



27 August 2021

Dear parents and carers,

We hope you have had a good summer and enjoyed time spent reuniting with friends and families again. We are very much looking forward to welcoming your child back to Highlands School next week and are busy ensuring that plans are in place so that your child has a smooth start to this academic year. In particular we would like to take this opportunity to warmly welcome new parents and carers to our school community; we look forward to welcoming your child to secondary school for the first time and hope that they enjoy all that our school has to offer.

This letter is a reminder of key information for the upcoming academic year, it includes:

- Term dates
- Timings of the school day
- Parent information evenings
- Return to school schedule (including COVID testing)
- Equipment and uniform
- Reading for pleasure

Some of the information in this newsletter is applicable to the sixth form, some is not. The sixth form team will write to parents and carers separately with sixth form specific information.

We wrote to the school community earlier this week to share information about the excellent GCSE and A level results that our students achieved this summer and to share some of the year 13 destinations. If you have not had the chance to watch our results day videos, you can do so by clicking the following links:

[A level results](#)

[GCSE results](#)

Please remember to note the time of the parent and carer online information meetings that we will be holding during the first few days of September. The dates and times of the events can be found below. We will send links to these events the day before they take place.

Many thanks,

Highlands School.

Term dates

The term dates for the autumn term are given below. Due to the requirement for schools to test all students before the start of term the return to lessons will be staggered as it was in September 2020.

October half term holiday - we are putting our disaggregated INSET days together and adding them to the half term holiday, meaning that the holiday will be two weeks long.

Autumn term

Wednesday 1 September 2021	Staff training day
Thursday 2 September – Monday 6th September	Student testing and induction days (see below)
Tuesday 7th September	Full teaching of all year groups begins
Monday 25 October – Friday 5 November (two weeks)	October half term
Friday 17 December	Last day of term
Monday 20 December – Monday 3 January 2022	Christmas holidays
Tuesday 4 January 2022	Start of spring term

Other dates are available on the school website - [Parents - School day/term dates](#)

Timings of the school day

Time	Monday, Tuesday Thursday, Friday	Wednesday
The school gates open at 8:20am. Students are expected to arrive by 8:30am. Students not in school by 8:30am are late.		
8:40	Registration with form tutor	Registration with form tutor
9:00	Period 1	PSHE lesson
10:05	Period 2	Period 2
11:10	Break	Break
11:35	Period 3	Period 3
12:40 Y10 & Y11 lunch 1:10 Y7 lunch 1:40 Y8 & Y9 lunch	Period 4 Including lunch break	Period 4 Including lunch break
2:10	Period 5	End of day 2:20 - 3:15 EdExtra activities (Y7 and others)
3:15	End of day	2:30 to 4:30 Staff training and development

Parent information webinars

We will be holding parent and carer information webinars in September to make sure parents and carers are aware of the priorities for the upcoming year for each year group and feel reassured that we will continue to do everything possible to ensure your child benefits from a broad, enriching school experience this year. Please make a note of these times in your diaries. We will send links to the meetings the day before they take place. Students are encouraged to watch along with parents and carers.

Year 7	Wednesday 1st September 5:30pm
Year 8	Wednesday 1st September 6:30pm
Year 9	Wednesday 1st September 7:30pm
Year 10	Thursday 2nd September 5:30pm
Year 11	Thursday 2nd September 6:30pm
Year 12	Monday 6th September 5:30pm
Year 13	Monday 6th September 6:30pm

Whilst we endeavour to ensure that all the latest news and dates of other events are brought to parents' and carers' attention via our weekly newsletter, please regularly check our [school website](#) for the latest news and the dates of other events during the school year.

Return to school schedule - September 2021**NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for Students September 2021**

You will have heard that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms is continuing in schools at the start of term using lateral flow devices. This section of the letter is to help give you more information about the testing programme in our school.

