

August 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Return to School – September 2026

As we are approaching the end of what has been a very warm, long and hopefully very relaxing summer holiday, I am writing to remind you about the arrangements for returning to school as well as some important updates and reminders about our usual routines and expectations..

Return Dates

Year 8 students will return to school on **Monday 7th September** at the times shown below. After an extended form time, lessons will begin at 10.15 on the same day.

Year: 8

Entrance to use: Uplands Entrance – Queens Drive

Time of return: 8.25

Head of Year: Mrs Doolan

Leadership Year Link: Mrs Smyth and Miss Reardon

SENCO: Miss Winter

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Miss McDermott

Lunch time: Lunch 2: 12.15 – 1.00

Mobile Phones, Headphones and Smart Watches

Phones – must be switched off and placed in bags as soon as students enter site. Any phone seen at any time during the school day will be confiscated. **Please note that, as per government guidelines we will be moving to a phone-free school later this year and will keep you informed as to how we will achieve this and the start date of the initiative as we go.**

Headphones – students must not wear headphones on site. If these are seen at any time on site they will be confiscated, **along with the phone they will be connected to.**

Confiscation: Any member of staff can confiscate any item seen. If the student follows instructions straight away, the device will be returned to them at the end of the day. If the student refuses and other staff must become involved, the device will be stored securely until a parent can collect. Serious defiance will result in further sanctions up to and including suspension.

Fidget toys, squishies and similar items will not be permitted in school

Whilst we understand that some students find these items helpful, our experience and educational research has shown that they often become a distraction in lessons, draw the attention of others and detract from the calm, focused learning environment we strive to provide. They can also become a source of unnecessary disruption when they are shared, misplaced or damaged.

For students who benefit from having something to occupy their hands while concentrating, we recommend wearing a hair bobble or plain elastic band on their wrist. These provide a discreet alternative that can be used without disrupting learning or distracting others.

Uniform Policy

Full details of our uniform which has been adapted to meet the recent government guidance can be found on our website. If you are having difficulty getting uniform for your daughter please contact Ms. Schenck to see if we can help.

In line with our uniform policy I would like to stress the following;

- All students should wear their blazer at all times.
- Outdoor jackets must be **plain black** and waterproof. Jackets of any other colour will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.
- Hair of shoulder length and longer must be tied back. Repeated failure to conform to this rule will lead to sanctions.
- Hair should also be of a natural colour. Sanctions may be applied if this is not the case.

Vaping

Research has shown that vaping rates are climbing amongst young people and our students are no different. Vaping is illegal for anyone under 16 and is therefore banned in school. Any vapes found will be confiscated and disposed of with sanctions up to and including suspension for those involved. Please regularly check that your daughter is not in possession of any vapes – either one of her own or another person's.

Roadworks

We have been made aware that the roadworks currently in place at Town Row/ Melwood Drive will be ongoing until November 2026. This will impact on the following bus routes: 12, 13 ,15, 61, 61A, 61B and will affect general traffic in all directions. Please do factor these delays into your daughter's journey to school to avoid her being late.

Energy Drinks and Water

Research has shown that energy drinks are physically and mentally harmful to young people so these are banned in school and will be banned in all schools by upcoming Government Legislation. Drinking Water is available all day around site, so please provide your daughter with a water bottle so that she can make use of this at break and lunchtime.

Car Parking

A reminder that we do not allow parents to routinely park on site. If you wish to drop off or collect your daughter, please arrange to drop her safely off in the local area so that she can make her way to school. When parking in the local area please be considerate to our local community by considering where and how you park.

Data Protection

Please be aware that our privacy notices have been updated and are available on our website.

CCTV Upgrade

We have upgraded our CCTV system during the summer and our CCTV policies have changed in light of this. The policy will be published on our website shortly. The new system provides better coverage to help keep students and staff safe.

Allergies

In line with new national legislation, Holly Lodge is required to put safety measures in place to protect pupils with allergies. The new requirements were introduced as part of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 and is known as Benedict's Law. If your daughter has an allergy that requires additional support in school, please speak to her Year Leader. Our Allergy Safety Policy is available on our website.

Holly Lodge is a safe and welcoming environment with notably positive relationships between all members of the school community, and it is these relationships which are underpinned by the procedures outlined above which allow our students to excel. We thank you for your support in these important areas.

Our successes have come about through hard work, high expectations and your support, so thank you on behalf of all the staff. We are looking forward to another successful and happy academic year.

Yours sincerely,



Mr A Keen
Headteacher

Using toilets safely during the day – Reminders for Students

Toilets need to be safe and looked after for everyone to feel safe. To achieve this, you must use our toilet etiquette.

- **Start of the day:** Toilets will be open in the food courts (Years 7 and 8) and sports hall (Years 9 to 11). All other toilets will be locked.
- **Break:** Toilets in the food courts will be open, along with those in Parks (Y7), Rosalind (Y8) and Emmeline Art (Others)
- **Lunch 1:** Toilets in the Food Courts will be open, along with those in Emmeline Art from 11.50.
- **Lunch 2:** Toilets in the Food Courts will be open, along with those in Emmeline Art from 12.35.

Etiquette for safely using toilets during lessons - You must use the toilets in Art in Emmeline

- You will arrive at each lesson in a timely manner. Therefore, no student should be using the toilet during a lesson changeover unless they have a Medical Toilet Pass.
- Once in your classroom, your teacher will be eager to start the lesson so follow his/her instructions – write the date / title and start the Retrieval Practice (RP) exercise.
- The register will now be taken while you write the date and title and complete the RP exercise.
- This means that you should not ask to go to the toilet for at least the first 5 minutes of the lesson.
- Unless you have a Medical Toilet Pass, it is always at the discretion of your teacher when he/she allows you to go to the toilet.
- When allowing you to go to the toilet, your teacher will have considered the point in the teaching at which it is appropriate for you to go to the toilet.
- Only one student at a time will be able to leave the room to go to the toilet unless it is a rare emergency. If you must go to the toilet, you must make sure your teacher gives you a Toilet Pass which you must then be ready to show to any staff on duty.
- You must return to your classroom within 10 minutes and return the Toilet Pass to your teacher.
- As the lesson nears its end, your teacher will indicate that it is not appropriate for any student to leave the lesson.
- This means that you should not ask to go to the toilet for at least the last 5 minutes of the lesson.

Remember

- You still have plenty of toilets to use at the start of the day, at break and at lunchtime.
- To use toilet etiquette.
- Improved punctuality to lessons will help everybody do well.
- We all want everybody to feel safe in and around school