

Welcome

Year 9 Information Evening





Head of Year Overview

Head of Year - Mrs Katharine Rowe

Form Tutors

9A – Mr Gregory
9B – Mr Adams/
Miss O'Connor
9C – Mrs Kirtland
9F – Mrs Burnham

9J - Miss Pedge
9P - Mrs Winters/
Mrs Hart
9R - Mr Mason
9T - Miss Hobbiger



Y9

Head of Year Overview

- Transition to KS4 / GCSE Options
- Friendships
- Role Models
- Clubs & Extra Curricular



Head of Year Overview - How parents can help

- Well-being
- Sleep
- Use Headstrong
- Monitor use of
Phone/Social Media

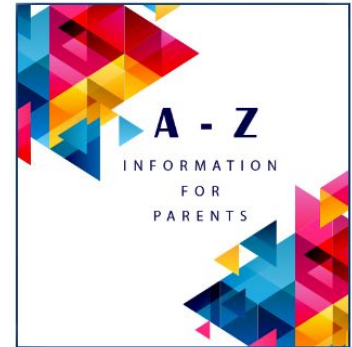
Student Wellbeing

HGS was shortlisted for the Wellbeing and Mental Health Award in the TES Schools Awards 2020.

Headstrong



Parent Info A-Z





HITCHIN
GIRLS'
SCHOOL

About Us

News

HGS Life

Sixth Form

Student Wellbeing

Community

Contact Us

Quick Links



Key Stages 3 & 4 Options

"HGS provides a wide range of opportunities for all students, and helps every individual reach their fullest potential. I've been immensely supported by staff at each stage of the journey."

Khaela, Year 13

Year 9 Curriculum

Year 9 is a key moment in your child's education. In the Spring term, your child will undertake an options process that allows them to choose 3 or 4 subjects to continue for their GCSEs.

Year 9 provides an opportunity to hone their skill sets and interests to ensure they are prepared for the next step while also demonstrating to themselves and their teachers that they are capable of the level of academic study required at GCSE to succeed.

In some subjects, some GCSE content is introduced in Year 9.



Year 9 Options



The purpose of this evening is to begin the thought process of what options your child may want to explore.

It is a long and very important process.

Take some time this evening to visit some of the different departments to learn what you might study.

You will not speak to all of them but much more information will be shared via the dedicated options website and assemblies

	Downstairs		Upstairs
M1	English Language, Literature and Media Studies	M16	History
M2	Maths, Entry Level Maths and Further Maths	M17	Geography
M3	Science, Combined and Separate	M18	Classic Civilisation and Latin
M4	French and Spanish	M21	Art and Design
M5	PE options and Dance		
M7	Health & Social and Sociology		
M8	Philosophy and Ethics options, Computing and Business		
Drama Room	Drama, Music and Technology options		



Hitchin Girls' School



GCSE Option Choices Booklet
2025-27



Key change from previous years

Previous years;

- Students opted between non-examined PE, Sports Leaders and examined Full Course PE. This meant those taking Full Course did a 10th or in some cases 11th GCSE. It also meant those taking Full Course PE had reduced time actually playing sport.

From this year:

- All students will undertake 4 hours of non-examined PE
- Students that opt for Full Course PE will do so as one of their 4 options. They will do this in addition to their 4 hours of non-examined PE.
- Students not opting for Full Course PE, will have an opportunity to express an interest in becoming a Sports Leader. More information will be shared on how to do this in December but this does not count as an option.

Year 9 Options

This evening is a mere introduction to the options process. More information will be shared later in the Autumn term but below is a brief timeline:

Tuesday 6th January 2026:	Options website goes live
Tuesday 13th January 2026:	Year 9 Parents' Consultation Evening
Mon 12th/Tues 13th/Weds 14th:	Options assemblies
Friday 16th January 2026:	Option forms 'go-live'
Friday 23rd January 2026:	Deadline for return of Option choices
Spring Term	Options interviews with SLG
Summer Term	Students will be notified of the finalised option blocks and timetables will be confirmed during this term

What is Unifrog?

- Unifrog believe that destinations - where students end up after school - is even more important than their academic performance. They partner with schools to support students to progress into the best opportunity for them.
- Unifrog do this by providing a one-stop-shop where students can explore their interests, then find and successfully apply for their best next-step after school.

