



WATLING ACADEMY

PARENTS'/CARERS' INFORMATION
BOOKLET
2025-2026

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HOW YOU AS A PARENT/CARER CAN HELP

Moving school is a significant event for your child and they will be expected to cope with a variety of new experiences. Your child will need your support in developing the necessary skills to experience a successful transition into Watling Academy.

Below are some useful tips that will assist with your child's move into secondary education.

1. Trial the school day

Our advice is to give children ownership of preparing themselves for each day. Specify what students will need in terms of equipment and uniform the day before and we suggest that parents/carers let children get these things ready themselves. This should include ensuring they have packed their homework and any equipment needed for the day such as PE kit.

2. Prompt discussion

Ideally, parents/carers will have ongoing communication with their child about what they are looking forward to at Watling Academy and anything they are worried about.

It is natural for children to feel a mixture of apprehension and excitement about the move up, and it is important for their parents/carers (and primary schools) to give them a chance to openly discuss this.

3. Encourage a positive mindset

It is very important to be positive when talking to your child about transition.

Parents/carers should be positive that it's the right school for your child to be moving on to. You should also be positive about the fact that your child will enjoy their time at Watling and succeed.

4. Talk friendships and relationship building

Whether your child will know plenty of others or not, set aside some time to discuss friendship building and the importance of managing new relationships in the first few weeks of term.

Like any large group of people coming together for the first time, relationship dynamics will be changeable. Encourage your child to keep an open mind and avoid looking for that one 'best friend' in the first few weeks.

Instead, support them to find the confidence to be open to getting to know as many people as possible before fixing themselves to a particular group. Getting involved in the extracurricular life of the school can be a good way to make this happen. Look at what clubs we offer and encourage your child to try a couple they like the sound of.

5. Journeys and routines

Make sure your child is well-informed and confident about their new journey to and from school. This is especially important for children travelling to and from school alone for the first time. If public transport is involved, take a few practice journeys, and talk about contingency plans. What would happen if...? This is a good way to ensure punctual attendance and pre-empt possible stressful situations before they arise.

A-Z OF KEY INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

ACADEMY DAY

The school day at Watling Academy begins at 8:40am and ends at 3:15pm, and we expect students to arrive before 8:35am. This ensures they have plenty of time to make their way to their classroom for a prompt 8:40am start. Students should not arrive before 8.00am. Students will start school with their registration/check in with tutors, and they will have a 20-minute morning break and a 45-minute lunch break each day.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE

We appreciate your support in ensuring that your child attends Watling Academy every day and on time. We ask that parents/carers have their children in school by 8:35am, giving them plenty of time to go to their lockers and be in registration promptly by 8:40am. The main doors will close at 8:40am, after which students should access school via reception giving their reasons for lateness.

If your child is absent from Watling, please contact the Academy first thing in the morning to let staff know why they are unable to attend. A message can be left on the attendance voicemail (01908 794094 option 1), directly on the attendance email attendance@watling.academy or through the absence reporting feature on ParentMail.

We monitor all absences very carefully and parents/carers whose children's absences cause concern are notified and may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss the situation further. In certain circumstances the Academy may refer the student to the Local Authority School Attendance Team.

Please note – PARENTS/CARERS SHOULD NOT BOOK HOLIDAYS OR TRIPS IN TERM TIME. As directed by the Secretary of State for Education, Headteachers are not allowed to grant leave for holidays or trips during term time. As such, all holidays or trips taken during term time will be unauthorised and you may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN). Parents/carers should read the document 'Holidays in term-time: Information for Parents/Carers' available at: <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning/information-parents/school-attendance>

Students who need to leave Watling during the Academy day due to illness must have the permission of the Academy first aid and wellbeing team who will ring one of the designated contacts to explain. All students leaving during the Academy day must be collected by a parent/carer.

Please inform attendance@watling.academy of any planned medical/dental appointments in advance (at least 24 hours before appointment). Where possible please avoid booking appointments during the school day.

