



HILLCREST SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE

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Leadership Team:

Samuel Abbotts (Headteacher)
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December 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

As we come to the end of a very busy and productive term, I would like to thank you for your continued support with our shared commitment to working together to secure the very best outcomes for all students. Since September, I have been extremely pleased with how well students have settled into their studies and embraced the school's routines and expectations.

This term has also been enriched by a wide range of opportunities, including numerous trips and visits, our Knowledge Champion Assembly celebrating excellent self-quizzing in Key Stage 3, and a highly successful Christmas Market, which raised just over £1,500 for Teenage Cancer Trust.

As the term draws to a close, I wish you all a safe, restful, and happy holiday. The term ends on **Friday 19 December at 12.30pm.**

Please find information about the following term and reminders about key aspects of our school expectations below.

Monday 5 January, is a training day for staff; therefore, the school will reopen for students on Tuesday 6 January 2026. All students must register at 8.45am on Tuesday.

Forthcoming Events

Spring Term:

Monday 5 January	Teacher Training Day
Tuesday 6 January	Students return to school at 08:45am
Wednesday 21 January	Year 13 Parents' Evening 16:00-18:00pm
Tuesday 10 February	Year 9 Parents' Evening 16:00-18:00pm
Friday 13 February	HALF TERM - School ends at 15:15pm
Monday 23 February	Students return to school at 08:45am
Thursday 5 March	World Book Day
Thursday 19 March	Year 7 Parents' Evening 16:00-18:00pm
Friday 20 March	Red Nose Day 2025
Friday 27 March	END OF TERM - Students finish 12:30pm

Reminders:

Students must be in school and seated in registration when the bell rings at 8:45am. Students who arrive after this time receive a late mark and a same-day detention.

Lunch Money and ParentMail:

If your child purchases food in the school canteen during breakfast, mid-morning, and lunch breaks, please ensure they have enough money on their card to cover the cost. If your child is eligible for free school meals, these are provided at lunchtime. Any food or drinks purchased in addition to the free school meal, or during breakfast and mid-morning breaks, are chargeable to parents/carers. You can check how much your child has spent and the balance on their card in your ParentMail account. Parents/Carers are contacted when a student's account reaches a debt balance and are asked to add funds as soon as possible to clear the balance. Please discuss with your child what they purchase at school and agree on their spending limits.

Uniform List - Compulsory for all students Years 7-11:

We expect our students to take pride in their appearance, and we believe that the wearing of a school uniform fosters a sense of identity. If students attend school not in the correct school uniform, their parents/carers will be contacted.

Jewellery:

The only jewellery permitted is one pair of small stud earrings. Body piercings, such as nose studs, eyebrow studs, or tongue studs, are not allowed. (Plasters covering piercings are also not permitted). Students will be asked to remove their piercings and sent home if they do not. Jewellery, if worn, will be asked to be handed over and returned to students at the end of term, or parents/carers may collect the item in person. Make-up, nail varnish/nail extensions, and false eyelashes should not be worn at school, and no unnatural hair colouring or extensions should be applied.

ID Cards and Lanyards:

Students are issued an ID card and a lanyard, which they must wear daily. Students are issued a 30-minute same-day detention if they fail to bring and wear their ID card and lanyard to school. They also use their ID card to borrow books from the Library and check their ParentMail dining room balance. If the ID card or lanyard is lost or damaged, a replacement can be purchased at a cost of £1.50 through ParentMail or at Student Reception.

Books and Equipment:

As you will know, the school provided all students with the basic equipment they required in September. The school will replace broken pencil cases, non-working whiteboard pens, and completed self-quizzing books; however, students must replace any other lost equipment. It is standard practice for students to take items home from lessons such as Food Technology, and in these circumstances, parents/carers are asked to provide the necessary resources.

A list of required equipment is on the next page.

Students must have the following essential equipment:

- Clear pencil case
- 2 black pens
- 1 green pen
- 2 pencils
- 1 pencil sharpener
- 1 30cm ruler
- 1 rubber
- 1 highlighter
- 2 whiteboard pens
- Scientific calculator - Casio FX-85GT X • Casio FX-83GT CW • Casio FX-85GT Plus
- Knowledge organiser folder
- Self-quizzing book

Some equipment is available to purchase from the library.

Mobile Phones and other valuable items:

Please note that students are responsible for their mobile phones at all times when they bring them to school. They are not to be seen, heard or used on the school premises. All mobile phones must be switched off before students walk through the school gates. Phones that are seen, heard or used on the school premises will be confiscated, and a parent/carer will be required to collect the phone. Please note that the school accepts no responsibility for any phones or other valuables brought into the school.