Quizzes

INTERESTS QUIZ

PERSONALITY QUIZ

WORK ENVIRONMENTS QUIZ

SKILLS QUIZ

QUIZ PROFILE

Connecting

UNIFROG EVENTS

COMMENTING

FOR YOU FEED

TALENT POOL

Exploring

CAREERS LIBRARY

SUBJECTS LIBRARY

KNOW-HOW LIBRARY

UNIFROG COURSES

MOOCS

READ, WATCH, LISTEN

SCHOLARSHIPS + SPECIAL
OPPORTUNITIES

NEWSLETTER

Recording

LOCKER

ACTIVITIES

SKILLS

PLACEMENTS/WEX

Materials

CV / RESUME

PERSONAL STATEMENT

WRITING TOOL

NOTES FOR REFERENCE
WRITERS

Searching

UK UNIVERSITIES

OXBRIDGE

APPRENTICESHIPS

COLLEGE/SIXTH FORM

INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITIES

Applying

INTENTIONS

APPLICATIONS LIST



Suggested tools for KS3

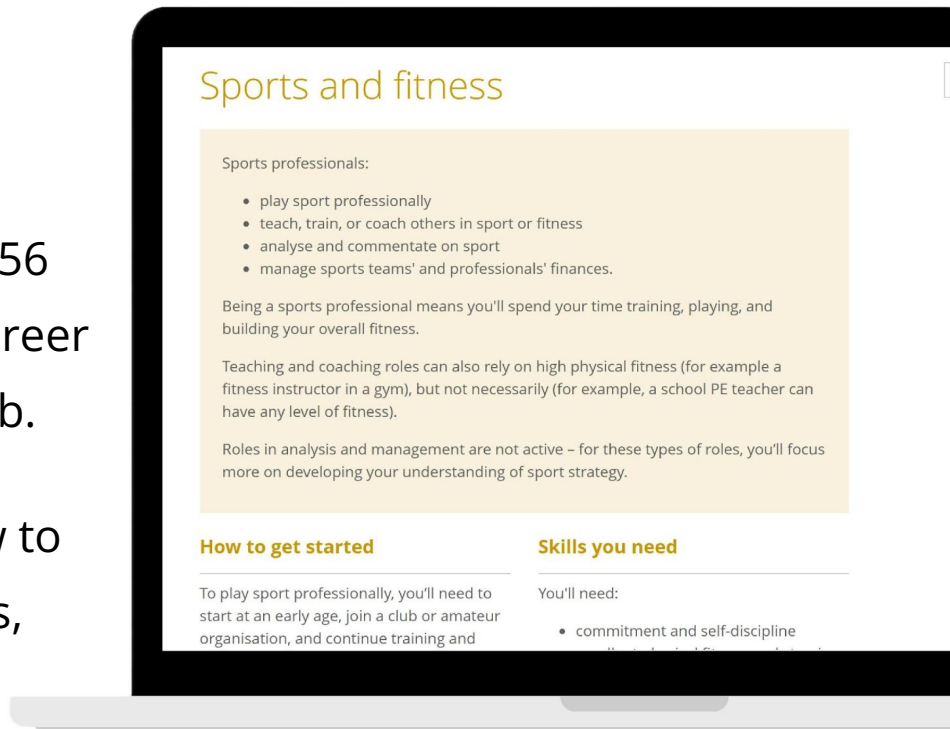
Unifrog makes tool suggestions based on students' ages and interests, as well as their experience with other schools. All students can explore all the tools available to our school.

The Career Sectors library

In KS3, exploring careers should be about discovering all the opportunities out there.

Unifrog has grouped its career profiles into 56 sector profiles to help students explore a career area without needing to focus on a single job.

Each profile includes a sector overview, how to get started, the skills you'll need, useful links, and up-to-date labour market information.

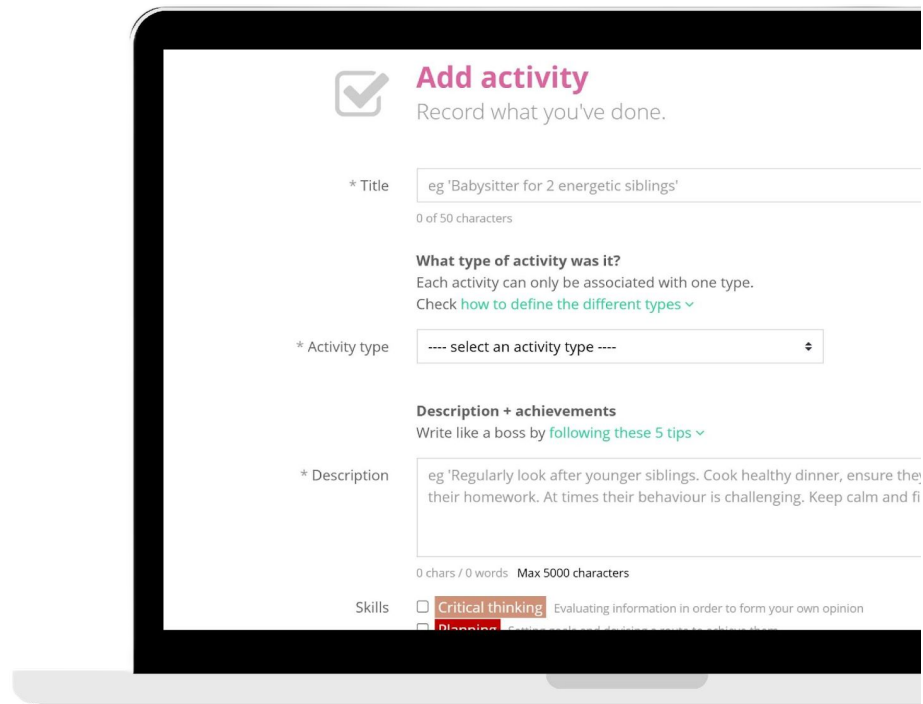


The Activities tool

Students can start building a portfolio of academic and extracurricular activities.

