

July 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

Please take a few minutes to read this letter as it contains useful and important information and news.

Arrangements for the start of term, Tuesday 3rd September 2019

8:35	Year 7 report to the Hall for a welcome assembly
9:30	Year 8-11 students start (to report to tutors to receive timetables, etc)
9:55	Break begins for Year 7
10:10	Breaktime for all
10:30	Lessons begin for all students
12:55	Early lunch for Year 7
13:05	Lunchtime
13:45	Lessons as usual for everyone

Attendance

Good attendance is key to high achievement. Where attendance falls below this figure, it will have a negative impact on students' learning. 90% attendance equates to 1 day's absence every two weeks.

The expectation in school is that attendance is 100%.

If your child is too unwell to attend school, please contact the school's attendance line as soon as possible in the morning. A reminder about the guidance relating to holidays during term time: Headteacher's discretion to allow a leave of absence in "special circumstances" for a family holiday has been removed. Requests for leave of absence should continue to be addressed to the Headteacher but will only be authorised in "exceptional circumstances". If your child is unwell in school they should speak to a member of staff who will refer them to Student Services for assessment and contact home if necessary. If your child attends a medical appointment, please keep a copy of the appointment card or compliment slip for our records.

Formal registration will take place during tutor time in the mornings. Tutor time is a vital part of school. Tutors will use this time to ensure that every student is ready for the school day as well as conveying important information and mentoring individuals. Punctuality to tutor time will be monitored. Lateness and non-attendance to tutor time will mean that no morning registration mark is given which may have a detrimental effect on a student's overall attendance figure.

The expectation in school is that students are on the school site no later than 8.30am.

Contact with the school

For all student-related matters please contact the Student Support Assistant relevant to your child's year group in the first instance, as follows:

Year 7 and 8	Mrs Hammett	Extension 2290	amanda.hammett@hdhs.school
Year 9	Mrs McDermott	Extension 2255	danielle.mcdermott@hdhs.school
Year 10	Mrs Locke	Extension 2254	deborah.locke@hdhs.school
Year 11	Mrs Wells	Extension 2253	alison.wells@hdhs.school

Please note that if you wish to meet with a member of staff that this must be by prior appointment only.

Should you need to drop any items at school, forgotten PE kits etc, you can leave them at the main reception and they will be collected. Students arriving late to school must buzz at the gate for entry and sign in as they go through the main reception.

Equipment/Mobile Phones

Students need their ID cards for exams and for purchasing food from The Lighthouse (canteen). Please ensure that, along with their pencil cases, planners, bags and equipment, these are carried every day. Mobile phones are brought to school at students' own risk. They should not be seen or heard during lessons or moving from class to class. If seen or heard during/between lessons they may be confiscated.

Homework

We welcome the support of parents in ensuring that students complete their homework to a high standard and hand it in on time. Homework is an essential part of school life. It has been widely recognised in the school as important in helping secure strong outcomes. As students move through the school it becomes increasingly important that they develop independent learning skills. Young people are now expected to be in education or training until the age of 18 and if they are to be successful in their chosen fields they must be capable of driving their own personal study. Homework is good preparation for this. Establishing good routines at home is key. The recommended homework timetable is as follows:

Years 7 & 8: Up to 1 hour per week in English, Maths, Science, French, History and Geography.
In all other subjects homework may be set as appropriate (up to 1 hour per fortnight per subject).
This amounts to approximately 1 - 1.5 hours per evening.

Years 9, 10 & 11: Up to 1.5 hours per week in English, Maths and Science. Up to 1 hour per week in all other subjects.
This amounts to approximately 1.5 - 2 hours per evening

Key Stage 5: At least 3 hours per subject weekly

Parents can check what homework has been set on the school's website by selecting the Show My Homework icon at www.hdhs.showmyhomework.co.uk

Uniform

The overwhelming majority of students, parents and the community continue to welcome the high expectations regarding school uniform. Our high expectations and associated consequences for non-compliance will also continue. We expect our students to look smart at all times and wear their blazer and tie while in school. We want our students to look and feel like professional students.

Tight fitting trousers and skirts are not allowed. Neither are trousers with decorative zips or patterns on them. Skirts should be no more than 3 inches above the knee. Small plain stud earrings (two pairs) and a signet/plain ring are allowed, plus one plain bracelet or band. Make-up and hair styles/colour should be understated and subtle. Facial jewellery, ear plug stretchers and "hoodies" are not allowed, especially under blazers.

Further guidance on what is acceptable uniform is enclosed. Please can I ask you to check the School Uniform Guidelines on our website for full details at www.hdhs.org.uk/uniform

Rewards and Sanctions

Praise and encouragement are highly effective motivators and I would like to ask for your support to reinforce rewards and on the occasions when we issue sanctions. We have a clear, stepped approach in addressing unacceptable behaviour. Behaviour is tracked on our computer system and this information helps inform and support any action we take with students, and will include discussions with parents and

carers. We are fortunate enough to work with a variety of external agencies in addition to our own school staff. At appropriate times we will involve these agencies, your child and or yourself.

I ask for your support when dealing with poor behaviour. When there is a united partnership between school and home we are far more effective in changing behaviour.

Rewards take the form of 'Vivo Rewards' and are points based. Students may save and exchange their points in an online shop for a wide variety of rewards such as free school meals, mobile top-up vouchers, high street shopping vouchers, and iTunes vouchers. The more positive the behaviour, the more reward points are issued and, potentially, the greater the treats our students may choose.

Calendar

A calendar with all essential dates will be given to students at the beginning of September. Please look carefully at this and keep it safe for the year.

Consent Forms/Year 7 & 9 Photos

If you have not already done so, please complete the enclosed photographic consent forms, and ask your child to hand this into their tutor on Tuesday 3rd September. Year 7 and 9 students will be photographed for official use on Monday 23rd September, and those parents that have given photographic consent will also have the opportunity to purchase these photos if they wish.

My Ed App

Downloading the free My Ed app (details of which can be found at www.myedschoolapp.com) will provide you with useful links to ParentPay, HDHS website, Facebook/Twitter, Vivos, Show My Homework and Parents' Evening appointment booking systems, all of which you will find useful for your child's education at HDHS. My Ed is also our preferred method of communication with parents. Please download this app now, if you haven't already done so, noting that the e-mail address used must match the one stated as the main e-mail address on our records.

Canteen arrangements

If your child has any allergies please contact our canteen manager at canteen@hdhs.org.uk and she will be happy to discuss this with you.

Parking

If you choose to drive to and from the school to drop off and/or collect your child(ren), please DO NOT park in the yellow zig-zag lines. This can present a serious hazard for our students. Please respect our neighbours by not parking across driveways. The automated gate system recently installed restricts access for safety purposes, so please be mindful when entering and exiting the School site with a vehicle.

Timetable

From September the school will operate a two week timetable with four teaching periods within the day. The times of the day are set out below:

8:35- 8:55	8:55- 10:10	10:10- 10:30	10:30- 11:45	11:45- 11:50	11:50- 13:05	13:05- 13:45	13:45- 15:00
Tutor	Period 1	Break	Period 2	Lesson changeover	Period 3	Lunch	Period 4

Best wishes to everyone for the new academic year. I look forward to students enjoying school and being successful as we continue 'Working, Learning and Reading Together' to provide a great education for every student.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kate Finch', with a small dot at the end.

Kate Finch
Headteacher