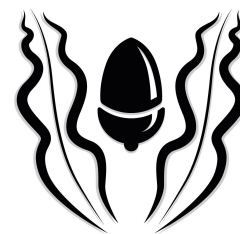


3 September 2021



Headteacher's News:

I am writing to you today to welcome all students, parents and carers back to the new academic year. This letter contains the key information for next week and a summary of the information that I shared with families during the information webinars that we held over the past two days. On Wednesday we met with families in years 7, 8 and 9. On Thursday we met with the families of students in years 10 and 11. We thank families for taking the time to attend the meetings, we hope you found them helpful. The sixth form webinars are on Monday, we will send links to the events today.

Year 12	Monday 6th September 5:30pm
Year 13	Monday 6th September 6:30pm

At the information events I was able to talk about how pleased we are to see the return of breaktime, form time, clubs and activities and our trips and visits. We are also excited to launch our DARE days, two days of trips, visits and on site activities for all year groups. They will take place on 21st and 22nd of October, the final two days before the start of the half term holiday.

Covid screening and the return to school

This week we have been carrying out COVID-19 testing ready for the start of term. We thank students for their mature behavior as we carried out the testing. We also held induction lessons for our year 12 and 13 students and we welcomed our year 7s to school.

Next week on Monday all other year groups will come to school for special induction assemblies and tutor time and then the full teaching timetable will commence from Tuesday. These are the timings for Monday:

	Monday 6th September	Tuesday 7th September
Year 7	8:30am to 3:30pm Induction day 2 & covid screening	Normal school day
Year 8	9:20am to 10:50am Induction morning	Normal school day & covid screening
Year 9	9:45am to 11:15am Induction morning	Normal school day & covid screening
Year 10	10:10am to 11:50am Induction morning	Normal school day & covid screening
Year 11	10:35am up to 1pm* Induction morning & covid screening (*note change of end time to include covid screening Students will leave after their test between 12:30 and 1pm)	Normal school day

Year 12	8:40am to 3:15pm Lessons & covid screening	Normal school day
Year 13	8:40am to 3:15pm Lessons & covid screening	Normal school day

Key links

In the information webinars, I said I would share key links, please find them below:

What is it?	Key link	If I have a problem with this link
<p>My child at school (MCAS) This allows families to review their child's attendance, timetable, achievement points, concerns and, from this year, reporting on progress. You can also notify changes to contact details.</p>	<p>www.mychildatschool.com</p>	<p>Please use the MCAS contact listed on the contact form (see below) or itstudent@highlearn.uk</p> <p>For year 7 families: Log in details will be sent from 6 September</p>
<p>Parent pay The means by which families can upload money to their child's lunch and printing accounts, pay deposits and pay for trips and visits.</p>	<p>www.parentpay.com</p>	<p>Please use the Parent pay contact listed on the contact form (see below)</p>
<p>Contacting the school You can contact named staff members using our website contact form</p> <p>Student absence</p> <p>The main email address for general communication with the school.</p>	<p>Contact Form on the school website</p> <p>Please telephone the school Absence Line directly before 9am on 020 8370 1191</p> <p>postbox@highlearn.uk</p>	<p>The postbox email address should work at all times.</p>
<p>Staysafe The school's safeguarding email address. Students and families can use it to communicate with the school about safeguarding issues.</p>	<p>staysafe@highlearn.uk</p>	<p>The staysafe email address should work at all times.</p>
<p>News & events This app links to our school website and gives access to the latest news, newsletters and calendar. It sends alerts for important announcements.</p>	<p>News & events app details</p>	

Highlands Parents' and Friends' Association

The Highlands Parents' and Friends' Association (HPFA) are looking for new members who can spare some time to help raise valuable funds for the school. In the past these funds have paid for a new minibus, an outdoor canopy area, additional IT equipment and the sixth form study area. They make a real difference to our school. They organise several social events during the year such as quiz nights, wine tastings, musical bingo nights, and provide refreshments at parents' events. They will be holding their **next Annual General Meeting on 15 September at 7pm** in the main hall and would welcome parents interested in joining the HPFA. They will also be electing new officers at that meeting, as the chair, vice chair, treasurer and secretary will all be standing down as their children are no longer at the school. I will write to all parents and carers separately about this, asking them to sign up and support our school, but should you want further information, please contact Fiona Judd, chair of HPFA on her email: fiona@smart-nebula.com.

Preparing students for school

In my presentations I listed some things that parents and carers can do to help us facilitate a smooth start to term, they are:

- Make sure students have the appropriate uniform and equipment for the start of term*
- Read the newsletter every week
- Make sure students bring their lanyards from last year (this does not apply to years 7 and 12)
- Reinforce our key behaviour principles at home, remembering to work hard and be nice!
- Remind students that they should come in full PE kit on the days they have PE
- Make sure students have a reading book for our new reading for pleasure programme (see below)
- For students in year 7 and new year 12 students, please make sure the £50 book deposit is paid on 'parent pay'.

* please ensure that your child has everything required for each school day before they leave home, in order to minimise items being dropped off at reception by parents, as we cannot guarantee delivering them on time

Draft assessment and reporting schedule for this year.

We are pleased to present the **draft** reporting schedule for this year. We have taken on board feedback about our assessments and reporting last year and have made changes to our assessment and reporting practices. The table below gives a sense of the schedule for this year, we will confirm the final dates shortly.

	Mid year assessments	Mid-year reporting	Parents' evening	End of year assessment period	End of year reporting
Year 7	22 Nov - 3 Dec	17 Dec	12 Jan	6 Jun - 1 Jul	15 July
Year 8	22 Nov - 3 Dec	17 Dec	5 Jan	6 Jun - 1 Jul	15 July
Year 9	17 - 21 Jan	28 Feb	2 Mar	6 Jun - 1 Jul	15 July
Year 10	10 - 14 Jan (final year) & 21 - 25 Feb	7 Feb 18 Mar	23 Mar	GCSE exams & late June	15 July
Year 11	10 - 14 Jan	7 Feb	9 Feb	GCSE exams	
Year 12	24 - 28 Jan	11 Feb	23 Feb	20-24 Jun	15 July
Year 13	8 - 12 Nov	30 Nov	1 Dec	A Level exams	

On the following pages are some of the important information that we have already shared for the start of term. Please have a look if you have not done so already.

Finally, I would like to wish students and families a successful start to term next week.

Mr McNerney
Headteacher

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

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 Lyons or Smith's school shops.

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 Dickins
- 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