HARROGATE GRAMMAR SCHOOL
EXCELLENCE FOR ALL

RED KITE LEARNING TRUST

11 September 2026

Dear Parents/Carers of all students in Year 7

Year 7 Welcome and Key Information

It is a pleasure to welcome our new Year 7 cohort to Harrogate Grammar School. We are very much looking forward to working with them.

At the end of this letter are key dates for this academic year. You can also access the school calendar on our website by clicking here.

Routines and Expectations

We are proud of the positive culture at HGS and have high expectations of all our students. Full details of our routines and expectations can be found in the student handbook. We know that students achieve their best when they attend school regularly, and we greatly appreciate the support of parents and carers in helping establish excellent attendance habits. If attendance becomes a concern, we will work closely with families to provide support where needed. Routine medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside of school hours wherever possible. If this is not possible, please minimise their absence, ensuring they are present at morning registration and are back in school for noon. If your child is unwell, please refer to the NHS guidance and follow the school's absence reporting procedures.

The start of a new school year is a fantastic opportunity to build positive habits that can last all year. With this in mind, we are launching a **Three-Week Attendance Challenge**, encouraging every student to achieve 100% attendance during the first three weeks of term. This challenge will start on **Wednesday 9 September and end on Wednesday 30 September**. By being in school every day, students give themselves the very best chance to settle quickly, strengthen friendships and make a positive start to their learning. Everyone who successfully completes the challenge will receive a golden ticket (further details of this will be given during the first day back assembly), and we hope our whole school community will work together to make this an outstanding start to the year.

At HGS, we place a strong emphasis on developing positive learner habits. These are the qualities that help young people become successful, resilient and independent learners. Students who demonstrate these habits will be recognised through positive Class Charts points and our rewards programme. We encourage parents and carers to celebrate these successes with us by regularly checking Class Charts. Where students need support to meet expectations, we will work alongside them – and you – to help them get back on track. Parent login details for Class Charts will be shared with you later this week.

Respect is at the heart of everything we do. As part of our HGS values, we encourage students to show respect for themselves, for others and for the environment around them, at the beginning of the year all students sign a Respect Pledge, agreeing to follow respectful behaviours. Throughout the year, assemblies, tutor activities and Big Picture lessons will help reinforce these values and support students in making a positive contribution to our school community.

Together, we look forward to helping every student have a happy, successful and rewarding year at HGS.

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Learning Trust Alliance Teacher Training Teaching School Hub

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Uniform

Uniform is an important part of life at HGS and helps to create a strong sense of belonging, pride and community. We are always delighted to receive positive feedback about how smart our students look, both in school and when representing HGS in the wider community.

We are grateful for your support in helping your child wear their uniform correctly each day. By working together, we can ensure that all students feel part of our school community and are ready to learn.

Blazers/Jumpers: A school jumper may be worn as an optional extra layer. Blazers should be worn throughout the school day unless we have notified families that warm weather uniform arrangements are in place.

Ties: The correct year group tie should be worn and adjusted so that it reaches the waistband of the trousers or skirt.

Shirts: White shirt, worn fully tucked in with the top button fastened.

Trousers: Black HGS logo trousers

Socks: Black socks should be worn

Shoes: Plain black, flat shoes only. Trainers, canvas shoes and boots are not permitted, including branded sports footwear such as Nike, Adidas, Reebok, Converse and Vans. If there is a medical reason why alternative footwear is required, please contact us so that we can offer advice and support.

Coats: Plain outdoor coats may be worn. Denim, leather, quilted shirt-style jackets and hoodies (including the HGS PE hoodie) should not be worn as coats.

Make-up and Nails: We encourage students not to wear makeup in school. However, if they choose to do so, it should be minimal subtle, and natural-looking. Please note that false nails, acrylic nails, and false eyelashes are not allowed. These are not suitable for a school environment and can create safety risks during practical activities in several subjects.

Jewellery and Piercings: Students may wear one plan ring on each hand, up to two stud earrings in each ear and a plain watch. Other jewellery and facial piercings are not permitted. Any items that do not meet our expectations will need to be removed and be collected at the end of the school day.

Finally, please ensure that all uniform items, especially PE kit but also coats, are clearly labelled. This helps us return any lost property to its rightful owner as quickly as possible.

Work Ethic and Home Learning

At HGS, we believe that developing positive learning habits and a strong work ethic helps students to thrive both in school and beyond. Home learning plays an important role in reinforcing classroom learning, building independence and developing confidence.

All home learning tasks will be available through Arbor on students' iPads, and parents and carers can view this information through the Parent Arbor app. Further information about our home learning expectations can be found in the student handbook.

