Wakefield Road, Horbury,
West Yorkshire,
WF4 5HE

01924 282740
enquiries@horbury.accordmat.org
horbury.accordmat.org

Principal: Mrs Nicola Walker

27 August 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

Summer update and our September return

I hope my communication finds all pupils, parents and carers safe and well and that you have all been able to enjoy the summer break so far. In this update I have included some of the information that was shared in my end of term letter alongside any new information and updates in readiness for our return to Horbury Academy on 2 September.

Examination Results Days
On Thursday 20 August, we were delighted to be able to welcome our Yr11 pupils in onto Academy site to collect their GCSE results. This is always one of the greatest days in the academy as it is the culmination of many years of hard work and diligence by the pupils. It was wonderful to see their achievements celebrated in their results envelopes and to hear about their exciting onwards journeys into further education, training or employment. We are incredibly proud of everything they have achieved!

Start of Term Arrangements for Pupils
The academy will re-open on Wednesday 2 September for all our pupils.

During the day pupils will:
- Spend time with their form tutor
- Attend a welcome assembly
- Begin their lessons and learning.

This day is designed to help pupils settle in, reconnect with staff and peers, and start the new academic year with confidence and clarity.

Start/Finish Times for all pupils on Wednesday 2 September 2026

Year Group	Start	Finish
7	8:25am	2:55pm
8	10:15am	2:55pm
9	10:15am	2:55pm
10	10:15am	2:55pm
11	9:05am	3:45pm *

** Please note that Year 11 pupils will continue their compulsory Year 11 period 7 curriculum from Wednesday 2 September. Period 7 operates each week on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday until 3:45pm.*

Key Changes to the School Day
- **Arrival Time** - Pupils will be expected to arrive **no later than 8:25am** to ensure a prompt and calm start to the day. All pupils should then be in their form rooms by not later than 8:30am
- **Form Time** - Morning form time will be **extended by 5 minutes**, allowing additional time for pastoral support, daily notices, and delivery of our PSHCE curriculum.

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- **Break Time** - Break time will increase from **15 minutes to 20 minutes**, giving pupils more opportunity to rest, socialise, and prepare for the next part of the day.
- **End of Academy Day** - The school day will now **finish at 2:55pm** for all year groups (with the exception of Y11 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday).
- **Year 11 Period 7** - On **Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday**, Year 11 pupils will continue to attend Period 7. However, this session will now run from 3:00pm to 3:45pm (a total of 45 minutes). This ensures that the session remains purposeful while still finishing at the same time P7 has always finished. Period 7 will commence on Wednesday 2 September for all Yr11.

These changes have been carefully planned to support pupil wellbeing, maintain our high-quality learning environments and ensure a smooth transition into the new academic year. The overall structure of lessons will remain familiar to pupils.

The Academy Day 2026/27

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Yr8 and 10</th><th>Y7</th><th>Yr 9 and 11</th></tr>
<tr><td>8:25 – 8:30</td><td>Arrival and readiness for learning</td><td>Arrival and readiness for learning</td><td>Arrival and readiness for learning</td></tr>
<tr><td>08:30 – 09:05</td><td>P1 Tutor time</td><td>P1 Tutor time</td><td>P1 Tutor time</td></tr>
<tr><td>09:05 - 10:05</td><td>P2</td><td>P2</td><td>P2</td></tr>
<tr><td>10:05 - 10:25</td><td>Break</td><td>P3</td><td rowspan="2">P3</td></tr>
<tr><td>10:35 - 10:55</td><td rowspan="2">P3</td><td>Break</td></tr>
<tr><td>11:05- 11:25</td><td>P3</td><td>Break</td></tr>
<tr><td>11:25 - 12:25</td><td>P4</td><td>P4</td><td>P4</td></tr>
<tr><td>12:25 - 12:55</td><td>Lunch</td><td>P5</td><td rowspan="2">P5</td></tr>
<tr><td>12:55 - 1:25</td><td rowspan="2">P5</td><td>Lunch</td></tr>
<tr><td>1:25 - 1:55</td><td>P5</td><td>Lunch</td></tr>
<tr><td>1:55 - 2:55</td><td>P6</td><td>P6</td><td>P6</td></tr>
<tr><td>2:55- 3:45</td><td colspan="2"></td><td>Yr 11 – Period 7
Tue, Wed, Thurs</td></tr>
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The HA1 bus will run as normal for the morning service, with the afternoon service now departing Horbury Academy at 3:00pm.

Introduction of a Two-Week Timetable

From September, we will also be moving to a two-week timetable, operating on a **Week A / Week B structure**. This approach allows curriculum time to be distributed more evenly across a fortnight rather than being confined to a single week. As a result, subjects with smaller allocations receive more consistent spacing between lessons, and pupils benefit from a more balanced learning experience. The timetable will be clearly communicated to pupils and parents and will be displayed on pupil planners and digital platforms to support organisation and routine.

Mobile Phone Policy
As a reminder please be advised that Horbury Academy is a phone free site in line with Department for Education guidance: Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK. On arrival at the gate and the 'purple line' all devices, including phones, smart watches and AirPods (or equivalent) must be switched off and placed in pupil's bags. On leaving site at the end of the academy day, once past the gate and the 'purple line', they may be taken out. Where a phone is seen on site during the academy day, it will be confiscated and an appropriate sanction applied, as per our policy. Should a pupil need to contact a parent or carer during the day, staff will arrange for this using office telephones. Thank you in advance for your ongoing support with this matter.

