



OLD BUCKENHAM
HIGH SCHOOL

Achieving excellence together

7th September 2017

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Dear Parent/Carer

I am very pleased to write to you to welcome you to the beginning of the academic year, which has started very well. Our new students are settling into the routines and the older students have started the new term in a very positive manner. Can I thank parents and carers for ensuring your son/daughter has come to school in full school uniform. There is much to look forward to this year, school productions, sporting opportunities and other exciting events. This is a very important year for Year 11 students; Mrs Morgan, one of our new Assistant Headteachers, will be leading the provision we will put in place. In addition, there are some important changes, which are mentioned below. I set aside Friday mornings to ensure I have availability to meet with parents to discuss any issues you wish to raise. If you would like an appointment please contact my PA Mrs Bradshaw via the school office.

Homework

The school has now moved to setting homework via Go 4 Schools (G4S). Please can you ensure your son/daughter is able to log on and, if you require a log on, please contact the school for details. Year 7 students will be shown how to use G4S over the next two weeks. Students will also have the opportunity to write homework in their planner if they cannot access G4S at home. We are looking into setting up a homework club to run after school until 5 o'clock, please contact me if this is something you would be interested in.

School Governors

We are looking to recruit new Parent Governors to our Local Governing Board and will be holding elections very shortly. Our Chair of Governors, Mrs Irvine, will be coordinating this, but it would be very helpful, if you are interested in becoming a school governor, if you would contact the School. If you would like more information about what the role involves feel free to contact me or Mrs Irvine via the school office.

Home/School Contact

The school very much welcomes a close working relationship with parents and carers and much of this communication is now via email. Our policy is that we will acknowledge contact to the school within 24 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) and endeavour to resolve issues within 72 hours. Clearly, in emergencies we will respond more quickly. I would like to take this opportunity to request that any contact that is made via email or social media maintains the standards of politeness and respect that we work to.



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Attendance at school and legal intervention

Research commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. At Old Buckenham High School our aim is to work with parents to ensure that all our students receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This letter is to remind all parents/carers regarding the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must to continue take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

Where students are absent through illness, we ask that this is reported to our Absence Line on the 1st day and each subsequent day the student is absent. Where possible, please make medical appointments outside of school hours. Where appointments are made for early morning or late afternoon, we would expect the student to attend school for the remainder of the day (unless there are exceptional circumstances) and will need to see evidence of all appointments. Failure to do this will result in that absence being recorded as unauthorised.

The Local Authority operates a system where any student will meet the criteria for legal intervention where they have:

1. 85% attendance or less, with at least 15% unauthorised absence over a 6 week period; or,
2. Below 90% attendance within a 12 week period where some or all of the absences are due to unauthorised term time holiday absence.

The intervention could be in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice. Any student at Old Buckenham High School who meets either of these criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued it is a fine of £60 per parent per child, which must be paid in one payment in 21 days. If unpaid, a further invoice for £60 per parent per child is issued; both individual invoices would then have to be paid, making a total payment of £120 in 28 days. You should be aware that failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken.

I hope we can count on your support in this and other matters, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions and I look forward to a very successful year.

Yours sincerely



Mr A Fell
Headteacher

