



Horsforth School

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Dear parents/carers

We wanted to round up the first term from our point of view with regards to how our new students have settled in. It's been an unusual first half term for us all but we have worked really hard to try and make the process as smooth as possible.

We hope you will be attending the virtual settling in evening with your child's form tutor on 4th November- details of which have been released separately.

We think on the whole students have settled in really well and had a very positive first half term especially given the circumstances we find ourselves in and the additional challenges this has brought for students.

We do have some concerns which we wanted to share with you in anticipation of your further support with these; our collective goal being to safeguard and educate our students as well as we can do in the difficult circumstances.

Progress

Further information will follow about how we monitor progress at Horsforth School.

Students will have been completing initial assessments which will inform their work over the next half term.

We will also be gathering data on students' attitude towards their learning in November. This will be shared with students during their first progress review lesson of which there are 4 across the year

Students have been introduced to Google classroom this term. Our aim is for this to be used consistently for homework in most areas moving forwards. We know this is new for students and they have needed some time to get used to this way of working. Their homework should also be recorded in planners. Their computing lessons have been used to focus on skilling students up in this area although we appreciate this will take time before they feel proficient in using it.

We have loaned ICT equipment to those students who have needed it; please do get in touch if this continues to be a problem and we will support where we can.

We do monitor Homework and Equipment comments regularly and other organisation concerns and will send letters if we feel these areas are a concern; this is partly to open a dialogue around support for the student moving forwards; with the common goal of supporting students and minimising comments and resulting sanctions for these things.

Behaviour at school

During break times there has been an increase in the amount of litter on the field. Please remind students that they are responsible for their litter. There are plenty of bins for them to use, they should use these bins as soon as they can to avoid any litter blowing away in the wind. Some students have taken it upon themselves to pick up others litter; while it is nice that they want to help we want to avoid this having to happen.

We have sent out a virtual assembly for students that reminded them of our break time expectations. We would appreciate your support with this; these expectations are to keep students safe. Students must not touch each other; this is to support with the schools COVID-19 safety measures. We cannot safely monitor students if they are running around. We need to be able to clearly distinguish which mini bubble they are in. It is also important to limit trips and falls to support our first aiders and students from being unnecessarily close to one another.

We are concerned with reports that students are not following school expectations when using the toilets. Members of staff have reported that some Year 7 students are ignoring simple instructions that are in place to keep them safe. These instructions include social distancing in the queue and waiting patiently for a member of staff to let them in.

Mobile Phones

Just as a reminder that we operate an Invisible Phone Policy at school. This means that phones cannot be seen, heard or used at any time on school site from 7.50am until 2.40pm. Students who bring phones do so knowing that they must switch them off as they enter the site at the gates and put them in their bag. Phones must stay in the bag for the full day. Students must not get them out to check messages, the time or for any other reason. Phones will be confiscated and high level sanctions will be given. We ask that parents see the separate mobile phones procedures on the website for more details.

TIK-TOK

We have been dealing with increasing incidents over the use of the Tik-Tok phone app at school. Please know that the legal age for this is 13 years and it is not appropriate for year 7.

Students are prohibited from taking photos or video's in school. Taking photos and videos breaches safeguarding procedures. If students choose to upload such images and share these on social media, we have no choice but to issue a formal exclusion. Please make sure your child understands our policy and please do monitor your child's phone and usage. Please be aware when monitoring phones that students can have multiple Tik-Tok accounts on the singular app.

Community

Whilst our interest in our students' behaviours, safety and welfare do not stop at the school gates, we do have limited control over what happens in our community.

We ask that you support our reputation in the community by reinforcing the messages below

Students should not congregate in groups larger than 6. We are doing what we can to stagger the release of students and encourage them to move on in small groups at the end of the school day but this also applies to after school and at weekends. We have had several reports from members of the public about

our students congregating in larger groups; we ask that you speak with them about this and do what you can to ensure this is not the case. This is of course a legal requirement.

Masks continue to be worn in our corridors as per government guidance, we also ask students to wear their masks whenever they cannot remain a 2m distance from their peers; this includes when they enter through our gates and should ideally continue on their way home, as well as their way to school if they are walking with others. We also ask that you provide your son/daughter with a spare mask in their bag and a plastic bag for safe keeping which improves hygiene around these.

We are working really hard in school to ensure bubbles do not mix where possible and students are kept as safe as they can be; we ask for your continued support in ensuring this remains the case outside of our gates as well.

We would also like to ask for your support in reiterating care around roads on the way to and from school. It has come to our attention that some students are walking in the road and are also not being vigilant when crossing roads. Obviously we want students to be as safe as possible when travelling to and from school.

We wish you a healthy and enjoyable half term break and look forward to working with you and our students more next half term

Kindest regards

Miss McFadden and Miss Dalton