



# Highfields School

Headteacher: Mr A Marsh



## Highfields Upper School

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## Highfields Lower School

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Our ref: TG

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Dear Parent/Carer

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www.highfields.derbyshire.sch.uk

As we approach the end of our second week of school, we would like to let you know what a good start the new Year 7s have made. They are coping very well with the daily routines of secondary school life. Thank you for your support; all the Year 7 students look very smart and are well equipped to begin their time in secondary education. If you have not already done so, please ensure all clothing and equipment has your child's name on it.

Some forthcoming dates for your diary include:

- **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September** – Activity Day for **7HC**, they need to be dropped off at school as normal. They will need collecting from Lea Green at **3.30pm**.
- **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September** – Activity Day for **7KSW and 7MB**, they need to be dropped off at Lea Green at **8.50am**. **Please do not arrive** earlier as staff will not be on site until then. They will go home in their usual way.
- **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September** – Activity Day for **7JST and 7MWE**, they need to be dropped off at school as normal. They will need collecting from Lea Green at **3.30pm**.
- **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September** – Activity Day for **7IR and 7CH**, they need to be dropped off at Lea Green at **8.50am**. **Please do not arrive** earlier as staff will not be on site until then. They will go home in their usual way.
- **Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October** – Freshers Disco for Y7 and Y8 students 7pm-9pm
- **Week commencing Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November** – Data sheets will be sent home to parents
- **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December** – Christmas Concert at Lumsdale site 7.00pm

More detail on the above will be available nearer the time. We have a school website - [www.highfields.derbyshire.sch.uk](http://www.highfields.derbyshire.sch.uk) - which is a good starting point for finding out other useful information.

## Homework

We believe at Highfields School that it is important to establish a regular pattern of working at home to encourage independent learning. This might involve students in following their own investigations or in revising and broadening new concepts introduced in school, possibly through reading, writing or individual research.

Many teachers will now start to set homework for year 7 students (indeed, they may have some already). They should expect to receive about 15 minutes of homework for most subjects each week. Some subjects will only set work on a fortnightly basis, especially if students only attend the lesson once a week. We try to ensure that students are given at least a few days and quite often a week to complete homework. Please be aware at times, some subject areas may decide to set an extended piece of homework or project that lasts a few weeks. We would greatly appreciate your support in ensuring all homework is completed to a

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good standard and that it is handed in on time. All homework will be recorded on Show My Homework – an online homework monitoring system. You will all be sent information, including login details, for this application shortly. We would be grateful if you could sign into this system and monitor the organisation and completion of homework. There is a homework club operating every lunchtime in Room 4 from 1pm to 1.30pm, where a member of staff is available to offer help and where children have access to computers. Many subjects also offer subject based homework clubs at lunchtime, in which the children can get extra help from their teachers. Some children prefer to do some of their homework here. If you are at all concerned over the homework your child is receiving, either because they receive too much or too little, or because they appear to be struggling with the work, then please do contact us immediately.

We have recently worked on our strategic plan which we call our 'Big 3' priorities. You can find this plan on our website but I thought it might be useful to explain how you might experience the plan from a home perspective and invite you to offer your support. We are aiming to improve students' 'approach to learning'. We want students to take on the habits of effective learners so that they can succeed not only with us and in their onward study but also in whichever job they choose. Teachers will now be clearer on what they expect. If teachers believe that your child could be a more effective learner they will let them know and reflect this in reports. It is not a punishment. It is not necessarily a judgement on behaviour. It is an indicator that they need to work in a slightly different way to maximise their fabulous potential.

Although you are unlikely to notice from a home perspective, our central focus on 'curriculum' will centre on the quality of holistic education that your child receives. This will touch all aspects of your child's experience in school. Mr Marsh's newsletter will offer frequent updates about the way that we are trying to make our school an exciting and inspiring place to learn.

We want ours to be a happy and inclusive school. We are going to be more stringent with students who disrupt learning or make others unhappy through the way they behave. In lessons this means that they will be removed more quickly and will stay out for longer if they disrupt the learning of others. This is in response to survey responses from families and students about the impact of low level disruption in lessons.

A high number of students at Highfields have low attendance. We know that missing even one lesson affects students' learning and wellbeing. Students have told us how things 'snowball' when students miss work and then feel anxious about re-joining lessons where they feel on 'the back foot'. We will be trying even harder to work with students and families to keep children in school, in lessons, with their friends, learning. If for any reason your child is absent from school it is important that you ring into school that morning to let us know the reason for their absence, telephone 01629 832314. We cannot emphasise enough the importance of good attendance and the impact this has on your child's progress. We will also be monitoring punctuality closely, particularly students arriving at school in the mornings. Please ensure you emphasise to your child the importance of arriving at school in good time to be in their form room by 8.40am. Any child not registered by 8.45am will receive a late mark which will remain on their attendance record. Obviously this will be cleared if it is due to a bus arriving late at school.

Can we also take this opportunity to remind you that we are unable to authorise any leave of absence for holidays during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances, e.g. a

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significant family event. Any unauthorised holidays will be referred to the local authority. This may result in parents being issued with a fixed penalty notice and/or court action.

Please ensure that you and your child have discussed the Emergency Closure Procedures so that in the event of heavy snow, your child knows what instructions to follow.

Also, do please remember that many families are entitled to Free School Meals but don't realise this and therefore don't claim them. Part of every school's budget is calculated using Free School Meals, so if you feel you might be entitled, your child can collect an application form from the school office or please contact email [info@highfields.derbyshire.sch.uk](mailto:info@highfields.derbyshire.sch.uk).

If you have any other worries, do please also get in touch with us.

Once again, thank you for supporting such a successful start to Year 7 and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Yours sincerely

The image shows two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature is 'A. Hollinrake' and the second is 'L. Redhead'. Both are written in a cursive style.

Mrs A Hollinrake and Mrs L Redhead  
Head of Year 7

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