

## HBK Update, Friday 15 October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

### COVID-19 Update

The number of positive cases of COVID-19 amongst students and staff remains high. The student number is well down on its peak of over a hundred cases that we saw two weeks ago, but it has risen since last week (this rise is mostly visible in Years 7 and 8; there are very few cases from Year 9 up). In terms of specific figures: on Thursday 14 October, 71 students were absent from school with a confirmed case of Covid-19, with a further 12 students awaiting a PCR result. This is approximately 4% of the student population. We are hopeful that the high number of students that have now been vaccinated, and the half term break that is approaching, will lead to a reduced number of cases in November.

Coping with the number of positive cases amongst Hinchingbrooke staff, and other staff illness not related to COVID, remains a significant challenge for the school.

### Non-uniform day, Friday 22 October

Just a reminder that next Friday is a non-uniform day. We are asking students to make a voluntary donation of £1 towards House charities; the donations will be collected at the school gate on the morning.

### Homework at HBK – message from Mrs Solvar-Isida, Assistant Principal

We recognise that the last two years have been highly disrupted, and some – or perhaps many - students may have fallen out of some of the essential school learning habits, like completing daily homework. We believe that if they persevere, they will get there.

### Why do we expect our students to do homework?

Research that focuses on the link between homework and academic achievement shows that homework has a positive impact on students' achievement - there is a direct link between students spending time on homework and their achievement in secondary school. At both GCSE and A Level, the students who are most successful also tend to have highly developed independent learning skills – they learn well at home as well as at school. Homework should help to **consolidate knowledge**, so that it has a positive impact on what is remembered over time. Therefore, to support students with their organisation, tutors should this week have given them a homework planning sheet, that shows how to plan for the week ahead referring to the homework set on Teams. Students have been asked to store these planning sheets in their Knowledge Organiser Books. Please encourage your child to use the homework planning sheet if, for example, they are struggling with organising and doing their weekly homework.

### Sixth Form Open Evening – message from Mrs Rix, Director of Sixth Form

Unfortunately, we have had to move our Sixth Form Open Evening online, in light of the number of COVID-19 cases in school. Next week, our Year 11 students will hopefully benefit from a week of activities designed to introduce them to Sixth form life and the subjects they can study with us. An Open Evening website will go live on the 21st October and later in the term we plan to offer tours of Hinchingbrooke House, our Sixth Form base, to families and Year 11 students – COVID-19 permitting. Hopefully the information available online and next week will inspire your child to want to join us next year in the HBK Sixth Form! If you have any questions, please get in touch at [sixthform@hbk.acesmat.uk](mailto:sixthform@hbk.acesmat.uk)

## Exams 2022 update – message from Ms Nightingale, Vice Principal

On 30 September the government released details on their 'Plan A' for the examinations next summer. To help you navigate all the information and what this means for your child in Years 10 to 13, please make time to watch the attached video. The video also includes the results day dates and what your child and you can do at this point in time, as well as the support you can offer as a parent and carer.

<https://youtu.be/lj9UM1IMrak>



[Exams 2022 Parent and Student Information Video \(October 2021\)](#)

A video which helps you navigate the decisions about the Summer 2022 Exam series as they currently stand. This includes the planned adaptations to the exami...

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One adaptation being made to the examinations in a few subjects is the addition of 'optionality'. To find out what this means in GCSE History, please read the letter [here](#).

## HBK School Improvement Plan

Here are this year's key focuses taken from the 2021-22 School Improvement Plan:

### 1. Quality of Education (Curriculum, Teaching, Learning and Assessment)

- To quality assure the delivery of the Hinchingsbrooke Approach to Teaching (HAT), and take action where practice falls short of expected standards
- To ensure the revised Feedback and Marking policy is followed by all
- To ensure leaders, including subject leaders, can articulate confidently the aims of the curriculum (INTENT), how it is delivered (IMPLEMENTATION), and its outcomes, in terms of students' progress and attainment (IMPACT)
- To ensure high-quality Knowledge Organisers in subject areas

### 2. Leadership and Management

- To ensure an external evaluation of the school's curriculum
- To ensure all leaders share ownership of the School Improvement Plan, and are mutually supportive
- To embed the school's new Mission, Values and Key Focuses

### 3. Personal development, behaviour and welfare

- To improve student behaviour across the school
- To ensure students have highly positive attitudes towards both their own learning and the school

### 4. Outcomes for students

All outcomes should be equal to or better than national averages in all externally reported measures. In particular, we aim:

- To achieve outcomes at GCSE in line with agreed targets for 2022, or better
- To achieve outcomes at KS5 in line with agreed targets for 2022, or better
- To achieve progress and attainment outcomes for disadvantaged and (Sixth Form) bursary students in line with agreed targets, or better
- To raise literacy levels across the school
- To address the gaps in students' learning that have emerged as a result of the pandemic

## **5. Sixth Form provision**

- a) To establish high standards of engagement for all students so that all are good role models
- b) To monitor attendance and subject engagement, and take action where practice falls short of expected standards
- c) To develop marketing strategies that aid recruitment and see overall numbers grow

## **6. Partnership working**

- a) To establish some workstreams with other schools or organisations to maintain an outward facing dimension to our work

### **This week's Blog**

This week's Blog has the catchy title, 'Putting staff first?'. You can read it here:

<https://learningisthething.com/?p=292>

Wishing you all a safe and peaceful weekend.

Kind regards

**Mark Patterson**  
**Principal**