

**Year 7
Transition
Handbook**

Handbook

**Welcome to
The Polesworth
School**



The Polesworth School
ENSURING EXCELLENCE



Introduction

We are delighted to welcome you to **The Polesworth School** and we look forward to working with you over the coming weeks, months and years. We value strong relationships at The Polesworth School as they are vital to ensuring **our pupils are safe, happy and confident when with us**. In turn, this will help our pupils to reach their potential both academically and socially.

At The Polesworth School we recognise that **education is a partnership between school and home** and that we need your trust and help to achieve our aims. We ask for your support in encouraging your children to make the most of the opportunities we provide to **develop their knowledge, understanding, interests and skills** and to ultimately prepare them for adulthood.

This booklet aims to provide you with as much information and advice as possible to help get you off to a flying start in this exciting new chapter of your lives. We understand that moving to secondary school can be a little daunting and we aim to **make the transition as smooth as possible**. Most students feel completely settled within a couple of weeks. If, after reading this booklet, you still have more questions or queries, please don't hesitate to contact the school.

Mr Rosten-Smart
Transition Co-ordinator & SENCO



Welcome



Contact details



admin@thepolesworthschool.com
for general queries



01827 702205



Often, the easiest way to contact the school is via email or telephone however, you are also welcome to request a meeting with any member of staff, but we ask that you either ring or email first to arrange this. It is unlikely that the member of staff that you wish to see will be available if you turn up in reception without an appointment.

Follow us on social media





Coping with school life and change

The most common challenges students moving into secondary school face are:

1



Bringing the correct equipment and books to school each day as they move to different rooms and subjects across a week.

2



Organising their time to fit in homework with other activities in their lives.

3



Finding their way around school.

Some students seem to take things in their stride, but many need a guiding hand in the first few weeks with us to help establish routines. The timetable will be issued in September and we ask that you work together at home to put routines in place such as:

1



Checking the homework schedule and making sure there is time for the work to be done in order to meet the deadline. If possible, use a designated space which is just for school work.

2



Check the timetable and pack your bag the night before. Try to avoid the morning rush of looking for parts of a PE kit or ingredients for a Food Technology lesson!

The sooner that routines are established, it should become less stressful for all of you and will encourage our students to become more successful and independent.



School Uniform

We believe that the wearing of a uniform helps students feel they belong and encourages a sense of pride in the school. We ask all parents/carers to support us in ensuring that the correct school uniform is worn and that everything is clearly labelled.



Plain white blouse or shirt



The Polesworth School burgundy blazer with school badge



The Polesworth School clip on House tie



Optional plain knit black v-neck pullover with school badge



Plain black trousers



Or optional plain black school skirt with school badge. No other skirts other than the school skirt are acceptable.



Plain black sensible shoes- not boots or trainers



An outdoor coat or jacket

(Not a sweatshirt, hoodie or tracksuit top. Any jacket must have full length opening).



Blazers, jumpers and House ties, like our PE kits, are available from our online supplier at:

<https://www.yourschoolwear.co.uk>. Uniform can either be purchased online or through local stores, providing they adhere to our uniform policy.

- The wearing of jewellery is discouraged. Only one small stud earring in each earlobe is allowed.
- Rings should be limited to one ring on each hand.
 - Nose studs and other facial piercings are not permitted.
- We do not allow extremes of hairstyle or make-up as we do not believe they are appropriate in a school which expects high standards of appearance – the Headteacher reserves the right to decide what is 'extreme'.
 - False eyelashes and nails are not allowed.
 - Only natural coloured nail varnish is allowed.



Equipment for school

A student's main school bag must be large enough to properly carry an A4 ring binder. Smaller bags are not appropriate as a main school bag. 'Handbag' or 'purse' type bags are not appropriate. Every student should have the following:



- Two pens
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Rubber
- Compass, protractor and calculator
- An A4 hardback sketchbook for Art (available on the school shop on the website)
- **Two aprons for technology**, these can be purchased once they have started at the school.



Students are free to bring any other stationery that they require.

PE Kit

ALL KIT NEEDS TO BE CLEARLY LABELLED ON THE OUTSIDE OR INSIDE



The following kit should be purchased from our online supplier at: <https://www.yourschoolwear.co.uk>

- Black polo shirt with school logo
- Black fully reversible rugby shirt

The remaining kit may be purchased independently as follows:

- Plain black shorts (logo shorts available)
- Plain black football socks
- Towel
- Trainers
- Football boots
- Shinpads
- Gumshield
- Plain black thermals that can be worn under PE kit
- Gloves and hat for wintertime

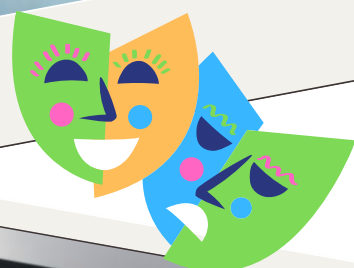


All students are required to bring the correct kit to their PE lesson even if they have a note to be excused. This will allow excused students to assist in the lesson with tasks such as coaching, officiating, setting up of equipment and assisting the teacher with tasks such as measuring and timing. If a student does not bring their own kit they will be loaned kit from school supplies. Should a student refuse to borrow kit, even with a note, they will be sanctioned via the departmental system. Any pupils with long hair are expected to bring a bobble to every PE lesson to tie their hair back.



