



JHU/THO

23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

An eight-week Autumn Term 1 means that we will have completed the longest term of the year by this half term holiday with Summer Term 1 only having 4 weeks! Everyone has been working hard to start the new academic year with gusto. It has been a pleasure to show prospective Year 7 and Year 12 families around, who have reported how impressed with our calm behaviour for learning ethos in classrooms they were and how pleased they were to see challenging academic content in classrooms across the age ranges on their visits. I have been impressed with the number of students with zero negative behaviour points on Classcharts and will continue to award positive points throughout the year to those who show the value of excellence.

### School developments

In 2014 Colton Hills Community School had only 700 students on roll and this September we welcomed over 1100 students. The school has grown by 10% in the past 12 months due to increased popularity and success, therefore we now have waiting lists in several year groups. As you are aware we have created additional classrooms, refurbished a science laboratory, enhanced our sixth form centre and opened our canteen extension in the past 12 months to support these increasing numbers. We are now at an exciting point in Colton Hills Community School as we start to create our vision for 2030. As we continue to expand and further enhance our academic and character offer for all students, I would like to extend an invitation to parents and carers who would like to hear more about school development plans. Last year we ran 3 Headteacher surgeries in my first year with different themes in a drop in and chat setting and this year I have selected some new themes with different members of the leadership team attending.

### Community Forums

Date	Time	Topic
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> November	5.00 pm	Colton Hills Community School: Our vision for 2030
Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> February	5.00 pm	Inclusive education for our diverse community: Provision for students of all abilities
Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April	5.00 pm	A respectful school: Our school behaviour for learning provision

Community forums will enable us to have a quick presentation and discussion so that we are listening to our wider community before key decisions are taken by the leadership when we craft the school development plan with governors for 2025-2030. We look forward to seeing you at these in-person forum events and to hear what you would like us to develop further at Colton Hills.



## Attendance

Attendance has been on the national agenda before and since our new Secretary of State for Education started in post in the summer. Every moment of learning time counts, which is the government's new motto. At Colton Hills we go straight into lesson 1 at 08:30, therefore it's important that students are on site by 08:20 giving them plenty of time to be ready for the lesson to begin. Our school site is open to students from 08:00 when they can access the canteen for breakfast and the corridors are open from 08:20 to get ready for lesson 1. If a student is late to lesson 1 by 5 minutes every day, they will lose over 3 school days of learning in just one academic year!

We have seen an increase in requests for holidays during term time, however unfortunately, we are not in a position to authorise this, and this then leads to the national fining system being initiated. As you may be aware, the government have implemented a new fines system. Five unauthorised days can lead to you being fined. If students arrive after 9am this counts as half a day. As a school we must follow national legislation and research shows us that every day really does impact on those final GCSE, A level and BTEC grades. We want to offer support to ensure this does not happen to you and therefore if your child is absent, you will be contacted by the attendance team.

We know winter bugs have arrived, and tiredness is setting in as the end of term draws closer. Please support your child to ensure they are in school and use self-care strategies if required: early nights and medication given under your guidance if they are feeling unwell. Thank you for your support in advance and for working with us to ensure your child is successful.

## Uniform

As the weather gets colder, we have started to notice an increase in hoodies and sweatshirts. Blazers are compulsory items of clothing to be worn every day with the school jumper an optional extra. Many students walk to school and a weatherproof coat with some reflective material is helpful for their winter journeys to and from school.

## Staffing update

I am delighted to confirm that Mrs Tolliday has been appointed as Curriculum Leader of PE from June 2025 and due to her staying as Head of Year 11 during their exam period Mr Esty and Mrs Tolliday will continue as Co-Curriculum Leaders of PE. I am also pleased to be able to share a new position for Colton Hills that begins in November with Mr Blair taking up the position of Challenge Champion. We recognise that many students have left primary school already on a high standard of academic learning and Mr Blair will be working with these students during their time at Colton Hills to support their wider learning via such ventures as The Scholars' Programme with the Brilliant Club. He will be writing to students accepted onto the highly selective programme in the next few weeks. Students on the programme will work with a student undertaking a research Doctorate, complete an essay and then graduate from a Russell Group University. We look forward to seeing what topic they are given as it can range from International Space discussions to working out who the most effective British Prime Minister was!



# Colton Hills Community School

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We also say goodbye to Mr Singh this term, who we must thank for his years of service to our school and supporting many students with their Computing knowledge. We wish him well in his future endeavours.

Next term we will be collecting data from mock exams and class assessments for the first reports to be sent home for all year groups before the Christmas holidays. Year 11 and Year 13 have had mock exam timetables shared and this set of mocks enables us to see what exam content and skills need finessing. It is important for students to revise thoroughly so that our data is accurate and helps us plan for lessons in the new year.

At the same time, it has been a long 8 week half term, so we hope everyone manages to rest and recuperate for another busy term ahead.

Yours sincerely,

Ms J Hunter

Headteacher

