



11 September 2026

Dear Parents/Carers of all students in Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11)

Key Stage 4 (KS4) Welcome and Key Information

It is a pleasure to welcome Year 10 and 11 students back to school after the summer break. The start of the new academic year presents an opportunity for students to set themselves personal goals and to establish effective habits. Through this letter we hope to provide you with essential information about the arrangements for Year 10 and 11, and to address any queries that you may have.

Key Dates

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 have high expectations of all of our students. Full details of the routines and expectations can be found in the [student handbook](#). We expect high levels of attendance throughout the year and will contact you if there is an unexplained absence. We monitor attendance trends closely and will put supportive measures in place if necessary. Routine medical and dental appointments should be made outside school time where possible. If this is not possible, please minimise their absence, ensuring they are present at morning registration and are back in school for noon.

The NHS have given [guidance](#) if you are unsure whether to send your child to school, please [click here](#) for instructions how to report any absence. We know that regular attendance makes a difference. One thing that does impact our attendance data is term time holidays, particularly around the ski season and in the summer term. Given the importance of KS4 and GCSE examinations, we politely ask you to support the school by not taking your child out of school for holidays, unless in exceptional circumstance.

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.

We continue to focus on our [Learner Habits](#), which are habits that learners need to exhibit to ensure they build a strong work ethic and are able to achieve the very best outcomes for themselves. Students will be awarded positive behaviour points on [Class Charts](#) if these habits are displayed and there are rewards for reaching milestones in the number of positive points. If students are not meeting expectations in the classroom or the wider school, students will receive a negative behaviour point. We will be monitoring these closely and making contact with you.

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Headteacher: Mr N Renton, Associate Headteacher: Mrs K Moat



Learning Trust Alliance Teacher Training Teaching School Hub

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As part of our HGS values, we have high expectations of students being respectful to themselves, to others and to the environment. All students have signed a [Respect Pledge](#) at the start of the year, agreeing to follow respectful behaviours. There will also be assemblies and Big Picture lessons supporting students on how best to achieve this throughout the year.

Students are not allowed to use mobile phones in school. If students do so, the phones are confiscated and returned to students at the end of the school day. In the rare circumstances where a student repeats this action, we will make contact with you to arrange collection. **Mobile phones must be turned off and placed in their bag.**

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](#)

Uniform

Uniform is an important part of our school's identity and culture. It sends a clear message to everyone that our students feel pride in their school and reinforces who we are as a community. As a school we receive regular feedback from the public about how smart our uniform is, and we take great pride in this.

The expectation is for uniform to be worn correctly throughout the school day and would ask parents to support in helping your child to meet these expectations.

Shirts: White shirt, worn fully tucked in and with the top button done up.

Skirts: Unmodified with HGS logo and waistband visible at all times.

Ties: The correct year group tie is to be worn and is to be tied so that it is touching the waistband of the trousers/skirt.

Blazers/Jumpers: A school jumper is optional; the blazer must be worn unless the warm weather uniform has been put in place.

Socks: Black socks with trousers, black tights need to be worn with a skirt and are not to be sheer.

Shoes: Black, flat shoes. No boots, canvas shoes or trainers, this includes branded sports shoes including (but not limited to) Nike, Adidas, Reebok, Converse, and Vans. If there is a medical reason that footwear needs to be different, please contact the school to make us aware and if you require any guidance on what acceptable options are.

Coat: Plain, no denim, leather, quilted shirts or hoodies including the HGS PE hoodie.

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/body piercings: Students are allowed to wear one ring per hand, two studs per ear, and a plain watch. We do not permit any other jewellery or facial piercings. Students will be asked to remove the extra jewellery, and it will be confiscated, the students may collect it at the end of the day from reflection.

Please label all of your child's uniform including their coat to help us to ensure any lost property is returned to its rightful owner.

Work Ethic and Home Learning

At KS4, there is a greater emphasis on self-guided learning in preparation for their GCSEs at the end of Year 11. Students are encouraged throughout to be independent and reflective learners in order to secure the best possible outcomes. All our students are supported by our subject specialist teaching staff and all the teaching resources can be found in Showbie. Similarly, all home learning tasks assigned to students will be available via their Arbor app on their iPads. Parents will also have access to this information via the [Parent Arbor app](#).

