



September 2017

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to the academic year 2017-2018.

We start with excellent news regarding our summer results. The students did very well indeed and they should be proud of themselves and their achievements. We are particularly pleased with the high proportion of top grades at both GCSE and A level.

The GCSE English and maths examinations were new this summer and they were much more demanding so we are delighted that 23 students gained the highest grades available in Maths and 19 students in English Language. It means that Ark Helenswood Academy remains the highest achieving school in Hastings.

We also celebrate the achievements of students completing Level 3 courses and they demonstrate the success of Ark 6th Form. Many students gained their first choice destination or were able to find a suitable alternative. University destinations include UCL, Bristol, Sussex and Kent to study Medicine, History, Law and Geology to name but a few chosen pathways.

I would like to congratulate our students for their dedication to their learning and wish them every success for the future and hope that they keep in touch. I would also like to thank their teachers and all staff for their ongoing commitment, hard work and support.

This year we continue to build on these successes. Students at Ark Helenswood Academy have had the benefit of being prepared for the change in GCSEs that students will sit from this year across all subjects. This preparation is evident in the success of the English and Maths outcomes this year. Our strong curriculum offer will be complemented with an extra-curricular programme, a full PSHE curriculum and a raising aspirations programme to give our girls the knowledge, understanding and experience of being successful beyond their school years.

Site works

Over the summer we have been busy preparing both sites for the start of the academic year. The schools have been re-decorated and re-organised. The Lower site has had several changes to support the additional year group and the 6th Form who will be taught there. The main changes are the canteen area, including an outdoor eating area that we are trialling, the outdoor spaces, updated security and morning line-ups. The DT, catering and music rooms have been updated and our Inclusion area has been completely renovated.



Principal: Tracy Dohel

Bus queries

We have consulted with Stagecoach regarding bus routes and the bus schedules and can confirm that additional dedicated school buses and routes have now been arranged, further details are included with this letter. We have arranged for Stagecoach to come to the school on **Wednesday 6th September between 5pm and 7pm** at the Lower site to enable you to follow up any further queries that you may have regarding this and also normal service bus routes that are available for students.

Cashless catering

We will be implementing a complete cashless system in the canteen during this term. This is consistent with how other school canteens work and will mean that students do not need to carry cash which will, in turn, reduce the wait time at the tills. Parents/carers can login to ParentPay with their email address as their username, if you have forgotten your password, you can use the automated password reset links on the ParentPay site. If you require support and advice on how to access ParentPay we will have members of our IT team available to help you on **Wednesday 6th September between 4pm and 6pm** at the Lower site. Parents of new Year 7 students will be receiving their ParentPay log on details in the post.

Lockers

Year 7 and 8 students will be guaranteed a locker if they make their request by Wednesday 13th September after which we will be offering lockers to girls in Year 9 and 10 on a first come first served basis. There are day lockers available by the Sports Hall which runs on a £1 refundable system. Please note that these lockers are opened and emptied every day by the staff at Helenswood Sports Centre, so we will not be able to guarantee a return of anything left in these lockers overnight.

Helenswood app

We are putting the finishing touches to the Helenswood app that parents said they found very useful when it was up and running. This will enable us to communicate with you more regularly and efficiently regarding upcoming events and other school matters.

Year 7 and 8 Enrichment

We will be issuing an extra-curricular programme for all years and in addition we will have enrichment activities specifically for year 7 and 8 students starting at 3.05pm on Monday and Tuesdays starting Monday 18th September.

High Expectations Policy

Our policies will be updated and available on the website from the middle of September. This will include the High Expectations Policy which will have some slight changes to it regarding rewards and sanctions. Our rewards will link directly to the Academy values of commitment, cooperation, excellence and respect. For the small minority of students that do receive behaviour sanctions these will include a revised B system of consequences and after school detentions. We request parents and carers to work with the academy to minimise the chances of these occurring. We will continue to give you a notice period of twenty four hours if your daughter has a detention.