BEHAVIOUR

Positive behaviour is the key driver behind our expectations for behaviour at Watling Academy, in line with our core values of Respect, Responsibility and Kindness. We have clear, high expectations of our students and these are made explicit in our Behaviour Policy (which can be found on our website). We encourage achievement and give praise, and we do so through a system of House Points, certificates, postcards and letters home which celebrate our students successes.

BOOKS, STATIONERY AND OTHER EQUIPMENT

All students will be provided with exercise books for each lesson and in line with our core values, we expect students to respect their class books at all times. If textbooks are issued, they are issued on loan on the understanding that, apart from fair wear and tear, damage and loss are made good by the students to whom they are issued.

Having the correct equipment and being ready to learn is very important, and we trust that you will be able to provide a full range of basic equipment so that your child can be fully engaged with their learning. Students should bring appropriate equipment to lessons at all times. Equipment required includes:

Pens (blue/black and red)	Protractor
Pencils	Compass
Ruler	Calculator
Eraser	Highlighter
Sharpener	Coloured Pencils
Glue Stick	

Filled pencil cases and scientific calculators are available to buy from the Academy. These will be available to purchase through ParentMail.

Pencil cases contain the following:

- 1x Ruler (30cm)
- 1 x Eraser
- 1 x Protractor
- 1 x Compass
- 1 x Sharpener
- 1 x Glue Stick
- 1 x Highlighter
- 4 x Black ballpoint pens
- 2 x Blue ballpoint pens
- 1 x Red ballpoint pen
- 3 x Pencils
- 2 x Black handwriting pens
- 2 x Blue handwriting pens

We strongly recommend that students should not bring expensive items to school. Students should not bring their own scissors to school. These will be provided when needed.

CANTEEN & CASHLESS CATERING

The canteen will provide a variety of healthy main meals as well as filled rolls, sandwiches, salads, snacks and vegetarian options. Allergies and dietary requirements are catered for. The Academy canteen will be open before school, at breaktime and at lunchtime.

The canteen will be open from 8:00am, enabling students to purchase breakfast prior to the start of the school day.

The school canteen operates a cashless catering system which enables payment online via ParentMail. This system uses fingerprint recognition software and ensures that students do not need to bring cash into the Academy to buy food from the canteen. It also provides you with the flexibility to add money to your child's account online and enables you to monitor what they consume on the school premises. Further information about ParentMail will be sent out before September.

In order to operate the cashless system, the Academy must collect biometric information (fingerprint) from students. By law we are required to have your consent to collect, store and use your child's biometric information.

We therefore request you complete and submit your child's new entrant information and consents via the Admissions+ system, indicating your consent to the processing of biometric information.

Please note: Without this consent we will not be able to undertake biometric registration of your child.

Alternative registration methods will be available in September for those who do not wish to give consent for the processing of biometric information.

CLASS CHARTS

At Watling Academy, we use ClassCharts. The ClassCharts software allows us to communicate behaviour records and homework with students and parents/carers alike.

It is essential that parents and carers sign up to the ClassCharts App as this enables them to:

- See all positive and negative behaviour notifications.
- Receive a notification that their child has been issued a detention.

ClassCharts will not provide parents/carers with specific details regarding positive and negative behaviour incidents. However, parents/carers can contact their child's Form Tutor or Head of Year to discuss these. Parents/carers can also expect a phone call or email from their child's Head of Year or a member of the Pastoral Team following a serious behaviour incident.

Log in codes and pin numbers for ClassCharts will be issued to parents and carers in September.

CLUBS

Extra-curricular opportunities are very important to us at Watling Academy, we operate a number of clubs termly offering students a wide range of activities. Each term, clubs will be shared with students/parents/carers; this will outline the way to sign up for these activities and take advantage of the amazing opportunities on offer. While most of these clubs are free, we have also expanded our provision through the introduction of paid clubs. This has allowed us to provide students with access to highly skilled specialised coaching in areas such as Basketball, Tennis, Dance and Cheerleading.