Up to one third of people who have coronavirus are asymptomatic. By testing we will help to reduce the spread in school and college settings through asymptomatic transmission. We are therefore strongly encouraging those returning to school to be tested.

The government has asked us to conduct two tests during the first two weeks of students returning and to prepare students for home testing during September. The test we will use at school is a simpler, nose only swab test. Students will carry this out themselves in supervised conditions.

We are planning to test all staff and students on a rolling programme as they return to school. For the first test, students will be invited to attend school by appointment prior to their main start date. They will attend school only for the test and return home immediately afterwards. For the second test students will remain on site and will be tested during the school day.

We asked for your consent to carry out the test when students returned in March and for existing students we will assume this consent still stands unless you notify us to the contrary using the consent form link below.

For our new year 7 students and any admissions since March 2021 it is important that parents/carers complete the consent form now.

Results will be shared via the NHS test and trace systems. Students should attend school for testing in school uniform.

Year Group*	Consent form - for new students or to change consent
Year 7	New Year 7 consent form
Year 8	Year 8 consent form - for amendments only
Year 9	Year 9 consent form - for amendments only
Year 10	Year 10 consent form - for amendments only
Year 11	Year 11 consent form - for amendments only

*students in the sixth form are over 16 so give their own consent.

Please see the [Covid Privacy Statement linked here](#)

Student induction session

Each year group will attend an induction session at the start of term; this will be a shorter school day than normal. Please note the date, start and end time below. As part of this induction students will attend an assembly and a tutor time session. The purpose of the induction sessions are to welcome students back to school and to ensure they are ready for learning and the new school year. Students will also have extended pastoral time with their form tutor and tutor group.

Return to school schedule - September 2021

	Wednesday 1st September	Thursday 2nd September	Friday 3rd September	Monday 6th September	Tuesday 7th September	
Year 7	INSET School closed to students Y7-12	COVID tests 1 pm Surnames A-K 2 pm Surnames L-Z	8:45am -12:00 Induction day 1	8:30am to 3:30pm Induction day 2	Normal school day	
Year 8			COVID tests 9am - Oak & Rowan 10am - Beech & Willow	9:20am to 10:50am Induction morning	Normal school day	
Year 9			COVID tests 11am - Oak & Rowan 12 noon - Beech & Willow	9:45am to 11:15am Induction morning	Normal school day	
Year 10			COVID tests 1:30pm - Oak & Rowan 2:30pm - Beech & Willow	10:10am to 11:50am Induction morning	Normal school day	
Year 11			COVID tests 10:30 - Oak & Rowan 11:30 - Beech & Willow		10:35am to 12:05pm Induction morning	Normal school day
Year 12			COVID tests 9:00 Surnames A-K 9:30 Surnames L-Z	9:45am - 3:15pm Y12 Induction day	8:40am to 3:15pm Lessons	Normal school day
Year 13		COVID tests 2pm		10:20 am - 3:15 pm Y13 induction	8:40am to 3:15pm Lessons	Normal school day

Equipment and uniform

School uniform is an important part of our high standards and expectations. Please make sure students are ready for school in appropriate uniform in September. As was the case in the 2020-21 academic year, students should wear their P.E. kit on the days they have P.E.

Students in years 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13 should bring their lanyards and ID cards back to school in September. Students in years 7 and 12 will be issued with new lanyards.

GIRLS	BOYS
Black school shoes (not canvas, trainers, Converse, pumps or boots)	Black school shoes (not canvas, trainers, Converse, pumps or boots)
Black socks or plain black tights	Black socks
Plain green skirt or black trousers (no jean style trousers or chinos)	Plain black trousers (no jean style trousers or chinos)
White school shirt or blouse (long or short sleeved blouse or collared shirt)	White school shirt (long or short sleeved collared shirt)
Green blazer (with school badge)	Green blazer (with school badge)
V-necked green jumper (optional)	V-necked green jumper (optional)
School tie (optional, with house colour)	School tie (with house colour)
Single ear stud per ear. No hoop earrings. No piercings other than the ear. A necklace with a small religious symbol (if required) must be worn inside a blouse/shirt.	
Headscarves worn for religious reasons should be black or green.	
Blazers must always be worn when moving around the school building unless otherwise advised by the headteacher.	
Students are required to wear their lanyard at all times when in classrooms and when moving around the building.	

