

21st October 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

Although this half-term hasn't been quite as straightforward as it could have been, with the Queen's death in September and a significant number of coughs and colds for both students and staff to contend with, it still feels significantly more like 'normal' than the Autumn Terms of 2020 and 2021. Please see our latest newsletter, [Helsby High School Autumn Newsletter](#) for photographs and more details on all the events and experiences that students have been involved in at school since the start of term.

Household Support Fund

The government has extended the Household Support Fund for a further six months until 31st March 2023, supporting those households most in need due to rising living costs, particularly around the need for food and fuel. Cheshire West and Chester will continue to allocate some of the funding to support students in receipt of Free School Meals over October half-term. Via schools, the council will be allocating £20 for each Free School Meal student to ensure families have the necessary financial support for food during the October half-term week. This support will be provided in the form of one £20 Tesco e-voucher per student and eligible families should look out shortly for the e-mails which provide access to these vouchers (which sometimes can be found in 'Junk' e-mail folders).

November/December Key Dates

Further details will be provided to parents via letter and/or our website and social media sites regarding the following events which will take place next half-term:

- Tuesday 1st November – Students Return (NB Monday 31st October is an INSET Day)
- Thursday 17th November – Year 11 Parent Consultation Evening (on-site)
- Thursday 1st December – Year 13 Parent Consultation Evening (on-site)
- Wednesday 7th December – Years 9/10/12 Parent Information Evenings (on-line)
- Thursday 8th December – 'Bound In Sound' Christmas Concert at Chester Cathedral
- Friday 16th December – Final Day of Term

2023-24 Term Dates

As we reach this year's October half-term, unfortunately Cheshire West and Chester have still not published their 2023-24 Term Dates, with whether the October 2023 half-term should begin on Monday 23rd October or Monday 30th October one of the decisions still to be made. Finalised 2023-24 Term Dates will be shared with parents as soon as they are published.

School Uniform

Thank you to parents/carers for your support with our drive to raise the standard of school uniform across all year groups this term. Details of school uniform requirements can be found on the school website, <https://helsbyhigh.org.uk/parents/school-uniform/>

In order to ensure that all students continue to promote pride in our school, build their self-confidence and establish their sense of belonging, we would be grateful if parents and carers could use the half-term holiday to correct any outstanding uniform issues and contact pastoral staff at the school if there are any uniform issues which require any assistance.

Students who return after half-term without items of uniform or with incorrect items of uniform will be given 24-48 hours to address any issues and will then be lent clean, correct uniform from the Pastoral Office for as long as necessary.

This system is not to be confused with our wonderful 'SUS' system run by Friends of Helsby High School, which is available to all current students and offers parents and carers the opportunity to source second-hand uniform on a permanent basis. If you require an item of uniform, please either order new uniform via the Scopay system or e-mail schooluniformshare@scopay.org to request uniform from the 'SUS' scheme.

Year 7 Autumn Reading Tournament

The English Department and the Learning Resource Centre are excited to be launching their Autumn Accelerated Reader (AR) Reading Tournament, which will run from Tuesday 1st November until the last day of term, Friday 16th December.

The research highlighting the importance of continued reading in Secondary Education is indisputable and forms the basis of this challenge. Year 7 students are being encouraged to focus on their reading during this period, remembering to quiz on all the books they read using the AR system. There will be prizes for highest point scores, 100% quizzes and the best AR English class effort.

Please encourage your children to take part in our challenge at home. Pupils who read for just 30 minutes a day can encounter an amazing 13 million more words than their counterparts during the course of their school careers, setting them up for academic success.

Governing Body

After 3 years in the role, Gail Fullbrook's term of office as Chair of Governors came to an end in late-September. In what is a very important and demanding role, Gail's contribution to the school during her time as Chair was immense as she led and developed the work of the Governing Body, supporting the school through all the demands brought by the pandemic. I know that parents and carers would want to join governors and staff at the school in thanking Gail for all the invaluable work she did as Chair of Governors on behalf of the school and its students.

Thanks are also extended to Andy Morley, whose term of office as Vice-Chair of Governors also came to an end in late-September. Ian Devereux-Roberts, Headteacher at Frodsham Manor House Primary School, has now taken over the role of Chair of Governors of the school and Helen Coy, co-opted governor and parent of a current Helsby High School student, has become Vice-Chair. Thank you to Ian and Helen for taking on the leadership of the Governing Body as the school now looks towards the next stage of its development in these challenging times.

I hope that all of our students, and their families, have a very enjoyable, relaxing and safe October half-term break next week.

Best wishes,

Martin Hill
Headteacher