

To: Parents/Carers

January 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

## Welcome back and Happy New Year - January 2020

On behalf of the school may I wish you all the best for the new year, and as I said in assemblies last week, I hope you had a restful and enjoyable Christmas holiday and that students have returned to school looking forward to the busy and exciting term ahead.

As I also said to students, a new year is a time to re-focus and accordingly last week I took the opportunity to remind students about our expectations of uniform and general conduct around school. Thank you for the support you already give in this regard as the vast majority of our students meet these expectations on a daily basis, providing just one of the many reasons why Helsby is such a pleasant place to spend the working day. For your information, please see below for the expectations which were shared with students:

### Uniform

- Coats/jumpers can be worn (outside of lessons) between October half-term and Spring break
- Blazers should be worn at all times (under coats and over jumpers)
- Shirts should be tucked in at all times
- Skirts should be no shorter than 8cm above the knee cap
- Only one small (pair of) stud ear-ring(s) and a wrist watch is permitted
- Only natural nails are permitted (no nail varnish or acrylic nails)
- Hair styles/colour should be appropriate for school (extremes of both cut and colour should be avoided)
- Appropriate footwear, i.e. formal shoes, should be worn
- 'Hoodies' are not permitted (under or over blazers)

### Food and Drink

- Canned drinks and energy drinks should not be brought into school
- Chewing gum should not be brought into school
- Food should only be consumed in the dining room, break-out space, annex and outside
- At lunchtime, bags should be stored on the shelving provided in the break-out space or outside the dining room

### Mobile Phone Use

- Mobile phones can only be used during lessons for learning activities and as directed by the class teacher
- Listening to music using headphones is allowed during break-time and lunchtime only
- Headphones can only be used in lessons if the learning in the lesson requires it and it is directed by the class teacher

### In Lessons

- In general, students will not be allowed to go to the toilet during lessons 3 or 5, or be allowed to go to the toilet within the first 15 or the last 15 minutes of any lesson
- Lateness will be challenged and detentions used to make up lost learning time and to incentivise good punctuality to lessons

**Learning Resource Centre – Monday to Friday 8.30am-4.20pm**

I am delighted to report that Miss Vicky Pattison has been appointed as our new Learning Resource Centre (Library) Manager. Miss Pattison has been working with us since September providing support to our Exams and Data team and is now looking forward to building on the work of Mrs Cummins who left us at the end of last term. As Miss Pattison is full-time, our Learning Resource Centre will now be open every day until 4.20pm, providing students with a space in school to study, read or work on the computers based in the Centre after the end of the school day. Please also note that the Centre will be open from 8.30am in the morning for students who wish to use the facilities before school. During these new, extended opening hours the Centre will be available to all students and this will be the first of many exciting developments in this area of the school in the coming months.

**Traffic Around School**

Inevitably at this time of year, many more students travel to school by car and hence can I please thank you in advance for being thoughtful when driving and parking around school, which is all the more important given our location on a busy main road. Cars should not park on the yellow 'zig-zag' lines on the road outside school and I would request that parking and turning in the private estate across the road from the school is avoided too. It is important that due regard is given to our neighbours who live on the estate, who may need to leave or enter their estate during the busiest times of day - something I know they have found increasingly difficult in recent weeks. In addition, it is imperative that all of our students use the foot-bridge to cross over the road into school and do not attempt to cross the road directly if they are dropped off by car or bus on the opposite side.

Given their similar location on the A56, I know our friends at Hillside Primary School face similar challenges to us in terms of traffic congestion. In order to try to keep traffic flowing in the vicinity of their school, parents are asked to enter Bates Lane from the A56 near the traffic lights and access back on to the A56 via Old Chester Road. I know they would be very appreciative if parents of both schools could follow this suggestion if driving/parking in the area around their school at the start and end of the school day.

I know a considerable number of our students travel to school by bike - one more reason to request that car users drive as carefully as possible around school. At this time of year it is more important than ever that they wear bright clothing to make themselves as visible as possible. In addition, it is also essential that bike helmets are worn by students cycling to school at all times of the year.

**Key Dates**

As in my September letter I thought it might be helpful to provide a reminder of some key dates this term. I look forward to meeting parents at the Consultation Evenings and celebration events outlined below:

Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> January	Year 11 Revision Evening for Parents/Carers (6-7pm)
Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> January	Year 9 Options Evening (5.30pm start)
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 10 Parent Consultation Evening* (4-7pm)
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March	Drama Showcase Evening (7pm start)
Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 7 Parent Consultation Evening* (4-7pm)
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 11 Parent Consultation Evening* (4-7pm)
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 13 Parent Consultation Evening* (4-7pm)
Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> March	Spring Music Concert (7pm start)
Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> April	Year 12 Parent Consultation Evening* (4-7pm)

*\*May I take this opportunity to provide a respectful reminder that unfortunately at our Consultation Evenings it is very unlikely that it will be possible to see a member of teaching staff unless an appointment with them has been made in advance of the evening - thank you for your co-operation in this matter.*

### Senior Leadership Team 'Drop-Ins'

As a school we are always keen to make ourselves as accessible as possible to parents and the wider community. Over the remainder of this school year we will be hosting 'Senior Leadership Team Drop-In' sessions between 8.00-10.30am and 4-5pm on the following days to provide opportunities to meet with members of the school's Senior Leadership Team to discuss any issues which may be of interest or concern:

Monday 27 January 2020
Monday 2 March 2020
Monday 11 May 2020
Monday 29 June 2020

If, as a parent or member of our wider local community, you would like to meet a Senior Leader during the one of the above sessions, please contact Mrs Diane Shingler, PA to the Headteacher, who will book an appointment slot with you. Mrs Shingler can be contacted via e-mail ([dshingler@helsbyhigh.org.uk](mailto:dshingler@helsbyhigh.org.uk)) or telephone (01928 728 344).

### Winter Weather

To date, this has been a very mild, if very wet, winter. However, it will probably be the end of March before we can be sure that the threat of disruption due to snow has passed. In the event of any extreme weather please do check our social media outlets (Facebook and twitter) as we will use them to keep students and parents/carers updated on any arrangements that may be needed to cope with any disruption caused.

Thank you in advance for your support over the year ahead as we work together to encourage and enable your sons and daughters to, as our school values state, "Achieve Success" and "Value Others". This happens most effectively when parents and school work in partnership together and I know my colleagues really appreciate the support you provide in so many different ways. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if we can ever be of any assistance over any matter and once again I wish you all the very best for 2020.

Yours faithfully,



**Martin Hill**  
Headteacher