

HBK Update, Friday 7 January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

A very happy new year to you all! Wishing you a great 2022!

Ofsted Inspection Final Report

Please see the [final Ofsted inspection report](#), following the Section 8 inspection of the school that took place on 9 and 10 November 2021. The main purpose of a Section 8 report is to check whether a school that was previously judged Good or Outstanding by Ofsted remains so; in our case, **Ofsted have confirmed their judgement that we are a Good school**. During the inspection, Ofsted commented very favourably on a number of things we do, and we are pleased to see mention of some of them, too, in the final report. They include:

- The effectiveness of our approach to safeguarding
- Our strong pastoral care
- Our well thought-through, broad and balanced curriculum
- Our school-wide approach to teaching
- Strong student attendance
- The opportunities we provide students to develop leadership and
- Our attention to the well-being of both students and staff

There are things that we can improve about the school. Ofsted Section 8 inspection reports typically result in at least two areas for improvement for schools, and ours are that:

- Students' achievement in some areas, over time, is not as high as it should be and
- The behaviour of a small minority of students does not consistently meet the school's high standards

Our key next step now is to include consideration of Ofsted's findings in our review of the School Development Plan that will happen this half term. We are an ambitious school and we are determined to get **from Good to Great**, by the time we are next inspected in approximately 4 years' time. Our revised School Development Plan will be our key driver of improvement over the next four years.

I would like to thank you as parents for your support for the school and in particular for your willingness to work with us to help this good school to get better. One key area for improvement for us as a school is in gathering the views of students and parents and acting on them – 'You said, we did' etc.. My senior colleague, Mrs Tandy, who is leading on this improvement priority, has been hugely heartened by the number of parents expressing a willingness to be involved in Focus Group work in the future! That is great news for the school!

Covid-19 update – message from Mr Cooke, Vice-Principal

The number of students and staff off school with Covid-19 at the moment is significant, as expected (around 60 each day this week). The school is working hard to manage the ever-changing situation and minimise the disruption to students' learning as far as we can. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and update you on any developments. We appreciate your continued support in ensuring that your child(ren) have **their own face mask and bottle of hand sanitiser with them every day**.

The On-Site testing on Wednesday morning of this week went very smoothly. Over 80% of our student population were supervised through the testing process, which is the highest number we have ever managed. We are very grateful to the 20 volunteers from the Hinchingbrooke community who worked alongside the school staff; we could not manage such a large-scale logistical operation without their support. We envisage that this may be required again at the start of the summer term, after the Easter holiday, if that is what the Government ask us to do.

We have also been asked by the Local Authority to share with you the [Covid-19 update letter](#). It contains some useful information regarding Covid-19 and the Local Authority's approach to dealing with the situation.

The government have recently announced that young people aged 12 to 15 are now being offered a second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine at a minimum of 12 weeks from the first dose, following advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). Parents can book vaccinations for their child, if aged 12 or over, through the **NHS booking system**. Vaccination for this group will also continue to be carried out by the school age immunisation service (SAIS), who confirmed yesterday that our **session in school** will be on **Friday 21 January 2022**. Please see a [parent letter](#) from the SAIS which includes a link to a consent form - **all 2nd doses will need a new consent form submitted**. Arrangements on the day will be similar to the previous session during the autumn term, so students should **wear a short sleeved school shirt or their PE polo top**.

Year 10 Assessments – message from Ms Nightingale, Vice-Principal

Each year students in all year groups take formal exams to test what they have learnt in their courses to date, so that we and they can assess their progress. The Year 10 exams are scheduled for **31st January – 11th February**. Usually these would be sat in the Sports Hall, like a formal exam such as the GCSE exams. We have changed the arrangements for this year, in response to the Covid situation; students will instead take shorter 'assessments' in their lessons during this two-week window. A key difference is that each assessment will take no longer than 40 minutes (unless a student qualifies for extra time). Students will all sit the same assessments in a subject, regardless of when they sit them. The main difference is that they will test a greater range of knowledge and skills.

Students will be issued with a blank timetable, which they will fill in as their teachers tell them when their assessments will take place in each subject. Staff will also indicate what could be on each paper. This process will happen over the next couple of weeks and this should allow students to plan their revision effectively. Students with access arrangements such as extra time, laptops and reader pens will have these arrangements in place for each assessment.

Uniform and dressing for the colder weather – message from Mrs Tandy, Vice-Principal

At Hinchingsbrooke we have high standards of uniform, which includes not allowing the wearing of hoodies or sweatshirts. If seen, these are confiscated and returned to students at the end of the school day. Given the cold temperatures and the fact we have doors and windows open to maximise ventilation, we would encourage students to wear the school jumper under their blazer and to ensure they bring a warm coat to school, which students are allowed to keep on in lessons. Students are also allowed to wear a plain white t-shirt under their school shirt if they want an additional layer to help them stay warm.

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

I do hope that you all managed to get some well-deserved rest over the holidays. Just a reminder of our expectations for students, and our routines, as we start this term:

- Please help us to ensure that your child brings in their knowledge organiser and self-quizzing book to school every day. If their self-quizzing book is a page or two away from being finished, they need to go and see Mrs Dow (lower school office) for a new one
- Please remind and support your child to set their weekly timetable plan to help them organise the completion of their homework in order to meet deadlines and avoid being overwhelmed each week.

We have been really impressed by the engagement in lessons and the desire from the vast majority of students to do well; we wish for all to persevere with this hard-working attitude! It is worth it!

PARENT GOVERNOR VACANCY at the school

We are seeking to appoint a Parent Governor to our Governing Body. Hinchingsbrooke School is an academy with 1900 students and is judged a good school by OFSTED. The key role of the Governing Body is to: provide strategic leadership; ensure accountability of the Principal and Senior Leadership Team for the educational performance of the school; and ensure effective use of resources to support learning. Governors should be able to focus on the bigger picture, capable of rapidly assimilating various forms of information and ask insightful questions of the leadership team. We would be particularly interested in people who have any of the following backgrounds: Health and Safety; Legal; Marketing and PR; Construction and building maintenance; Finance. Parents and carers with other backgrounds are, of course, very welcome to apply, too. The most important thing is to have someone who is committed to supporting the school to help it improve and to working positively and collaboratively with other governors and senior leaders to bring this about.

Governors are expected to attend around five evening meetings per year plus a one day visit to the school. If you are interested in being a governor, you should in the first instance, apply to Mrs Warner, our clerk to governors, for an expression of interest form. The application window will close on **Monday 24 January 2022**. Contact details: dwarner@hbk.acesmat.uk

Message from Cambridgeshire Constabulary

Please see the January edition of our [Cambridgeshire Constabulary Safer Schools Newsletter](#). The subjects that we have covered in this newsletter are as follows:

- **Cyber Savvy?** – Fifteen Apps that parents should know about.
- **Parking outside schools** – The general ‘Do’s and Don’ts’ regarding illegal and inconsiderate parking during school drop off/pick up times.
- **Cannabis Edibles** – Awareness for parents.
- **County Lines/Child Exploitation** – Explanation about County lines, how it works, grooming and recruitment and how to spot the warning signs.

On behalf of Cambridgeshire Constabulary Children and Young People Team, we would like to thank you for your support with the newsletter.

Kind regards

[Cambridgeshire Constabulary](#)

This week's blog

This week's blog is about the merits of silence at times in the classroom. If you would like to read it, it's here: <https://learningsthething.com/?p=357>

We are Hinchingsbrooke.

Best wishes

Mark Patterson
Principal