

# Houghton School Newsletter



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## WELCOME BACK

A very warm welcome back to all our Houghton families — and a special welcome to our new starters who are beginning their school journey with us this year. We're looking forward to another successful school year, where success is not only measured by academic achievement, but also by growth in wellbeing, sport, friendships, teamwork, and more.

In our collective worship this morning, I spoke to the children about being part of something bigger — their class, our school, our family of church schools, our Trust, and even the wider world. I reminded them that although they may be a small part of a larger whole, the role they play is incredibly important. By living out our Christian value of *"Love one another as I have loved you"* and embracing values such as kindness, courage, gratitude, forgiveness, and self-control, our pupils can flourish — academically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually — not just at Houghton, but beyond. This is a message I always share at the start of the school year, and it's one we revisit regularly — not only in Collective Worship, but also through our daily interactions, our behaviour around school, and our presence in the wider community. Team Houghton is a truly special community to be part of — whether you're a pupil, member of staff, parent, carer, or part of our wider network. We hope you feel proud to be associated with our school and all that it stands for.

Future newsletters will include key dates, photos, updates on school priorities, and more but for now, this early newsletter is focused on sharing a few important reminders.

Thank you for your continued support. We're excited to begin this new chapter together and look forward to all the learning, growth, and joy the year ahead will bring.

With best wishes,

Ali Woollerson  
Head Teacher



# START OF TERM REMINDERS

## CLASS INFORMATION

At the end of the summer term, you had the opportunity to meet your child's new teacher and learn about class routines and key information for the year ahead. We hope you found the information sheet helpful. In the coming week, we will upload this information on our school website.

## ALLERGIES

Please be aware that we have children in school for whom contact with nut products is life-threatening. Any food suspected of containing nuts (e.g. Nutella) will be confiscated as the risk is too great. Please do take care.

May I also remind you that the only permitted morning snack is fruit (dried or fresh) and not biscuits, crisps or chocolate. Children in Foundation, Year 1 and Year 2 are provided with a piece of fruit.

## SCHOOL UNIFORM

Most of you are familiar with our uniform policy, which is available on our school website. Here are a few key reminders:

**Footwear:** Plain black, sensible shoes must be worn — no boots please.

**Labelling:** All uniform items must be clearly named. Please check regularly to ensure labels haven't faded in the wash. We accumulate a large amount of unnamed lost property throughout the year, and most of it remains unclaimed. Year 3 pupils will be tackling lost property this year so we will share more news about this in future newsletters.

**Jewellery:** Earrings must be removed on PE days, ideally before arriving at school. For more details, please refer to our *Wearing of Jewellery* policy on the school website.

**Hair:** Hair that falls below the shoulders or into the eyes must be tied back — this applies to both boys and girls



## BIRTHDAY TREATS

At the start of the school year, we usually get asked about birthday treats so we'd like to clarify our approach.

Due to a range of reasons — including teacher time, food intolerances, financial considerations, and peer pressure — we kindly ask that children **do not** bring in birthday treats such as cakes, sweets, chocolates, or other food items to share with their classmates.

We also ask that individual gifts, such as party bags, are not brought in, as this can quickly become unmanageable. Thank you for your co-operation with this.

# PUNCTUALITY

The school gate opens at 8.35 and at 8.45 the gates are closed. Registers are taken at 8.45. Anyone who arrives in school after 8.45 is classed as 'Late' and must sign in on the system in the school foyer.

The following information is from the LearnAT Attendance Policy.

## Attendance Policy LearnAT

If arrival is less than 30 minutes after the register opens it will be recorded as late - L code (Late before the close of register)  
All pupils arriving 30 minutes or more after the register opens will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

Most children arrive at school promptly, and this calm, settled start benefits not only the individual child but the whole class. Thank you for your continued support in helping us maintain this positive start to the day.

If you're experiencing any difficulties getting to school on time, please don't hesitate to speak with us. We're here to support families with any challenges they may be facing.

# Term Dates 2025-26



Term days  
 School holidays  
 Staff training (in school)  
 Staff training (disaggregated)  
 Public holidays

August							September							October						
M		4	11	18	25		M	1	8	15	22	29		M		6	13	20	27	
T		5	12	19	26		T	2	9	16	23	30		T		7	14	21	28	
W		6	13	20	27		W	3	10	17	24			W	1	8	15	22	29	
T		7	14	21	28		T	4	11	18	25			T	2	9	16	23	30	
F	1	8	15	22	29		F	5	12	19	26			F	3	10	17	24	31	
November							December							January						
M	3	10	17	24			M	1	8	15	22	29		M		5	12	19	26	
T	4	11	18	25			T	2	9	16	23	30		T		6	13	20	27	
W	5	12	19	26			W	3	10	17	24	31		W		7	14	21	28	
T	6	13	20	27			T	4	11	18	25			T	1	8	15	22	29	
F	7	14	21	28			F	5	12	19	26			F	2	9	16	23	30	
February							March							April						
M	2	9	16	23			M	2	9	16	23	30		M		6	13	20	27	
T	3	10	17	24			T	3	10	17	24	31		T		7	14	21	28	
W	4	11	18	25			W	4	11	18	25			W	1	8	15	22	29	
T	5	12	19	26			T	5	12	19	26			T	2	9	16	23	30	
F	6	13	20	27			F	6	13	20	27			F	3	10	17	24		
May							June							July						
M		4	11	18	25		M	1	8	15	22	29		M		6	13	20	27	
T		5	12	19	26		T	2	9	16	23	30		T		7	14	21	28	
W		6	13	20	27		W	3	10	17	24			W	1	8	15	22	29	
T		7	14	21	28		T	4	11	18	25			T	2	9	16	23	30	
F	1	8	15	22	29		F	5	12	19	26			F	3	10	17	24	31	

## A reminder from last term.....

One of the more challenging aspects of my role is responding to holiday requests during term time. While I completely understand that holidays are often more affordable outside of school holidays and that family time away together brings many benefits, there are strict guidelines that I must follow.

In line with government regulations and our school policy, holidays during term time can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. This policy is in place to ensure pupils receive uninterrupted learning, maintain steady academic progress, and fully engage in school activities. As a result, holiday requests are routinely unauthorised unless they meet the criteria for exceptional circumstances.

Our Attendance Policy states:

*"Day trips and holidays taken during term time are not considered 'exceptional circumstances' by the headteacher, including those arranged by external parties."*

I want to remind you that any holiday request will be unauthorised, and this type of absence may result in the school referring the matter to the Local Authority, which could lead to penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

**Please also consider the following when booking any holiday, not just for summer but any time in the school year.**

*There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.*

*The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.*

*Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.*

More information can be found in our attendance policy [Learn Academies Trust - Documents and Policies](#). Thank you for your support with this.



**Back with friends.**