Frequency and Duration of Home Learning

Subject	KS4 – Frequency	KS4 - Duration
English	2 per week	40 minutes per task
Maths	2 per week	
Science	1 per week per subject	
RS	1 per fortnight	
All GCSE options	1 per week	45 minutes per task
In addition, students should continually review and revisit prior learning.		

We focus on work ethic at KS4. We want to support and encourage students to develop resilience and a sound work ethic, enabling them to achieve in all areas of school life. This is particularly pertinent in KS4 and will help students take their next steps after Year 11.

Regular Reading and Regular Maths

Students are expected to use Sparx Reader and Sparx Maths each week. We will send you a separate communication about this next week.

Support and Help Through KS4

We welcome feedback and want to form an effective partnership between home and school. It is crucial, therefore, that we have open and honest communication. Each year group has an allocated year manager who should always be your first point of contact.

Year 10 is Mr Inglis InglisT@hgs.rklt.co.uk Tel: 01423 531127 ext: 7046

Year 11 is Mr Liley LileyJ@hgs.rklt.co.uk Tel: 01423 531127 ext: 6913

Year 10 and 11 students also have access to the Harrogate Cluster Services for emotional support. They should see their year manager in the first instance if they feel they may need this support.

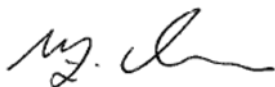
We are also holding some information evenings for parents and carers to provide further information about how you can support your child over this academic year. Please see the key dates below for timings and how to book.

- Monday 21 September – Year 10 GCSE option subjects information evening (invite only)
- Tuesday 22 September – Year 11 Supporting Success Evening ([click here](#) to book a place)
- Tuesday 29 September – Year 10 Supporting Success Evening ([click here](#) to book a place)

As a reminder, please be aware the Sixth Form Open Evening for Year 11 takes place on Wednesday 21 October 2026. This is an important event where we begin preparing students for their application to the Sixth Form at Harrogate Grammar School.

We look forward to working with you and your child in a way that best serves their interests and effectively shapes their future. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you require any information throughout the year via 01423 531127 or mail@hgs.rklt.co.uk.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Mason', written in a cursive style.

Mr N Mason

Assistant Headteacher, Director of Upper School

Key Dates for 2026/2027

Date	Event	Y10	Y11
Thursday 10 September 2026	Year 10 School Photos	✓	
Monday 21 September 2026 6.30pm	GCSE option subjects information evening For specific coursework subjects only – you will receive an invitation email	✓	X
Tuesday 22 September 2026 6.30pm	Year 11 Supporting success evening Please click here to book a place	X	✓
Tuesday 29 September 2026 6.30pm	Year 10 Supporting success evening Please click here to book a place	✓	X
Wednesday 21 October 2026	Sixth Form Open Evening	X	✓
w/c 9 and 16 November 2026	Year 11 Mock exams	X	✓
w/c 23 November 2026	Year 11 Mocks (Art, Design and PE)	X	✓
Tuesday 8 December 2026	Year 11 Parent Consultation evening (in person)	X	✓
w/c 11 January 2027	Year 11 Mock speaking exams	X	✓
Tuesday 12 January 2027	Year 10 Parent Consultation evening (online)	✓	X
Wednesday 13 January 2027	Taster Day in Sixth Form	X	✓
Saturday 16 January 2027	Sixth Form Open Afternoon	X	✓
w/c 1 February 2027	Hospitality and Catering Practical	X	✓
w/c 15 February 2027	GCSE Food and Nutrition Assessments	X	✓
w/c 22 February and 1 March 2027	Year 11 Mock exams	X	✓
w/c 8 March 2027	GCSE Geography fieldwork trips	✓	X
w/c 15 March 2027	GCSE Drama practical	X	✓
w/c 22 March 2027	Easter revision sessions	X	✓
w/c 12 April 2027	GCSE Art/Photography exams	X	✓
w/c 12 & 19 April 2027	GCSE MFL speaking exams	X	✓
w/c 19 April 2027	GCSE Drama practical exams		
Friday 28 May 2027	GCSE study leave begins	X	✓
w/c 14 & 21 June 2027	Year 10 End of Year CATs	✓	X
Thursday 24 June 2027	Sixth Form Induction	X	✓
Friday 25 June 2027	Year 11 Prom	X	✓
Wednesday 30 June 2027	Year 10 End of Year Trip	✓	X
Wednesday 7 July 2027	Year 10 Sports Day	✓	X
School Term dates can be found here: Term Dates			