School Payments Moving to MCAS
Further to our letter sent on 10th July, a reminder about an important change to the way payments are made for school meals, educational visits and other school-related items. From September, all payments will be made via My Child At School (MCAS), rather than Tucasi Scopay. This means that payments will now sit alongside other information about your child directly within the MCAS app, rather than requiring parents and carers to use separate applications. What has happened over the Summer Holidays?

- Scopay has been frozen during the transition period and payments cannot be made through the platform.
- Any remaining balance held in your Scopay account has been transferred automatically to MCAS.
- Payments already made for school trips and visits have been transferred across and will be visible within MCAS.
- You will now be able to make payments through MCAS.

In addition to the new payment system, MCAS provides access to a range of information and services in one convenient place, including attendance information, behaviour records, timetables, school messages and letters, and clubs and activities. If you have any questions regarding this change or require assistance accessing MCAS, please contact the academy as normal.

If you haven't already, we strongly recommend downloading the MCAS app and setting up your account. Guidance on how to do so can be found here: MCAS | Horbury Academy.

Focus on attendance.
Excellent attendance at the start of the academic year is vital for all pupils. National evidence highlights a worrying pattern: almost two-thirds of pupils who are absent in the first week of term go on to be persistently absent—missing more than 10% of school across the year. This level of absence can significantly affect their education and reduce the chances of reaching their potential.

In contrast, pupils with an attendance rate of 95% or above are twice as likely to achieve a grade 5 or higher in both Maths and English compared with pupils whose attendance falls to 90%. Even small differences in attendance can have a big impact on your child's outcomes.

Attendance & Absence

For further information on our attendance policy please follow the link shown below:
Attendance Policy

Uniform and equipment.
As we prepare for the new academic year, we would like to remind all parents and carers of the importance of ensuring that our pupils are equipped with the correct uniform, and necessary supplies. A smart appearance and being well-prepared for learning contribute significantly to a positive learning environment for pupils. Please ensure that your child wears the full school uniform, including appropriate footwear and brings all the required equipment, such as pens, pencils, ruler, and a calculator.

Further detailed information about our uniform policy and required equipment is on our school website or can be found by following the link shown below.

Uniform Policy 2025/26

If you need any assistance with obtaining items of uniform or equipment, please contact the academy for support info@horburyacademy.com

Free School Meals
The Free School Meal entitlement is for breakfast and a lunchtime meal deal only. The Free School Meal entitlement doesn't include food at break time. If a pupil wants food at break time, then the parent/carer must put money on to the MCAS account.

Calendar Dates for 2026/2027
The following represents the confirmed Inset Day arrangements for next academic year with a full breakdown of the term dates and Academy calendar available on our website

Term Dates | Horbury Academy

- Tuesday 1 September 2026 – Inset Day
- Wednesday 2 September 2026 – Academy opens to all pupils
- Thursday 10 September 2026 – Yr7 Supporting Success Evening
- Friday 23 October 2026 – Inset Day
- Friday 12 February 2027 – Inset Day
- Monday 19 July 2027 – Inset Day
- Tuesday 20 July 2027 – Inset Day
- Wednesday 21 July 2027 – Inset Day

Contacting the Academy
Whilst the academy will only be operating with minimal staffing until 1 September, if you have any questions or concerns about your child, please do not hesitate to contact the academy using the usual communication channels.

Contact Us

Finally, I hope all pupils and their families can enjoy what remains of our summer break. I very much look forward to welcoming all pupils and staff members back into the academy next week.

Yours sincerely

Mrs N Waker
Executive Principal

Support for Families and Young People

Useful Numbers for Families over the Summer Break

Child line
Support and advice for children online and over the phone. 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk.

Change, Grow, Live
An under 18s substance and alcohol misuse service providing free and confidential service to young people, families, friends and significant others that are residents in the Wakefield District. 01924 438383.

Citizen's Advice
An independent, local charity which offers free, confidential and impartial advice to the citizens of the Wakefield District for a wide range of issues e.g. housing, debt, family, employment... For telephone advice or for an appointment please call the advice line 0800 144 8848 – Monday to Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm.

Kooth
Free, safe and anonymous online mental health support for young people https://kooth.com/.

Star Bereavement & Support Service
Emotional and practical support to children and young people aged 4 – 18 who live in the Wakefield District and have suffered bereavement or significant loss. 01924 787384 or 07881750094 claire@starwakefield.org.uk or via Facebook (Star Bereavement)

The resource food bank (Christ Church Ossett)
This operates on a referral basis from Job Centres, Social Services, Local Authority Crisis Units, Schools and Children's Centres, Homeless Shelters and Benefit Centres, Refuges and Vulnerable adult organisations. For further information contact 01924 263311 or christchurchsouthossett@gmail.com.

Worried About a Child?
If you have concerns about a child's safety or well-being you should contact Social Care Direct free on 0345 8503 503 or email social_care_direct@wakefield.gov.uk. They will deal with your concerns and can offer advice and support on what to do.