

## HBK Update, Friday 3 September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to 2021-22 at Hinchingsbrooke! An especially warm welcome to those parents who are new to Hinchingsbrooke this year! For your information, I write a Friday ParentMail called 'HBK Update', that is usually a summary of key information from senior staff at the school. I also do a weekly education-related blog that appears as a link at the end of each ParentMail; I intend to restart the blog next Friday.

This school starts differently from other years, due in part to the government's expectation that secondary schools offer all students two lateral flow tests on site **prior to** normal lessons beginning, and this year we are also taking the opportunity to explain to all students key aspects of the school's routines for teaching, learning, behaviour, homework and so on. Mrs Tandy refers to this, too, in her 'This is Hinchingsbrooke' message here:

### **This is Hinchingsbrooke – a message from Mrs Tandy, Vice-Principal**

We will be starting this school year off a little differently from usual. In addition to the voluntary lateral flow testing for students, we will be spending some time using assemblies and form time sessions to explore in more detail the way we do things at Hinchingsbrooke. Why are we taking time to do this? We are introducing some important new things, such as Knowledge Organisers and self-quizzing (see below) and we think it is well worth the time we will take with students to focus on how we teach, how we learn and how we behave, all of which are fundamental to success. We believe that imparting this knowledge will be empowering for students and will clarify our expectations of them. We are very hopeful that starting in this way will have significant long-term benefits for all students at HBK.

Timetabled lessons will commence on Friday 10th September and school photographs will take place for all year groups on Monday 13th September.

### **Knowledge Organisers at HBK**

This year, we are rolling out the use of Knowledge Organisers in as many subjects as possible. A Knowledge Organiser (KO) is a sheet of paper produced by a department (English, Maths, Science, History etc) that aims to set out the key knowledge that students are expected to learn and remember over, typically, a half term. Subject teachers will be giving students their KOs as soon as they are ready and then students will be asked to learn sections of the Knowledge Organiser as part of their regular homework in the subject. This is an exciting development for the school and we are optimistic that the use of KOs will help all students to remember key knowledge.

Next week, during our start-of-year 'This is Hinchingsbrooke' sessions with students, tutors will give students a Knowledge Organiser 'book' that they will use to store their KOs, and a Self-Quizzing book that they will use when they do their self-quizzing. Tutors will explain to students how to use these two books, both of which will from now on be part of the compulsory equipment to bring in to school every day.

### **On-site asymptomatic testing – message from Mr Cooke, Vice-Principal**

In July the government asked all secondary schools to test all students at an on-site asymptomatic test site (ATS) on return following the summer holidays. This request was based on the latest public health advice and research which was that testing helps break chains of transmission in education settings after the summer holidays when students may have been mixing with lots of people, and when tests are carried out on site, testing participation rates amongst students via ATS are much higher than when testing at home.

We have now completed the first test for all year groups, including the new Year 7s, in two days rather than the 3 days which we needed back in the spring after the lockdown. We are very grateful to the community volunteers who are assisting us with this very busy testing schedule and for support from parents and carers to ensure that their child attends for testing. We appreciate that this may have caused some inconvenience

for parents; we are pleased that we have managed to minimise the delay to the start of term by only two days.

If any student missed the first test, we would still encourage them to attend the second test (Monday for Years 7, 12 & 13. Tuesday for Years 8, 9, 10 & 11. The testing schedule can be found [here](#). Once the students have conducted their second test, they will collect a box of home test kits (containing 7 tests) as the government requires students and staff to recommence twice-weekly testing at home until the end of September. Further announcements will be made in due course on what happens from October onwards. The first test at home should begin on Thursday morning, 9 September, (or the night before) and the result submitted on TestRegister.co.uk in the usual way. More information will be provided for the Year 7s in school next week.

#### Use of Teams for homework setting – message from Mr Pendlebury, Assistant Principal

We have made changes to the way homework will be set at school, because we are no longer using the Doodle system; we will now be using Microsoft Teams to set homework. This will mean that our pupils have fewer systems to use as Teams is incorporated within Office 365, which all pupils already have access to. Homework will be set via the “Assignments” function within Teams and all teachers will create an assignment when they set homework. Teams has more functionality than Doodle had, and pupils can submit work and receive feedback within the same system. Pupils will automatically be part of a “Team” for every class they are a member of, and login details will be shared in school with all pupils.

We recommend that your child familiarises themselves with Teams. Once they are set up, do please encourage your child to log on and explore their class Team and they should get in the habit of checking Teams daily to check if they have been set any homework. A user-guide to help pupils use Teams can be found [here](#). As parents and carers, you will receive a weekly email which summarises the assignments which have been set; our IT team have automatically enabled all parents and carers to receive this email. If you do not receive this parental email, please email our IT team at [ITTechnicians@hbk.acesmat.uk](mailto:ITTechnicians@hbk.acesmat.uk).

#### Appeals for Summer Exam Results – message from Ms Nightingale, Vice Principal

The deadline for the first stage of the appeal is **today (3rd September)**, so if you have not yet requested an appeal for your grade, then this needs to be received by midnight tonight. Please refer to the appeals page of the website for the relevant paperwork and information. Please also be aware that you need a separate request form for each subject you appeal. If you wish the appeal to go to the second stage (An Awarding Body Appeal) then the deadline for this is 17th September. We will therefore need your application by 16<sup>th</sup> at the latest, as we will need to send this to the board on your behalf. You cannot have a Second Stage Appeal without first requesting Stage 1.

All appeals paperwork needs to be sent to: [appeals@hbk.acesmat.uk](mailto:appeals@hbk.acesmat.uk)

#### Quality in Careers Standard – message from Mrs Tandy, Vice Principal

We had confirmation yesterday that Hinchingsbrooke School has been awarded the Quality in Careers Standard. The Quality in Careers Standard is the single national quality award for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) in secondary schools, colleges and work-based learning. The Awarding Bodies undertake assessments by an expert Careers Education & Guidance assessor (who is independent of the school or college). Assessments are made against national assessment criteria, fully incorporating the Gatsby Benchmarks for “*Good Careers Guidance*” and requiring additional evidence of **impact** on students’ career-related learning from the careers programme. The national Standard requires secondary schools and colleges to demonstrate that their careers programme:

- has strong leadership from the Head Teacher/Principal, the senior leadership team and the governing body
- has effective training for staff involved in planning and delivering the careers programme
- includes all pupils and students

We are immensely proud of this fantastic achievement and would like to thank Mr O'Shaughnessy and Mrs Tanton-Smith for leading our CEIAG work so well. We would also like to thank our link Trustee for CEIAG Mr Gary Weston for his unwavering and enthusiastic support.

#### **New HBK SENDCo**

Our new SENDCo is Mr Andrew Sedgwick and you should now contact him, instead of Ms Rebecca Berton (I am pleased to say that Ms Berton remains in our Trust, with a Trust-wide role!). His email address is [asedgwick@hbk.acesmat.uk](mailto:asedgwick@hbk.acesmat.uk).

Wishing you a lovely weekend!

We are Hinchingsbrooke.

Kind regards,

**Mark Patterson**  
**Principal**