

WEEK 38 - Friday 16 July 2021

It is at this time of the school year that I take time to reflect on the performance of my year group in both behaviour and attendance. Having had such a difficult year in terms of COVID 19 I am extremely proud of how the vast majority of year 8 students have coped. Behaviour of year 8 students around the school has been excellent. Students have shown great maturity and resilience, and have also made excellent progress in their subjects despite the hurdles we have all faced.

Attendance has been something that, as I reflect, I believe we as a year group can and have to improve upon for next year. There have been many circumstances for students missing school this year that would pre-covid never have impacted the way they have. However, we must approach the new school year in September with a determination to improve our attendance to ensure that our students, your children, have the best possible chance of achieving extraordinary outcomes in their learning.

Having a 100% attendance to all lessons will guarantee that they will make significant strides at achieving their goals and true potential. It is at this point that I ask you as parents for your continued support in this quest. Below I have listed some ways in which you can help us to ensure your child reaches their full potential: Establish a good routine in the mornings and evenings so your child is prepared for the school day ahead

1. Ensure that the school uniform policy is applied. If you have any concerns regarding this please contact the school for clarification
2. Ensure your child arrives at school on time – not late
3. Arrange dental and medical appointments outside school hours when possible
4. Always inform the school if your child is absent due to illness – this should be followed up with a written note when your child returns to school
5. Take truancy seriously – if your child is not attending school as you expect they may be putting themselves at risk – Who are they with? What are they doing?
6. Take family holidays outside term time
7. Talk to your child about school and take an interest in their school work (including homework). Attend parent evenings and school events
8. Praise and reward your child's achievements at school
9. Support school staff in their efforts to control difficult or challenging behaviour
10. Discuss any problems or difficulties with the school – staff are there to help and will be supportive.
11. As we approach the final week of this school year I want to thank all the parents for your continued support, and to wish you all a happy summer holiday with your family and friends.
12. If you have any concerns or questions regarding the new uniform policy please contact me at [hoyyear8@hessleacademy.com](mailto:hoyyear8@hessleacademy.com)

Mr Leckenby

Head of Year 8

WEEK 36 - Friday 2 July 2021

A uniform is an important piece of someone's wardrobe. Whether for school or work, wearing a uniform sets you, your employees or your students apart from the other in their daily setting. Yet the importance of uniform wearing goes beyond just setting people apart. There are many advantages of wearing uniforms at work and at school. Uniforms have been part of life since the days of the Roman Empire, and continue in importance today. In the school setting, uniforms on both students and certain staff provide a sense of unity. For students, adding a uniform reduces costs for parents, who no longer must invest in an entire wardrobe of school clothes. It also puts all students on a level playing field. Students with more money do not stand out because of their clothing. Reducing the peer pressure to dress a certain way allows students to focus more strongly on their studies. When everyone wears the same thing, students have one less thing to tease others about. Uniforms also create a sense of belonging and identity for students, connecting them to their school and their classmates.

School uniforms also teach students how to dress well. After finishing their school careers and they head to the work world and have to wear collared shirts and long trousers, they will be comfortable doing so. The importance of school uniform wearing extends beyond the classroom. School uniforms may help to break barriers between social classes. Since students are wearing the same outfits there is no obvious distinction to be made between them.

School uniforms may save students time when getting ready in the mornings. Since they know what they have to wear there isn't much thought or effort that has to go into getting ready for school each day. Reducing the time spent on choosing what to wear and actually getting ready can be spent sleeping more or enjoying breakfast at their own pace. School uniforms may prevent distractions in the classroom. By wearing the same pieces of clothing students tend to be more focused as it automatically eliminates the need to find popularity in fashion choices.

I hope as parents you have had the opportunity to read the recent correspondence that Mr Groak sent out to all parents regarding the changes to next year's uniform policy. I think you will agree that the main priority is having a consistent approach to making sure that we as a school have a positive attitude towards our fantastic uniform. It is imperative that you as parents ensure that your children are kitted out in clothing and footwear that is acceptable in relation to this new policy. If we ensure that we get this right from the absolute start of the next calendar school year I am confident this will further improve the students' experience at Hessle High School.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding the new uniform policy please contact me at [hoyyear8@hessleacademy.com](mailto:hoyyear8@hessleacademy.com)

Mr Leckenby

Head of Year 8

Mrs Newman

Assistant Head of Year 8

WEEK 34 - Friday 18 June 2021

If there's one thing that's inevitable in life, it's change. Sometimes those changes are small, but every once in a while they're major – think marriage, loss of a loved one, a new job, having children, going back to school, or buying a house. These transitions often uproot our world, sometimes in ways we aren't prepared for or don't want to deal with. My own life has very recently had a massive change having recently welcomed the birth of my son Albie. I can tell you all that this has completely changed my daily routine and raised my stress and anxiety to a whole new level.

