



Wye School

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

INFORMATION FOR YEAR 7 PARENTS

SUMMER 2015



Information for Parents

September 2015 to July 2016

Term 1	Wednesday 2 nd September (Year 7 only) Thursday 3 rd September (Year 7, 8 & 9)	Friday 23 rd October	2015
Term 2	Monday 9 th November	Friday 18 th December	2015
Term 3	Monday 4 th January	Friday 12 th February	2016
Term 4	Monday 22 nd February	Thursday 24 th March	2016
Term 5	Monday 11 th April	Friday 27 th May	2016
Term 6	Monday 6 th June	Friday 22 nd July	2016

Please note: we have a 2 week autumn break. The first week is in line with Kent dates.

INSET days (staff training days) **NO SCHOOL FOR PUPILS** will be:

- Tuesday 1st September 2015
- Friday 6th November 2015
- Friday 8th April 2016

Timings of the School Day

8.20	Registration and tutor time.
8.30	Lesson 1
9.30	Lesson 2
10.25	Break
10.45	Lesson 3
11.40	Lesson 4
12.35	Lunch
13.20	Tutor time, registration, assembly, house activities.
13.40	Lesson 5
14.35	Lesson 6
15.30	Activities
16.15	End of compulsory school day.
16.15 – 17.30	Homework Club Mon-Thurs

Optional

Students must be in school from 08.20 until 16.15 and they may stay at school until 17.30. We actively encourage participation in Homework Club and this takes place Monday to Thursday. If a student is having difficulties managing this part of their studies, they will be directed to attend and staff will be on hand to support and encourage them.

Communication

We see it as essential to maintain close links between home and the school throughout your child's education at Wye School. Do let us know, through your child's tutor, of any circumstances, however trivial, which may affect his/her ability to learn, so we can provide support as appropriate. Similarly, we are keen to celebrate all of our students' achievements, so do let us know of their successes outside of the school and any particular talents and skills they have demonstrated. These can earn Achievement Points through our reward system, for a whole range of activities such as sporting and musical success, community and fund-raising activities and success in competitions and events.

We report regularly over the year about student progress and also have face-to-face meetings with parents. We pride ourselves on our close contact with all of our parents and how we work collaboratively to manage each child's needs. If you are worried about your child's progress in particular areas or in general, or about any other matter relating to your child, please make contact with your child's tutor or subject teacher. If either we or a parent has a particular concern, we have Moving Forward Meetings which are used to address and resolve these.

We are not complacent and are always looking at ways to improve our performance, so do feel free to provide any feedback which will help us in this regard. We also conduct bi-annual Student and Parent Voice surveys to support us in our self-evaluation and reflection.

Newsletter

A weekly newsletter is sent to all parents electronically (hard copy on request) and is available also on the website. It is **extremely important** that parents read this weekly as he gives out important notices for the coming week, including details of fixtures and trips. In addition, it updates you on the curriculum and teaching and learning and celebrates the success of individuals and groups.

Email Contact Details

In the interests of sustainability, most of our communication with parents is electronic. It is essential that you provide us with an email address that is accessed regularly, as notices and newsletters are sent every week. If you wish to have any communication sent to more than one email address, please specify this clearly.

General Contact Details for Wye School

T 01233 811110

E office@wyeschool.org.uk

We will attempt to respond to any communication within 24 hours.

Please see also the Wye School Communication Policy on our website, which details our communication protocol and practice.

Wye School Uniform

Wye School students are expected to take pride in their personal appearance and wear all items of their uniform smartly. It is extremely important that all items are **clearly marked** with the owner's name in the event of uniform being lost, particularly jackets, PE items and girls' kilts which will be identical to each other. Labels or permanent marker can be used.

A few key pieces* will need to be purchased through the official suppliers (Pages – Please see details below) but we have tried to ensure that other items can be bought anywhere, enabling parents to consider high street alternatives which might be cheaper.

Boys: Plain charcoal grey trousers, white shirt, school tie*. School blazer with braiding*. Plain navy or black socks.

Optional – plain navy jumper under blazer, from our uniform suppliers or other high street retailers. Only plain white vests /t-shirts can be worn under shirts.

The blazer must be worn at all times, unless directed otherwise.

Girls: Wye School kilt*, sold with a minimum length of 20" and 22" for larger waist, white blouse. School blazer with braiding*. Knee high navy socks or black /navy coloured tights, with the option of natural tights in the summer. (Leggings or footless tights are not permitted.)

