

HBK Update, Friday 22 October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

COVID-19 Update

Our number of student COVID-19 cases is falling, compared with last week: yesterday (Thursday), we had 43 confirmed positive student cases of COVID-19, compared with 71 positive confirmed cases on Thursday 14 October. The number of staff who are absent from school due to illness or COVID-19 has also fallen slightly, compared with last week, although it remains fairly high. We are hoping that after half term, we will see the number of COVID-19 related absences for both students and staff continuing to fall.

The school's Senior Leadership Team this week reviewed our current COVID-19 measures, including the requirement to wear a face covering at specific times in school, and we have decided to continue with all measures for the first two weeks after half term. This is in line with the most recent information from the Local Authority, where there is significant concern about the rise in the number of cases of COVID-19 in the region at the moment. We will review our COVID-19 measures again in the week beginning Monday 15 November.

COVID-19 Home-testing- message from Mr Cooke, Vice Principal

More home self-test kits (Lateral Flow) have recently been offered to all students to ensure that they have enough kits to continue with twice-weekly testing over the half term break. Please could you ensure that your child(ren) conduct a Lateral Flow test **BEFORE returning to school on Monday 1 November**. This is a very important action for the whole school community in our aim of keeping everyone safe and trying to minimise disruption to our students' education as best we can. If your child ever requires more home test kits, they are always available to collect from the Lower/Middle School Office. Thank you.

COVID-19 Catch-up Vaccinations – message from Mr Cooke, Vice Principal

On Wednesday this week (20 October), we sent a ParentMail to parents of students in Years 7 to 11 regarding COVID-19 catch-up vaccinations. Attached to the ParentMail was a letter from the Cambridgeshire Immunisation Team, which contained links for booking COVID-19 vaccinations for 12-15 year olds at local vaccination centres. Unfortunately the link we were given was incorrect, so they have provided this new one: <https://www.swiftqueue.co.uk/hertfordshire-vax-cape.php>

Free School Meals over Half Term - message from Ms Nightingale, Vice Principal

We sent a ParentMail earlier this week with information regarding the vouchers for FSM over half term and the Household Support Fund. Please click on the following links to view the [Parent Letter](#) and the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQs). Those who qualify for vouchers should receive them from the county council sometime today. If there are any issues please refer to the FAQs in the first instance.

HBK Sixth Form Admission 2022, Information – message from Mrs Rix, Director of Sixth Form

We are delighted to say that the Sixth Form 'Open Evening' information is now available for you and our Year 11s to see! There are videos about all the courses we offer in the Sixth Form and information, too, about how we will support you through your two year journey with us here: [Sixth Form Open Evening](#). If Year 11 parents/carers or students have any questions about the Sixth Form, we would be very pleased to hear from you! Email us at sixthform@hbk.acesmat.uk

Teaching and Learning update – message from Ms Solvar-Isida, Assistant Principal

First of all, a HUGE **THANK YOU** for your support so far this year ensuring that your children have had a positive and successful start to this school year. There have been a significant number of changes this year, with the launch of the new Knowledge Organisers, Self-Quizzing Books, tighter homework expectations and up-front conversations with our students about how we learn and how we teach - overall, we are very proud of the way the majority of students have risen to our 'High Standards'. Well done to them!

This week, senior leaders conducted another Self-Quizzing (SQ) Books check (we do this by collecting a random sample of self-quizzing books from 5 or 6 tutor groups across the school) and it was pleasing to see the amount of SQ homework completed so far this term by many students: this consistent practice can only lead to more knowledgeable and successful students in the future, and that's very exciting! Presentation of work was also a good feature; we are pleased to see so many students taking pride in the presentation of their work.

Although this check showed more evidence of students checking the work with a green pen and doing their self-quizzing twice, we are clearly not there yet in our journey towards **all** students doing this consistently. So we will need to do further work on this with students after the half-term break. If you are unclear about the expectations and how to support your child/children, they should have at the front of their SQ Books a model that shows them what is expected of them; please remind them to refer to this model. We have also created some tutorial videos that could be of use and these will soon be published on the HBK website - once they are there, we will let you know. Have a lovely break and thank you again for what you do!

Flooding in school this week

On Wednesday night some parts of the school flooded as a result of the deluge of rainfall that we experienced during the night and into the morning. We managed on the Thursday morning – the Site Team and others quickly springing into action! - although some classes had to be moved, temporarily. I mention this in order to tell you **how great the students were – again!** They moved without fuss and, at the end of Period 1 we had to redirect hundreds of them away from a huge puddle in the underpass near IT, which meant they had to take the long way around! Again, the students were fantastic!

This week's blog

This week's blog is about why learning is hard and why 'failure' is essential to learning. If you would like to read it, you can find it here: <https://learningisthething.com/?p=293>

Have a great half-term break.

WE are Hinchingsbrooke.

Kind regards

Mark Patterson
Principal