



Hardenhuish School

A High Performing Academy

September 2018

Dear Parents

Welcome to the start of Year 9. We hope you have had a relaxing and enjoyable summer and are ready, with your child, for the new school year ahead. Please find below important information regarding school protocols as well as information specific to Year 9.

ATTENDANCE

At Hardenhuish, we believe that high levels of attendance is one of the key ways of ensuring that your child will achieve both their academic and personal potential. If children do not attend school regularly they may:

- struggle to keep up with school work and miss information needed for assessments and exams.
- miss out on the social side of school life; poor attendance can affect children's ability to make and keep friendships, which are a vital part of growing up.

This year, the School's minimum target figure for how often a pupil should be present is 97%, which is a standard set in line with the Government's expectations based on historical data that shows how much better, on average, pupils achieve with attendance at or above this figure. In order to try to achieve this, we will be:

- Promoting the benefits of high attendance through assemblies, Parent Information, Advice & Guidance meetings (PIAGs), Tutor Evenings and through posters around the site.
- Rewarding attendance above 97%; Pupils receive rewards certificates for two-termly attendance (3 per year).

Absence Hotline

School begins at 8.30 am each day and we expect all pupils to be in school ready to begin the day at 8.25 am. We should be informed of any absences on the School Hotline number, which is 01249 767390.

Monitoring Attendance

If a parent of an absent child has not contacted the school to inform us of a reason for absence, a member of staff will contact them on the first day of absence (either through School Comms or by telephone) to enquire as to the reason for absence. We will be closely monitoring attendance and will work with parents where necessary to support the good attendance of all pupils this year.

Holiday Requests

Further to instruction from Wiltshire Council, please find below clarification regarding leave of absence in term time. This may be for a family holiday, weddings, funerals or other reasons. Leave of absence should be requested by completing a Leave of Absence Form available from Pastoral Managers or the main school office prior to the leave of absence being taken.

The Headteacher may authorise leave of absence where exceptional circumstances are evident. However, the leave of absence will not be authorised if:

- public examinations will take place during the time of absence
- the pupils' educational progress may be disrupted
- the pupils' current attendance rate is less than or close to 90%
- the pupil has had previous unauthorised absence

Should you decide to take your child out of school without authorisation from the Headteacher, if a pupil's overall attendance is less than 90% and unauthorised absence amounts to 10 sessions or more within a 6 month period and additional unauthorised absence is within the previous 12 months, the Education Welfare Service will be notified and the Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice* to each parent for each child. The 12 month period includes all unauthorised absence up to and including the day the Education Welfare Service is notified.

**the Penalty Notice shall be a sum of £120 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. If the Penalty is not paid in full within 28 days the Local authority is required to commence proceedings in the Magistrates' court for the offence of unauthorised absence.*

For more information regarding attendance, please see our Attendance Policy and Protocol, available on the School Website.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an important part of your child's learning. It helps them to:

- consolidate and extend their knowledge and understanding of subjects
- practise skills such as problem solving, research, expression and extended writing
- build independence, self-discipline and organisational skills that will support them to prepare for future assessments and exams and to cope with future employment and life's challenges

Show My Homework

All teachers are required to set all homework using the Show My Homework website or App. This is an online tool that enables you and your child/children to see what has been set, how long they should spend on it and when it is due to be given in. Both you and your child/children can also access any relevant resources or support materials that you may need to complete the homework through Show My Homework. You should already have access to your own unique username and password so you only see homework that is relevant to you. Please speak to the IT Support Office or your Learning Manager if you have trouble logging in.

Homework should always be relevant, challenging and meaningful and, therefore, will only be set when it is appropriate to do so.

UNIFORM

We would like to remind you about checking that your son/daughter has the correct school uniform. The school as a whole will be rigorously checking this and will contact you if your son/daughter is persistently not complying with uniform requests. The School Uniform Policy can be found on the school website, or a paper copy can be requested. Your support of the School Uniform Policy is much appreciated and valued. I would also like to mention the importance of marking names in all items of school uniform, PE/games kit and coats so that should an item be forgotten/left somewhere, staff are aware of who it belongs to. In a school the size of Hardenhuish, lost property can be an issue and the office will now only keep items for up to 4 weeks if it is unnamed.

Mobile Technology (Phones)

Mobile phones are allowed in school but are expected to be in bags and switched off throughout the school day, unless in lessons with the expressed permission of the teacher.

TRAFFIC

May we take this opportunity to remind parents about traffic on site:

- There is a 5mph speed limit across the school site
- Drop off and collection must be at the drop off bay on the entry hill only
- Cars are not permitted to turn left at the bottom of the hill and proceed up the drive unless the driver has an appointment at Reception

These arrangements are intended to ensure the safety of all pedestrians. In particular there are large numbers of pupils walking about the site at the beginning and end of the school day. Please also remind your children to walk on the path and not on the drive. Your support with these arrangements is much appreciated.

Please could I also remind parents that pupils who arrive at school via a bus need to wear a seatbelt for the whole journey. We had concerns raised last year by bus drivers who noticed pupils were choosing not to wear them. Please speak to your child regarding the importance of wearing a seatbelt on school transport.

CHANGE OF CONTACT DETAILS

It would be very helpful if you could update any change in your personal contact details with the school so that our databases are correct. This could be a change in address, email address or contact telephone number. If any of the above have changed in the past year please contact admin@hardenhuish.wilts.sch.uk and detail the change so that we are able to update our systems.

The Year 9 Office can be contacted if you wish to discuss any aspect of your child's learning and wellbeing. My email address is as follows: axh@hardenhuish.wilts.sch.uk. We look forward to working with you in the forthcoming year.

Yours sincerely

Miss Alice Humphries
KS3 Learning Manager

Mrs Samantha Greenaway-Light
Year 9 Pastoral Manager