They can use this tool to record and remember all the great work they've been doing, whether in class, on a sports team, in private music lessons, volunteering, or something else.

They can also use their record to reflect on their journey so far to see what they're good at, what they like doing, and what they want to do next.



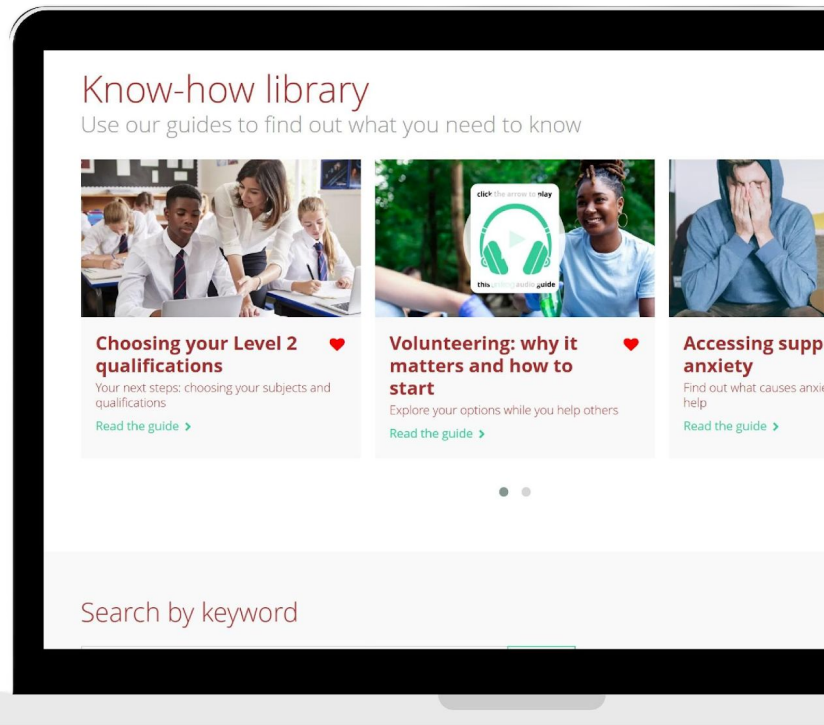
The screenshot shows a laptop screen displaying the 'Add activity' form. At the top right, there is a green checkmark icon and the heading 'Add activity' in pink. Below this is the instruction 'Record what you've done.' The form contains several fields: a '* Title' field with the example text 'eg 'Babysitter for 2 energetic siblings'' and a character count '0 of 50 characters'; a section titled 'What type of activity was it?' with the instruction 'Each activity can only be associated with one type. Check [how to define the different types](#) ✓'; an '* Activity type' dropdown menu with the placeholder text '---- select an activity type ----'; a section titled 'Description + achievements' with the instruction 'Write like a boss by [following these 5 tips](#) ✓'; and an '* Description' text area with the example text 'eg 'Regularly look after younger siblings. Cook healthy dinner, ensure their homework. At times their behaviour is challenging. Keep calm and fi...'. At the bottom, there is a 'Skills' section with two checkboxes: 'Critical thinking' (with the description 'Evaluating information in order to form your own opinion') and 'Planning' (with the description 'Creating a plan to achieve a goal or to solve a problem').

The Know-how library

Sometimes, students need a little bit of guidance. The Know-how library is full of expert advice and guidance tackling a range of topics from mental health, to academic support, to industry insights.

Some of Unifrog's popular guides include:

- Get on the ladder: sport and fitness
- Skills: what are they and why do they matter?
- Understanding autism



How can I support my child in Year 9?

- Take an active interest in their studies
- Encourage your child to engage with extra curricular activities
- Enrich their learning with conversations that might relate to areas of study, i.e. news stories
- Keep an eye on what is being studied presently so that you can play an active role
- Support and communicate regularly with your child's teachers
- Regularly log into Go4Schools and attend virtual consultation evenings
- Give your child a safe and quiet work space that they can use - try not to tidy it!
- Support them to have appropriate 'down time' and manage their time effectively



Your Biojourney

Further & Higher Education

A Level Biology is an excellent base for a university degree in healthcare, such as medicine, veterinary or dentistry, as well as the biological sciences, such as biochemistry, molecular biology or forensic science. Biology can also complement sports science, psychology, sociology and many more.

Careers

A Level Biology can open up a range of career opportunities including: biological research, medical, environmental, forensics, sports and science communication. The transferable skills you will learn, such as problem solving, are also useful for many other areas, such as law.

