

5 September 2023



Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back to the start of a new academic year, with the return of warm sunshine to start the term. I hope you have all had a great summer. I would particularly like to welcome all parents of children who are joining us this term. As you might expect at the start of an academic year there is a lot of information for parents, so this is a much longer letter than usual but I trust you will appreciate having all the information in one letter.

This letter contains important information on:

1. Start of term arrangements
2. Parents evening arrangements and curriculum evenings for all year groups
3. "Every Lesson Every Day" expectations
4. Uniform
5. Attendance
6. Behaviour
7. Parking and buses
8. Vaping
9. Arbor
10. Key dates this term

Start of term arrangements

Wednesday 6th September: Year 7 and Year 12 pupils start at 8.45am and will have a full day in school on induction activities and lessons. Staff will be available on the gate to greet students and help them to find where to go.

Thursday 7th September: Years 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13 start at 8.45am.

All students will have an extended tutor time on Thursday to receive timetables, important information and settle back into school followed by lessons.

All students will attend an assembly with their Year Leader, members of the Senior Leadership Team to welcome students back to school. After a long school holiday this is a valuable opportunity to re-establish high expectations for positive behaviour and commitment to learning. We know that positive behaviour creates a learning environment for all students to succeed.

Parents and Carers Evenings

As part of our ongoing commitment to enhancing parental engagement, I wrote to some of you last term for your input on the format of our parents evenings for next academic year. Thank you to those who contributed to this consultation which has helped us make an informed decision.

The majority of families expressed a strong preference for online appointments due to the convenience of these and the ability to fit parents evenings into busy family life. Timing of appointments and the ability to fit all appointments into the evening was a strong feature of feedback from parents. Given the majority of families preferring online appointments with teachers, we will be continuing with online parents evenings for this academic year.

We have carefully considered the feedback from many families who expressed a preference for parents evenings to take place in school. Thank you for taking the time to provide constructive feedback on how the online appointments could be improved and we will be working on improvements to this.

We recognise the benefits of being able to meet in person and therefore will be holding additional dates for you to come into school for specific year group Curriculum Evenings. These evenings will be led by your child's Year Leader, and the evening will include helpful guidance on how to support your child in the coming year both in their academic development and their wellbeing as well as reviewing key dates and expectations. After the presentations there will be an opportunity for you to meet your child's form tutor and socialise with other parents with refreshments being provided. I look forward to seeing you in person at these events.

	Online Parents Evenings	In School Curriculum Evenings
Year 7	Thursday 23 Nov 2023	Thursday 28 September 2023 Welcome evening and Year 7 curriculum
Year 8	Thursday 25 April 2024	Thursday 5 October 2023 Year 8 Curriculum
Year 9	Thursday 14 March 2024	Tuesday 28 November 2023 Options Evening for choosing GCSEs
Year 10	Thursday 20 June 2024	Thursday 29 February 2024 'Making the Grade'
Year 11	Thursday 18 January 2024	Tuesday 19 September 2023 'Making the Grade' Thursday 16 November 2023 Sixth Form Open Evening
Year 12	Thursday 14 December 2023	UCAS Evening to be confirmed
Year 13	Thursday 14 December 2023	

Every Lesson Every Day

Our commitment to high quality teaching and learning continues and we are spending the teacher training days on strategies to enrich our lessons and practices. After a successful recruitment drive last term, I am pleased to inform you we are fully staffed with all classes taught by skilled subject specialists.

Students will be reminded of the importance of meeting our high expectations for being prepared for lessons and displaying positive attitudes to learning in line with our “Every Lesson Every Day” framework.

This framework is closely linked to our four school values of being Community-minded, Courteous, Conscientious and Committed. Teachers look forward to seeing your child in lessons displaying these values and awarding merit points in line with our popular reward scheme.