I have found myself questioning my ability to deal with such a significant life change. Am I up to the job? Will I make mistakes? How can I ensure that I am a perfect dad? I am slowly realising that there is no perfect answer or guarantee to any of these questions. And I am now realising that that is the beauty of having significant life changes. I am now on a new journey which is challenging, exciting, scary and above all else, time consuming. It is now my responsibility to take care of myself to ensure that I am able to take care of others who rely on me.

Having spent many hours in thought, I came to the realisation that our students have to deal with many changes in their school lives, almost on a daily basis. It could be major life changes at home, or something smaller like a seating plan change in a classroom. Are we as parents, guardians and educators providing our young people with the right skills, knowledge and support to deal with change. What can we do to support our students in school to allow them the freedom and comfort to achieve extraordinary outcomes in their time at Hesse High School?

We may not all be planners, but as we work through a major life shift, it's a good idea to become more organized. Rather than saying, 'I'll take it as it comes. We'll see how we'll handle this,' which often increases the amount of uncertainty upfront, make the intentions more specific. Make a plan, sit and talk to your children and help them understand these changes. By creating a plan, by talking through the changes, we all start to feel more positive about the outcomes, which in turn relieves some stress and anxiety associated with the change.

As I move into week 2 of being a dad all over again, my ability to plan, be more organised and manage my time has already improved massively. Time is precious, and is also something that we can never get back. How we use our time effectively is super important and will be the platform for a happy well balanced lifestyle. I feel strongly that we as adults must support our young people in developing these skills, which in turn will further develop the resilience of our young people to deal with further changes in their lives as they continue to grow.

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Mr Leckenby

Head of Year 8

Mrs Newman

Assistant Head of Year 8

WEEK 32 - Friday 28 May 2021

As we approach the end of the half term I wanted to highlight some of the many successes that Year 8 have achieved over the last 7 weeks. We are all very aware of the challenges that the Covid-19 pandemic has created in all walks of life, but we should never underestimate just how much change our students have had to deal with since their return to school. In previous blogs I have talked about the importance of resilience. I am extremely proud to celebrate how fantastically brilliant the year 8's have coped with all of the "new rules" that we as a school have had to implement to ensure the safety and well being of everybody in our school community.

Face masks have now become the norm in and around the school building. We as a school have always ensured we are clear and concise with our policy regarding face masks. I want to thank all parents for supporting us with this issue and making sure your children understood the reasoning behind it and the importance of wearing their masks in the school building. This is a selfless act that is in place to protect others. I'm very proud to say that our year 8 students have acted responsibly and with kindness at all times when face masks are required.

When in their year 8 bubbles and in the structured seating plan in their teaching home groups our students have shown an immense amount of resilience and maturity at dealing with what I know is a very challenging situation at times. To be in a room for 5 hours a day, sitting in the same seat can at times be uncomfortable and tiresome, but the year 8 students have shown great maturity, the ability to deal with adversity at times, and being respectful to adults and teaching staff at all times. We should all be very proud of the fact that our students continue to make progress and be successful despite these hurdles that have been placed upon them due to the pandemic.

As we move into our final half term of this school year, it must never be forgotten what our students have had to deal with over the last school year, both within the school day and also when outside of school. Lockdowns prevented us from seeing family members, from mixing with our friends, from taking part in sports events and missing out on many other hugely important activities that have a massive impact on our well being and mental health. As we move towards some normality, as rules and restrictions are lifted I hope that as families we encourage our young people to get back out there, get back involved in all of the activities they love to do, mix with their friends and family and get back to enjoying life and all the amazing things that we so desperately miss. I can finally see the light at what has at times been a very dark tunnel...but from adversity comes great opportunity which I am confident that the year 8 students are going to grasp with both hands.