The infographic illustrates the A-Level Biology curriculum organized by season:

- AUTUMN:**
 - Evolution and natural selection, classification and extinction
 - Genes, Inheritance and Selection, I
 - Chemistry - Atomic Structure and Separation Techniques
- WINTER:**
 - Health and Disease
 - Biology - Keeping Healthy and Our Local Systems
 - Physics - Sound Waves
- SPRING:**
 - Global Challenges: The Environment and Food Security
 - Community Level Systems: Ecosystems
 - Biology - DNA Enzymes
 - Chemistry - Separation Techniques and Bonding
 - Biology - Bones & Muscles
 - Physics - Type of Reaction
- SUMMER:**
 - Revision and Exam Preparation: Students will be reviewing PABs, content and practicing questions to improve their exam technique.
 - Scaling Up The challenges of life
 - Organisms beat systems: Coordination & control
 - Biology - Cells, Respiration and Photosynthesis
 - Chemistry - Bonding & Structure and Materials & Their properties
 - Biology - Variation, Breeding & Reproduction
 - Physics - Heat
- FALL:**
 - Reproduction and Development
 - Chemistry - Chemical Reactions
 - Physics - Space and Global Warming
- WINTER:**
 - Reproduction and Development
 - Chemistry - Chemical Reactions
 - Physics - Space and Global Warming

At the end of Yr. students opt for either Triple or Combined Sciences

Chemical structures shown include a benzene ring (c1ccccc1) and a nucleotide-like structure (O=C1NC(=O)NC(C)=CN1).

Further & Higher Education

Music can be studied in many different forms - some courses cover lots of different musical skills, whereas others focus specifically on one area such as composing or appraising. You can choose to study particular genres of music such as pop or classical. Many courses focus on music technology or sound production which overlaps with the musical industry.

Careers

Music may lead you to a career in or as; a performer, composer, song writer, sound engineering, live events production, stage management, journalism, media and communication, music management, teaching, music therapist or as a community musician.

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Performance: You will do lots of performance throughout the course and at the end of Y10 we will choose your best 2 performances to submit!

Composition: We will start with some easy tasks to try out different approaches as composition, gradually moving towards producing two of your own pieces to submit.

Appraising: You study 4 pieces divided into 4 areas of study, and aim to understand the key elements of each piece. These pieces form the basis of the listening exam in the end of Y11.

Seasonal Activities:

- Autumn:**
 - Composer (Sketching, Sketches, On Pitch, Afro-Cuban Sound System Review)
 - Shots
 - Activities
 - Musical Theatre
 - Opened Dreaming
 - Find Your Voice
- Spring:**
 - Ensemble
 - PERFORMING: You will do lots of performance throughout the course and at the end of Y10 we will choose your best 2 performances to submit!
 - Free composition
 - Music Festival: Green Version
 - Film Music
 - Musical Elements & Instruments
 - Travis Chef and Keyboard
 - Myth and Magic
- Summer:**
 - Stage and Screen (Interviews, Self-Recording, Williams, Star Wars)
 - Radio
 - Song Writing
 - Thesis and Reflection
- Winter:**
 - Instrumental Music: (1950s-1960s Bach - Brandenburg Concerto, Beethoven - Sonata Pathétique)
 - Year 10s (Project Music for a while, Queen - Killer Queen)
 - Music Management
 - Thesis and Reflection

GCSE Music

GCSE Music is made up of three strands that are taught in parallel throughout the two year course.

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[illegible]

Excelling	Consistently performs above expected levels.
Advancing	Displays assured understanding and higher-level proficiency.
Secure	Demonstrates a firm grasp of the curriculum
Developing	

Y7 - Biology: Cells	Y7 - Biology: Reproduction	Y7 - Chemistry: Acids and Bases	Y7 - Chemistry: Particle Theory	Y7 - Physics: Forces	Y7 - Physics: Electricity	Y7 - Biology: End of Year Exam 2024	Y7 - Chemistry: End of Year Exam 2024	Y7 - Physics: End of Year Exam 2024
Excelling	Advancing	Excelling	Advancing	Advancing	Advancing	Excelling	Advancing	Secure

Listening, Speaking, Reading



- sentences with familiar verbs with support.
- Pupils at this level can evaluate short texts that they read and hear to answer simple questions about details and gist.
- Pupils at this level can recognise a few connectives, quantifiers, qualifiers and opinions to

- success, using these tenses with familiar verbs.
- Pupils at this level can evaluate texts that they read and hear to answer questions with some success about details and gist.
- Pupils at this level begin to apply some connectives, quantifiers, qualifiers and opinions to create / evaluate short pieces of work.
- Pupils at this level ask simple questions about topics and can work independently on areas of personal interest.

- Pupils at this level can often evaluate texts that they read and hear to answer questions about detail and gist with a good level of accuracy.
- Pupils at this level can apply successfully a good range of connectives, quantifiers, qualifiers and opinions to create/evaluate extended pieces of work.
- Pupils at this level ask more detailed questions about topics and can work independently for sustained periods on areas of personal interest.

