

# LADY HAWKINS' SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM

KINGTON HEREFORDSHIRE HR5 3AR

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Our Ref: PD/PJ

8<sup>th</sup> September 2017

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am delighted and honoured to be able to write to you as the 30<sup>th</sup> Headteacher of Lady Hawkins' School and to welcome you to the new academic year. This is an exciting and challenging time in education with changes to the examination system in particular presenting us all with fresh challenges. I am looking forward to working with you to make sure that we give all of our learners every opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Since leaving academia to join the teaching profession, I have been motivated by the desire to give the next generation the best possible chance to succeed. This has been evident through my own teaching and as a Head of Science, where I first realised the impact that we, as leaders in a school, can have on the life chances of learners. In my most recent post before being appointed Headteacher I have been a part of a leadership team which has brought about stability for John Beddoes School and a significant improvement in standards.

I am excited now to have the opportunity to bring what I have learned to Lady Hawkins' School and lead us forward as we write a new chapter in the school's lengthy history.

The start of the academic year is a chance for a new start for everyone. During our training day on Monday, I discussed with the staff how we are going to move forward during the coming months. There will be some changes made to how we work in school, to make sure that we are tracking your child's progress and supporting them as fully as possible. I am confident that these changes will have a positive impact on the standards at Lady Hawkins' School.

A school is not a school without its students and it was lovely to welcome everybody back in their smart school uniforms ready to learn. It has been particular pleasure to welcome our new Year 7 cohort and they certainly seemed to enjoy the day of activities organised by Mrs Bennison and her tutor team on Tuesday. I hope that they have had a positive first week and feel that they are now fully fledged members of our school.

In assembly on Tuesday, I shared my non-negotiable expectations with learners. I expect every child to be in correct uniform, to be on time to lessons, to be correctly equipped and ready to learn. I have also made clear that we will be enforcing the mobile phone policy and I am sure that I have your continued support with this.

The link between attendance in school and learner progress is very strong and we are keen to promote good attendance for all pupils. Our whole school target for attendance this year is 96% and I am sure that we can work together to reach this. I understand, as a parent myself, that there are times when our children will be absent from school and we have set up an email address which parents may choose to use to report pupil absences, this will run as an alternative to phoning in with an absence. We hope that the email will relieve some of the time pressure which we can feel as parents and allow absence to be reported out of office hours, the address is

[absence@lhs.hereford.sch.uk](mailto:absence@lhs.hereford.sch.uk)

In order to improve communication with home, we have introduced a first call home system when, if we have not received notification of a child's absence by the end of morning registration (9am), we will telephone home, to make sure that pupils are safe and accounted for. Lady Hawkins' school will not authorise holidays during term time unless circumstances are exceptional.

As a part of our work to improve the communication between home and school, we are trialling a web based homework system called 'Show My Homework'. The system allows learners to access their homework online, on their phone via an app or via the website and can send alerts when homework is due. It also allows parents to access the same information, to allow us to support our children and help them to manage their time. The aim is for the new homework system to be wholly up and running for the start of the spring term, planners are still available for use this term. We are planning to hold some drop in sessions during the term for parents to make sure that we are all getting the most from what is a powerful tool.

This term we are introducing the ParentPay system, which is an online payment system. You will be able to use this to pay for school trips in the first instance and we hope to extend this to canteen payments next year. We will send more information to you regarding this during the coming months.

I would like to take this opportunity to draw your attention to some dates for your diary:

**Open Day** - 28<sup>th</sup> September – come and see the school in action at 9:30-11am & 6:30-8pm

**Foundress' Day** – 29<sup>th</sup> September

**Parents Forum** – 5<sup>th</sup> October at 6.30pm - an opportunity for us to meet and discuss any ideas that you might have for how we can improve our school

I am very much looking forward to working with you and our unique caring school community to ensure that your child will feel valued, experience success and enjoy learning.

Please contact me at the school if there are any aspects of school life that you would like to discuss.

Yours faithfully,

Mr P Jennings  
Head teacher