Uniform

Part of the commitment students show to the school is wearing the uniform with pride and being equipped for learning. If the uniform is not correct, students will have a detention in the morning break with a senior member of staff. A reminder of our uniform and how to purchase is available here: <https://www.chalfonts.org/parents/uniform-1>

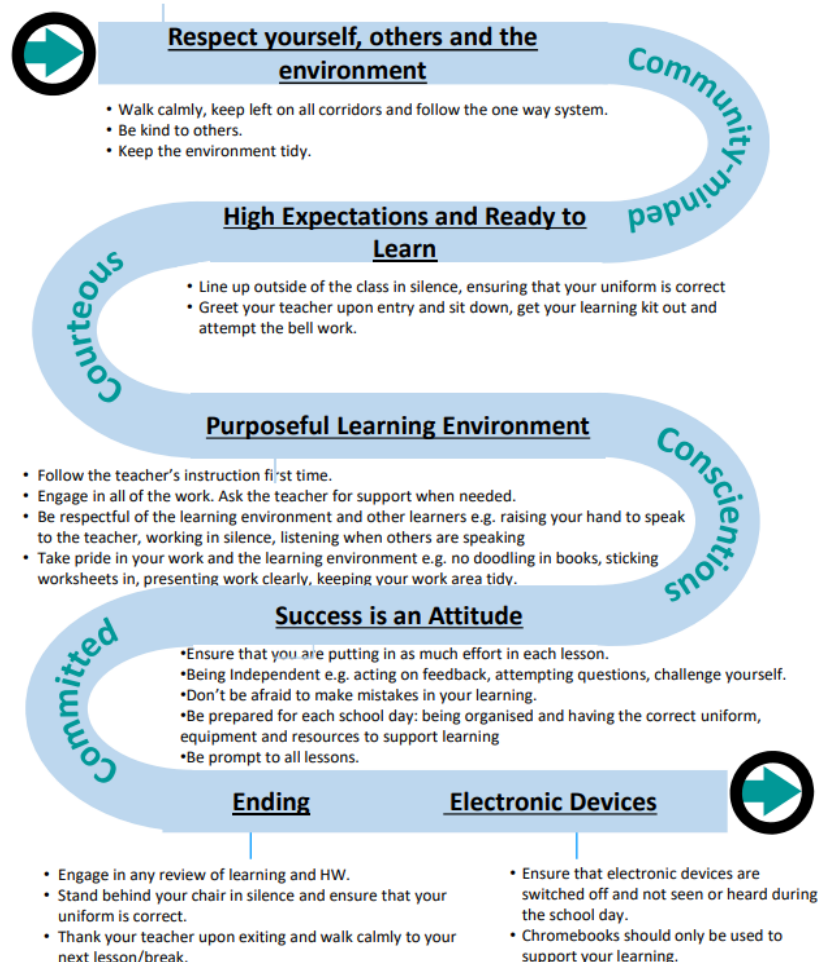
If you have any queries regarding uniform, please do not hesitate to contact your child’s tutor or Year Leader.

Attendance

Attendance at school is very important so that students can attend “Every Lesson Every Day”. As a parent/carer you want the best for your child. Having a good education is an important factor in opening up opportunities in adult life.

There is a lot of educational research that shows a clear link between educational outcomes and attendance at school. We know that when attendance drops below 97% we start to see a negative impact on learning. An attendance of 90% actually means a student has missed 19 days of education, which equates to 95 lessons. An attendance of 80% equals 38 missed days and 190 lessons.

You can help your child to ensure they don’t miss school days by helping them to understand the importance of good attendance, taking an interest in their school work and encouraging them to get involved in school activities, discuss any problems they may have at school, arrange appointments and outings after school hours, at weekends or during school holidays will help to prevent disruption to your child’s education. [Attendance Policy](#)



Parents are reminded that all term time absences (except for sickness) must be requested in writing to me in advance. Please do not book holidays in term time, as these will not be authorised. Sickness absences should be reported by email attendance@chalfonts.org or telephoning 01753 882 032 Option 2 Please include your child's full name, tutor group and the reason for the absence.

Behaviour

At The Chalfonts Community College, the staff, students, parents/carers and governors work together to establish and maintain a safe and secure working environment for all. We are very pleased that the majority of students display positive behaviours and are rewarded for doing so through the school reward scheme.

