

Senior School FAQ - Information for Parents

The following information may be helpful to you, especially if your child is just starting in the senior school. The senior school is located in Ebenezer Church on Wyndham Street, and includes Years 9-13. The senior teacher in the senior school building is Mr. Bilton.

As you will be aware, Covid-19 means that many of our normal procedures this current academic year are different to usual. There is a separate FAQ which details the procedures that we will be following as a senior school regarding Covid-19. Any changes to our normal procedures are highlighted in yellow.

1. What are the timings of the senior school day?

The senior school day begins at 8.30am and ends at 3.10pm. Break time is from 10.30-11am and lunchtime is from 12.30pm-1.15pm.

To ensure supervision of students, we ask that no child is dropped off before 815 without prior arrangement with the school office.

2. What should I do if my child is late?

Please notify the school office as soon as possible. Registration in the senior school building ends at 9am, and so any student arriving after this point should use the sign in book by the secretary's desk.

3. What are the arrangements for dismissal?

We dismiss all pupils from the senior school building at 3.10pm. For parents picking up directly from Wyndham Street, we ask that you follow the unofficial "one way" system of driving **up** Lewis Street and **down** Alma Street. Please make sure you pull in to the non-residential side of the street and **stop** your car before dropping children off or collecting them at the end of the day. We encourage students who are being collected from school to wait for their parents inside the railings until their lift has arrived.

For students who walk home or are collected from the car park in middle school, we always emphasise the need to walk carefully and use the pedestrian crossing on the main road.

To avoid large groups of students leaving the building at the same time, we will be dismissing pupils who live locally in staggered intervals from 3pm. Similarly, children who are collected from senior school will be dismissed in staggered intervals from 3.10pm.

4. What do students need to bring for lunch? Can students use the kitchen?

All pupils require a packed lunch each day, and a small snack for morning break. Pupils may bring a water bottle, especially on days when we have sports sessions. Please note that the kitchen in senior school is very small and limited, and so students (other than Sixth Form) are discouraged from bringing food that needs to be refrigerated, cooked or re-heated.

Please note that no students will currently be able to use the kitchen for any reason.

5. Where do students keep their bags, coats etc?

All students are given a pigeon hole in which they may store books, ring binders etc. These are emptied at the end of each school year. Students also have access to coat hooks and space to put their bags, but we encourage students to limit themselves to one school bag if possible.

6. Do I need to buy any textbooks?

All textbooks for Year 9-11 are the property of school, and should be returned in good condition once the course is completed. Pupils are told to write their name in pencil on the inside of the book, and the number of the book will also be recorded by teachers. All textbooks not returned at the end of the year will incur a standard charge of £10 per textbook to cover the cost of replacement.

For most subjects teachers require students to bring an A4 ring binder and lined paper, but exercise books and homework diaries are provided by the school.

All textbooks for Sixth Form are covered by the additional charge of £50 per subject at the start of Year 12 (explained in the sixth form handbook). Sixth form students therefore own their textbooks and do not have to return them at the end of the course, but any donations are gratefully received!

7. What equipment do students need to have?

All students are required to have at least the following equipment in every lesson: a pencil case (preferably clear), 2 black pens, 1 blue pen, 2 sharpened pencils, a 6 inch ruler, a scientific calculator and a rubber.

~~Each classroom is equipped with scissors, glue sticks, staplers, hole punches and coloured pencils, but students may bring any additional stationery they wish.~~

As stated in the Covid FAQ, senior school pupils should bring **all** their own equipment. We will no longer be providing scissors, glue sticks etc.

8. What does “Cleaning Duty” involve, and how often do students do it?

Due to Covid restrictions, cleaning teams will be suspended until further notice. However, students will be expected to tidy their classrooms as the end of lessons and the end of the day.

All senior students belong to a house team as one of the ways we seek to cultivate character in our students and grow a servant community in our school. One of their responsibilities is to take it in turns to spend a week on “cleaning duty”, and therefore your child will be on “cleaning team” once every 8 weeks. This involves spending 15 minutes at lunchtime and 15 minutes at the end of the day completing a simple cleaning task, and so we would appreciate it if parents picked up their child at 3.25pm on weeks when their children are on the cleaning team. If this causes a problem with lifts etc., then please contact Mr. Bilton via the school office.

9. Where can I find lost property?

Unlabelled lost property is put into the lost property boxes in the kitchen, and at the end of each term if it remains unclaimed then it is usually donated to charity. We would therefore ask parents to label your children’s clothes and possessions if you have not already! In particular, we would recommend labelling jumpers, coats, drinks bottles, asthma pumps, calculators, pencil cases and lunch boxes.

10. Where is the procedure for homework diaries?

Our homework procedure is explained in full in the inside of the homework diary, and the homework procedure should be signed by both you and your child at the start of each academic year.

We frequently remind students that it is their responsibility to ensure that they ask their parents to sign their homework diaries each day, as we believe this helps to train young people to take responsibility for their work.