Excelling

- Pupils at this level remember all topic specific vocabulary and are able to apply it confidently from memory when writing and speaking in the target language. Communication is always clear.
- Pupils at this level are confident in using the present tense and in using key near future phrases and can create work using these tenses with a wide variety of verbs.
- Pupils at this level can evaluate texts that they read and hear to very accurately answer questions about details and gist.
- Pupils at this level can apply successfully a wide range of connectives, quantifiers, qualifiers and opinions to create/evaluate extended pieces of work.
- Pupils at this level ask insightful questions about topics and can work independently for extended periods on areas of personal interest.



Year 9 Assessment and Reporting Calendar

At any point during your child's education at HGS, you can log into Go4Schools to monitor their most recent assessments in each subject. In addition, you will receive two reports that detail their engagement with learning along with tips on what they could do to improve this. More information on these will be shared shortly

1. Initial EwL	wc 01/12/25
2. EwL with tutor comment	wc 07/07/26



Teaching & Learning at HGS

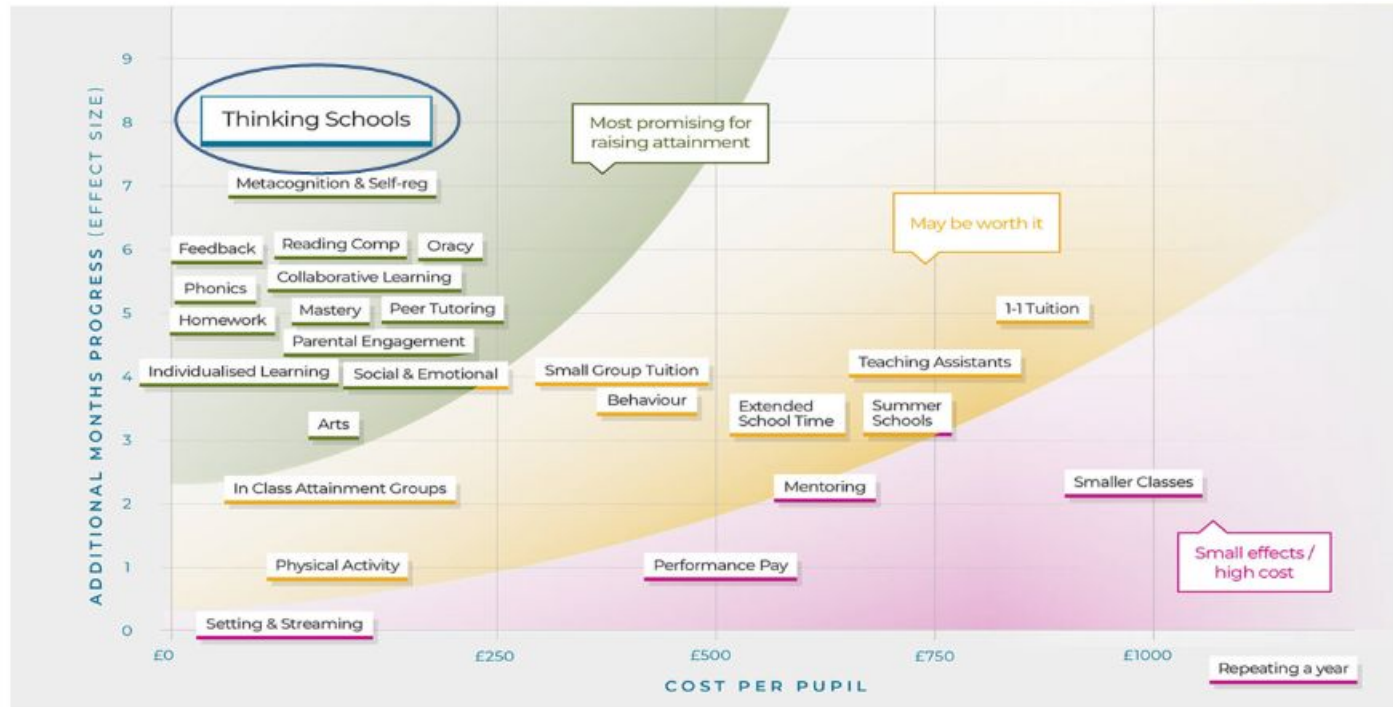


Thinking Matters

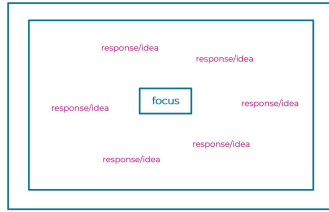
Whole School Metacognition



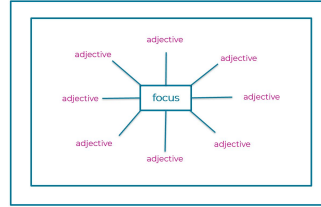
Impact vs Cost: Evidence Based Attainment Strategies



