

31st March 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

When I wrote to you a fortnight ago, I was hopeful that the final two weeks of term would be more straightforward than those that had preceded them. That has certainly been the case and some of our students have really taken advantage of opportunities to showcase their considerable talents in that time.

School Production

Congratulations to the students who performed so wonderfully well in this year's school production, a play called 'Strangers Like Me'. Having performed a two-night stint in the Main Hall last week, they now take the play on to the big stage at Home Theatre in Manchester on Friday 28th April as part of the National Theatre's 'Connections' project where students perform plays of upcoming playwrights and then get the opportunity to showcase both the plays and their own talents in a professional arena.

Sporting Fortunes

Unfortunately it's been a case of just missing on the trophies as our Year 8 Boys Football Team and Under-16 Girls' Football Teams were narrowly beaten in their Cheshire Cup finals and the Under-16 Boys' Basketball Team lost their national cup semi-final last week. To get so far so many different competitions is still a fabulous achievement though and both the students and our PE department should feel proud of their performances this year, showing just why we were named in the Top 200 Schools in the country for sport (please see our Spring Newsletter for full details).

Spring Break

Once again payments for households of students in receipt of Free School Meals is being made over the Spring break. Each eligible family will receive £15 per week, per child, so in total £30 per student for the two-week period, plus payment in lieu of meals not taken on days of industrial action where appropriate. Please look out for the one-off payment in the form of an e-mailed Tesco e-voucher early on in the holiday period.

Cheshire West and Chester Council, alongside Edsential and a range of community partners, are running a wide range of fantastic activities for the Easter Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) that will run throughout the school spring holiday. Please see the attached for full details of these activities.

Cost of Living Support - Message from Cheshire West and Chester Council

"It is a really challenging time for households throughout the Borough and families may be worried about the rising cost of energy bills, food, and transport. Families may want help accessing welfare rights, benefits and debt advice, support getting all the money they're entitled to, or simply want to know more about national support put in place. Whatever their money worries may be, the Council has put together some useful information to help which includes a wealth of information. Please visit [Cost of living support](#)"

Summer Term Dates

As we look forward to the Summer Term, I hope the following dates are useful for parents:

Monday 17th April - Start of Term
Wednesday 26th April - Year 11 Information Evening (on-line)
Thursday 27th April - Year 13 Information Evening (on-line)
Monday 1st May - May Day Bank Holiday (school closed)
Monday 8th May - King's Coronation Bank Holiday (school closed)
Monday 15th May - Start of Summer 2022 Year 11 and 13 Examinations
Monday 15th May to Friday 26th May - Year 7 & 8 Assessment Window
Friday 26th May - Last Day of Half-Term

Monday 5th June - Start of Final Half-Term
Monday 5th June to Friday 16th June - Year 9 Assessment Window
Monday 12th June - Year 12 UCAS Evening
Monday 12th June to Friday 23rd June - Year 10 Assessment Window
Monday 19th June to Friday 30th June - Year 12 Assessment Window
Monday 26th June (week beginning) - Year 7 & 8 Reports issued
Thursday 29th June - Year 11 Prom
Tuesday 4th and Wednesday 5th July - Induction Evenings for Year 6 Parents
Thursday 6th July - Year 13 Prom
Monday 10th and Tuesday 11th July - Induction Days for Year 6 Students
Monday 10th July (week beginning) - Year 9 Reports issued
Monday 17th July (week beginning) - Year 10 & 12 Reports issued
Friday 21st July - Final Day of Term

Thursday 17th August - Year 13 Results Day
Thursday 24th August - Year 11 Results Day

Leaving Arrangements for Years 11 and 13

Year 13 students will attend lessons full-time up until Friday 12th May. From Monday 15th May lessons can continue, although inevitably some students will be in examinations. There will be a celebration event for Year 13 on the morning of Friday 26th May.

Year 11 students will attend lessons as normal until Friday 12th May ahead of GCSE examinations starting on Monday 15th May. They will then attend school full-time until Friday 26th May (further details regarding arrangement for the weeks beginning Monday 15th and Monday 22nd May to follow) and will have a celebration event on the afternoon of Friday 26th May. From Monday 5th June onwards they will only attend school for examinations and scheduled revision sessions.

Parent Survey Feedback

Thank you to parents of students in Years 7, 9 and 12 for completing the parent surveys distributed at on-site events this term. The feedback provided will enable us to ensure that we have a good understanding of the views of parents and use them to inform our work and development moving forwards. For summaries of feedback received please see our school website at [Parent and Student Voice - HHS Website](#)

School Uniform Share (SUS) Scheme

Thank you very much to members of our Friends of Helsby High School for their oversight of our School Uniform Share (SUS) scheme. I know that stocks of blazers and PE kits are relatively low at the moment and so any donations of these items would be particularly appreciated. Please note that, as the season end approaches, there will also be boxes for football boot donations provided at the uniform collection points in Tesco in Helsby and Morrisons in Frodsham. Many thanks to all the many parents who have donated spare or no-longer-needed uniform to the SUS scheme since it began last October.

Parent Governor Elections

I just wanted to provide parents with advance notice that elections will take place early in the Summer Term to elect parent governors to the school's Governing Body. Further details about this opportunity and the election process will follow after the Spring break.

Staff News

Sadly, we will be saying good-bye to a small number of colleagues at the end of this term:

- Miss Binyon, who has worked and supported students in the SEND department this term.
- Having been a member of the Design and Technology department since October, Mr Oliver moves on having completed his contract with us. We are very grateful for his work and support over the last 1½ terms and wish Mr Oliver all the very best for the future.
- We also wish our Senior Science Technician, Mrs Hughes, all the very best as she moves on to Holly Lodge Girls' College in Liverpool at the start of the Summer Term. Mrs Hughes has worked at Helsby for nearly 5 years, leading a team of Science Technicians who diligently ensure that all the equipment and resources are in place for our students to enjoy their experiments and practical work in the subject, enriching their understanding and interest in Science as a result.
- After teaching at Helsby since 2010, Mrs Ingman moves on at the end of this term to take up a role as a Lecturer in Sociology at Deeside College in North Wales. During Mrs Ingman's time at the school there will have been many students who will have benefited from her ability to inspire through her love of her subject area and the commitment she has had to always wanting to do the very best for them. Mrs Ingman's thoughtful work and dedication to her role will be sadly missed by students and colleagues alike and we would all like to wish her all the very best for the future.

There have been far too many highlights from this term to mention in this letter - please see our social media sites and our Spring Newsletter, [HHS Spring Newsletter](#), for much more detail. After such a busy time, I'm sure that all of our students are now ready for a well-deserved rest and I hope that all of our families have a very pleasant, enjoyable and relaxing Spring Break.

Very best wishes,

Martin Hill
Headteacher