Optional – plain navy jumper under blazer, from our uniform suppliers or other high street retailers. Only white bras or vests can be worn under blouses.

The blazer must be worn at all times, unless directed otherwise.

Dark charcoal, loose-fitting trousers can be worn as an alternative to the school kilt. They should be tailored, school trousers, which are straight-legged in style.

Please note black trousers are not permitted as a substitute for either girls or boys - Pages can advise.

* These items of uniform are available only from our uniform supplier. <http://www.pages-schoolwear.co.uk/>

Outer Garments and Other Uniform Matters

Outer garments should be plain and dark (navy or black) in colour with no images or logos on them. Students are *not* permitted to wear cardigans, sweatshirts, hoodies, leather/leather-look or denim jackets as outer garments. Sleeveless jackets /gilets are also not permitted. These items will be confiscated, regardless of the weather, so please ensure your child wears outer garments which fit the description above. Scarves should be plain black or navy only. Shoes should be plain black and leather or leather-look in terms of material, and plain in style. Boots, trainers and trainer-type shoes are not acceptable, so avoid these styles, even if they are amongst school shoe displays.

Hair styles should be reasonable, appropriate and neat. Extreme / unnatural hair colour or a mixture of colours (including dipping and other forms of colouring) and any patterned, shaved hairstyles are not acceptable, nor are hair extensions. Hair should not be cut shorter than grade 3 nor worn long in a way that it is covering the eyes. Make-up should only ever be minimal and discreet or students will be asked to remove it. Nail varnish must not be worn. Nail extensions are not permitted as they pose health and safety risks.

Jewellery is not permitted and will be confiscated. The only exception is small, plain silver or gold ear studs, one per ear. No other facial piercings, including nose and eyebrows, are permitted. Please contact us if you wish your child to wear an item for religious purposes, such as a cross on a chain. Headbands and slides should be plain black or blue only. Decorative hair accessories are not permitted nor are headscarves, except for religious reasons.

It is very important that your child's uniform reflects the ethos and values of Wye School and we thank you for your support in this.

We are rigorous in our implementation of this policy.

P.E. Kit

All students are expected to wear Wye School PE uniform which has our logo on some items. This includes sports top and shorts, with skorts for girls and our regulation socks. There is also a Wye School sports hoody and students should wear plain navy tracksuit bottoms (available from any suppliers) when directed, in times of inclement weather.

Boys: Wye School sports top and shorts, sports socks, training shoes, football boots, Wye School sports hoody, gum shield, shin pads, plain navy tracksuit bottoms (optional).

Girls: Wye School sports top and skort (skirt with in-built shorts), sports socks, training shoes, football boots, Wye School sports hoody and plain navy tracksuit bottoms (optional).

All PE uniform is available only from Pages, our suppliers. <http://www.pages-schoolwear.co.uk/>

Health and Safety Advice

All students will need to have a mouth-guard which can be purchased from Pages. However, the wearing of personally designed mouth-guards is recommended as a valuable means of protection. The school will arrange an opportunity for these fittings for those who wish their children to have personally fitted guards. For football, boots will need to have plastic studs; these can be metal-tipped. The wearing of shin pads is compulsory for both football and hockey. All shoulder-length or longer hair must be tied back for all PE, games and sporting activities.

Basic Equipment

It is vital that each student comes to school every day with the basic equipment needed for learning. All students will need a pencil case containing the following items:

Black, blue and green pens (a multi-pen can be purchased)

Pencils, pencil sharpener and eraser;

Ruler;

Coloured pencils;

Highlighter pens.

Mathematics sets and calculators will also be needed. Students need a science calculator and we recommend Casio FX83GT. Mathematics sets will need to include a ruler, protractor and compass. Pencil cases and calculators should be clearly marked with your child's name.

Stationery Shop

We have a small stationery shop at school where these items can be purchased at break and lunch only by pupils.

All students are expected to bring a full size bag to school each day with all of the books and equipment they need. Neither handbags nor mini-bags are acceptable. Bags can be of any style or design, as long as they are suitable for purpose and a school environment.