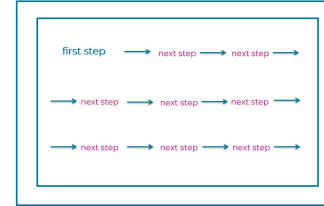
Defining



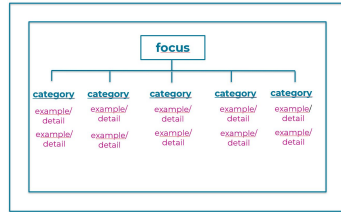
Describing



Sequencing

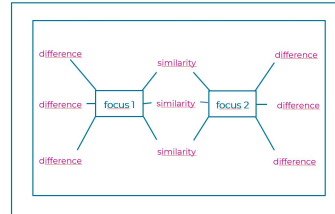


Categorising

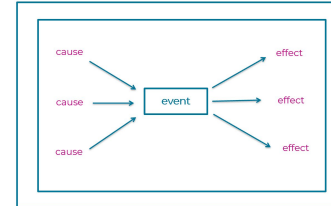


Thinking Frames: Metacognitive Visual Tools

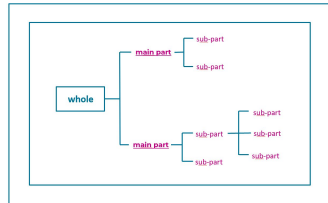
Comparing Contrasting



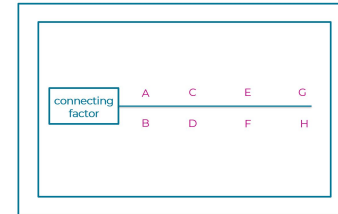
Cause Effect



Whole Part



Connecting





Thinking About Your Thinking (Metacognition)

Know your Knowing!

Being aware of your own thoughts, strategies, feelings and actions and their effects on others.



Persisting

Stick to it!

Persevering with a task through to completion; remaining focused. Searching for ways to reach your goal when stuck. Not giving up.



Managing Impulsivity

Take your time!

Thinking before acting; remaining calm, thoughtful and deliberate.



Striving for Accuracy

Check it again!

Doing your best. Setting high standards. Fact checking and finding ways to improve.



Listening with Understanding and Empathy

Understand others!

Devoting mental energy to another person's thoughts and ideas. Making an effort to perceive another's point of view and emotions.



Thinking Flexibly

Look at it another way!

Being able to change perspectives; generating alternatives; considering options.



Questioning and Posing Problems

How do you know?

Having a questioning attitude; knowing what data are needed & developing questioning strategies to produce those data. Finding problems to solve.



Thinking Interdependently

Work together!

Working with and learning from others in reciprocal situations. Teamwork.



Thinking & Communicating with Clarity and Precision

Be clear!

Striving for accurate communication in both written and oral form; avoiding over-generalizations, distortions, deletions and exaggerations.



Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations

Use what you learn!

Accessing prior knowledge; transferring knowledge beyond the situation in which it was learned.



Gathering Data Through All Senses

Use your natural pathways!

Paying attention to the world around you. Gathering data through all the senses: Sight, Sound, Smell, Taste, and Touch.



Creating, Imagining, and Innovating

Try a different or new way!

Generating possibilities; playing with new ideas.



Taking Responsible Risks

Venture out!

Being adventuresome; living on the edge of your competence.



Finding Humor

Laugh a little!

Finding the whimsical, incongruous and unexpected. Being able to laugh at one's self.



Responding with Wonderment and Awe

Become intrigued!

Finding the world awesome, mysterious and being intrigued with phenomena and beauty.

