



5th September 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

Important Start of Year Information

This letter contains a significant amount of information that is useful to parents/carers and students at the start of the academic year. It complements the work students have completed today with their form tutors, enabling you to see some of the key information we have shared. To assist, it is broken down into sections that are listed alphabetically. It is essential that all parents/carers read the information below carefully to understand some of the changes that have been introduced and take action as appropriate. Therefore, we will try to ensure that this will be the only whole school external communication sent to parents/carers this week.

Attendance and punctuality

- **Every Day Counts**

Attendance continues to be a priority for schools given that absences result in gaps in learning. Absence from school also means that students miss out on vital extra-curricular opportunities, and experiences which support them. Our whole school attendance target is 97%, which still allows for up to 6 days of absence throughout the year as we do appreciate that it is inevitable that a child may be unwell at some point in the year.

When attendance drops below 95% this is a concern, and we will be in touch to see what support can be offered, if we are not already working with you. A child with 95% attendance at the end of the academic year will have missed 50 hours of learning time. **Given the impact that absence has on learning, students' attendance will ordinarily need to be above 90% to be considered for any non-compulsory trips and visits unless we have medical proof of illness.**

Important reminders:

1. Please inform the school **before 8.30am** on the first day of your child's absence. You will be required to provide a reason for the absence and an expected return to school date.
2. If the school is not notified of the absence, parents will be contacted to request a reason for the absence. If a reason is not provided the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**.
3. Students arriving after 9.00am will receive a (U) mark which accounts for unauthorised absence. This results in a student losing their morning registration mark which means that they will only have 50% attendance for that day.
4. Where possible, all **medical appointments etc** should be made outside of the school day.

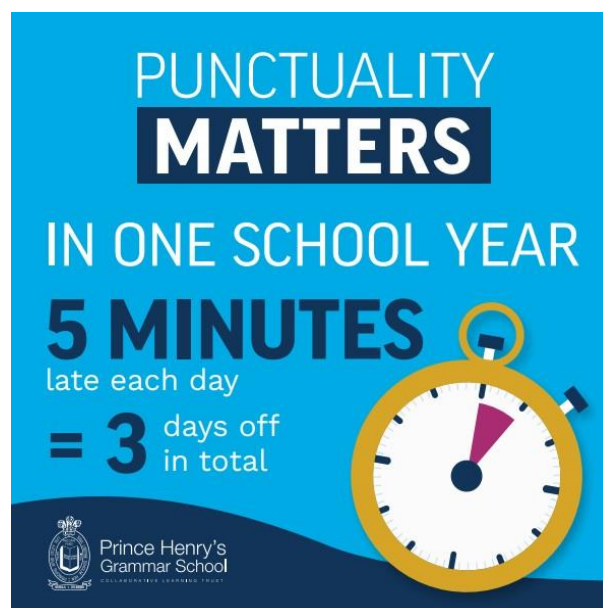
- Please contact your child's Year Manager if you feel we can help to support your child and their attendance, if we are not already working with them. It is vital that we work together as a team.



- Punctuality Matters**

It is widely known that lateness to school and to lessons has a big impact across the academic year in terms of the number of minutes lost to learning.

All students should be **on site for 8.25am** when the warning bell rings, thereby ensuring they can be in their form by 8.30am. From the start of term in September, **the Farnley Lane gate will be closed and locked at 8.27am. Any student arriving after this time must enter the site via the Newall Carr Road entrance.** Students who arrive late to school will be issued with a late mark and a negative comment. We thank you in advance for supporting us to ensure that your child arrives on time for school daily.



Behaviour – Positive Discipline

The success of Positive Discipline is dependent on support from and partnership with parents/carers and it is therefore essential that you understand it as well as students and staff.

Positive Discipline ensures that students have clear guidelines and are rewarded for good behaviour, work and effort, whilst at the same time providing a framework within which incidents of poor behaviour and other misdemeanours are challenged and sanctioned in a consistent manner. Over time, it has helped improve students' attitude to learning and has significantly reduced incidents of "low-level disruption" in the classroom. In short, at Prince Henry's we will not allow the learning of the vast majority of hardworking students to be disrupted or impeded by a minority. The Positive Discipline policy was fully updated at the end of the last academic year following feedback from students, staff and parents/carers. The most recent policy can be viewed on the school website [here](#).

- **The Student Planner**

Central to the success of Positive Discipline is the Student Planner, which forms the centre of communication between school and parents/carers. The planner must be brought to school each day with identified sanctions for students who forget or lose the planner.

- **Positive Discipline Records**

During registration, students and tutors will use the planner to review performance and check that the planner has been signed by a parent/carer. Please support your child by reviewing and signing the planner weekly.

