



7 October 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

Key Updates October 2025

As we enter week six of the new school year, I would like to share some important updates with you. We have been incredibly pleased with how students have returned to school, adapting to the next academic level and often new teachers.

Our Communication Charter

We are proud to be part of the Red Kite Alliance (a group of over 50 schools) who commit to working positively with families. To support this, we have adopted a new Communication Charter across the schools. This sets out some simple but important principles to make sure communication between home and school is always respectful, timely and constructive.

In practice, this means:

- we will always listen carefully to concerns raised
- we will respond within three working school days
- meetings will be arranged at a suitable time, rather than on an ad-hoc basis, and we will handle all dialogue with respect and compassion.

We ask, in return, that all communication from home is considerate and respectful. This partnership helps us ensure that colleagues can focus on supporting students while maintaining a healthy work-life balance. A full copy of the Charter can be found on our [website](#).

Reporting Student Absences

We would like to remind all parents/carers of the procedures for reporting student absences and highlight recent changes. Following a trial last year, we have made the decision to *no longer use* the StudyBugs platform to record student absences. We are now using the Arbor App or Parent Portal to record **same day absences**.

To do this:

1. Go to Arbor App or Parent Portal
2. Go to the Attendance section
3. Enter the relevant absence details
4. Submit the request for review by the school.

Once submitted, the school's attendance team will approve or reject the request. If approved, the absence will appear in the Attendance tab of the app/portal. If the request cannot be authorised, a member of the Attendance Team or a Year Manager will contact you. Please remember, you are requesting authorisation for an absence, and as a school, we must be curious about student absence so that we can best support students to be in school and fulfil our safeguarding obligations. Members of the team may ask for more information or clarification. These

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Learning Trust Alliance Teacher Training Teaching School Hub

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conversations are not a judgement, but an opportunity to gather the necessary facts and explore if further support can be offered. In some cases, we may not be able to agree to your request to authorise the absence or may require additional medical evidence before we can do so.

In line with our Communication Charter, we ask that all discussions are calm and respectful. If you or your child need help or support in attending school, please don't hesitate to speak with the team – we are here to help.

For detailed guidance on using the Arbor system to log absences, please visit the Arbor support page here:

[Logging absences on the Parent Portal and Arbor App](#)

Extended or Future Absences

Requests for extended or future absences, including holidays or known absences, must be submitted using the absence form available on the [school website](#).

Medical Appointments

For reporting medical appointments, please contact the Attendance Team directly via email hgsattendance@hgs.rklt.co.uk.

If You Cannot Access the Arbor App or Portal

If you are unable to access the Parent Portal or Arbor App, please contact the relevant attendance line:

- **Years 7–11:** 01423 535635
- **Years 12–13 (Sixth Form):** 01423 535236

Our School Charity for 2025/2026

Last year we successfully raised £10,301 for Mind, and we hope to raise even more money this year. Our chosen school charity is JustB, which provides vital wellbeing and mental health support for young people with a specific focus on bereavement. We are pleased to be supporting such an important local charity that we know has supported many students at HGS. Over the year, there will be several fundraising activities for students to take part in. To make it easier for parents, we have set up a payment system to cover all three non-uniform days. This is a significant part of our fundraising so we hope you can support us with one payment.

Branded Items Consultation and the PTA

You may have seen that schools are being asked to reduce the number of branded items required for students. We want to take this opportunity to review our own approach and to consult with various groups before making any changes. We will consult with Parents and Carers through our PTA.

We are currently encouraging parents to support the PTA, and we are looking for a new Chair and Treasurer. Please do contact the school if you are interested in these roles. The PTA at secondary school often involves a much larger team than at primary school. All the events are well established with a large team of helpers. We do, however, need a Chair or even Co-Chairs to lead. Thank you also for supporting our recent used uniform sale which raised £1,400.

Reach Out App

We are also keen to raise awareness of our Reach Out App on every student iPad. This gives students a safe and easy way to share any concerns, about themselves or others, directly with school staff. We have a zero-tolerance approach to racism, discrimination, bullying and harassment. Every young person has the right to feel safe, respected and valued in our community. We encourage all students to speak up, whether through the Reach Out App or by talking to a trusted adult in school.

Kindness Week

Last week we celebrated Kindness week and have awarded 7,272 positives, and many students have written kindness messages. It has been a pleasure to see students engaging in such a positive week and we wanted to say thank you, for their kindness.

Changing Rooms


We are currently refurbishing the boys' changing rooms and the first phase should be completed just after October break. We will then progress to the girls' changing rooms. We would not have been able to do this work without the generous support of parents, particularly through the Burns Night. We really appreciate this support.

Social Media and the Student Bulletin

If you have not had the chance to follow the school social media accounts, please see the links below. We have also simplified the student bulletin to the most important messages, and we share this with you each week via email.

Thank you for your ongoing support and please do not hesitate the school via mail@hgs.rklt.co.uk.

Yours sincerely



Neil Renton
Headteacher