The Curriculum & times of the day

All students in Year 7 will be taught a core of 13 subjects – English, Maths, Science, French or German, Religious Studies, Art, Music, Drama, History, Geography, PE, ICT and Technology. There are five one hour lessons a day over a two-week timetable.



Access to the main school is through our automatic gates straight ahead as you arrive on site. If students are late, they will need to sign in at Reception which is just on the right before the automatic gates. A member of staff will then open pedestrian access for the student.



Important Information

100%

Attendance

Facts

The law states that all young people must attend school all day, every day unless they are ill, until they reach the legal leaving age. Absence obviously makes it difficult to keep up with lessons. Students who have been away must make every effort to catch up with the work but copying up is not the same as being taught. We work hard to encourage attendance and will notify you if your son/daughter's attendance falls below 96%.

- Ten days holiday leave each year equates to over two terms of education missed.
- Fifteen minutes late each day equates to one year of education missed.
- One half a day per week missed in Year 10 & 11 can mean the loss of one full grade for every GCSE taken.
- 90% attendance is the equivalent of missing one-half day of school every week.
- One day a week absence is the equivalent, over a school career, of nearly two and a half whole years of education missed.

It is important that parents/carers and the school are aware of student absences in view of child safety and truancy. In order to support this, the school uses the following procedure:

1

We request that parents/carers phone or email the school before 8.45am on the first day of absence, with the reason for absence and if possible, details of how long the absence is likely to last.

2

The school uses an automatic communication system for student absence. The system will contact parents/carers directly if a student is marked absent during Period 1 and school has not been informed of a reason for the absence.

3

This automatic system will ensure that parents/carers are aware of student absences and that school is assured that absent students are safe.

4

If our Attendance Clerk is not able to contact parents/carers and there has been no message from home, then an absence note is required.

5

If you know about an absence in advance (e.g. hospital or dental appointments), please inform your child's Tutor in writing or contact our Attendance Clerk, before the day. The school has the support of the Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) who will visit homes in the event of problems with attendance.

The most recent Government regulations on attendance state that students may only legitimately be away from school if they are ill. Other reasons are recorded as 'unauthorised absences.'

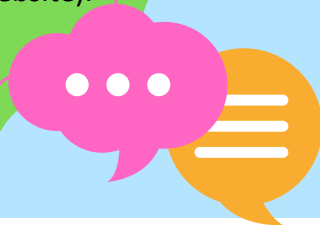
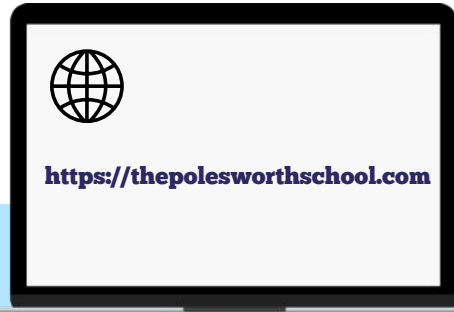
School phone number: 01827 702205

School Attendance email: attendance@thepolesworthschool.com



Holidays in Term Time

The government rules of holidays in term time have been tightened up considerably. Any leave in term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. A request for any leave must be made in writing to the Head of School a minimum of six weeks prior to the proposed absence. A leave of absence form must also be completed (available on the school website).



Bullying

Bullying is defined as 'a persistent, deliberate attempt to hurt or humiliate someone'. At The Polesworth School we do everything we can to prevent bullying, working on the following principles:

- All bullying is unacceptable – every member of our school community should be treated with respect.
- Bullying is a whole school issue – every member of the school is responsible for preventing bullying.
- All reports of bullying will be taken seriously.
- Victims will be helped and supported. Bully mentoring is a peer mentoring process, involving a group of Upper School students who are trained to help and support students who feel they are being bullied. We also have a school youth worker.
- 'It was only a game/accident' or 'we were only joking' will not be accepted as explanations of what happened.
- Bullies will be dealt with in the way it is felt will best resolve the problem, the emphasis being on effecting a change in their behaviour.
- A central record will be kept of all the reports of bullying, including racist, homophobic and sexist bullying, giving details of the problem and the outcomes for future reference.
- Students will be encouraged to tell if they know about an incident of bullying or other unacceptable behaviour. They will be helped to feel safe in the knowledge that no more bullying will occur as any repetition would be dealt with much more seriously.
- The School Counselling and Advisory Service is also used to help with support. Students should see their Head of House for a referral. Alternatively, they can seek support anonymously if they prefer, through our confidential email support service at: www.workingtogether@thepolesworthschool.com

