



HIGHDOWN SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE

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Headteacher:

Rachel Cave BSc. NPQH

26th June 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

In this letter, I would like to highlight some important events and take time to consider how families and school can work together to support learning.

As an Academy we are promoting reading. One reason to do this is to increase students' word hoard. Students with large vocabularies ('word hoard') achieve higher outcomes at GCSE. Families can support this by referring to [whowantstobereadingmillionaire](#)

We have postponed our annual Great Get Together for Highdown to the 5th July due to inclement weather. Students will be working in mentor groups to provide a fund-raising stall and competing in the annual House Tug-of-War. We want everyone to join in and make friends with students with whom they may initially believe they have little in common. This is in honour of Jo Cox M.P, and her wise words, 'We are far more united and have more in common than that which divides us'. Highdown is a tolerant community; our students are proud of this and rightly call out any intolerance or unkindness when they see it. This event will promote that and should be fun for all.

The Highdown Estate

Ms Claridge has inspired Student Leaders with her commitment to Surfers Against Sewage. Student Leaders have worked with Accent, our caterers, to look at options for replacing single use plastics and installing crisp packet recycling facilities.

We are working at improving our Academy estate with very limited resources. The work of year 9 and colleagues from Reading University to paint our new mural in The Gallery helps to brighten that space and reminds us of our commitment to inclusivity for all in our community. Upcycled furniture is appearing around the grounds for picnicking. Thank you to our Estates team for this.

We are very grateful to our parents contributing to the School Fund. We are hoping to have sufficient funds for a new canopy and seating area in the near future. School Fund could also help to refurbish an area for a lunchtime quiet space (like Star) for our older students. Please see school fund [School Fund Donations](#)

Safety to and from school.

A number of students need to replace their cycle helmets, please could this be done as a matter of urgency. Students not using helmets will be asked not to bring their bicycles to school. To help improve our safety on site, can I remind parents not to bring cars onto site at the beginning and end of our day; we do not have sufficient space. Please can families have a conversation at home about safety – games of 'chicken' with cars, 'wheelies' in the road and cycling of pavements in the local community have been reported – stopping this before a tragedy is our aim with this request.

With the summer weather as variable as ever, we will keep a watching brief on when to call the application of summer uniform. This means, as always that blazers are to be worn every day and not carried in a bag. Warmth is added with school jumpers only - hoodies and non-Highdown jumpers are **not** permitted. Our shoe code is for sensible black footwear which can be polished. Earphones (including Airpods) are not to be worn around site or in lessons. We would also caution students wearing them to and from school as this can prevent hearing traffic and so pose a safety risk. When summer settles in we will adopt a sensible shirt-sleeve order approach. Do remember to bring own water bottles daily and top them up at break or lunch.

It's been great to see our year 11s taking part in the 6th form induction. Year 10 are taking their first steps with 6th form unwrapped; they will be the 6th form of 2021! The students are obviously, rightly, impressed by both the yearly increase in outcomes, and range of enrichment opportunities available! Have we mentioned that Highdown is in the TOP 5% of ALL SCHOOLS!?

Wishing all the Highdown community a great last few weeks of term.

Yours sincerely



Ms R E Cave
Headteacher

Dates for diaries in Term 6:

Friday 28th June - Professional Learning Day 5 (School closed to students)

Thursday 4th July at 7pm - Drama showcase