Examples of clubs offered:

- Sports – Basketball, Football, Netball, Badminton
- Curriculum extension – History, Spanish, Mandarin, Maths, Art, History, Drama
- Music – Choir, Orchestra (musical instrument lessons are also offered by external providers, at additional cost. Further information will be sent out before September)
- Performing Arts – Culminating in our annual Performing Arts Showcase and school production.
- Leadership – Science Leaders
- Lego
- Diversity

CONTACTING WATLING ACADEMY

Parental engagement is very important to us at Watling Academy, and we would like you to feel confident about contacting the Academy whenever you feel it is necessary. Our main office is open between 7:30am and 5pm.

If you wish to contact a particular teacher, please contact the Administration Team in the Admin Hub in the first instance. They will be pleased to help you.

The Form Tutor is the central person in the support and development of each student and will deal with day-to-day communications between home and Watling Academy.

The Head of Year co-ordinates the work of the Form Tutors.

Should an issue or problem not fall within the province of the Form Tutor or Head of Year, please telephone or email our Admin Hub so that they can direct your query to the most appropriate member of staff.

CURRICULUM

The aim of the Year 7 Curriculum, is to excite, inspire and motivate all students, developing both their skills and knowledge to be successful young learners. At the heart of the curriculum is an emphasis on Milton Keynes, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), the environment and sustainability. These go hand in hand with our core values of **Respect, Responsibility** and **Kindness**.

The Year 7 curriculum consists of English; Mathematics; Science; Art; Design and Technology; Computing; Geography; History; Religion & Ethics; Modern Foreign Language; Drama; Art; Well-being; STEM; Music and Physical Education. There is also a Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education programme, which is 'mapped' within the curriculum, tutorial programme and delivered in Well-being lessons.

We will be working closely with our primary school colleagues on matters of curricular progression, and we have contacted these schools to ascertain up-to-date individual levels of achievement.

Upon entry in September, our induction programme will give Year 7 students extra support in transferring to their new learning environment. The students will have been placed in a Tutor group which will provide the focus for individual guidance during the next five years and where possible, students will remain with the same Tutor throughout their time at Watling Academy.

CYCLING TO THE ACADEMY

In line with our commitment to sustainability and environmental care, we encourage students to consider cycling or walking to the Academy. This approach not only benefits the environment and reduces traffic in the local community but also contributes to personal well-being. To support those choosing to cycle, the Academy has made provisions for bicycle storage spaces, ensuring a secure place for bikes during school hours.

We advise all cyclists to use a 'D-lock' for securing their bikes and to consider security marking or registering their bicycles on a national database like BikeRegister for added security. Ensuring that your bicycle is in good working condition and using safety equipment, such as helmets and high-visibility clothing, is also recommended for a safer journey.

By opting to cycle, students contribute to a more sustainable and healthier community. We hope to see more students joining this initiative, making a positive impact on our environment one pedal at a time.

FRIENDS OF WATLING ACADEMY

The Parent Teacher Association at Watling Academy is known as Friends of Watling Academy (FOWA). By virtue of your child enrolling at Watling Academy, you are automatically welcomed into the Association. As the Academy flourishes, so does Friends of Watling, benefiting from the enthusiastic involvement of parents/carers, teachers, governors, and supporters of the Academy.

FOWA is dedicated to significantly enhancing the experiences of every student at the Academy. We are excited to have an active committee already in place, driving our initiatives and events. However, we are always eager to welcome new members to our team. Keep an eye out for an early newsletter, which will include an invitation for you to join the FOWA committee. We would love for more individuals to come forward and contribute to our growing community.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Free School Meals (FSM) are available to all eligible children who attend school within Milton Keynes (full-time). This is a legal entitlement, and we would encourage those of you that are entitled to apply for your child. To be eligible you must be in receipt of one of the following:

- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

Please note: Children currently receiving Free School Meals (FSM) at their primary school will not automatically be entitled to receive FSM at Watling Academy. All those currently in receipt of FSM **will need to re-apply** between April and September and, if eligible, email their reference number to admin@watling.academy. Please click on the link below to apply:

<https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims>

Pupil Premium (PP)

Pupil Premium is funding to improve education outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in schools in England. Evidence shows that disadvantaged children generally face additional challenges in reaching their potential at school and often do not perform as well as other pupils. *DFE, 2021*.

