

Horsforth School

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Headteacher: Dr P C Bell

Our Ref: PCB/TRH/JFI

25th November 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

As the weather takes a turn for the worse and winter seems to approach we are having to run some wet breaks and lunches where students need to stay inside but we will always try to get outside if we can. Students have been great however so please pass on my thanks.

Linked to this please let us know via info@horsforthschool.org if your details e.g. mobile number have changed.

I would like to remind you that the **school is shut to students for our Training days** on Friday 25th and Monday 28th November.

Evacuation Practice

We have been practising our fire assembly procedures this week. We expect students to be silent on exit, assembly and re-entry to ensure we can register quickly, accurately and if we need to give further instructions we can do so quickly and safely. If we ever did have a fire it is so important we get the registers accurate and we have a calm and orderly system to ensure student, staff and fire personal safety. I would like to pass my thanks to the students who were amazing! Mrs Comiskey (who leads our evacuation systems) was incredibly impressed.

Safeguarding Updates

Diversity

We continue to work hard to raise the awareness of diversity in our school community, creating an environment where young people feel secure to be themselves in a supportive and accepting environment. We have a terrific group of students who lead the Diverse Alliance Group currently working hard to produce resources to help further educate students about LGBTQ issues, difference and individuality. The lead member of staff is Mrs Asquith.

Mental Health and Mindmate Status

Good mental health is imperative for all of our students; we recognise that being proactive by talking, raising awareness and focussed teaching about this is crucial for our next generations. We raised the profile of KOOTH in June and sent home a letter about this charity which offers free counselling last month. Please use the resources and links on our website for support and additional information.

'Opportunity and achievement for all'

In the New Year, in February there will be a targeted “Mental Health Week” in school in which we will be able to really drive forward this important agenda by engaging our students and staff with a variety of activities looking at stress, anxiety, anger management alongside coping strategies involving resilience and mindfulness.

We are also pleased to confirm that we will be completing the accreditation of Mindmate friendly status through the Health and Wellbeing Team.

Online Safety

Next week, students in years 7-11 will be reminded about the risks associated with the online world and how to stay safe including how to report concerns to school or CEOP.

We want to take this opportunity to remind you that we monitor internet access to safeguard our students and staff. We have filters and blocks to prevent unsuitable content being accessed.

We do expect that as we have a no mobile phone use policy in school that students do not access their own personal data plans to access the internet, we cannot safeguard this and there are sanctions if they do.

Students will be signing the Acceptable User Agreement for using school ICT and devices in the assemblies, and the copy will be in the planner for you to look through and check. We ask that parents read through this to support their child in using these resources responsibly and safely.

Please do look at the safeguarding section of our website for parental advice, signposting and support and digital parenting.

Attendance and Punctuality Drive w/c 29th November

Attendance is a major focus for our school improvement and recovery from Covid. We are highly focused on the pursuit of excellent student attendance and punctuality. Everyday a child is absent is a lost opportunity. We expect all students to attend every day and on time. We know that excellent attendance is vitally important for attainment, life chances and employment prospects. We therefore, have a set school target of 96% or above for attendance for all students. Where a % total for each student falls below this, we will contact you to make you aware and relay our concerns, but also offer support where it is needed. As a reminder to all parents, students with a % under 90% and below are classed by the DfE as a Persistent Absentee and this % indicates a serious concern for schools.

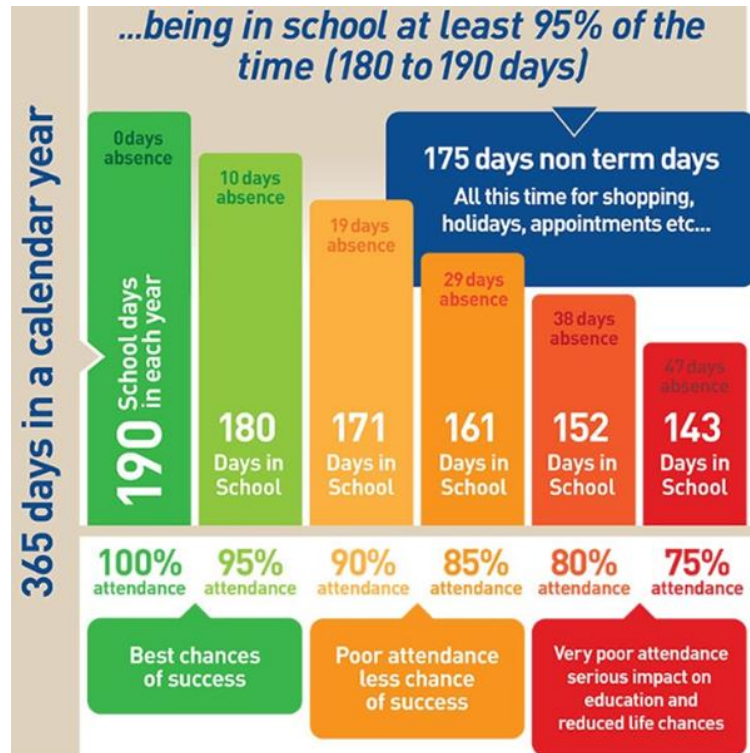
To highlight the importance of attendance with all stakeholders next week, will be our whole school attendance drive. You will be sent additional information about attendance during this week, students will have specialist assemblies and Tutor activities on this issue and we will be increasing our home contact either through visits or calls when students are not in school.