Students are also expected to follow these uniform rules:

- Skirts worn full length, modestly, just above the knee
- Blazer and shirt sleeves unrolled
- Shirts fully buttoned up and tucked in
- Ties worn down to the waist
- If a t-shirt must be worn underneath a shirt it must be white and not visible.
- Belts and shoelaces black coloured only
- No extreme hair styles, no brightly coloured hair (e.g. pink, blue, green), no shavings, and no tracks (including eyebrows)
- No nail extensions, false eye lashes or coloured nail varnish
- No make-up, apart from natural/subtle foundation/face powder

Parents and carers who wish their child to wear religious jewellery other than a chain with a small symbol must make a request to the headteacher in writing. The school reserves the right to challenge any jewellery that does not meet our uniform expectations.

Highland school PE kit expectations:

- Highlands PE hoodie
- Highlands PE t-shirt

- Highlands rugby shirt (optional)
- Highlands black tracksuit bottoms
- Highlands black shorts / black skirt / skirt
- Highlands black sports leggings
- Highlands black rugby socks outdoor lessons or plain white socks indoor lessons
- Shin pads
- Non-marking trainers
- Football boots for lessons on the field (winter period only)

Students are expected to only wear a full PE kit that has been purchased from our suppliers John Lyon or Smith's.

Students are not allowed to wear any other alternative coloured kit, hoodies or tracksuit bottoms.

Students are expected to carry their everyday equipment (pencil case, books, etc) in a bag of suitable size.

Students should bring a pencil case, which should include the following	
30cm ruler	2 HB Pencils
Pens (black/blue and green)	Eraser
Sharpener	Protractor
Compass	Colouring pencils

Students should also bring their mini whiteboards, board marker, board rubber and a scientific calculator.

Reading for pleasure programme

Highlands School is committed to providing students with the opportunity to read high quality literature. Engaging with such literature not only supports students' learning in English, but across the curriculum as a whole. It also plays an important role in fostering a life-long love of reading. It is for this reason that the English department has published its list of suggested reading and we will be using some morning registration periods each week for reading. We ask that students come to school in September with one of the books from the list below, selected as appropriate for their age. Students will be asked to keep a journal of their reading during registration and we look forward to celebrating journal entries with the school community in our weekly newsletter

Years 7 - 9

Quick reads:

- The Dark is Rising by Susan Cooper
- King Arthur and the Knights of the round table by Marcia Williams
- Sir Gawain + the Green Knight (illustrated) by Michael Morpurgo
- The Humiliations of Welton Belt by Alex Wheatle
- Usborne Illustrated Grimm's Fairy Tales by Ruth Brocklehurst, Gill Doherty, and Raffaella Ligi (illustrator)
- Frankenstein for young readers by Rosie Dickens
- The Count of Monte Cristo for young readers by Rod Llyod Jones
- *Our Day Out* by Willy Russell
- *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton

Reading list:

- My Swordhand is Singing by Marcus Segdewick
- Grendel's Wife by Susan Signe Morrison
- The Short Knife by Elen Caldecott
- The Princess Bride by William Golding
- SkyWake: Invasion by Jamie Russell
- Here Lies Arthur by Phillip Reeves
- Shakespeare by Bill Bryson
- Twilight by Stephenie Meyer
- Rani and Sukh by Bali Rai
- Our Beautiful Game by Lou Kuenzier

