

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope his email finds you and your family well. As you are aware, I sent you a very detailed email last week regarding arrangements for the start of the autumn term 2021, so I will try to keep this email fairly brief. As a Headteacher, I don't think I have ever sent out so many emails and other communications during a school year before. I am sure you are looking forward to a break from receiving messages from the School!

### **Thank you**

To begin with, on behalf of the staff and the governors, I would like to thank you for your incredible support, patience and understanding during what has been a most challenging year for all of us in coping with another lockdown, remote learning and large numbers of students having to self-isolate due to positive cases of COVID-19 within the School. As staff, we have always felt a great deal of understanding and empathy from parents/carers during phonecalls and messages, even when you have been feeling understandable frustration or concern at lost learning time in school. Knowing that you as our parents/carers appreciate that we are doing our best and always trying to make appropriate decisions, whatever the challenges, has been very reassuring, so thank you.

### **Letter from the Department for Education**

Please find attached a letter that schools have been asked to distribute to parents/carers regarding the changes to contact tracing in education and childcare settings.

### **Reminder of support available throughout the summer holiday for students and families**

We are delighted to have launched our new Health and Well-Being Hub for students and parents/carers which can be found on our website in the 'Parents and Students' section. It contains links to important support agencies such as Young Minds, Headspace, Every Mind Matters, Rise, MIND and Kooth, as well as the Warwickshire School Health and Wellbeing Service.

If you need to speak to someone urgently then please read the information below on support available and/or click on the link below to access a selection of online support.

<https://www.highamlaneschool.co.uk/parents-and-students-health-and-wellbeing-hub>

- Papyrus provide support and advice to young people under 35 having thoughts of suicide or for anyone concerned about a young person. Call 0800 068 41 41 Mon-Fri 10am-10pm, Weekends 2.00pm to 10.00pm and Bank Holidays 2.00-5.00pm. Text 07786 209 697
- The Samaritans offer a 24 hour listening service Call 116123
- If you are 11-18 talk to someone today: 02476 641799 (8am and 8pm) or 0300 200 0011 (overnight) or download the Stay Alive app [www.cwrise.com](http://www.cwrise.com)
- Take a look at <https://www.kooth.com/> This is an online Mental Health and Wellbeing Community. It is free, safe and anonymous.
- The MeeToo app allows you to talk anonymously about difficult things with other people of a similar age or experience. You can get help with your problems or use your experiences to help others. The app is a safe space where all posts and replies are checked before going live so there is no harassment, bullying or grooming. <https://www.meetoo.help>

The Family Information Service (FIS) is a helpful friendly service which supports families with a wide range of needs including childcare, finance, housing, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and family relationships. Not sure who can help? Give the team a call, and they can offer advice and support. They are available every Monday to Friday (except bank holidays) 9am to 5pm by phone 01926 742274 or email [fis@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:fis@warwickshire.gov.uk). You can also message on Facebook WarwickshireFIS.

Remember the FIS is available when school is closed over the summer break, so please don't hesitate to contact them if you need any sort of support.

### **School uniform and students' personal appearance**

Thank you for your fantastic support regarding these aspects of our expectations. Please kindly take a look at the relevant section of the Student Organiser if your son/daughter is considering a change of hairstyle, school coat, trousers or footwear for next term. Our normal expectations regarding school uniform and personal appearance still apply. For example: "No jewellery other than a watch, school badges and one, small, plain ear stud per ear may be worn. The wearing of jewellery in body piercings is not allowed for health and safety reasons. The wearing of jewellery in PE is not allowed for health and safety reasons. Please note: necklaces chains and jewellery should not be worn".

Please kindly note, from the start of the autumn term, students who have PE should come to school in full school uniform as they will be changing into PE kit before their PE lessons.

### **Black coats not blue coats please**

The Student Organiser clearly states that students should wear 'A plain, full-length black coat or anorak, covering the top of trousers/skirts'. Blue coats are not acceptable. Thank you.

### **Staff leavers and new-arrivals**

Mr Eddon will be leaving us after eleven years of superb service to Higham Lane School. He has been an excellent Geography teacher throughout his time at HLS and also a highly-effective Subject Leader. Students have benefited from the many school trips and other extra-curricular trips he has organised. We wish Mr Eddon all the best for the future.

Mrs Endlicher joined HLS in September 2017 as a teacher of MFL. We are grateful for her high quality teaching and assessment and we wish her and her family all the best as she returns home to her native Germany. So it's 'auf wiedersehen' from us!

Miss Dixon joined HLS in September 2019 as Subject Leader for Computer Science and ICT and Whole-School Online Safety and ICT Coordinator. She has done a very effective job in this position, and staff, students and parents/carers have benefited from her helpful and informative talks on E Safety and her surveys with students and parents/carers have helped to inform the School's response with regard to online safety education and support. We wish her well in her next post.

Miss Mansaray has completed her NQT year at HLS teaching Sociology and Modern Ethics. We wish this enthusiastic colleague with a passion for her subjects, all the best in her new position.

Mr Williams has been an excellent Learning Support Assistant (LSA) in every respect and Miss Greenfield and the team think so highly of him. He has forged excellent relationships with our students, including some of our most vulnerable young people. Whilst we are sad to see him go, we are delighted to hear that he is going to train to be a Media Studies teacher.

Mrs Green has been a fine LSA who has supported the students really effectively and been a strong member of the Support for Learning team. Although we are sad to see her leave, it

is for good reasons: she is going to train to become a teacher. We wish Mrs Green, a former HLS student, who remembers me as a young-looking Headteacher, (she's even got a photo from her Prom to prove it), all the very best and thank her for her excellent work with our students.

Miss Hameed has done an excellent job in covering an English teacher maternity cover post and made a real impression in our English Department. We are grateful for her enthusiastic teaching, her strong subject knowledge and her creation of some excellent resources and we wish her all the best for the future.

Next term we look forward to welcoming: Mrs West- teacher of Sociology, Mrs Saunders (teacher of English) and Mr Gregson (teacher of History). We would also like to congratulate Mrs Sahota who takes up the post of Subject Leader for Computer Science and ICT and Whole-School Online Safety and ICT Coordinator and Mr Blankley who takes up the post of Acting Subject Leader for Geography from September.

We would like to congratulate Miss McGee (Science) who is getting married over the summer and will be returning as Mrs Walsh. We have welcomed back/will be welcoming back several staff from maternity leave: Mrs Clempson (Geography), Mrs Patel (Science), Mrs Lewis (English) and Mrs Neale (Maths). Miss Aston will be teaching MFL part-time next year.

Thank you for your on-going support for your child/children at the School, particularly at such a challenging time. We hope you have an enjoyable summer.

Best wishes,

P. Kelly  
Headteacher