In April 2011 the Government identified the need to boost the attainment and progression of students they classed as disadvantaged. The Pupil Premium funding allocation is calculated according to the number of students in Year 7 to 11 who either receive free school meals or have received free school meals in the last 6 years, the number of students who have been looked after by their local authority and the number of students whose parents/carers are permanent serving armed services personnel.

The Pupil Premium is paid directly to schools as they are best placed to assess what additional provision their students need, and it is at the discretion of the school as to how the funds are used.

HOMEWORK

At Watling we believe that Homework is an important part of a student's learning, to consolidate knowledge and skills developed within lessons, as well as enriching and broadening understanding beyond the formal curriculum.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF HOMEWORK?

- To develop independent learning habits.
- To consolidate learning within the classroom and provide opportunities to practice key skills.
- To develop a love of learning and to enrich individual subject curriculums.
- To revisit past learning to embed knowledge and skills over time.

HELP WITH HOMEWORK

Teachers will outline details of homework as an assignment using ClassCharts. Students and parents/carers will be able to see what has been set, any required information or resources to complete the task and the date that the homework is due.

Students should plan their homework so that they create time to speak to their teacher if they do not understand a homework task. It is therefore important that students do not leave their homework until the last minute.

A bookable homework clinic provision is available to support students with completing homework tasks set.

SUMMARY OF HOMEWORK PROCEDURES

1. Homework will be set by the teacher;
2. Homework will be recorded on Class Charts;
3. Homework should be handed in/completed on time according to the date set;
4. Data about homework will be sent home to parents in the regular progress reports.

HOUSE SYSTEM

The House system was founded when Watling Academy opened, our first cohort of students chose the names of the Houses- Laine, Leyh, Marshall, Rutherford and Turing; all prominent people linked to Milton Keynes.

Our house system underpins everything we do at Watling Academy. We use our House system to develop a sense of shared Academy identity, to facilitate healthy competition, to reward our students and to allow our students to be involved in positions of leadership and responsibility.

One way we recognise student achievement in lessons is by issuing House points. Outside of lessons students are also issued with House points when they display our Academy core values of Respect, Responsibility and Kindness. Each term student achievement is recognised during House and celebration assemblies.

Our House shield is presented at the end of the year to the House of students who achieve the most House points throughout the year. As well as the House points that they earn as individuals, students compete in a wide range of events and competitions to earn further points for their House.

Each House has two House Captains (our most senior student role), two Deputy House Captains and each form group also has a House Representative. Together they make up the Student Council. Working with a staff member who leads each House (House Champion), they form a team that represents and supports Academy events, they lead their House in competitions and finally they provide the opportunity for students to feedback their views and opinions to the Academy's Senior Leadership Team.

Competition is tight this year with only a small number of House points separating first and last place. Will we have new champions this year or will Rutherford hold on to their title?

LOCKERS

Watling Academy offers the opportunity to hire a locker for your child. The cost is currently £5.

Lockers will be available to hire via our online shop in ParentMail (details will be sent out separately).

MEDICAL CARE

Our First Aid and Wellbeing Team are on duty during Academy hours to deal with accidents, illness, and routine medical matters. They will be pleased to discuss any problems with parents/carers.

It is vital that you advise the Academy of any medical history or special medical treatments affecting your child as the Academy may rely on this information in the event of an emergency. Your permission will also be needed for the administration of medication such as paracetamol.

If there are occasions when your child needs to bring prescribed medicines into Watling, they should be left with our First Aid and Wellbeing Lead. They will require your written permission for administration and full directions for use.

At Watling Academy, we place an emphasis on keeping students in lessons to maximise their learning. We expect students to remain in the classroom for the full duration of the lesson (1 hour). Students have adequate time to use the toilets between lessons and during their lunch and break times. We fully appreciate that some students require immediate access to toilet facilities due to medical conditions; in this circumstance we ask parents and carers to provide documented medical evidence of their child's condition, this enables us to support them fully and supply them with an exemption pass.

If your child becomes ill during the day, they will be directed to the First Aid and Wellbeing Lead who will advise whether they will need to go home or can continue in the Academy. In the event of your child needing to go home, the First Aid and Wellbeing Lead will contact you.