Student Planners and Homework

All students will have a Student Planner, in which they will record homework and reflect on their learning each week. We ask that parents sign this on a weekly basis and also use it as a means of communicating with tutors. *It is very important that this is done and you read your child's weekly learning reflection as this will tell you a lot about their successes, progress and what they are trying to improve.*

Students will have two homework projects each term called Independent Learning Projects, making a total of twelve over the year, two for each core subject and one for all other subjects. These are enquiry-based projects with a high degree of choice about how students respond to the exploration. The only other homework tasks that may be set are learning vocabulary / key terms and reading, research and revision tasks. You will be sent details of each terms ILP electronically, at the start of term, so that you know what has been set and can support them in meeting deadlines.

Homework Club

This runs from 16.15 to 17.30 Monday to Thursday in the IT room and is open to all children. It is staffed every day and students can receive support and guidance on their homework projects. It is voluntary but if a student falls behind with their homework project, they will be directed to attend to catch up. Please let us know via the planner or email that your child will be attending so we know that someone will be picking them up at the end of this session. Please wait downstairs to collect your child.

Student Groupings

Students are organised in many different ways in order to meet their academic and social needs. We use information from primary feeder schools to create:

- Tutor groups
- Ability groups for English, mathematics, sciences and MFL
- Mixed ability groups for other foundation subjects

Ability Sets for Core Subjects and MFL

In the first few days at Wye School, all students sit Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs) which assess Verbal, Non-Verbal and Quantitative Reasoning. We consider these alongside KS2 test data or, for students who did not do KS2 tests, in place of these. These are used to finalise ability groups and also identify highly able students for our Gifted and Talented register, and students who may need literacy /numeracy support. The groups are organised by student strengths or support needs:

- A Group - students are identified as strong across all core subjects – normally KS2 Level 5 or 4a in all, or CAT average of 110 or more.
- V Group – students are stronger verbally, with higher English KS2 levels or Verbal CAT scores.
- Q Group – students are stronger quantitatively, with higher mathematics KS2 levels or Quantitative CAT scores.
- S Group – students need support across all core subjects, as they are below Level 4 for KS2 / have low mean CAT scores.

We will also, as part of United Learning, be conducting standardised baseline tests in English and Mathematics at the start of the year.

Parents are notified of students' ability sets for core subjects within the first week and they are reviewed termly.

Tutor Groups

We value the friendship bonds that our students bring from their feeder schools and we work with the people who know them well, to group students so they can support each other during this transition. Where parents have particular requests for their child to be with / not be with named children, they can notify us directly, with reasons for the request. Each tutor group will comprise students from our main feeder schools and students who may come from a school with few other children, which optimises their chances of forming friendships. The groups are mixed ability, as they are each part of a house group, and the houses compete regularly in a range of inter-house challenges.

Houses

All tutor groups will belong to one of our houses. These are named after famous Wye residents: Behn (Aphra), Dunbar (Evelyn), Kempe (John) and Wain (Louis) and students will learn about these namesakes. The house structure will offer opportunities for the year groups to mix vertically and develop house loyalty. A number of inter-house competitions and challenges over the year result in the presentation of an annual house cup for the winners.

Additional Support for Students

All of our schemes of work are devised to allow us to differentiate for children of different abilities, even when children are in an ability set, as the needs of all learners vary. All children need additional support at some time and in some subject areas and our staff are willing to offer individual support where it might be needed. Our extended hours provide a forum for any out-of-class intervention that might be needed. At Wye School we have formal assessments six times a year and rigorously track and review progress, so we are well-placed to put additional support into place, if we notice that there is a 'dip' in performance.

Learning Support

Extra support is available for students with Special Educational Needs [SEN]. These students may have been identified in their primary school, in which case there will have been contact with our staff before your child enters Wye School. Some students will need an organised programme of support, which could include additional support within or out of the classroom and this provision will be overseen by our Head of Inclusion, Helen Wilson and our Senco, Dr Jo Gowen. The mapping of provision to meet needs will be done in coordination with parents and students, and students will have input into decisions about the support they will be given. Where appropriate, this provision will include input from external agencies and experts in particular learning needs.

Each SEN student will be tracked individually, with their own Passport. All provision is recorded and the impact of this on their performance is reviewed at least termly. More details of how SEN provision is organised is in our SEN Policy.

We liaise with all feeder primary schools, in order to get a full academic and social profile of all of our students, but understand that some SEN students may be particularly vulnerable during transition. Our Head of Inclusion works with the feeder schools and other support workers in organising bespoke transition to meet these individuals' needs.

Literacy and Numeracy Development

It is essential that all students develop strong skills in literacy and numeracy, in order to be successful in all areas of the curriculum. All subjects will actively promote these skills and, for students who are identified as needing

support in these areas, we offer a range of interventions, from reading groups to literacy software packages to numeracy support groups.