The whole community encourages good behaviour in a positive way within an environment of focused work, commitment and responsibility. We know students are more likely to display positive behaviour when parents support their child in adhering to The College's Behaviour for Learning Code of Conduct ([Behaviour for Learning Policy](#)) and encourage their children to recognise the importance of education, learning and communication. Please inform your child's tutor of any changes in circumstances that may affect your child's behaviour, discuss any behavioural concerns and take an active interest in the life of The College

After school detentions are used as an important part of our staged approach in the event of repeated breaches or a significant breach of schools behaviour for learning policy. Examples of this may include: Failure to attend a break time detention, missing a lesson without a good reason, in-class vandalism, repeated disruption in lessons, failure to attend a lunchtime detention, repeated lateness to school or the same lesson, or over 15 minutes late to all lessons over a week. After school detentions of 40 minutes will be held on Mondays and Thursdays. We expect all students to attend detentions and complete homework in silence during detention. If there is a more serious behaviour issue or students fail to attend an after school detention they will be expected to attend a one hour detention on a Friday afternoon with a member of the Senior Leadership team.

It is important that you support our detention system in the event of your child's behaviour falling below expectations. If you would struggle to collect your child on a particular day we will move the detention to a different day. After School detentions will not be moved to break or lunch time detentions - if your child receives an After School detention, they will have to attend it after school.

Medical conditions and toilets

If your child has a medical condition, whether this is an ongoing condition or a temporary condition which requires adjustments to be made in school, it is very important that you make the school aware of this by informing your child's year leader. Students will be issued with medical cards that they can show to staff to support their needs.

Toilets are open throughout the school day and year groups have designated toilets for their use. We will continue to encourage all students to use the toilet using break times so that they do not miss lesson time. If however your child needs to use the toilet during lesson time, they will be allowed to go to their designated toilets. Our intention is to trust students to behave responsibly and we have systems in place to monitor toilet use and those who abuse this trust.

Parking and Buses

We understand that many parents must drive their children to and from school and I encourage you to do so in a safe and considerate manner. The turning circle at the front of the school must not be used for parking. The arrival of buses requires clear access to the turning circle. Cars that are dropping off or picking up prevent access for the school buses to safely drop off students and for students to board buses safely after school. I encourage you to drop off and pick up a little further from the school entrance to ensure the safety of all students arriving and departing from school.

Vaping

As you no doubt know, vaping is an increasing problem and danger for young people today. There have been various news stories over the summer about the dangers that vaping poses to children, and the difficulties schools are having with this issue across the country. As a school we take this very seriously and I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of our approach.

Vaping is the term used to describe the use of e-cigarettes which are commonly called vapes. These devices heat a liquid into an aerosol that's inhaled by the user. The aerosol from e-cigarettes is not just harmless water vapour. It contains a mix of potentially harmful chemicals that are not safe to breathe. Vapes contain nicotine, which is very addictive and can harm brain development, which continues past adolescence into the mid-20s. We are now starting to see the first news stories about children who are becoming seriously ill, and tragically the first deaths in teenagers and young people from lung issues connected to vaping.

These are some of the steps we are taking to address this issue:

- Vapes are of course banned in school. Students must not bring them into school. If we suspect a student has a vape, our behaviour policy and government legislation allows us to search the student and confiscate the vape. We will not return the vape. Students who are caught vaping or with a vape in school will be suspended.
- We are continuing our work in assemblies and PSHE to educate students about the dangers of vaping.
- We have installed vape detectors in our school toilets. These are connected to CCTV cameras outside the toilets which switch on when vaping is detected, so that we can identify which students have been present when the vaping occurred.
- We are looking into additional programmes for any students who want support to stop vaping, as we know that some students are already addicted.

Please talk to your child about the dangers of vaping, and the various steps we are taking in school to reduce this problem. If your child is vaping you may wish to read information on this website and share it with your child to support them to give up vaping. [Quit Vaping | Smokefree Teen](#). If there is any further support your child would benefit from in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Year Leader.

Arbor - Keeping you informed

It is vital that your contact information is accurate and I urge all parents to keep us informed of any changes to postal addresses, telephone numbers (including mobiles) and email addresses. Please remember to include the name and forms of each of your children.

If possible, please ensure that you have the App installed on your phone to receive up to date information on your child to fully support them. It is also a good idea to allow notifications for the App, so you get the latest information quickly.

Along with all staff I look forward to welcoming students back to school this week and the academic year ahead.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "C. Whitehead".

Mrs C Whitehead
Principal