

HBK Update, Friday 10 September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

The start of term at HBK

We are very pleased with how this year has started at HBK! It has been a challenge: we were told by the Government in July to prepare to offer two lateral flow tests to all students BEFORE we started 'normal' lessons in September and we have done that but, clearly, it has affected the start of the new school year. I would like to pay tribute to the parent volunteers who came into school to help us run the tests alongside colleagues from HBK – YOU know who you are, you were amazing AGAIN - thank you.

Before the Government asked us to do the COVID-19 testing, we had already planned to start this school year with a 'Reboot'. Our thinking was two-fold: first, we wanted to press the reset button after two school years of the pandemic that hugely affected how the school operated day to day. Our current Year 8s, for example, had never had an assembly in our lovely Performing Arts Centre (PAC), whereas in normal times they would have had an assembly every single week. Second, we are introducing some new initiatives this school year and we thought that we could best do this through assemblies delivered by senior staff and Form Time activities run by tutors (see below for a brief summary of what's new at HBK this school year).

The students have been amazing during Reboot and I would like to thank and congratulate them all. I would also like to thank my colleagues, who have stepped up extraordinarily well to the challenges of the two-day Reboot programme. Normal lessons have now begun for all.

COVID-19 Testing – message from Mr Cooke, Vice-Principal

Thank you to all students who came into school to take the lateral flow tests. They behaved beautifully, a credit to themselves and to you as their parents. The testing resulted in nine positive cases, all of which were dealt with in line with public health guidance. The Government have asked students and staff to recommence twice weekly lateral flow testing at home (Mondays and Thursdays) for the month of September. Home test kits can be collected from the Lower/Middle/6th Form Office if a student missed out on collecting it during the on-site testing. Please can you submit your results on the school system (TestRegister.co.uk), using **your new email address**. Registering on the government's system will continue to be whatever email address you set it up with. The government will update us on what will be expected from October onwards. The Year 7s are yet to be shown how to access their school email address, so please only contact the school if your child's test is positive, we do **not** need to be informed if it is negative. Thank you for your support with these COVID-19 measures.

What's new at HBK this year?

We are embedding the Hinchingsbrooke Approach to Teaching (HAT) across the school. Its purpose is simple: to ensure a high standard of teaching in every lesson, every day. You can find a brief summary of our approach to teaching in the HAT poster [here](#) (still a work in progress):

We are introducing **Knowledge Organisers** in as many subjects as possible for Years 7 to 11. A knowledge organiser describes the key learning in the subject, and teachers will give students a new knowledge organiser approximately every half term.

Self-quizzing: teachers will set students learning from their subject knowledge organiser to do at home as part of their regular homework, and students will self-quiz using the Look-Say-Cover-Write-Check-Repeat method, which we have explained to them in school. We are using Look-Say-Cover-Write-Check-Repeat because it is simple to understand and do, and we believe that it works – clearly, how well it works will

depend greatly on the effort individual students put into doing it. The 'Write' part of the self-quizzing will be done in a Self-Quizzing exercise book that we are giving to all students (in Years 7-11).

Literacy: we have plans for lots of work to improve HBK students' literacy; we know good literacy is key to success at school and beyond. More on this in due course.

Email addresses change – message from Mr Pendlebury, Assistant Principal

Over the summer all the email addresses changed for all students and staff so that everyone within the ACES trust has the same email address. For Hinchingsbrooke, this is now **@HBK.acesmat.uk**. Whereas previously a teacher's email address started with their initials, it now starts with the initial of their first name followed by their surname. Therefore, Sam Brown's email would be SBrown@HBK.acesmat.uk. The students will be informed of their email change in school. Included here is an all-staff contact list with the new email addresses: [HBK All Staff Contacts 2021-22](#)

Queen's Jubilee celebrations!

In the summer, the Government announced an additional day's holiday to be taken during the summer term of this school year. Schools are allowed to choose the day, provided they choose a date in the summer of 2022. At Hinchingsbrooke, we have chosen the last day of the school year, Friday 22 July, as our additional day's holiday, which means that the summer term of 2022 will now end on Thursday 21 July. We chose this date because at the moment we do not know when the GCSE and A level examinations will take place next summer, but we do know they will be done by July, so taking the extra day at the end of term makes sense for us.

Please don't park in the school bus bays!

A plea to those parents who are dropping off, and/or picking up, their children in the school bus-bay parking. The bus bays are **not** a car park and cars using them causes a potential hazard for the buses. We absolutely know this is a challenge, but please find an alternative place to drop off and/or pick up your child.

This week's blog

This week's blog is about explicit instruction and if you would like to read it you can find it here: <https://learningisthething.com/?p=246>

Wishing you a lovely weekend!

We are Hinchingsbrooke.

Kind regards,

Mark Patterson
Principal