Gifted and Talented Provision

It is essential that all of our learners are challenged and stretched. Quite a few of our students have or could have passed the Kent Test as we are a comprehensive school for all abilities. Our Gifted and Talented Policy outlines our philosophy with regards to the highly able and our preferred approach to meeting their needs. We use a wide range of data, including CATs and KS2, and other information to identify the gifts and talents of our learners, including input from parents. A full audit takes place within the first term and students could be identified as gifted and talented across a range of subjects or in particular areas. The progress of this group of students is reviewed continuously. We believe that intelligence is not fixed and not always easy to identify, so we continuously review and reflect on our identification and intervention processes.

Whilst we offer wide-ranging, subject-specific enrichment and extension opportunities, Wye School is committed to in-class approaches (Wave 1) which differentiate and challenge. The school has worked extensively on developing this practice, resulting in us presenting our approach to a national audience of heads. We believe our class-based focus has the benefit of being continuous and enables us to differentiate for and challenge individual students.

This approach to gifted and talented provision incorporates a range of strategies such as:

- Higher level questioning;
- Opportunities for leadership and ownership of learning;
- Project or enquiry approaches to learning;
- Problem-solving and decision-making;
- Real-life briefs and topical focus;
- Recognition and promotion of originality and individuality.

To supplement this, we offer a range of extra-curricular activities. Over the last year this has included:

- Opportunities for Year 7 students to learn up to 5 languages (French, Spanish, German, Portuguese and Latin)
- Crest Science Award projects
- Mathematics Code-Breaking Club
- Gifted and Talented artists working weekly with an acclaimed artist
- Entry to the national Foreign Language Spelling Bee
- Salters Chemistry Day at University of Kent
- Entering national writing competitions
- Carefully tailored options as part of our Activities Programme, such as chess, Greek Philosophy, History in Action, sporting groups
- Peripatetic music lessons
- Visit to WE Day and follow-up workshop

Highly able students can be particularly vulnerable to underachievement and at Wye School we differentiate daily, provide a multitude of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities and track these students as a group of learners and as individuals.

Anti-Bullying Policy

We know that children sometimes experience anxiety about going to 'big school' and meeting a lot of different children from many different primaries. There are many reasons why some children may be anxious at this time of transition about bullying as they are moving from a 'known' secure environment to a place of some uncertainty.

At Wye School we have a clear anti-bullying policy which identifies types of bullying behaviour and how we deal with instances. We tell all our students:

- a) Everyone has a right to be safe and feel safe
- b) No one needs to 'put up' with being bullied
- c) It is not your fault if you are bullied
- d) Ask for help
- e) Never give up – if the bullying does not stop, continue to get help and support.

Keys to our anti bullying policy is our 'snitching' culture where students feel able to tell us when incidents have occurred. Our Anti-Bullying Policy can be accessed on our website and also covers cyber-bullying via mobile phone or chat rooms or social networking sites. We regularly offer advice and guidance to parents on this and other e-safety matters, to help you safeguard your child.

Safeguarding, Care and Guidance

There are lots of issues which can cause anxiety for a student beginning a new school. If a student has a problem, their tutor should be the first person they go to. They will have an opportunity to see their tutor during the morning registration period. They can also see them during the house, tutor or assembly time, which takes place after lunch. Alternatively, they can seek help at reception at break or lunch if necessary. Students can see their tutor for a range of issues, such as:

- They need another copy of a letter/medical form;
- They feel unwell;
- They need to use the telephone in an emergency;
- They have lost their bus pass;
- They have any uniform issues;
- They have issues with homework;
- They have lost their timetable;
- They need to find or hand in lost property;
- They need to find the premises officer (caretaker);
- They need to find a member of staff.

School Meals and Payment

Our school meals are supplied by the caterers Chartwells and are freshly cooked daily, with a choice of meat and vegetarian dishes daily, along with jacket potato and pasta options. We have a cashless payment system and operate this using the biometric system. This system makes it easier for parents to pay and to create anonymity for those having free school meals. This system also allows parents to view details of what their child eats each day and they can set a daily limit on spending. We hope all of our students will take up the chance to have a healthy school meal which they can eat with their peers and staff.