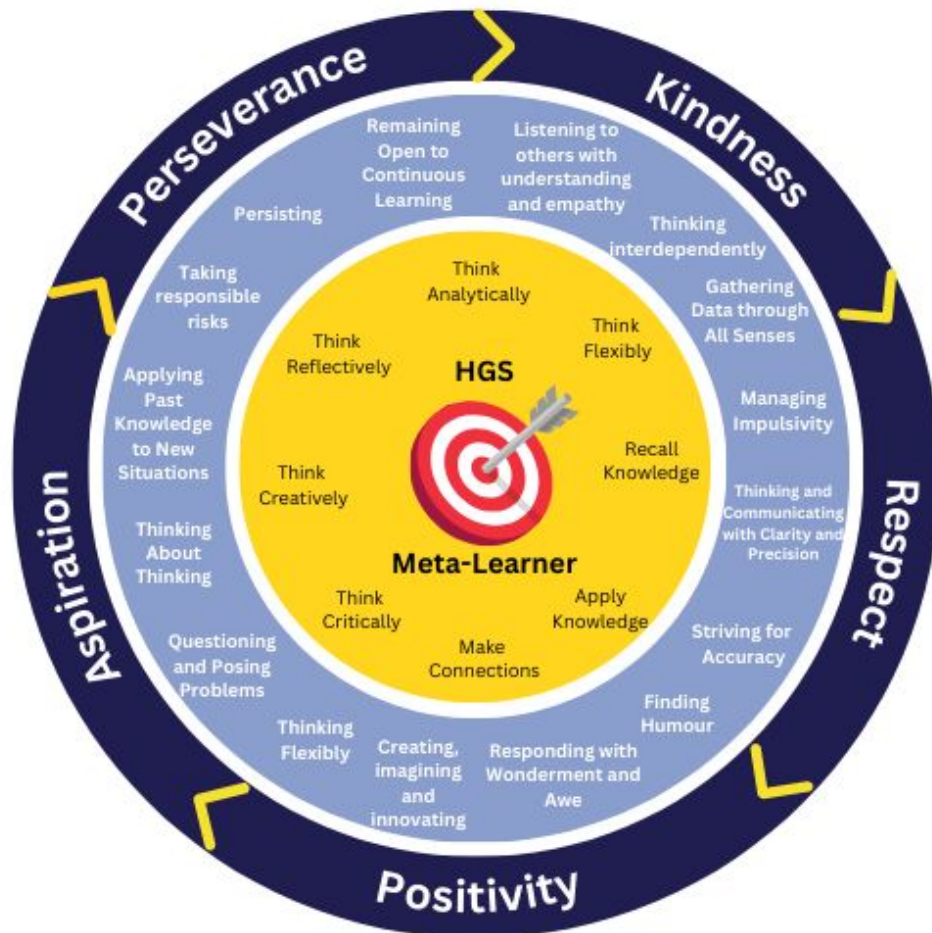


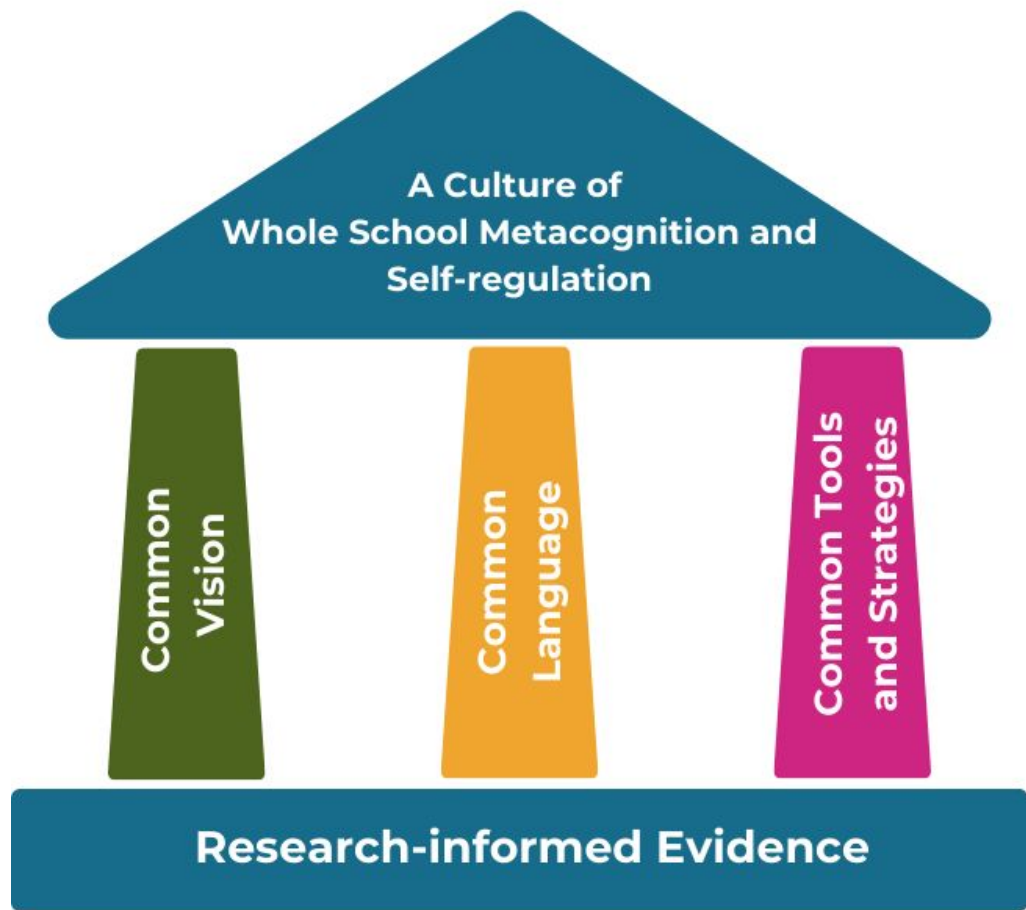
Remaining Open to Continuous Learning

Learn throughout your lifetime!

Having humility and admitting when you don't know and are curious to find out. Resisting complacency.