If you have any concerns or questions please contact me at [hoyy8@hessleacademy.com](mailto:hoyy8@hessleacademy.com)

Mr Leckenby

Head of Year 8

Mrs Newman

Assistant Head of Year 8

WEEK 30 - Friday 14 May 2021

“The importance of wisdom”

I completed my formal education some years ago. Thinking about the 13 years I spent in school, I realise that I would have had a more fulfilling and successful time if I'd been wiser. It takes time to acquire wisdom. It is also extremely important to share our wisdom with our children to help them develop and grow as human beings. Below is my top 10 list of words of wisdom that I wish I had heard when I was that 12 year old student many years ago.

1. Don't take your parents for granted. Your parents may nag you, and you may feel as if they don't understand you. But they love you unconditionally, so appreciate them as often as you can.
2. Getting a bad grade isn't the end of the world. In a few years, you won't even remember most of your grades. If you get a bad grade, learn from your mistakes and prepare better for the next exam.
3. Use the Internet as a tool for education more than entertainment. The Internet can keep you entertained for hours. Help your children use the Internet to support their learning. Understand the bias that is often associated with some websites. BEWARE of social Media!
4. Stress is a fact of life, but it should never become a way of life. This means that it's normal to feel stressed and tired once in a while. But if you feel stressed and tired almost every day, then you need to reevaluate your lifestyle to see what you ought to be doing differently.
5. Make sleep a priority. Research has proven that sleep is essential for [health and brain function](#). Make it a priority to get [eight hours of sleep a night](#), and you'll be a happier and better student.
6. Ask for help when you need it. There's no shame in asking for help. If you can't find the answer on Google, don't hesitate to ask your teachers or parents. They'll be more than willing to assist you.
7. Learn to embrace challenges rather than avoid them. Choose to see challenges as fun opportunities to learn. Even if you can't overcome the challenge, you would have still grown as a person.
8. Don't blame others. I used to blame my teachers, parents and peers for almost every problem I faced. Don't be like me. The sooner you stop blaming others, the sooner you'll learn to take full responsibility for your life.
9. Exercise regularly. Exercise is [good for your body and your brain](#). So if you think you don't have time to exercise, you actually don't have time *not* to exercise. Exercise will make you a healthier and more effective student.
10. Attitude matters more than intelligence or talent. As Zig Ziglar once said, “Your attitude, not your aptitude, will determine your altitude.” Intelligence and talent play a part in how

successful you become as a student and in life. But attitude matters much more. Start cultivating a positive and resilient attitude today.

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Mr Leckenby

Head of Year 8

Mrs Newman

Assistant Head of Year 8

WEEK 28 - Friday 30 April 2021

I'm writing this week's blog after watching a fantastic game of rugby league in which Hull FC lost their first game of the season. It made me think about how we as adults and how our students deal with losing. Is losing always a negative experience or is it in fact a massively significant experience that can shape us as individuals in the long term?

The feeling of losing and moving on are particular skills children need to develop in order to deal with negative experiences in life when they become older. It might not seem fair to children that one student can do something faster or better than they can, but parents can teach their children that everyone has different talents and that it is impossible to be good at everything. Research has shown that losing games is helpful for children because it teaches them to show empathy and cope with the experience of losing. Children who do not experience losing can grow up to be anxious, because they start seeing the possibility of not winning as some form of harm and they cannot deal with situations that do not go their way.

Losing a game is the only way for children to learn from their mistakes and think about strategies to improve. When children improve their skills and win the next time, they do not only get better at the sport or game, but they also learn something new. Learning new things increase children's confidence and their self-belief and they start to be proud of their abilities.

When children lose, they also learn to identify themselves with others who have lost. This experience of coping with loss will allow children to show empathy towards other children in the same position. A child that has never lost a game will not realize that everyone struggles in life.

Finally, losing shows children that they need to work hard in order to have success, because good things are not just handed over to them. These situations also help children to lose with grace in front of others and to be seen as a fair loser.

And so...having watched Hull FC lose their first game of the season in a hard fought, tough, competitive contest...maybe it could prove to be the best result of the season so far because of the lessons learnt!

If you have any concerns or questions please contact me at [hoy8@hessleacademy.com](mailto:hoy8@hessleacademy.com)

Mr Leckenby

Head of Year 8

Mrs Newman

Assistant Head of Year 8

WEEK 26 - Friday 16 April 2021

## **The importance of Resilience**

Within our school community we are very aware of the challenges that our students are facing. Many of us spend a great deal of effort trying to avoid change, but it will inevitably catch up to you. Whether it's starting a new job, returning to school after a long period of absence, the end of a relationship, or a loss of a loved one...being able to cope with change and being resilient is a personal attribute that we all must continue to work on.

