



Ref: GRA/KB004

7 September 2023

Dear parents, guardians, carers

Thank you for supporting us with an excellent **start to the term**. Students have returned well-equipped and with a positive mindset to start the new year with enthusiastic vigour. Years 8-13 engagement with the 'Step Up' programme at the end of the last academic year was superb and they have really embraced their role as ambassadors for the school in their new year group.

Please can I ask **all parents to thoroughly check** all of your details on the SIMs app. Please do not send queries to the year offices. Please first check the information [here](#); failing that, use the email address: [sims@poolehigh.poole.sch.uk](mailto:sims@poolehigh.poole.sch.uk) from which one of our IT team will help you.

**A few words about results.** We are delighted that every Year 13 student went on to their chosen courses this year. Over 75% of our A-Level students achieved grade A\*-C across our wide variety of A-Level and vocational courses. We are thrilled that the vast majority of our sixth form students secured highly credible university places at their first-choice institutions, with a diverse range of degrees. Some have mentioned looking back enviously at the new courses that have become available to Year 12 students.

As a year group they undoubtedly were unsettled slightly by their first public exams (having experienced Teacher Assessment Grades when they were in Year 11) but can go forward with confidence given their results. There has been a significant 'up-turn' in students wishing to access the quality of teaching our sixth form provides for these reasons.

**Our 2023 GCSE and KS4 vocational results** have improved for the seventh consecutive year - opening multiple opportunities for our students' future. To express this on a national scale, this year, our cohort's progress **was in line with the top 5%** of schools nationally.

Our English, Mathematics and Science results are particularly strong with 77% achieving the benchmark grade of 9-4 in both English and Mathematics - well ahead of the national average. We are particularly pleased with the performance of our large cohort of 'more able' students - 100% of these achieved grades 9-4 in English and Maths, with 91% achieving the higher passing grades of 9-5 in both English and Maths. There are many other subjects with exceptional performances. These include: Geography, Computer Science, Product Design, and Single Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics).

As previously mentioned, just to remind you that on **Thursday 14 September**, school will close at lunchtime for our Staff Training and Open Evening preparations. Please see the [link](#) for other dates. The arrangements are as follows: 12.30pm finish for all students. The main dining hall will be open at 12.30pm for those children entitled to free school meals for a light lunch. Alternatively, students can spend their FSM allowance at break time. Teachers will be setting homework accordingly. Morebus will operate Bus 401 in the morning on Thursday 14 September but advise students to catch the service M1/M2 from the George bus stop to get home at lunchtime. Those students who would normally use the 405 are invited to catch a 5/6 service from the stop on Wimborne road on this date.

For **parents who drive** their children to school, thank you for your consideration regarding the use of the school drive. The school driveway will be closed to all motor vehicles: 8.10am to 8.35am and 2.45pm to 3.10pm. Please do not ask to access the driveway during these times as permission will not be granted to ensure safe transit for pedestrians and cyclists. For parents who are new to Poole High School, please be aware that there is a rear entrance to the school on Sterte Road. This area provides ample, safe 'drop-off' points for your children.

As previously mentioned, there has been a significant increase in the numbers of students who cycle to school. **If your child cycles**, please insist they use lights/ 'high viz' and wear a helmet properly.

While the critical mass of students wear our **uniform** with pride and diligence, a small number have needed to be reminded about our expectations ([here](#)).

There is much in the news receiving high profile coverage regarding **construction matters** - the aerated concrete (RAAC) concerns in some schools. This does not affect Poole High School. However, I shall be in touch with you next week on a related matter. Continuing the well-being theme, this year the school is once again working closely with the **Dorset Police Dog unit**. Students are aware of the severity of sanction should anyone ever dare to bring an illicit substance into the school. Students appreciate the clarity and consistency of our message and response. To reinforce this and to provide complete reassurance on this matter, we shall have trained police dogs coming on to the site on an irregular basis and for spontaneous visits.

Finally, if you have any **spare uniform** that is in good condition which your child may have grown out of, please could you consider contributing it to FOPHS (Friends of Poole High School) by dropping it off, labelled clearly at the school reception. Any support for local **families** will help enormously.

Any parent who thinks they may be entitled to Free School Meals, please **find the link** [here](#).

Wishing you all a healthy and happy term and year ahead.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Gray', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

**Mr P Gray**  
**Headteacher**