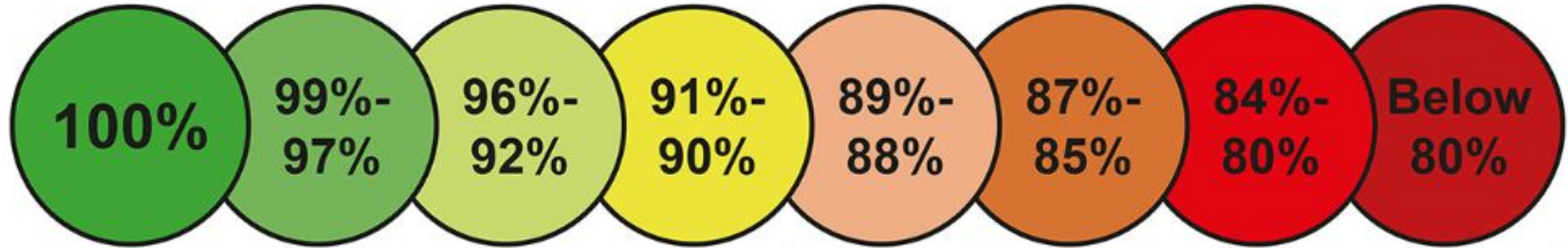




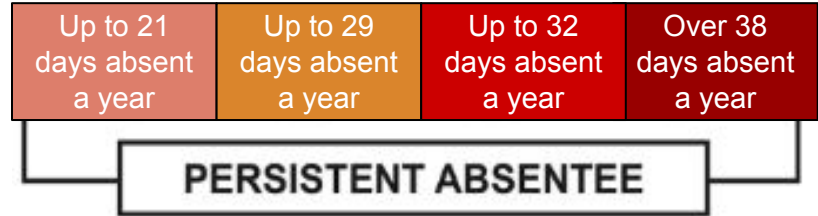
ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Exceptional attendance for all = 97%+ daily attendance

Attend today, Achieve tomorrow



Attendance impacts of academic outcomes, the **more** school students miss, the **less** likely they are to achieve their potential.



Which CIRCLE is your child in?



Attendance

National data and our historical data shows that students who have attendance above 90% make better progress and achieve better GCSE outcomes than those whose attendance is below 90%.

- In **2025** GCSE results at HGS, students with an attendance above 90% on average achieved or exceeded their target grade with a **progress value of 0.26 in each subject**.
- At 97-100% attendance this increased to an **average of 0.37 grades** above their target in each subject.
- Those that were sub 80% attendance on average missed their target grades by **-1.83 grades in each subject**.



Absence during term time

- Absence from school can only be authorised in **‘exceptional’** circumstances and must be requested in advance.
- Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period. This is the equivalent of 5 school days.
- Holidays are highly unlikely to be deemed ‘exceptional’ circumstances and therefore will be unauthorised, with the likelihood of a penalty fine being issued for a week’s holiday.



Working together to improve school attendance

Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities

August 2024

Unauthorised absence

- **First Offence - £160** per parent per child, reduced to **£80** per parent per child if paid within 28 days.
- **Second offence (within 3 years) - £160** per parent per child to be paid within 28 days.
- **Third or further offences (within 3 years)** - a penalty notice is not issued but the case will be presented to the **Magistrate's Court by Hertfordshire**. Fine up to **£2500** per parent per child



PENALTY NOTICE FINES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IS CHANGING

FIRST OFFENCE

1

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days
Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

2

SECOND OFFENCE (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days. No reduced rate will be offered.

The following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after **19th August 2024**.

3

THIRD OFFENCE AND ANY FURTHER OFFENCES (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on a Parents future DBS certificate, due to failure to safeguard a child's education.

10 SESSIONS (5 DAYS) OF UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE IN A 10-WEEK PERIOD

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.

SEND Support

Key contacts:

- Mrs Cole = Assistant Headteacher and SENCO
- Miss Lennon = Assistant SENCO
- Mrs Virdee = Inclusion Administrator

If you have any concerns about your child's learning, please contact the team so we can work with you to establish a plan to support them.



SEND Support

SEND interventions

There are 8 LSAs at HGS. They will work in the classroom with some students and also deliver a range of interventions which take place during registration, at lunch and in exceptional circumstances, during lessons.

The team runs homework club every lunch time.



Access Arrangements

The Learning Support Department and the Exams team work together to ensure that students receive access arrangements in line with JCQ regulations.

Key things to note:

- To receive access arrangements, this must be the students normal way of learning.
- Evidence must be provided of need from teaching staff.
- Medical evidence may need to be provided.
- Testing cannot take place prior to year 9 and will not happen until at least the summer term.



	Downstairs		Upstairs
M1	English Language, Literature and Media Studies	M16	History
M2	Maths, Entry Level Maths and Further Maths	M17	Geography
M3	Science, Combined and Separate	M18	Classical Civilisations and Latin
M4	French and Spanish	M21	Art and Design
M5	PE options and Dance		
M7	Health & Social Care and Sociology		
M8	Philosophy and Ethics options, Computing and Business		
Drama Room	Drama, Music and Technology options		

Thank you

Year 9
Information
Evening