair of the Local School Committee, Mrs Naz Akhtar and Mrs Karen Boyd. They reviewed our school systems, behaviour, and teaching and learning. We have received a very positive report.

Our Trust Concert was an immense success! Along with the rest of our Trust schools, our students did us proud. They demonstrated excellence in teamwork and showcased musical talents. **We are holding a mini-concert in school on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December at 3.30pm – 4.00pm. It is free! Please do try to attend and support the students and your school.**

We are working hard to ensure students of all year groups receive meaningful homework every day. You can find the homework schedule on our school website. As always, we are happy to receive feedback from parents. Mr Ward, Deputy Headteacher for Quality of Education, will be monitoring this important aspect of student work.

We have run various school trips, including Year 7 trips to Nell Bank Outdoor Activity Centre. **In January, we will be taking some students to the University of Cambridge.** Colleagues from this prestigious Russell Group university will also be working with students from Key Stage 3 and 4 at Beckfoot Upper Heaton. In March, we will hold a careers fair for all our students.

**Beckfoot Trust** - an exempt charitable company limited by guarantee

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Year 11 students will have their second mock exams towards the end of January. Over 70% of our parents attended the recent parents' evening – thank you! We will schedule after-school lessons in the New Year for your child to attend. I know that we will receive your support with this strategy.

Please do take time to read the termly newsletter, the BUH Bulletin. The newsletter highlights so much that has happened at Beckfoot Upper Heaton.

We have made significant progress in a very short space of time. We are very proud of our students, staff and our Trust. We appreciate your continued support for our school – this is important to us.

Your support for our school sentence where we all belong, our three values of excellence, integrity, and kindness, and to anchor all that we do with our five simple habits:

- 100% Perfect uniform
- 100% Equipped for learning
- 100% Punctuality and attendance
- 100% On task
- 100% Polite response

Thank you for helping us in our mission to become a remarkable school where no child is left behind.

**We look forward to welcoming back all our students at 8.10am on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024**

Have a lovely festive holiday. We wish you a very Merry Christmas and a successful New Year.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B K Dey', written in a cursive style.

Mr B K Dey

**Head Teacher**