Punctuality will be a focus and we want to use this opportunity to impress how essential it is that your child is here on time, we close the gates at 8.20am and need to for security reasons. Ideally, we ask that your child is here for 8.15am to avoid last minute running into school and the anxiety that being late can cause, as well as the class disruption.

‘Opportunity and achievement for all’

DFE research illustrates there is a direct link between attendance and attainment. Specifically, students with no absence are 2.8 times more likely to achieve 5+ CSE's 5-9 or equivalent including Maths and English, than students missing 15-20% of Key Stage 4 lessons. The diagram below explains further the direct effect on attainment that attendance can have.

The school will use every opportunity to convey to students next week the importance of regular and punctual attendance.



We would like to remind parents of your role as outlined in our policy which is on the website:

We specifically ask that you:

- Ensure your child is fully prepared for school each morning and has packed their bag the night before – this avoids unnecessary stress and lateness
- Ensure your child is in the building by 8.20am and ideally by 8.15am
- Follow up late to school texts with your child. Check your child's planner for late to school detentions.
- Do not allow your child to be absent from school for trivial reasons. Check patterns of absence.
- Contact school on the first day of absence and any subsequent day of absence.
- Provide notes for absence and medical evidence of appointments and illnesses.
- Liaise with the relevant PBO if you have concerns or need support.
- Attend meetings and respond to letters or calls.

Sports Fixtures

Netball

Year 9 won against Carr Manor 23-5. Lily and Eloise were teacher's players. Well done!

'Opportunity and achievement for all'

Children in Need Grand Total

We are delighted to share that Horsforth School and Sixth Form raised £1304.71 for Children in Need last week!



Sixth Form at Horsforth News

Year 13 Fraud Talk

Virgin Money are coming to our Sixth Form on Wednesday 30th November to raise awareness on fraud education. They will be explaining how this occurs, what the consequences are for individuals and how to stop this from happening, helping keep our students safe from being a victim of this.

A Level Trip to London

A handful of our A Level Art students enjoyed a trip to London this week to visit the incredible galleries, such as the Tate Modern. Thank you to Mrs Brown for organising it all!



'Opportunity and achievement for all'

Sixth Form First Aid Course

Our students took timeout from the classroom to learn some vitally important life skills. Thank you to Affinity Care in Shipley for coming in to teach our sixth formers how to save lives and bandage arms and legs! A fantastic new addition to our ever-evolving enrichment programme.

<https://www.horsforthschool.org/sixthform/enrichment-programme/>



Debating Club

Sixth Form students have recently been engaging in a frank and lively debate on 'Is God real?'. Students used lots of prior knowledge from philosophy, Religious studies and science to have a really compelling debate on the creation of the universe and if God is real and at the heart of it.

Students have also debated 'if food packaging should have calories on it or not.' Students weighed up the need for managing health and diet vs feeling attached to societal pressures and an over fixation on healthy eating.

It was a healthy debate... won by team anti-calorie!

The debating club is a wonderful opportunity for our Sixth Form students to develop effective tools for research, organisation and presentation as well as developing their critical thinking and improving their oral and written communication skills.

We have received some lovely praise for staff recently by some parents and I would like to pass on my thanks for the positive feedback, it's always great to be able to pass this on.

Thank you, as always, for your support and I look forward to another very successful year.

Yours faithfully

Dr P Bell
Headteacher

'Opportunity and achievement for all'