



7th September 2015

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome back to a new academic year at Ark Helenswood Academy! Term 1 started this morning with a celebration of the fantastic exam results from our GCSE and A level students this summer, and this was of course an opportunity for all of our girls to recognise the importance of hard work, determination and a growth mindset of self-belief as I shared the successes of our outgoing Year 11 and Year 13 students. 62% of our students achieved A*-C grades in five GCSE courses, including English and maths; with 99% of our students achieving a GCSE grade in their subjects. We pride ourselves on our examination success simply because we know that this then opens doors for our students as they move into our 6th form, onto vocational courses at college and then onto apprenticeships and university. A huge congratulations from all of the team here at Helenswood to all of our girls as they move into 6th form and onwards in their careers post-18, we look forward to hearing of your success. A reminder that we run an 'old girls' or alumni association so that we can keep in touch with you as you move on through your life, and we ask you to join by visiting: <https://networks.futurefirst.org.uk/former-student-ms-s1/helenswood>

Our staff team of course started back last week, with training days focusing on the continuation of the improvement of the quality of teaching, with a sharp focus on English and maths. I am pleased to report that we are fully staffed for the beginning of the year and that we are delighted to welcome three new colleagues to our team:

Mr P Miley	- English teacher
Ms T Osula-Winthe	- Science teacher
Mrs H Welsh	- Head of IT

They are great additions to our team, coming to us with a broad range of experiences in local schools and I am sure that our girls will make them welcome.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all of our families of a few practical items as we start the year:

Reporting student absence:

A reminder to all parents/carers that we ask you to report your daughter's absence on the first day of her absence, and every subsequent day after that. Please use the direct dial telephone number for reporting absence: **01424 757986**. This telephone number can be found on page 4 of the Student Journal which your daughter has been issued with today.

School Term dates:

All holiday dates can be found on the academy website: <http://arkhelenswood.org/about-us/term-dates-and-attendance>, or on page 2 of the student journal.



PRINCIPAL: Lucy Monk
REGIONAL DIRECTOR: Mark Phillips



Please note that we will be closing early to students this term on: **Wednesday 30th September at 1.00 pm**, for the Year 6 Open Evening for students seeking admission to the academy in September 2016. I will be writing to you to confirm the arrangements for buses on this date shortly.

Sending money into the academy:

We operate a cashless catering system at Ark Helenswood, and I would encourage you to place funds on your daughter's lunch money account by visiting your account at Parentmail +Pay. We will be asking for payments for all school trips and financial requirements to be paid via this method as we prefer students not to carry large amounts of money into school. For those of you who have not yet registered for an account a letter will be sent to you in the near future with the necessary details.

However, if you do need to send money into school for payments please can I ask that it is sent in an **envelope, which is clearly marked with your daughter's name, tutor group, the amount enclosed, and what the payment is for e.g. Art book, trip deposit, etc.**

Curriculum Evenings, Parent/Carer Consultation, and Ark 6th Form Open Evening:

I would like to remind parents/carers that during Terms 1 and 2 we have the following opportunities for you to meet with staff, discuss your daughter's curriculum, and visit our 6th form in preparation for entry to the 6th form in either September 2016 or 2017.

10 th September 2015	Year 8 & 9 Curriculum Information Evening	6.00 pm
15 th September 2015	Year 10 & 11 Curriculum Information Evening	6.00 pm
23 rd September 2015	Ark 6 th Form Curriculum Information Evening	6.00 pm
21 st October 2015	Year 7 Tutor Parent/Carer Evening	4.30 - 7.30 pm
18 th November 2015	Ark 6 th Form Open Evening at Ark William Parker	6.00 - 9.00 pm
9 th December 2015	Year 9 Parent / Carer Evening	4.30 - 6.30 pm
16 th December 2015	Year 11 Parent/Carer Evening	4.30 - 7.30 pm

I look forward to seeing you at one of these evening events, where we will be working together to ensure that your daughters achieve even more success than we have seen this summer!

With best wishes

Mrs L Monk
Principal



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