



Hillcrest School & Sixth Form Centre

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July 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Year 7, 8 and 9

I would like to start this end of term letter by thanking all students, staff, parents and carers for how you have all managed over these last few months with students organising their schoolwork remotely. We have received some fantastic pieces of work and feedback, so well done.

'Summer Holiday Work'



You should receive your child's summer work booklet through the post for them, to be able to continue with their learning with fun activities set by their teachers. These booklets will be the only work that is set for your child over the summer holidays as it is important that students take a break and enjoy some well-earned time away from their studies. New form group information has also been sent with the summer booklets.

I am writing to give you details of the arrangements for the start of the next academic year, that we are aware of. If things change due to Governmental advice, we will of course contact all parents via ParentMail and through our school website.



Monday 31st August	Bank Holiday (No staff or students required in school)
Tuesday 1st September	Teacher Training Day 1 (No students required in school)
Wednesday 2nd September	Teacher Training Day 2 (No students required in school)

Further details of the return to school process of reintegration and COVID-19 control systems and measures will be sent in August, so please keep checking your ParentMail emails and the school website.

Thursday 3rd September	Year 7 start school for 8.45 am (Year 7 Induction Day 1)
Friday 4th September	Year 7 start school for 8.45 am (Year 7 Induction Day 2)

'Pupils' conduct is excellent. Around the School and in lessons, pupils are courteous and confident.'
'Strong ambition for improving outcomes for all pupils has led to good examination results.'
(Ofsted 2017)

Monday 7th September

Year 11 return to school at 8-45am

Year 10 return to school at 10am

Tuesday 8th September

Year 9 return to school at 8-45am

Year 8 return to school at 10am

Risk Assessments for re-opening

I would like to reassure you that we are doing all that we can to make your child's return to school in September a safe, happy and positive one. The updated risk assessments, systems of control measures and plans for re-opening will be available on our school website from mid-August and a brief outline will be sent via ParentMail. We will be monitoring the Department for Education and Public Health England guidance closely and will keep you informed if there are any further changes to our start of term arrangements.

Free School Meal Vouchers over the Summer Holidays

The government have confirmed that students, who are eligible for Free School Meals, will continue to receive £15 per week free school meal vouchers (per student) over the school summer holidays.

- On the 13th July you will receive: - £45 (£15 x 3 weeks of 13th, 20th and 27th July)
- On the 3rd August you will receive: - £60 (£15 x 4 weeks of 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th August)

Uniform

Throughout their time at Hillcrest, students are preparing for their future and developing the skills needed for success in the world of work. Attendance, punctuality and smart appearance are key aspects of this preparation. May I take this opportunity to remind you of our dress code and jewellery rules which apply to all students.

Jewellery

The only jewellery to be worn is one pair of small stud earrings. Body piercing, nose studs, eyebrow studs or tongue studs, are not permitted. (Plasters covering piercing are also not permitted). Students will be asked to remove body piercings and will be sent home if they fail to do so. Jewellery, if worn, will be taken and will be returned to students at the end of term, or parents/carers may come in person to collect the item. Make-up, nail varnish/nail extensions should not be worn for school and no unnatural hair colourings should be applied.



Books and Equipment

The school supplies books and teaching materials but **students must replace lost or damaged books and equipment and will be asked to pay for any damage to school property wilfully caused.**

It is normal practice for students to take articles home from lessons such as Food Technology and in these circumstances, parents are asked to provide the necessary resources.

It is important that students have the basic equipment for lessons. Suggested essentials are:

- Pens (blue, black and green)
- Pencils, a pencil sharpener, a selection of coloured pencils
- A rubber
- A ruler
- Glue stick.
- A notebook for rough work
- A protractor and compass
- A Casio fx-83GT PLUS Natural-V.P.A.M Scientific calculator (available from most supermarkets)
- An English Dictionary
- A French Language Dictionary
- Scissors and a small stapler
- Knowledge Organiser folder

Some **equipment is available to be brought from the Open Learning Centre.**

Students will be issued with a swipe card in order to borrow books from the Open Learning Centre, check their ParentMail dining room balance and open key doors around school.

Mobile Phones and other valuable items

Mobile phones are the responsibility of students if they bring them to school. The school accepts no liability for mobile phones or other valuables brought into school. They are not to be seen, heard or used on the school premises. 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 see the Parents Handbook for further details.

'Keeping Safe'

Please see our website for guidance for parents/carers regarding keeping children safe. By clicking the blue icon on the website, you'll find information on health and well-being, relationship education, study skills and online safety, including internet and social media safety and preventing radicalism and extremism.



