



2nd October 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

September is one of the most exciting times in an academic year and this year has proved to be no different. Our students have engaged brilliantly with our start of year message of be here, be present and be together. We have been so proud of how our students are, taking part in all the opportunities on offer and supporting each other to work together as a community. In the letter below we will summarise some of the highlights for the year so far and some key dates and events that are to come.

It was our pleasure to welcome over 200 families into the school on our open evening. It is always a highlight to see how the whole school community pulls together to show the best of what Henley Bank has to offer. We are particularly grateful for all of the students who gave up their time to support with the event, whether they were tour guides or supporting with subjects.

Our Year 11 students have fully engaged with our program of support that we provide in the crucial GCSE year. Period 6 and period 0 have become an embedded part of our Year 11s school day and we are already seeing the benefits of the extra 80 minutes of teaching our Year 11 students receive every single day. Students have also been taking ownership of their learning by attending our Working Lunch sessions and our Champion's Hour, which runs between 4pm and 5pm Monday to Thursday. Year 11 is an incredibly fast paced year, and our students are already working on PSAs in their vocational subjects which will contribute 30% towards their final grades, preparing for their NEAs in Hospitality and Catering and for their first set of pre public examinations that will take place in November. Please look out for further communications from Mr Watson, our raising standards lead, for key updates about our Year 11 students.

Our outdoor education program has started with a bang! A group of Year 11 students undertook the Duke of Edinburgh silver expedition. This involved a challenging trek and 2 nights camping in the Cotswolds. This was made even more challenging by the stormy weather on the expedition weekend. The students showed plenty of the Henley Bank values, particularly determination to ensure that they all finished the expedition. A massive well done to the students on completing this challenging trek and a huge thanks you to Mr Haseler, Mr Gailey and Mr Halliday for supporting the students during the weekend. Mr Haseler, our Duke of Edinburgh lead, has also launched the Bronze award to our Year 9 students and we want as many students as possible to take this opportunity. The Duke of Edinburgh award teaches students a wide variety of knowledge and skills and is well regarded by employers and higher education. A letter will be sent out soon with further information.

Stephen Derry, Headteacher

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After much preparation we are incredibly excited to launch our program of co-curricular clubs this week. Our clubs offer is broader than ever with clubs that include debating, chess, free drawing, rugby (girls and boys), school production and many more. We are also able to offer subject specific homework clubs so students can get support in English, maths and science. The sign up so far has been excellent but there are still places left in some of the clubs, so if your child is yet to sign up, please encourage them to do so.

We have taken great pride in seeing our sixth formers fully integrate into Henley Bank life. It is wonderful to see them so engaged in their lessons and fully committed to the private study work that they are being set by their teachers. We are also developing the wider offer that we give to our sixth form students, this week will see the start of our volunteering program where our sixth formers will support in other parts of the school. We are keen to promote the importance of 'giving back' to our sixth formers and how this can benefit them as well as the wider school. Our sixth formers will be going on their second visit of the academic year on Friday 4th October to explore careers at Ashton Gate in Bristol. This is part of our commitment to ensure that our students are well informed and prepared to go onto the best universities and careers in the world. As a reminder if you would like to find more about our Sixth Form please go to the Sixth form page of the website or join us at our Sixth Form Open Evening on Thursday 28th November at 6pm.

We would finally like to remind all parents of our three key priorities for our students this year. We have asked students to **be here** every day on time, **be present** take opportunities and give their all to everything that they do both inside and outside the classroom and finally **be together**, be kind to all and celebrate being part of a community.

Yours faithfully

Ms Bradbury and Mr Dakin
Co Heads of School

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