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Email: [admin@strichardscs.com](mailto:admin@strichardscs.com)  
Web address: [www.strichardscs.com](http://www.strichardscs.com)

04 September 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope you and your family have had an enjoyable summer holiday and your children are looking forward to returning to school.

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with some news, reminders of expectations and some key dates.

### **Starting Dates for all year groups**

The new term begins for Years 7 and 11 on Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> September and for Years 8, 9 & 10 on Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> September. On both days pupils will need to be in school at 8.30am, ready for a prompt start at 8.40am.

On their first day of term, pupils will need to line up in the playground and then they will be escorted to their form base, as some form groups have moved classrooms.

### **School Uniform and Equipment**

In preparation for the start of term you are asked to remind yourself of uniform requirements and expectations. These are attached [here](#) but were also in Newsletter 7, published in July, and in the new School Handbook, published at the end of June for our new Year 7. Please ensure all pupils are appropriately dressed with the correct attire, including black shoes, and hairstyles which meet school regulations.

For girls choosing to wear trousers, formal black tailored slim-fit trousers should be worn; these can be ordered online from Price and Buckland.

You are reminded that all pupils must have their own personal equipment, including a pencil case with stationery, a scientific calculator, headphones and a maths set. A strong waterproof school bag is recommended to protect equipment and books.

Pupils in Years 8-11 need to pay £5 via ParentPay to cover the cost of rough books and teaching and learning apps, which include MathsWatch, HegartyMaths, Bedrock, Edulink and Memrise. Indeed, most departments purchase online licences for the use of pupils inside and outside of school and to support revision. Year 7 pupils need to pay £10 via ParentPay, which also covers their five year hire of a locker, as well as a journal, rough books and educational apps.

### **Community Expectations**

In order to ensure a calm, safe and productive teaching and learning environment, it is essential that all pupils follow our Community Expectations. These are listed [here](#) so that you can go through them with your child. I would also urge you to read our Pastoral Care & Behaviour Policy (a copy of which can be found [here](#)). This way, parents/carers can work with staff to ensure all pupils act with kindness and respect towards one another inside and outside of school, and adhere to our

high expectations. Your role as parents/carers in reinforcing our values is crucial to ensure that high standards of behaviour are maintained at all times.

## School Routines

- In line with the academic year 2022-2023, the school day will commence at 8.40am for all pupils, so pupils need to be on the school playground by 8.30am.
- The school day will continue to finish at 3.15pm for Lower School pupils (Years 7-9) and at 3.20pm for Upper School pupils. NB Year 7 pupils will leave at 3.00pm for this week only.
- All pupils will be expected to carry a water bottle to keep them hydrated. Additionally, it will help us, as a school, to reduce single waste plastic.
- Prep Club will take place in C-Block ICT Suite until 5.00pm (Monday to Thursday) with the overflow using the library until 4.30pm. Please note, following requests from pupils, the Prep Club will also run on Fridays until 4.15pm for a trial period in the first instance.
- Prep Club Plus (for pupils with SEN) will take place in Lab 7 from 3.20pm to 4.15pm (Monday to Thursday).
- A full list of extra-curricular clubs will be published on the school website by Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> September.
- To ensure the safety of all pupils, you are asked to pick-up and drop-off **away** from Ashdown Road, remembering not to park in front of residents' driveways in surrounding roads. Ashdown Road is simply not wide enough to cope with a large volume of traffic and many of the neighbours surrounding the school have young children to get to and from school too.
- A Data Collection sheet containing all the personal details we hold about your child will be sent to you via Edulink for updating. It is essential that this happens immediately so that all medical details are updated, as well as emergency contact details.

## Edulink

Edulink is our key line of communication with you as parents/carers, so please ensure you download the app on to your mobile phone.

## School Dinners

Attached [here](#) are details about the service provided by our catering company, Chartwells, together with notification of a slight rise in prices from September [here](#). Please note that we have no control over price rises. Please ensure that you have put money on ParentPay ready for the first day. I would urge you, as parents/carers, to keep an eye on what your children are purchasing daily to ensure that they are eating a healthy, balanced diet. Please ensure your child does not bring in large packets of crisps, packets of biscuits, or fizzy drinks.

## GCSE Results

I am sure you will be delighted to hear that our Year 11 cohort of 2022/23 achieved highly in their recent GCSE exams, achieving 84% 4-9 grades in Maths/English; 66% 5-9 grades in Maths/English; and 41% of all grades were 7-9. These were excellent results for a year group

whose studies were interrupted by the pandemic. The staff and I are really proud of the pupils' achievements and all that they contributed to school life.

### **Diary Dates: September to October**

The first Newsletter of the school year will be published on Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> September. As well as news and further reminders, a diary will be provided on the last page of events in terms one and two. I would just like to highlight the following events, which are early in the term, so that you may make a note in your diary.

07.09.23	Year 7 Transition & Curriculum Evening at 7.00pm
08.09.23	Newsletter No.1 published
11.09.23	KS4 Curriculum Evening – which includes a presentation on revision strategies
18.09.23	PTFA Welcome Meeting & AGM (7.00pm)
21.09.23	Dance Company auditions
22.09.23	Coffee Morning for Year 7 Parents/Carers (8.45am to 10.30am)
25.09.23	Key Stage 3 Curriculum Evening (6.00pm to 7.00pm)
29.09.23	Year 7 & 8 Disco – organised by the PTFA
04.10.23	Open Evening for Prospective Pupils & their Parents/Carers (6.00pm to 8.30pm)

We now look forward to a new academic year supporting all pupils to achieve, to thrive and have a strong sense of wellbeing. I pray that all pupils will enjoy good health and, as well as working hard to achieve their potential, will participate positively and enthusiastically in school life in and beyond the classroom, and always be kind to each other in school and online.

Enjoy the remainder of the summer holiday.

Yours sincerely,



Miss D Cronin  
Principal