



HILLCREST SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE

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March 2026

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.

During the term, all students have worked extremely well in lessons, and Year 11 and 13 students have been working hard, completing their mock examinations and preparing for their GCSE and A-Level examinations in May and June. Outside of lessons, students have been taking part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities before school, at lunchtime and after school.

We held our annual Careers Fair on 26 February and were fortunate to be supported by a range of providers. These included Sixth Form Colleges, Universities, members of the Armed Forces, Police, Engineering, Government Organisations, and global Food and Beverage sector businesses. This year, we invited parents and carers to join students at the fair, which enabled them to ask questions, explore opportunities for further and higher education, apprenticeships, and employment, and consider where those might lead in future careers.

This term has been further enriched by a wide range of opportunities outside the classroom, from trips and visits and our Knowledge Champion Assembly celebrating excellent self-quizzing in Key Stage 3, to students performing in our school musical, 'The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse', preparing for The Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition, and raising over £1000.00 for Teenage Cancer Trust.

I was also delighted that our Year 7 and Year 8 Athletics Teams finished second in a regional competition in both year groups this week, a fantastic achievement!

As the term draws to a close, I wish you all a safe and restful Easter break. The term ends on **Friday 27 March at 12:30pm.**

The school will reopen for students on Monday 13 April, and all students must register at 8:45am.

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

Forthcoming Events

Summer Term:

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| Monday 13 April | Students return to school at 08:45am |
| Wednesday 6 May | Year 12 Parents' Evening 16:00-18:00pm |
| Monday 11 May | Year 10 Parents' Evening 16:00-18:00pm |
| Wednesday 13 May | UCAS Information Evening for Parents/Carers |
| Friday 22 May | HALF TERM - School ends at 15:15pm |
| Monday 1 June | Students return to school at 08:45am |
| Friday 26 June | Year 11 Prom |
| Monday 29 June | Year 8 Parents' Evening 16:00-18:00pm |
| Friday 17 July | 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 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 for £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.

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 get in touch with 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 navigating to 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/>

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 spring term, and my best wishes to you and your family for a restful holiday.

Yours sincerely



Mr S B Abbotts

Headteacher