



September 2016

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Dear Parents/Carers

I would first like to welcome you all back to the new year at Brakenhale. I am delighted to be starting this academic year as Head of Year 8. As a Year 7 tutor and maths teacher last year, it is absolutely lovely to now be in a position where I can work with all students in this year group and support them for the rest of their time at Brakenhale.

The students have now completed their first year of secondary school and should be ready to take on new challenges and be evermore prepared to work hard towards their GCSEs. It is really important that they get the Key Stage 3 years right so they enter their GCSE years with the correct foundation of knowledge, skills and mind-set that will help them through their exams and beyond.

All students in the year have been told of the high expectations we have of them with regard to standards of behaviour, uniform, attitude in lessons and tools for learning. It is vital that every child abides by these expectations. As a year team we will work with you to support your child's learning to enable them to make the best progress possible. We will monitor the performance of all students and identify those who need intervention and support if they fall below the expected levels of progress. This will be done both on a pastoral and curriculum level and you shall be informed of any support we choose to put in place for your child.

The school planners include information on uniform, tools for learning and much more. Please refer to these pages to ensure your child is fully prepared and equipped for the school day. Students will also need to record homework set in planners (as well as teachers making it visible on Show My Homework). Please check the planner with your child each evening to make sure they are staying organised and on top of their homework.

Equipment your child should have for each lesson is as follows:

- Brakenhale School Bag and any exercise books they have taken home
- Large pencil case, clear if possible
- Three black or blue pens
- HB pencil
- Pencil Sharpener
- 30cm Ruler
- Protractor
- Highlighter pen
- Scientific calculator
- School Planner
- Coloured pens/pencils
- Glue stick



Wednesday will be our planner signing day in tutor time, so please ensure that at the end of each week, you sign your child's planner ready for this to be checked by tutors the following Wednesday. We will also have a weekly tutor time timetable with scheduled assemblies, literacy and numeracy activities, equipment checks, event planning and working on their PiXL Edge accounts that were started last year. I will email out every Friday with a plan for the next week so you are aware of what we are doing and can help your child prepare for the coming week. There will also be scheduled fortnightly PSHE sessions in which students will be encouraged to discuss topical issues in their tutor groups.

Students will also have the opportunity to further their learning outside of the classroom with a number of extra-curricular clubs. This term, students will be able to take part in football, rugby, netball, cross country, badminton, basketball and trampolining. More information on these opportunities will be on tutor room displays.

Students will be set regular homework from all subjects. Show My Homework has been updated and homework should soon be visible on this. Please remember to still check your child's planner. If there is a problem with the homework, please write a note to your child's teacher in their planner for them to show the next day. Homework should have an impact on learning a new topic or developing a skill, so it is important that it is taken seriously and completed to the best of your child's ability. There is a homework club which runs until 4pm in the LRC every day. This is open to all students should they need help with their homework, or a quiet place to sit and get it completed before they go home.

Attendance in Year 7 was good however the new target for attendance is 95%. We will hold regular tutor group attendance competitions and we will encourage students to be in every day. If an absence is absolutely unavoidable, please make sure you contact the school attendance officer. Poor attendance can result in under-achieving and not making required academic progress. If a student misses 10 days within the academic year, this will put them at below 95% attendance. As a school, we would also like to request that medical appointments, where possible, be arranged outside of the school day.

Mrs Terri Pike is our school attendance officer and she can be contacted at:

Phone: 01344 465050 email: attendance@brakenhale.co.uk

Punctuality is as important as attendance. I would like to remind you that tutor time begins at 8.40am every day. Please make sure your child is in school by 8.30am so there are no reasons as to why they are late. This will help them be in the right mind-set for tutor time and will help set them up nicely for the day ahead.

Your child's form tutor should be the first point of contact for you if you wish to speak to the school. You will receive a letter from the tutor whereby they introduce themselves to you and also give you their email addresses. Below are a list of the tutors and other staff linked to Year 8.

B – Mrs Gardener – ggardener@brakenhale.co.uk & Miss Toofany ltoofany@brakenhale.co.uk

R – Miss O'Brien – dobrien@brakenhale.co.uk

A – Mrs Chantry – ichantry@brakenhale.co.uk

K – Miss Langille – clangille@brakenhale.co.uk

E – Mrs Whybra – jwhybra@brakenhale.co.uk

N – Mr Marshall – jmarshall@brakenhale.co.uk

H – Miss Garrido – lgarrido@brakenhale.co.uk

Miss O'Brien is also the Assistant Head of Year 8

Mrs Powell (Assistant Headteacher) is the SLT member attached to Year 8 – gpowell@brakenhale.co.uk



Below you will find a number of key dates for your diaries but please monitor the school calendar for updates, changes or new events.

- Tuesday 20th September: Year 6 open evening, to allow staff to set up for this event the school will be closed for students from 13.05.
- Students will return then on Wednesday 21st September at a later start time of 09.40.
- Thursday 20th October – Year 8 school disco (details to be confirmed)
- Monday 24th October: Friday 28th October: Half Term
- Thursday 24th November: 17.00-22.00 PTA Christmas Market
- Wednesday 7th December: 19.00 – The Brakenhale Dance Show
- Thursday 8th December – Year 8 Parents Evening
- Thursday 15th December: 19.00 – The Brakenhale Music show
- Friday 16th December – School closes for the Christmas holidays at 12.05
- Wednesday 4th January: Students return to school, starting at 08.40

As mentioned at the start of this letter, I am delighted to be Head of Year for this fantastic group of students. Ultimately, they are here to learn and develop as young people and it is my job to support them in whatever way I can. I look forward to building really strong partnerships with you as parents/carers and helping these young people achieve their full potential.

Please do small things at home like ensuring your child eats a healthy breakfast, lunch and dinner, gets enough sleep each night, gets a good balance of studying and relaxation time in the evening and has their bag fully packed for the next day.

I am always happy to hear from you so please do let me know of any questions, issues, concerns or comments you have throughout the year.

Yours faithfully

Mr D Hicks
Head of Year 8
dhicks@brakenhale.co.uk
Phone 01344 465008