We experience changes in work and relationships, changes in our physical and mental health, and new events in our local communities and our world. Sometimes we know a change will occur, while other times it comes suddenly and unexpectedly. Maybe it's a disappointment, or maybe it's a wonderful surprise. If you can learn to cope with change, you'll lower your risk for anxiety. Your relationships will flourish, and your body will feel healthier. But if you can't cope with change, only a minor amount of stress can make you feel overwhelmed by life. You might also struggle to set and meet the goals you have for yourself. Being able to cope with change is called resilience.

Sometimes it's all too easy to become fixated on events over which we have no power, or people who might never change their actions or attitude. But rather than focus on blaming others or moving the unmovable, resilient people set their sights on what they can control. To evaluate your level of control over a situation, you can ask yourself, "What can I take responsibility for in this situation?". Some of our young people find this a difficult action to take. They are still developing the confidence and the experience to make more informed decisions. I see this as our opportunity, both us as educators and you as parents, to always encourage and develop the resilience of all our young people. When you look for opportunities to empower yourself and work towards change that is possible, you're less likely to feel stuck in difficult situations. You can generate more positive thoughts if you take the time to remind yourself about transitions and challenges you successfully navigated in the past. Make a list of ways you've been resilient in your life, and consider what traits and actions might be able to see you through the current challenge. By focusing on your strengths instead of your weaknesses, you will feel more empowered to meet what lies ahead.

The most resilient people see change as an opportunity rather than a monster to fear. Transitions in life allow you to consider where your priorities lie. How do you really want to spend your time at school? What's really important to you? Where do you see yourself wasting your time and energy? What career pathways do you want to pursue? With a clear sense of your goals and values, you will find your mind and body can be much more resilient when it comes to the stressors of change.

Above all, prioritizing your health in life's transitions means not being afraid to ask for help when you need it. Humans are social creatures by nature, so you weren't built to withstand every sudden event in life without the support of others. Talk to family and friends who are experiencing similar changes, or consider engaging with the support offered at school. At Hessle High we pride ourselves in supporting all families, all stakeholders in our community. My overriding message to you is to always ask for help, and communicate with us at all times to ensure your children are happy and engaged in their learning.

If you require any support please contact me via email: [hoyyear8@hessleacademy.com](mailto:hoyyear8@hessleacademy.com)



Mr Leckenby

Head of Year 8

Mrs Newman

Assistant Head of Year 8

Week 24 - Friday 19 March 2021

**The success of a school or college is based heavily on the quality of its relationships. That is essentially what a school is all about – relationships. I strongly believe that learning can only really flourish alongside the fundamental aim of developing positive relationships. Without excellent relationships learning will always be compromised.**

But it's not just about the relationships between students and teachers that count, if we forget about parents then we miss out an important part of the jigsaw. The most successful relationships are built on positive communication. Research shows that for every negative comment there were five positive ones exchanged in a happy relationship. So, take those opportunities to speak to your children and praise them for the many successes that they achieve throughout the week. These don't have to be huge milestones like achieving high grades in assessments, it could be as simple as praising your child for attending school every day with a smile on their face, for preparing their uniform and school bag independently, or for completing homework tasks without moaning (I have yet to be able to do the this with my own children regarding homework!!)

Most people are not mind readers. This means if we want or need something from someone else, we have to be clear and let them know what it is we are asking for. Assertiveness is not about being aggressive, it's about communicating clearly and explaining what you are happy with doing or not doing. We as adults should always have the ability to listen to both sides of any story and come up with solutions that best support our students, your children.

There's an old adage that goes, "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle." It reminds us that life can be really harsh and unfair sometimes and we never really know what is going on for someone at any point in their life. Never more so has this been so relevant than in these covid pandemic times. So, when your child's behaviour is less than ideal, and I contact you to inform you of this behaviour, be sure to understand that my contact is always, without question, from a supportive measure. If we as adults work together, to build positive relationships and positive communication channels, the biggest beneficiaries of this will be our students. By supporting each other we will provide a safe learning environment, a fair learning environment and a structured learning environment that will ensure that your child is able to mature and develop into a positive member of our school community

If you have any concerns or questions please contact me at [hoyyear8@hessleacademy.com](mailto:hoyyear8@hessleacademy.com)

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