SMITHILLS SCHOOL
SUCCESS FOR ALL

C. Dewse: Headteacher
BA (Hons), PGCE, National SENCO Award, NPQH

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Smithills Dean Road, Bolton, BL1 6JS 01204 842382 office@smithillsschool.net smithillsschool.net

CDE/CMS/Year 11 Autumn Term

October 2026

Dear Year 11

As we reach the end of your first half term, I want to tell you how impressed I have been with the start you have made to the academic year. You have been focused, worked hard and approached Year 11 with a positive attitude. You should be proud of everything you have done so far.

Attendance at Pathways to Success has been fantastic. It has been particularly pleasing to see you making the most of these sessions, strengthening your understanding and building your confidence. Keep this commitment going as we move towards your PPEs.

Over half term, I want you to build on this positive start by making time for purposeful revision. Use your teachers' feedback to identify what you need to practise, revisit topics you find difficult and test what you can remember. What you choose to do when no one is watching matters: following through on your revision plans and giving your work your full attention will help you arrive at your exams feeling better prepared.

However, it is also important to enjoy your holiday. Spend time with friends and family, do things you enjoy and get some rest. Plan your time wisely so that you can revise regularly and still have a proper break, returning refreshed and ready to continue.

The five principles from my summer letter remain useful reminders: be ambitious, work hard, do the right thing when no one is watching, use the support available, and stay organised while looking after yourself.

Please read the following notices carefully.

PPE revision booklet
You now have your PPE revision booklet. Use it over the holiday to help you plan your revision and focus on the content you need to prepare for each subject. It is also available on the school website: YEAR 11 PPE final revision guide - 2026-27.pdf

English
Continue to keep up with your reading on Sparx Reader. You are currently reading Stave 3 of A Christmas Carol, with a stave set each fortnight and progress checked in class. You will finish the novella in November before moving on to Macbeth, reading one act each fortnight.

During Pathways to Success, you are given an overview of a poem from the Power and Conflict cluster each week, followed by GCSEPod activities to complete independently. Make these activities count: watch and listen carefully, then create flashcards recording key ideas, themes and quotations. Return to these cards to test your understanding and recall.

Parents and carers, please support this preparation by asking your child where they are up to with their reading and GCSEPod activities, and encouraging them to keep up with the work set. All pupils have been shown how to access these resources.

Maths
You have made a really positive start in Maths. Alongside your curriculum lessons, you have worked hard on mini mocks, timed questions and 'aiming for grade' booklets. During Pathways to Success, you have also tackled goal-free problems and revised specific topics. Your positive attitude and excellent attendance are helping you build confidence ahead of your PPEs. Continue to use these resources to guide your independent revision.

BTEC coursework
For pupils studying Dance, Music Practice, Enterprise and Health & Social Care, next half term is a crucial period for completing coursework. All work must be submitted to the exam board by 15 December, at which point you will have completed 60% of your qualification.

Attend every lesson, meet your deadlines and make full use of the support available. The effort you put into your coursework now can make a significant difference to your final grade.

Spanish and Urdu
Your speaking exams will take place during the week beginning 9 November 2026. Your class teacher will confirm your exact date and time. These results will contribute 25% of your PPE grade, so make sure speaking practice forms part of your preparation.

Computer Science
Use Smart Revise and GoCodeIt regularly for independent revision. Include both in your revision plan to strengthen your knowledge and practise your programming skills.

Thank you for the effort and commitment you have shown this half term. Keep going, ask for help when you need it and recognise the progress you are making. I look forward to seeing you after the holiday, rested and ready for the next stage of Year 11.

Have a lovely half term.

Regards

C. Dewse.

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Headteacher