- The Crossing by Manjeet Mann
- In a Glass Grimly by Adam Gidwitz
- We Played with Fire by Catherine Barter
- A Castle of Otranto by Horace Walpole
- Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children by Ransom Riggs
- The Sound of the Waves by Yukio Mishima
- Our Town by Thornton Wilder
- The Supreme Lie by Geraldine McCaughrean
- Burning Sunlight by Anthea Simmons
- The Gilded Ones by Namina Forna
- The Boy I am by K.L Kettle
- The Coral Island by R.M. Ballantyne
- The Last Hawk by Elizabeth Wein
- *A Quiet Kind of Thunder* by Sara Barnard
- Echo Mountain by Lauren Wolk
- The Fountains of Silence by Ruta Sepetys Wein
- Nevertheless, she persisted by Jon Walter

Challenging reads:

- *Jane Eyre* by Emily Bronte
- *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens
- *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger
- *1984* by George Orwell
- *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding
- *Drawn across borders: True Stories of Migration* by George Butler

Reading for pleasure (continued)

Years 10 - 11

Reading list

- The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time - Mark Haddon
- Banquo's Son - T. K. Roxborough
- Enter Three Witches - Caroline Cooney
- Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde by David Edgar
- Educating Rita - Willy Russell
- The Lovely Bones - Alice Sebold
- Gone Girl - Gillian Flynn
- The Shadow of the Wind - Carlos Ruiz Zafon
- The Watcher in the Shadows - Carlos Ruiz Zafon
- Clap When You Land - Elizabeth Acevedo
- The Boxer - Nikesh Shukla
- The Dark Lady - Akala
- Natives - Akala
- Billy Elliott - Melvin Burgess
- The Poet X - Elizabeth Acevedo
- The Fat Black Woman's Poems - Grace Nichols
- The Mysterious Affair at Styles - Agatha Christie
- Born a Crime - Trevor Noah
- Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine - Gail Honeyman
- Such a Fun Age - Kiley Reid
- The Beekeeper of Aleppo - Christy Lefteri
- The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo - Taylor Jenkins Reid
- Little Fires Everywhere - Celeste Ng
- The Help - Kathryn Stockett
- Falling Leaves - Adeline Yen Mah
- Where the Crawdads Sing - Delia Owens
- Big Little Lies - Liane Moriarty
- Animal Farm - George Orwell
- Blood Brothers - Willy Russell
- Power - Naomi Alderman
- A Christmas Carol - Charles Dickens

Challenging reads:

- The Picture of Dorian Gray - Wilde
- Frankenstein - Mary Shelley
- Dracula - Bram Stoker
- King Lear - Shakespeare
- The Mask of the Red Death - Poe
- Paradise Lost - John Milton
- The Da Vinci Code - Dan Brown
- Rebecca - De Maurier
- Jane Eyre - Charlotte Bronte
- The Island of Doctor Moreau by H G Wells
- The Woman in Black - Susan Hill
- The Kite Runner - Khaled Hosseini
- The Turn of the Screw - Henry James
- The Time Traveller's Wife - Audrey Niffenegger
- Queenie - Candice Carty-Williams
- Purple Hibiscus - Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- Catcher in the Rye - J. D. Salinger
- The Great Gatsby - F. Scott Fitzgerald
- The Old Man and the Sea - Ernest Hemingway
- Grapes of Wrath - John Steinbeck
- 1984 - George Orwell
- Atonement - Ian McEwan
- White Teeth - Zadie Smith
- Small Island - Andrea Levy
- Slaughterhouse Five - Kurt Vonnegut
- In Cold Blood - Truman Capote
- Wide Sargasso Sea - Jean Rhys
- The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo - Stieg Larsson
- A Thousand Years of Solitude - Gabriel García Márquez
- The Alchemist - Paulo Coelho
- A Modest Proposal - Jonathan Swift
- The Midnight Library- Matt Haig
- Things Fall Apart - Chihuahua Achebe
- Captain Corelli's Mandolin - Louis de Bernière