Reminder - Emergency Closure of School:

In extreme weather conditions or other emergencies when it is necessary to close the school, details will be posted on the school website, sent via X/Twitter, and sent via ParentMail. The school will always try to give as much notice as possible.

If, for any reason, we are unable to reopen as announced due to secondary factors (e.g., burst pipes or heating failure), we will communicate this as above. Please ensure that students have an alternative place of safety should it become necessary to close the school early in an emergency.

Homework and Class Charts:

Class Charts enables you to keep track of your child's behaviour, track their positive behaviour points, access their weekly timetable, view assigned homework tasks and track scheduled detentions.

All parents/carers have a unique login for their child. If you have more than one child, you can access Class Charts information about your children from a single, centralised parent/carer account.

Class Charts for parents/carers can be accessed via the website:

<https://www.classcharts.com/parent/login>

ParentMail:

The school uses an online communications system called ParentMail for communication with parents/carers in the following ways:

- Sending you essential emergency text messages, for example, if the school is closed due to bad weather
- Text reminders of parents' evenings or school events
- All school letters and newsletters are sent to you via email

Online Payments:

The school is cashless; students should not bring cash to school. You will need to use ParentMail for the following:

- To put money on your child's ID card so they can purchase food in the canteen.
- To pay for all school trips
- To purchase ID cards or school resources

If you need any help setting up ParentMail, please contact the school at 0121 464 3172 or email enquiry@hillcrest.bham.sch.uk

Parking at Hillcrest School:

We have a designated waiting area for students awaiting siblings in other year groups; therefore, our car park will be closed to vehicles from the end of the day until 3.25pm. Parents/carers will need to park on the school side of Stonehouse Lane and nearby roads, and arrange to meet their child in an area away from the front of the car park to allow traffic to flow along Stonehouse Lane at the end of the school day. I would ask that you please do not park in the entrance to the fire station, on local business premises, or on pavements. Please be considerate of residents by not blocking driveways when parking near the school. We also ask for your support in keeping all our students safe and not parking or blocking the school entrance.

Keeping Safe:

Please see our website for guidance for parents/carers regarding keeping children safe. By clicking the support tab and then safeguarding on the website, you will find information on health and well-being, relationship education, study skills, and online safety, including internet and social media safety and how to prevent radicalism and extremism.

Useful links for Parents/Carers and a reminder of available services:

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) is a safeguarding charity. Visit their website for more information - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/staying-safe-away-from-home/>

Birmingham and Solihull Bereavement Support:

0121 687 8010 - Email: support@crusebirmingham.co.uk <http://www.cruse.org.uk/get-help>

The Cruse Bereavement Care Freephone National Helpline is staffed by trained bereavement volunteers, who offer emotional support to anyone affected by bereavement.

The number is 0808 808 1677. You can also email: helpline@cruse.org.uk

Pause:

If you need someone to talk to or are struggling to cope with your feelings. 0207 841 4470

email:askbeam@childrenssociety.org.uk

<https://www.forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk/services/13-pause>

Kooth:

Free, safe, and anonymous service supporting young people's emotional and mental health in Birmingham. Kooth gives children and young people access to online counselling from qualified counsellors, available from midday to 10pm every weekday and from 6pm to 10pm at weekends. Young people can drop in for one-to-one instant text-based chats or book a session in advance.

<https://www.kooth.com/>

Winter Holiday Clubs Bring It On Brum! is running FREE activity clubs in Birmingham for young people aged 4-16 who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals. **Your Winter, Bring it on, Brum! (HAF/FSM) code is: 3304012**

During the winter school holidays, each club runs for up to seven days, and each child is eligible to attend up to four sessions. Holiday clubs will run from Monday, 22 December 2025, to Friday, 2 January 2026 (excluding bank holidays and weekends).

Programmes will vary by the type of provision and each club's location, but every day, young people will receive a free, nutritious meal. Bookings for winter holiday clubs opened from Monday, 1 December 2025 at www.bringitonbrum.co.uk. Please see the message sent on ParentMail for further details.

Can't attend a face-to-face holiday club? Activity packs and food boxes are also available. If you are unable to attend face-to-face holiday clubs, at-home activity packs are also available for the winter school holiday. You will need your Bring It On Brum! / Free School Meal code to request a free winter activity pack.

Keep your contact details up to date!

If you change any of your contact details, please update your ParentMail account. This is essential so we can send you important school information and letters. Please also inform the school of any changes to your home address or phone number/contact details as soon as possible.

Thank you for all your continued support this autumn term, and my best wishes to you and your family for a restful holiday.

Yours sincerely



Mr S B Abbotts

Headteacher

WORK HARD | BE KIND | AIM HIGH