PHONES

Students should not use their mobile phones during the school day. Mobile phones should be switched off prior to arrival at Watling Academy in the morning and kept in their bag or locker throughout the duration of the school day. Smart watches are not permitted.

PROGRESS REPORTS

It is important for us to share with you the progress your child is making at Watling Academy. Once every term you will receive a report showing levels of homework completion, levels of engagement and standards of behaviour. In addition to this we will have tutor and subject teacher consultation evenings at which you can discuss your child's progress. At the end of the year, you will receive the first stage of your child's Achievement Record, which will report on progress in all subjects and the development of personal and social skills.

READING

Reading is an essential skill which enables all students to access a full, broad and challenging curriculum. As such, we place a big emphasis on the importance of reading at Watling Academy to ensure that all of our students are equipped with strategic reading skills in order to ensure success and to boost their well-being.

All students are assessed in reading periodically throughout the year to monitor progress and to allow us to provide additional support and challenge where required through teaching and learning within the classroom or small group interventions where appropriate.

Students are provided with daily opportunities to read through our Tutorial programme and receive explicit teaching of strategic reading skills to support them in the wider curriculum. Students are expected to bring a reading book with them every day to fully engage in these reading opportunities.

We have an excellent library provision at Watling Academy which is stocked with a wide range of books aimed at readers of all levels and abilities. Students are able to access this provision throughout the school day as well as using our online catalogue from home.

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding is of the upmost priority at Watling Academy. All staff are trained thoroughly to ensure that they can respond appropriately to safeguarding issues as and when they arise.

Watling Academy has a dedicated Safeguarding team who work alongside our Heads of Year and Pastoral Team.

Further information regarding our safeguarding team can be found on our website <https://watlingacademy.net>

SEND

At Watling Academy, the achievements, attitudes and well-being of all students are important to us and practical steps are taken to account for students' varied life experiences and needs. Students are valued equally, regardless of ability and encouraged to achieve their full potential.

Watling Academy complies with 'The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2014' which sets out the legislation for the identification and provision for children/young people with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND). We have a dedicated SEND Team, led by our SENDCo and Deputy SENDCo, who work closely with other members of staff within the Academy to support students with additional needs.

As part of the transition process, our SEND Team liaise closely with our feeder schools to identify those students who may need additional support to achieve their full potential. We work closely with parents and carers to support students with SEND, and look to start this process during transition as well.

- SENDCo – Mrs Bennett
- Deputy SENDCo – Miss Okutu
- Assistant SENDCo – Ms Price

TRIPS AND VISITS

Throughout the school year, students have opportunities to take part in a range of school trips. These trips will be linked to student learning, both in and beyond the classroom. This will give students the opportunity to reinforce their knowledge of various curriculum areas, while also developing the key components of an effective learner, such as their problem solving, communication and planning. Trips are a great way to develop employability skills and expose students to possible careers and training pathways. This includes a variety of trips to develop and enhance student leadership within Watling Academy.

UNIFORM (INC PE KIT)

At Watling Academy, we firmly believe that the wearing of the Academy uniform helps to instil pride, supports positive behaviour and encourages students to identify with the Academy and its' ethos. It ensures all students from all backgrounds feel welcome and helps in protecting them from social pressures to dress in a particular way.

As representatives of the Academy within the community we expect all students to always uphold the highest standards of uniform, including journeys to and from the Academy.

Maisies are the Academy's designated supplier of Academy blazers, jumpers, skirts, ties and the compulsory items of the PE kit. Maisies also offer the complementary items, such as shirts and trousers, plus other ancillary items. These products can also be bought from a range of other suppliers such as larger supermarkets.

We fully believe that the cost of a school uniform should not be a limiting factor in parents' choice of secondary school. Therefore, we have worked hard to keep the number of branded items to the minimum required to achieve a clear identity for our students and for them to look smart. In line with our ethos of Milton Keynes community links, we use a local stockist that provides good value for money and will review this biannually. Our PTA facilitate a 'Pre-loved uniform selection' and parents/carers are welcome to contact us to access the range of items available.