Frequency and Duration of Home Learning

Subject	Frequency	Duration
English	1 Sparx per week 1 other learning task per week	20 minutes per task
Maths	1 Sparx per week	
Science	1 Sparx per week 1 other learning task per fortnight	
RS	1 per fortnight	
Geography and History	1 per week (per subject)	
MFL	1 per week (per subject)	
Art and Design	1 per fortnight (per subject)	

How Parents and Carers Can Help

The support of parents and carers makes a huge difference. Some simple ways you can help include:

- Supporting full attendance, especially the three-week challenge.
- Encouraging a regular routine for completing home learning.
- Providing a quiet space, free from distractions where possible.
- Talking to your child about what they are learning and celebrating their effort and achievements.
- Checking Arbor and Class Charts regularly to stay informed about home learning and progress.
- Encouraging your child to ask for help when they need it and to take pride in completing work to a high standard.

Reading and Maths at Home

We are incredibly grateful to our PTA for their continued support and for funding books for our new Year 7 students. As part of their transition to HGS, every student have had the opportunity to read the same book, helping to create a shared experience and a love of reading from the very start of their secondary school journey.

Reading remains one of the most powerful ways to support learning, wellbeing and personal development. We encourage students to read for around 30 minutes each day and would greatly appreciate your support in establishing this as part of a regular routine at home.

Students will also be expected to engage with Sparx Reader, Sparx Maths and Sparx Science each week. These platforms provide personalised practice that helps build confidence and fluency in both reading and mathematics. We will send further information about these resources during the first few weeks of term.

Together, through regular reading, home learning and positive routines, we can help every student make a successful start to Year 7 and develop the habits that will support them throughout their with us.

iPads and Smartphones

Technology plays an important role in learning at HGS, and our iPad programme gives students access to high-quality resources both in school and at home. To help students stay focused and use their devices safely, we have put restrictions in place so that iPads function primarily as educational tools. If you have any concerns about how your child is using their iPad, please do get in touch, as additional restrictions and support can be put in place where needed.

As a school, we are keen to work in partnership with families to help students develop healthy and balanced digital habits. Simple routines, such as charging devices in a shared family space, keeping them out of bedrooms overnight and having a regular screen-free period before bedtime, can have a significant positive impact on sleep, wellbeing and readiness to learn.

Recent Government guidance says that students are not permitted to use mobile phones during the school day. This helps to minimise distractions, support positive social interaction and ensure students remain fully engaged in their learning and school life. **Mobile phones must be turned off and placed in their bag**. If a phone is seen or used during the school day, it will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.

We would like to remind you about the webinar introducing Blackout Technology which is taking place on Wednesday 9 September at 6pm. Please use the link below to join the webinar.

HGS Blackout Technology Webinar

Voluntary Contributions

We are committed to providing a rich and varied educational experience for all our students. Alongside the opportunities available through the curriculum, we strive to offer a wide range of enrichment activities, trips, resources and experiences that help our young people develop confidence, creativity and a sense of belonging. Last year, for example, there were 72 trips and 395 sports fixtures.

To help support this, we invite families to make a **voluntary contribution of £20** for each Year 7 student. Throughout the year, there may also be opportunities to contribute towards activities such as curriculum visits, extra-curricular clubs and fixtures, or additional materials used in practical subjects.

We are incredibly grateful for the generosity and support of our parent community. These contributions help us provide opportunities and experiences that enhance learning and enjoyment of school life. All contributions are entirely voluntary, and we appreciate any support families are able to offer.

Voluntary contributions can be made through the Arbor Parent app or portal via the **School Shop** section.

Support and Help Throughout Year 7

Starting secondary school is an exciting milestone, and we are committed to ensuring that every child feels supported, challenged and valued during their time at HGS.

We believe that the strongest outcomes are achieved when school and homework together in partnership. Open communication is incredibly important to us, and we encourage parents and carers to contact us whenever they have a question, concern or simply wish to share something that will help us support their child.

Every year group has a dedicated Year Manager who is the first point of contact for pastoral matters. For Year 7, this is Mr Thurley, who can be contacted by email at ThurleyA@hgs.rklt.co.uk or by telephone on 01423 531127 ext. 7054.

We have been very pleased with the impression Year 7 have made during transition events and look forward to watching them grow in confidence, develop new friendships and make the most of the many opportunities available at HGS. Working together, we can ensure that every child makes a positive start and enjoys a successful first year with us.

If you require any further information or support throughout the year, please do not hesitate to contact the school on 01423 531127 or via mail@hgs.rklt.co.uk.

Yours sincerely



Mrs C Jackson
Director of Lower School

Key Dates for the 2026/27 Academic Year

Date	Event
Thursday 10 September 2026	Year 7 School Photos
Thursday 24 September 2026	Year 7 Preparing for Success Evening for Parents 6.30pm to 7.30pm Please click here to book a place
Tuesday 29 September 2026	First PTA meeting 6.30pm
Wednesday 14 October 2026	Year 7 Tutor Consultation Afternoon 2pm in school
Tuesday 27 April 2027	Year 7 Consultation evening 4-8pm virtual event
w/c 7 and 14 June 2027	Years 7 to 9 Summer CATs
Wednesday 30 June 2027	Year 7 Sports Day
Wednesday 7 July 2027	Year 7 End of Year Trip
School Term dates can be found here: Term Dates	