We continue to have and maintain high expectations so it is essential that girls arrive to school punctually and every day. They should be ready and prepared to learn with the right equipment, their homework completed and their uniform worn correctly. Please note girls should be wearing the revere collar shirt. They should be encouraged to read age-related literature beyond that provided by the school.

The academy will continue with its electronic device expectation of not seen, used or heard whist on the school site. If you wish to contact your daughter in an emergency, please contact the school office.

If you need to meet with a member of staff please contact the school in order to make an appointment.

I always look forward to working with you in the best interest of your daughter(s). It is well known that children make their best progress when a school and families work cooperatively with each other. As part of this, I always appreciate parent feedback and look forward to hearing from you and meeting you during the course of the year.

The key dates for the first term are included in this letter they can also be found on our website. Please note that there a number of events to which you have been invited throughout the term.

Should you have any concerns do write or call my PA, Pauline Ralph, on 01424 753040 to make an appointment and I will respond as soon as I possibly can.

We look forward to welcoming our students back to the Academy on Thursday 7th September at 8.45am.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tracy Dohel', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tracy Dohel
Principal

KEY DATES FOR ARK HELENSWOOD ACADEMY – TERM 1 2017/2018

Date		Activity	Staff lead
Monday	4th Sept	INSET DAYS	
Tuesday	5th Sept	INSET DAYS	
Wednesday	6th Sept	INSET DAYS	
Thursday	7th Sept	8.45am – Yrs 7 – 10 at Lower School site Yr 11 at Upper School site	
Friday	8th Sept	9.00am Yr 7 East Sussex Music Concert	Mrs Fautley
Monday	11th Sept	Dyslexia/SLCN screening Yr7	Ms Culshaw
Wednesday	13th Sept	5.15pm East Sussex Music Parent evening	Mrs Fautley
Thursday	14th Sept	9.00am - 10.00am Year 6 Open Morning	Mrs Ralph
Friday	15th Sept	9.45 - 10.45am Appointments available with the Principal 11.00am Visit of former High School students	Mrs Ralph
Monday	18th Sept	Yr 8 HPV vaccinations	Ms Daubney
Wednesday	20th Sept	6.00-7.00pm SEN Parent Workshop	Ms Culshaw
Thursday	21st Sept	9.00am - 10.00am Year 6 Open Morning Yr 10 Art trip 7.30pm White Rock Theatre Trip	Mrs Ralph Mrs Betts Mr Whitehead
Monday	25th Sept	Yrs 7-10 School photos	Mrs Daubney
Tuesday	26th Sept	European Day of Languages	Mrs Hardy
Wednesday	27th Sept	6.00pm Yr 11 Parents' Evening by invite only	Mr Connor
Thursday	28th Sept	9.00 - 10.00am Year 6 Open Morning 6.00 - 8.00pm Year 6 Open Evening. School day will end for students at 1.35pm	Mrs Ralph
Friday	29th Sept	INSET DAY	
Wednesday	4th Oct	6.00-7.00pm Parent Workshop - Curriculum	Mr Connor
Thursday	5th Oct	9.00 - 10.00am Year 6 Open Morning World Teachers day	Mrs Ralph Miss Gardiner
Friday	6th Oct	9.45 - 10.45am Appointments available with the Principal Year 11 PGL weekend tbc	Mrs Ralph Mr Connor
Saturday	7th Oct	Year 11 PGL weekend tbc	
Sunday	8th Oct	Year 11 PGL weekend tbc	
Wednesday	11th Oct	Glyndebourne Opera trip	Mr Whitehead

Thursday	12th Oct	9.00 - 10.00am Year 6 Open Morning 6.00- 7.00pm Year 7 Tutor Evening	Mrs Ralph Mrs Phillips
Thursday	19th Oct	9.00 - 10.00am Year 6 Open Morning	Mrs Ralph
Friday	20th Oct	9.45 - 10.45am Appointments available with the Principal Wear it Pink mufti day for Breast Cancer Year 7 History Trip to Battle Abbey	Mrs Ralph Miss Lelliott Miss Warburton