Transport Arrangements

Wherever possible we want our students to become independent and to travel to school on foot or by public transport. You can buy a 'Freedom Pass' which allows students in Years 7 – 11 unlimited weekday travel between

0:00 & 19:00 at a cost of £250 for a year, £100 for those who have free school meals and free for Young Carers and Looked after Children. There are suitable bus services from the Canterbury direction morning and evening. In addition, we have organised with local bus company Poynters to have our own dedicated school bus service to and from Ashford which serves many of our students. The Freedom Pass can be used on this bus service and we hope you will take advantage of this because it is being arranged specifically for Wye School.

Students who live outside Wye and have Wye School as their closest secondary school may be entitled to free transport provided by Kent County Council; please see your 'Admission to Secondary School in Kent 2013' book for more information on free transport and purchase of freedom passes. The train timetable is also suitable to serve the school, but the Freedom Pass does not cover travel by train.

We are very conscious of both the environment the already congested road system in Wye and we would ask you to avoid driving your children to school if at all possible. If travel by car is essential, please consider sharing journeys with others and dropping/collecting children at the edge of the village rather than driving through the middle. Parents picking up children must wait round the back of the school for the safety of all students. No child will be allowed to leave by the front entrance, to go to a lift waiting at the front of the building or in the road because of road safety.

Attendance and Illness: A Brief Guide

1. When does my child need to be in school?

Your child should be in school at 8.20am (at the latest) in time for Registration, which will begin at this time.

2. What happens if my child is late?

If your child is late (after registration finishes at 08.30) s/he should go to Reception where s/he will be registered. If you know your child is going to be late, please contact the school in advance so we are aware.

3. Does the school need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?

We would expect a parent to telephone or email the school on the morning of every day of absence. If you do not phone us, we will contact you to enquire about the absence.

4. What reasons will the school accept for absence?

- Illness
- Emergency dental/medical appointments (make routine appointments after school or during the holidays)
- Day of religious observance
- Family bereavement
- Attending an interview for a job, college, university

Except in cases of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences for illness you may be asked to produce a medical certificate.

Doubtless, you will be aware that the law regarding leave of absence in term time was tightened considerably in September 2015, and this has led to a huge increase nationally in fines for unauthorised absence. Please note that, in accordance with this, Wye School will only grant permission for absence under exceptional circumstances.

Illness during the School Day

If a student feels unwell during the day he/she will be taken or sent to Reception and seen by a qualified first aider. The student may be placed in our medical room and monitored. The school will take a view on whether the student is well enough to return to lessons or should go home. *Parents/carers must ensure that we have up to date emergency telephone numbers* on which they or another responsible adult can be contacted. Any accident or emergency will be dealt with by an appointed first aider in the customary way. If an ambulance is needed,

every effort will be made to contact parents immediately but, failing this, a first aider or member of staff will accompany the student.

If your child needs to take medication regularly or when he/she experiences symptoms of an illness, please ask us for an administration of medicines form. The completed form, the clearly labelled medication and instructions on how and when the medication should be administered can then be left with Reception.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL MEDICATION BE GIVEN WITHOUT THE AUTHORITY OF THE PARENT/CARER.

Please see our Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy on our website.

How to get more involved with Wye School

If you wish to get more involved in the life of Wye School, there are a number of ways you can do so.

Wye School PTA

This group meets at least six times a year, with the mission statement of enhancing the experiences of children at Wye School. They play an active role in organising events and fundraising.

Local Governing Body

We will hold elections in the autumn for a Parent Governor to represent our new year's intake.

Visits

We run regular trips and visits, including walks in the area and to local venues. We often ask for parents to accompany us on these.

Resources and Contacts

We regularly use our newsletter to ask for resources which we need for different projects or to find out about local suppliers and our parents are always very helpful in this regard.

Fund-Raising

We have already established a fine tradition of raising money for charity and we are very grateful to parents who help out by baking or sourcing prizes.

Parental Feedback

One way all parents can help is to provide feedback to us. We conduct two annual surveys and also give out feedback slips six times a year with reports. In addition to this, we hold Parent Panel forums to explore some ideas in detail, as in the Reporting Progress forum this summer, where we looked at how we could ensure parents understand reports and how they can support their children's progress. Parents also regularly pass on useful contacts, information and ideas.

Parents are at the heart of Wye School as it is because of them that the school exists. Our approach to engagement is founded on our desire for inclusion. We want all parents to have the opportunity to contribute positively to the future success of the school.

Please see also Wye School Parental Engagement Policy on our website.