11. What do I do if my child is absent?

The senior school absence procedure is exactly the same as the rest of the school, and so senior school parents should contact the school if your child is ill, and provide a short note (preferably in your child’s homework diary) on your child’s return to school.

If a student is absent for no more than one full school day, they are expected to catch up with any work set. If a child is absent for more than one full school day, students should speak to individual subject teachers on their return to school and ask what they may be required to do.

12. Do senior school year groups have form tutors?

In contrast to the younger years, classes in senior school have several different subject teachers and are often held in different classrooms, and so all subject related queries should be directed to individual subject teachers.

However, each year group does have a nominated year tutor who takes most of the class assemblies and is responsible for checking homework diaries, and so any pastoral inquiry should be directed to those staff members via the school office. Year 9's year tutor is Mr. Corney, Year 10's year tutor is Mr. Tamplin, and Year 11's year tutor is Mr. Bilton. Mrs. Watson is the head of Sixth Form.

13. What are the key things I need to know that happen in each year group?

Specific dates obviously vary from year to year, and so parents should always check the Google calendar on the school website.

It may, however, be helpful for parents to know the following:

Year 9: Broadly speaking, Year 9 is a foundation year for GCSE, as many teachers either teach foundational skills or begins teaching GCSE content in Year 9. Year 9 students make their choices for GCSE at the end of the second (spring) term, and begin their full GCSE timetables in the summer term.

Year 10: The only GCSE examinations that Year 10 sit are the RS O-Level (GCSE equivalent), which is sat at the end of Year 10. Year 10 also have the opportunity to arrange work experience, which should be arranged for the first week of the summer term.

Year 11: Year 11 have a special "Choices" evening in the autumn term that outlines the key information they need to know for making their choices after the end of Year 11.

Sixth Form. Most details about the sixth form are found in the "Sixth Form Handbook", which should be signed by both student and parent at the beginning of sixth form.

14. Is there anything on the school website for senior school parents?

All key dates for senior school are found on the school website. An overview of all GCSE subjects is also found on the school website.

15. Do teachers use email to contact students?

All students in Years 9-13 should create a Google email account (available for free online). Several teachers use "Google Classroom", and each year group is also part of a mailing list that is occasionally used by staff to communicate with students and parents regarding school matters.

16. What IT resources are provided in senior school?

All students are provided a password-protected student account for the school network, accessed on the school computers. This allows them restricted access to the internet, access to a range of relevant software, and a limited amount of storage of digital files such as Word documents. Students are also able to print from the school computers, but only with teacher permission.

17. What is the senior school procedure on the use of mobile phones?

Senior school students should not bring mobile phones to school or to any other school activity. If they need to contact you as parents, or vice versa, we ask that this is done via the school phone. If students do bring their phones to school, we would ask that they are switched off and kept inside their school bags during the whole of the school day. The only exceptions to this are our Sixth Form students, who are allowed to have reasonable and responsible use of their phones. Moreover, please note we cannot accept responsibility for phones brought on to the school premises. Any student found using a mobile phone during the school day without permission will be required to hand it in to staff, and parents will need to come into school to collect it from senior staff.

18. What are the arrangements for exams?

All GCSE and A-Level exams are usually in the summer term and take place in the Workingmen's Hall in Machen, although occasionally the senior school building is used, and on rare occasions exams may take place at other points in the school year.

Precise details about exams, such as the exam timetable, the costs of exams and exam leave, are sent home in a letter prior to exams.

19. Can my child bring medicine to school?

If your child requires medicine during the school day, we ask that you write a note in their homework diary (e.g. "2 aspirin every 4 hours"), and that your child only carries sufficient medication for that day. Please note that senior school staff cannot dispense medication.

20. Why does the senior school use a detention system? What does it involve?

In order to cultivate good habits in the students and to maximise the teaching time throughout the school day, we have a simple detention system of recording students who come unequipped for class, speak without permission or have incomplete homework. All detention periods are completed in the lunch break (**not** lunchtime) and all marks are crossed off at the end of each lunch period.

21. What are housepoints? How do students use them?

As in other parts of the school, students are rewarded with housepoints both for academic achievements and good behaviour. These can then be "spent" on various rewards, ~~one of which is the privilege of walking down to the local shop at break times. If your child wishes to do this, we require parents to write a short note giving permission. This should be written in their homework diary, and therefore would only need to be done once each academic year.~~

Please note that until further notice students will not be allowed to the shop.

Students may also use their housepoints to "buy" non-uniform days, but these should always be **agreed beforehand** with class tutors.

To encourage team work and grow community, house teams also have prizes at the end of term for the highest scoring house team and for the best cleaning team.

22. How should I contact senior school staff?

As a school we firmly believe in working with parents, so if you ever have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us! However, as a matter of courtesy we would ask that parents endeavour to only contact us via the school office (phone: 01633 441582 or email: info@wyclifchristianschool.org) or by putting a short note in your child's homework diary.