Bullying is deliberate hurtful behaviour which is repeated over time. It usually involves a real or perceived imbalance of power or strength. Examples of bullying behaviour include: name-calling, picking a fight, taking another's belongings, spreading rumours or gossip, ganging up on or isolating someone, writing graffiti about someone, sending threatening text messages, using social networking sites to intimidate others. Other forms of bullying include that which is racist, sexist, faith-based, sexual, homophobic, transphobic or linked to a disability or Special Educational Need.



What should you do?

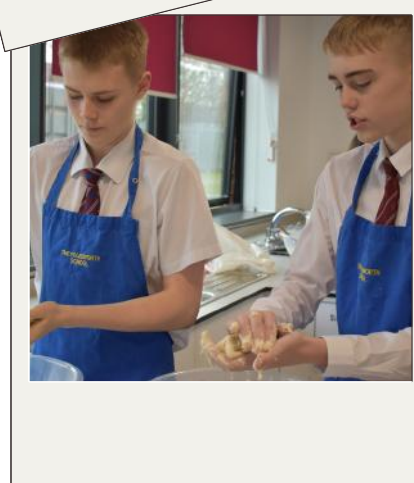
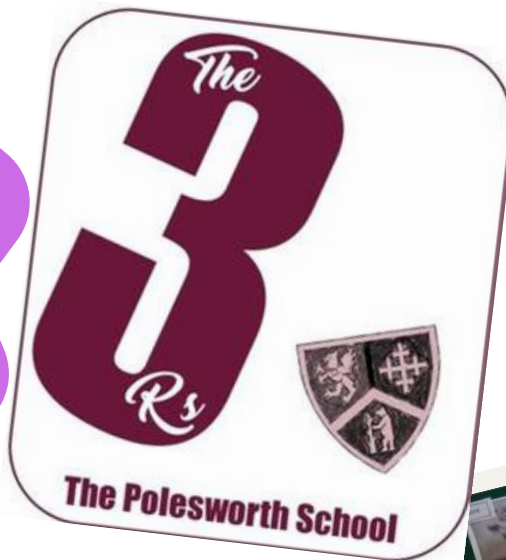
Students – If you feel you are being bullied, tell someone: a friend, a parent/carer, a peer-mentor, a teacher, a lunchtime supervisor....and talk the next step through with them. If you know or suspect that someone is being bullied, tell an adult in school so that it can be followed up officially. You will be listened to and provided it is best for you, what you say will be kept confidential to a small number of people.

Parents/carers – If you know or suspect that your child is being bullied, tell the Head of Year or a Behaviour Manager as soon as possible – unless we know, we cannot do anything to help. Finding a permanent solution may take time; if the problem is not fully resolved in the first instance it is important that you keep coming back to us. Similarly, if another parent/carer comes to you worried about their child being bullied and saying 'nothing is being done', please encourage them to come into school and talk about it.



Behaviour

Be Ready
Be Respectful
Be Responsible



1

BE READY

- Sit in the seat you have been assigned by your teacher.
- Enter the lesson and depart the lesson in an orderly manner.
- Complete your 'Do Now' or 'Recall Task' promptly once you have entered the room.
- Follow your teacher's instructions and try to answer questions.
- Complete tasks set.
- Ask for support if you need it.
- Complete all homework tasks.

2

BE RESPECTFUL

- Respect others by listening when they are speaking.
- Do not distract others.
- Support your peers and cooperate with others.
- Think carefully about your choice of language.
- Look after your own belongings and respect those of other people.
- Do not abuse any school property.
- Help keep the school site and the surrounding streets attractive by not dropping litter.
- On your walk home and on buses you must behave appropriately and show respect for property and members of the community.

3

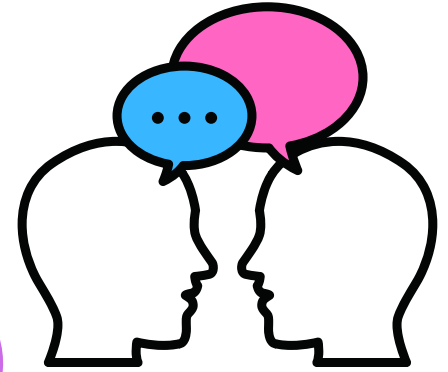
BE RESPONSIBLE AND SAFE

- Complete all homework tasks.
- You may choose to bring items to school for your personal convenience or recreational use at break or lunchtime – e.g. phones, iPods etc. These devices should be switched off in lessons and should not be visible – this includes earphones attached to mobile phones or iPods.
- Do not bring dangerous items to school, such as matches, knives or fireworks. Only use water-based correction fluid.
- If you bring medication to school, hand it in to Reception in Student Services (Nethersole Building).
- Wheel your bicycle on the school grounds and always wear a helmet on the road.
- Clear your table and dispose of litter when you have eaten in the canteen.
- Report Graffiti or damage to school property.
- Finish eating and drinking before going to lessons. You may drink bottled water during lessons, except in areas such as Science labs and computer rooms. Dispose of any chewing gum properly, before you go into the school buildings.
- Smoking/vaping is not allowed on school premises or buses. Students should not smoke on the way to and from school. Smoking materials will be disposed of if found in school.