Maisies of Wolverton

For further information please visit website:

<https://www.maisies-superstore.co.uk/watling-academy/>

Telephone number: 01908 313313

The store's address is: 60-64 Church Street, Wolverton, MK12 5JW

Shoes

- Students are required to wear formal black school shoes, black trainers are not permitted (these include Vans, Converse, Nike Air Force 1).
- Canvas shoes of any type and boots above ankle height of any type (including leather) will not be allowed. Shoes must be plain in colour without coloured trim or stitching.
- Boots may only be worn in extreme weather conditions for travelling to and from the Academy. Student's usual shoes should be brought to change into.

All students are required to wear-

- EITHER a royal blue Watling Academy blazer embroidered with Academy logo, OR a royal blue Watling Academy V-neck jumper with logo. (In previous years, students were required to wear a blazer with the jumper being optional. Considering feedback from our Student Council and the views of our Local School Board, we are now giving parents/carers and students the choice as to which they prefer). Please can we emphasise that students MUST wear either a blazer or jumper.
- A Watling Academy tie.
- Regulation plain white buttoned shirt with a collar. "Fashion" alternatives to the regulation shirt are not allowed.
- Students may choose from the following-
 1. Full length grey tailored trousers (not black trousers, leggings, jeggings or chinos).
 2. Watling Academy royal blue tartan skirt.
- Students may choose from the following-
 1. Dark coloured (black/navy/grey – NO white) plain socks or
 2. Black tights (plain).

The following items of uniform are only available from our stockist, Maisie's, in Wolverton.

- Watling Academy blazer with logo
- Watling Academy tie
- Royal blue tartan skirt
- V-neck jumper with logo

Parents/carers should note that just because an item is sold within a uniform section in a shop, does not mean that it complies with Watling Academy uniform requirements.

General Uniform Requirements

- All articles of clothing should be clearly marked with the student's name.
- Jewellery must not be worn. The only exception is a small pair of stud earrings – (one stud in each ear). There must be no other visible piercings – this includes nose piercings, tongue piercings and any type of 'stretchers'. In PE and some practical lessons students will be required to remove their earrings.
- Extremes of hair colour and hairstyle or patterns (including lines) are not allowed.
- If a belt is worn it should be plain and black.
- Hijabs should be worn in accordance with Academy uniform colours – Black/Navy/Royal Blue.
- Hair items that are worn to keep long hair off the face should be plain, discreet, and black or dark blue in colour.
- Sweatshirts/hoodies/sports tops with logos are not allowed.
- Coloured nail varnish must not be worn. Students should not wear false or gel nails.
- Makeup, including eye makeup or lipstick, is not encouraged and certainly should not be obvious.

PE Uniform

Compulsory Items:

- Polo shirt with Academy logo
- Shorts, tracksuit trousers or leggings with Academy logo
- Academy sports socks
- Quarter-zip fleece top with Academy logo or Watling Academy rugby shirt
- Shin pads
- Mouth guard

Additional items:

- Plain black base layers (to be worn underneath their PE uniform). Coats are not to be worn within PE lessons.

Footwear Requirements for PE

Students are required to have two pairs of footwear – one for indoor and one for outdoor activities.

- Indoor/MUGA footwear (trainers) should have non-marking soles.
- Astro/grass footwear – Astros or moulded studded boots.

Academy PE kit (excluding trainers and base layers) is only available from our uniform stockist, Maisies, in Wolverton.

All PE/games kit should be clearly marked with the student's name (including socks and footwear).



WEBSITE

<https://watlingacademy.net>

We hope that our website will provide you with a flavour of the context and vision for the Academy and how we work in partnership with parents and carers. Detailed information about all areas of the Academy can be found on our website, some examples include:

- Policies and Statutory Information
- Pastoral Care
- Clubs and Enrichment
- Curriculum Summaries
- PTA
- Eco Committee
- Careers
- Governors

Watling Academy is proud to be a part of The Alliance Multi-Academy Trust. For further information please visit their website:

<https://thedenbighalliance.org.uk>