Where a student has received no negative comments throughout the previous week, they will be awarded a "clean slate" personal tutor stamp. To highlight the importance of full attendance and punctuality, a further weekly personal tutor stamp will be awarded to students who have achieved 100% attendance and punctuality OR, in some cases, have shown improved attendance.

- **Rewards** - *See pages 42/43 of the student planner.*

The PD rewards system allows students to gather stamps in their planner for demonstrating positive behaviour. As each student gathers more stamps, they will receive different levels of rewards.

- **Sanctions** - *See pages 40/41 of the student planner.*

At times, we recognise that some young people will not behave or work in a manner which is acceptable. Where misdemeanours are minor or are a result of carelessness, it is likely that only a clear "verbal warning" will be issued. It is expected that this will be a sufficient prompt for most students to return to working acceptably.

Where misdemeanours are more serious or are persistent in nature, then comments will be placed in the Student Planner. The teacher concerned will indicate the nature of the misdemeanour (e.g. B – indicating poor behaviour, H – incomplete home learning, L – Late, E - Equipment issue, U – Uniform misdemeanor, etc.) followed by their staff code.

Such comments will result in the loss of the Form Tutor Clean Slate award and, if three negative comments accumulate over a half term within a given subject, or 'Around School', an after-school detention will follow.

- **Detention**

Detentions take place from 3.00pm to 4.00pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Parents/carers will receive an email giving notice of, and brief reasons for, the detention. This will show on a

student's electronic timetable on Arbor. Attendance at detentions is compulsory and non-negotiable. A student who fails to attend will be placed in a longer, Friday night, SLT detention.

Students receiving repeated detentions will be placed on monitoring report. They will be offered support to improve their behaviour, but also face further sanctions should the negative behaviour continue.

- **Reflection**

Where student behaviour is particularly disruptive, a referral to the Reflection Room will automatically follow. Please note that 'Reflection' replaces our previous 'Isolation'.

Reflection is an extremely serious sanction. The Reflection Room has a functional and purposeful environment. Students work in silence on activities that get them to reflect on why they are in the room as well as completing classwork which their teachers send them. Students will be away from the main school and unable to socialise with other students.

The duration of the day in the Reflection Room will be from 8.30am to 3.00pm. All students who are placed in Reflection must bring their set books and equipment for that day. A student who is late to Reflection (arriving after 8.30 am) without good reason will repeat the full day at the earliest opportunity. A student who is absent will serve this time when they return to school.

The level of commitment displayed by the student will be recorded. A student who works satisfactorily or better will rejoin mainstream education, though a record of the period of Reflection will be kept in the child's personal file. It may also be worth noting once again that this sanction, as with any sanction, can be reached through a gradual process of continued unacceptable behaviour or through the committing of a misdemeanour which is considered sufficiently serious to warrant such an immediate sanction.

It is essential to point out, however, that we expect very few students to be doing anything other than enjoying working well at school and receiving the rewards and benefits that go with such an approach.

Lastly, it is worth highlighting that a handful of misdemeanours have clear stand-alone sanctions. These are outlined in the planner and students have been reminded of them today. These particularly focus on mobile phones (page 27), iPad use (page 29) and Bus behaviour (page 36).

We need students to understand that the school and parents/carers work together. As such, you will best support us (and your child) by regularly reviewing and signing their planner, by encouraging positive performance and by challenging under-performance as you feel appropriate.

Car parks / travelling to school by car

Arrival and departure from school often sees 1,600 students and up to 9 buses needing to access the main gateways safely in a narrow time frame. For this reason, please can we remind you that **students must NOT be dropped off or picked up within the school grounds**, on the approach road to school from Newall Carr Road or in Prince Henry's Court. It is also especially dangerous, and illegal, to stop on the 'zig zag' area by the pedestrian crossing adjacent to the Farnley Lane entrance.

If you are unable to avoid transporting your child to school by car, it helps traffic congestion enormously, before and after school, if students can be dropped off a short walk away from the gates. Page 36 – 38 of the student planner give further information on travelling to school, including information on the new safe 'Feet First' Drop off points located within walking distance of school.

Contacting School

As a school we very much value your support and are always happy to discuss specific matters of concern with you. I would ask, however, that you telephone school to arrange a mutually convenient time should you wish to meet with a member of staff, as meetings which have not been pre-arranged can usually only be accommodated in exceptional circumstances.

Curriculum

Our Curriculum is carefully designed to ensure that students retain valuable learning and that it covers breadth and depth within and across topics. You will find full subject information under 'Our School' and 'Curriculum' on our website, including more detailed overviews of what your child is learning embedded within each subject summary table. Please do check this frequently, as updates are dynamic and are designed to help you support your child in their learning.