Detentions

To emphasise that we expect high standards of punctuality, behaviour and work, students are sometimes detained after school. Students must go to the room of the member of staff who set the detention at the end of the school day. Students will be registered, and the member of staff taking the detention will enable a restorative conversation and discuss the behaviours that have led to the detention. The school will inform parents/carers of the detention through our text messaging service. The text message will be sent the afternoon prior to the detention to allow for the arrangement of transport home if necessary. Detention dates are non-negotiable – if a student fails to attend a detention there is an escalation process in place. Detentions are not given lightly, and we expect our students to work hard and behave sensibly so that there is no need for such serious sanctions to be given. We appreciate your support with this and would expect further sanctions to be issued at home.

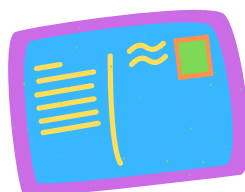


Rewards



Our school community places a great emphasis on praise to inspire a love for learning. We reward and reinforce good work and behaviour. Our students are praised and rewarded in a variety of ways, such as being invited to House Celebration Brunches, being celebrated in year assemblies, meeting with the Headteacher or member of Senior Leadership and/or receiving a postcard from their teacher or tutor. One of the ways in which we encourage praise is through our points-based reward system. Teachers award students for a range of commendable reasons such as:

- Consistently working hard
- Excellent effort
- Good behaviour
- Positive attitude
- Excellent progress



Students can save their points and spend them on desirable prizes such as shopping vouchers, lunchtime queue jump etc. If a student achieves 100% attendance in a week, they will automatically receive points which can be spent via the My Child website.



Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Support Team is housed in Nethersole Building where we deal with all sorts of student needs. The team consists of Heads of Year, the Attendance Team and Pastoral Support Officers. Their roles include:

- Investigating all referrals, interviewing students, and liaising with parents/carers and staff.
- Resolving minor student conflicts and other everyday behavioural issues, providing guidance and support, and reporting back to parents/carers and staff.
- Supporting students and families in cases of long-term absence from school.
- Monitoring and supporting students causing concern, meeting with parents/carers for progress reviews, where appropriate.



Our Student Support Managers are also trained counsellors who work closely with students with emotional/mental health issues. Our School Counsellor and Well-being Coordinator and Safeguarding Team are trained in Child Protection and work closely with Miss Downing, the Designated Safeguarding Lead.



Tutor Groups and The Tutor

Our pastoral care system starts with your child's Tutor. This person is arguably the most important adult with whom your child will meet at The Polesworth School.

This is the person they will see every day. To ensure continuity of care, wherever possible, a tutor will stay with the same tutor group from Year 7 to Year 13. It is intended that the tutor is the first port of call if you have any concerns or problems for which guidance and support is required. The tutor may at times get in touch, either through email or by phoning, about welfare issues – this may be about attendance concerns, behaviour issues or just a congratulatory phone call. Each year group is organised into at least 8 tutor groups and these will remain the same throughout their time at the school.





Tutor Time

Every day between 10.50am and 11.10am is Tutor Time. This is the part of the day that our students spend with their Tutor. Over the course of a week our students receive 'character' education – these sessions are largely discussion based and cover a wide variety of topics from current affairs to relationships. There will also be an assembly once a week for each year.



'The Voice'

Student Voice is an essential part in developing our school. At Polesworth, we believe that students should have a say in the running of what is, after all, their school. Every year group has four representatives who have been voted for by their whole year group. These student leaders are known as 'The Voice'. Miss Downing and Mrs Munn lead the meeting with the support of the Head Boy and the Head Girl. 'The Voice' play an active role in improving the school environment and teaching and learning. For example, all new applicants for teaching posts are also interviewed by a student panel. 'The Voice' students are easily identifiable with their badges. If students have anything they want to say about the school, they can talk to these student leaders and they will pass their comments on.

Student Leadership

There are many ways to get involved at The Polesworth School. Each year group has a committee which organises events, picks a charity for out of uniform days and represents the year group. In Year 9 and 10 there is an opportunity for a student to apply to become a prefect. Students can also apply to be members of the Student Voice and to be anti-bully mentors.