Summer Safety Advice

With the long summer holiday fast approaching the police have asked us to issue some reminders to you to share with your children to help keep them safe when they are out and about and away from crime and anti-social behaviour.

Parents/carers and students should already be aware that as part of our safeguarding arrangements, the school has a two-way information sharing agreement in place with West Midlands Police, and we are active

members of the local Police & Schools Panel. This joint approach helps us to intervene early to prevent and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour involving our students and provide support and up-to-date safety messages.

- **Personal Safety:**
- **Be aware of your surroundings**, take care of friends and family members and keep valuables such as phones out of public view whenever possible.
- **Don't drink alcohol, take illegal drugs or unknown substances**; they can have a big impact on your health and safety, behaviour and your ability to do well at school and enjoy other interests and activities. They can also be addictive and have unpredictable side effects, including sudden death! Information is available at www.talktofrank.com
- **Swimming in rivers/reservoirs**: Reservoirs may look inviting, especially on a hot day, but they are extremely dangerous places to swim. If you jump in, you may not be able to get out as the sides are very steep; the water never gets above 11 degrees, and this will affect your ability to breathe and to move. Rivers and reservoirs may contain broken glass and may be deeper than you think.
- **Social Media**: Don't allow your use of social media to put you at risk of grooming, exploitation or anything you would regret in the future. Use social media positively and avoid being negative about anyone online as comments/actions may be traced back to you and you will be held accountable.
- **Weapons in public places**: Carrying a knife or other weapons will get you a criminal record which can have life-long effects on travel and job prospects. Those who carry knives are also much more likely to be injured by them.
- **Anti-social behaviour**: Think about your actions towards others; a little thought and respect goes a long way.
- **Off-road bikes**: These can only be ridden on private land with the landowner's permission. Don't risk your life and future prospects by illegally riding these on the road.
- **Remember the company you keep**: If your friend breaks the law, you may also be held responsible for that crime – even if you weren't the one directly responsible.

If a student is in a position where they need help, they should talk to an adult they trust. Crimes can be reported directly to the police via 101; alternatively, you can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or via www.crimestoppers-uk.org If a crime is taking place or a life is in danger, call 999 immediately.

Stranger Danger Prevention Advice

Here are some simple steps you can take to make sure you stay safe on the street.

- Never go off on your own with a stranger, take things from them or get in a car with them
- Make sure you tell your parents where you are
- If someone scares you, or makes you feel uncomfortable go somewhere safe, which could be your home, your school or a police station
- Remember to tell someone what has happened straight away
- If you have Snapchat check the settings on the new location sharing feature, Snap Maps, including details about how to change your settings and tips for staying safe.

USEFUL LINKS FOR PARENTS/CARERS

- 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/>

A reminder of the services that are available:

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 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 to support young people's emotional and mental health in Birmingham.

Kooth gives children and young people the opportunity to access online counselling from qualified counsellors who are available from mid-day to 10pm every weekday and 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/>

Early Help Hubs

Support for families in need can still be accessed through the Early Help Hubs. Early help locality hubs will be in operation to provide a source of advice, guidance and a range of early help support which will include access to food banks. The following will be connecting together in ten localities: community, voluntary and faith sectors, health, family support, social work, police, schools, further education, nurseries, children's centres, health visitors and GPs. Each locality has a voluntary sector lead and a public sector lead. Parent, carers and young people can use the mind map attached to connect to the leads and discover other services that are available in each locality during Covid-19.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact the school via email if you require any further support or guidance.

If at any time you have any concerns about a Hillcrest student please email: safeguarding@hillcrest.bham.sch.uk or contact Children's Advice & Support Service (CASS) on 0121 303 1888.

For all other queries please continue to use enquiry@hillcrest.bham.sch.uk ([Emails will continue to be checked over the summer periodically](#))



Keep your contact details up to date!

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

I would like to thank you for your support over the last year, especially in these unprecedented times. Please continue to follow the current government guidance and enjoy the summer break, I look forward to seeing you and our students next term.

With best wishes
Yours sincerely

J A Davies (Ms)
Headteacher

Hillcrest School & Sixth Form Centre Parents' Handbook

A copy of the Parents' Handbook is available on the school website and will be emailed through ParentMail with this letter but if you would like to **request a paper copy**, please could you email the Enquiry email address and we will send you a paper copy when we reopen in September.

Please email by Monday 20th July 2020