Data Management – Arbor

At Prince Henry's, we use a data management system called Arbor. All parents/carers have previously been invited to join this (including year 7 parents/carers as part of the induction process). New parents/carers, or those who have yet to log in to Arbor, will receive an email with information about how to join this week. Arbor is easy to use (it can be used on the Arbor website, or by downloading the Arbor Parent App) and allows you to see a range of information (for example attendance and timetable) about your child.

It is essential that all parents/carers visit the site and check the student profile area is accurate. Data stored there includes address, email, phone numbers, emergency contacts, etc. We must stress that if your child has a Medical Condition, you must check and complete **all** areas linked to this. This includes:

- What the Medical Condition is
- What the Severity is
- A quick Summary, if appropriate
- Symptoms
- Treatment

The bottom two sections **must** be completed if your child has a known Medical Condition. This will enable staff to know what to look out for and how it should be treated.

We ask all parents/carers to check the information shown above and make any amendments by **Monday 18th September**. We will remind parents/carers throughout the year to check that this information is up to date.

As a reminder: Arbor parent portal shows a user their children's data, their own personal data, but only the name of any other contacts attached to their children. This is to reduce the risk of data sharing incidents, for example where parents live apart. Any named contact in our system with parental responsibility will be able to see the data we hold about their children, in a secure manner. For additional information about Arbor, this [link](#) takes you to an 'Introduction to Arbor' for parents and carers (referred to by Arbor as 'guardians').

Home Learning

There is no longer a weekly page in the student planner for recording Home Learning. Arbor is now the only way to see information relating to what a home learning task involves. This allows students and parents/carers to see and manage the tasks they have been set more easily.

It is likely that home learning (and feedback) will be completed somewhere else (e.g. in exercise books, on Teams or Showbie). Arbor is simply used to manage what home learning tasks are set and confirm that they have been completed. Currently, you should be able to view any home learning that your child has been set on your Arbor home page.

Year 7 students have a small paper 'Home Learning' planner in the back of their planner for use in the first few weeks whilst iPads are distributed. Once all students have access to iPads, Home Learning will be set via Arbor only.

Key Dates

At the end of this week, you will receive a 'Key Dates' leaflet which flags important dates across the year. For your forward planning, please note that, as usual, school will close at 12.10pm on Friday 29th September, in preparation for the following Monday's School Open Evening.

Online Payments

Please can we remind parents/ carers that, where possible, we ask you to use the Scopay payment system to add credit to your child's lunch card. This helps to reduce congestion around the re-valuation machine and saves students having to carry cash. All year 7 parents/carers should have received an invite to the online payment system prior to starting today.

Planner

Students have today been issued with their new school planner. In order to support our sustainability efforts, this is significantly condensed from previous versions. It now contains just the key information your child will need during the next academic year. We would encourage you to look through this and familiarise yourself with the layout. It is also essential that **all parents/ carers sign the following pages** before the end of this week:

- Page 5 – PHGS Charter for Parents
- Page 21 – Equality and Diversity at Prince Henry's
- Page 45 – Consent for use of student's images and videos

And should you wish to at this time:

- Page 44 – Extra-Curricular Health and Safety Consent Form

School Vision

Last year saw a school wide consultation take place to ensure that our vision and values reflect our common purpose and are part of our regular behaviours, communicated in a succinct and memorable way. We are excited to launch this fully as follows:

"Prince Henry's will become internationally recognised as an exceptional school with a culture of respect, where we can all flourish and achieve."



Uniform

To further emphasise the message sent in the July Newsletter, please ensure that your child is wearing correct uniform at the start of the school day. Any student not wearing the correct uniform will not be allowed to join mainstream lessons until the infringement has been rectified. In particular, please note the expectations detailed in the student planner (page 17) regarding socks, belts, jewellery, make-up, hairstyles and colour, trousers and skirt length.

We encourage students to take pride in their uniform as representatives of the school. Smart school uniform is an important means through which we establish and communicate the high standards that we aim for in all aspects of life in school. For this reason, our uniform policy is strictly enforced at all times. This applies equally to footwear, and a doctor's note must be provided (and presented to the Year Manager at the start of the day) if it is necessary for a student to wear alternative footwear.

It is also worth mentioning at this point that, if parents/carers are permitting students to have facial or extra ear piercings then these should be carried out at the beginning of the next summer holiday so that they can be removed during the school day, as these are not allowed. Exceptions will not be made under any circumstances.

September is always a busy time, but it offers all the opportunity for a fresh start. We look forward to working with all our students and parents/carers this year as we seek to encourage respect and ensure our school gives everyone the best chance to flourish and achieve.

Yours faithfully



Sally Bishop and the Senior Leadership Team