Sawtry Village Academy

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The Student Guide to Starting

YEAR 7

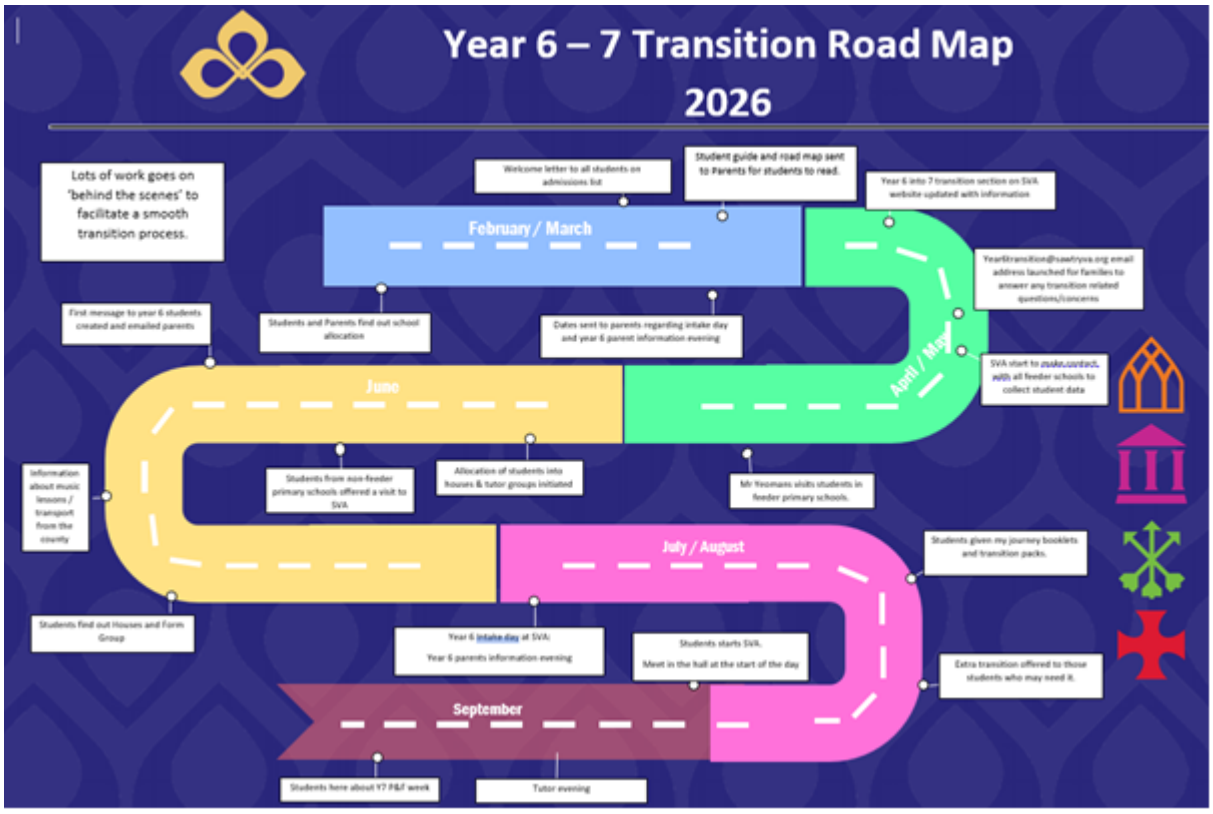
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SAWTRY VILLAGE ACADEMY



Introduction

Welcome to the Sawtry Village Academy family; we can't wait to see you in September. This handbook is the first part of an important transition from primary to secondary school. It is for students and their parents/carers and will hopefully be good to read a few times before starting at Sawtry. This handbook is part of a roadmap of transition (picture below) which also includes Mr Yeomans coming into primary schools, transition packs, intake day, parent information evening and much more. If you have any questions directly linked to this information pack, please contact: year6transition@sawtryva.org



So you are starting Year 7?

Chapter One

Any changes in your life take a bit of getting used to and joining SVA is no different. Some of the concerns I have picked up during my visits to primary schools include the following:

- **'Will I get told off for being late or if I get lost?'**

It normally takes no more than four weeks to get your bearings. There will be lots of people willing to help you in Year 7 because they know what it feels like when you join the Academy. The most important thing is to try to keep as calm as possible and ask when you are not sure about something, however silly you think it might seem. You will not be in trouble if you get lost.

- **'What if I am not with all my friends for some lessons?'**

In the first term you will get to meet lots of students with similar interests and sense of humour as you. It does not take long for friendship groups to join up and before you know it your circle of friends gets bigger and bigger.

- **'What happens if I do not understand some of the work?'**

The teachers at Sawtry Village Academy will be more than happy to help you if you need some extra explanation about something you are studying. It is important that you speak to your subject teacher or tutor if you are worried about any aspect of your learning. If it is homework that is causing stress, then ask your parents / carers to contact the Academy by writing in your student planner or to contact via the most appropriate e-mail address.

Note to Parents / Carers

From my experience the major worries that your child may have starting Year 7 relate mainly to social concerns. We have plenty of support in place at the Academy and it is vital that you or your child speak to his / her tutor if you are worried about anything.

Any concerns that need immediate attention can be flagged by contacting your child's tutor via their e-mail address, by phoning the Academy on 01487 830701. E-mail is preferable and all tutors will try to respond as soon as they can (48hrs is the aim). All tutors have a teaching role so cannot guarantee being able to come to the phone.

Chapter Two

The Journey to Sawtry Village Academy



Walking & Cycling

If you live in Sawtry this may be no different from how you went to primary school. If you choose to cycle to SVA you **must** inform your tutor. Arrangements will need to be made to store the bicycle during the day. Whether you are walking or cycling you must make sure you are here by 8.30 at the latest, whatever the weather.

By Car

If you are going to arrive by car you must not be dropped off or picked up within the yellow markings on Fen Lane. Using the main drive in a car at the end of the day is very difficult due to the number of buses that arrive and is not advisable.

By Bus

It normally takes very little time for most of you to get into the swing of catching the bus to and from the academy. The most important thing is to be at the bus stop on time in the morning. You should arrive at least ten minutes before the designated pick-up time. A 'dry run' may be required to work out what time you need to get up to get to the bus stop on time. It is very important to have a "plan B" in case the bus does not turn up for some reason.

At the end of each day a team of teachers are on bus duty to make sure you catch the correct bus. If for some reason you do miss your bus do not panic; instead report to a member of staff on bus duty who will help you to call home and make alternative transport arrangements.

If you are travelling on the public bus, you must make sure you keep your ticket safe, if it is a return, or have enough money if you need to pay for a return fare.

Keep bus passes safe as you will need them; avoid behaviour that could distract the driver and do not leave anything on the bus when you get off.

Note to Parents / Carers

There are a number of session 6 clubs / sports fixtures that run after hours. Please make sure you know which of these your child is attending to ensure travels plans are in place on the appropriate days. Students are eligible for a school bus must apply for this on the Cambridgeshire County Website.

Chapter Three

Lessons

Unlike at primary school you will move from one classroom to the next for lessons and could be taught by six different teachers per day. It normally takes a few weeks to remember teachers' names and which subjects are taught where but this is normal when you start secondary school.

You will need to bring the correct books and equipment every day, arrive promptly, unpack what you need for the lesson, settle down quickly and be ready to work.



Note to Parents / Carers

Learning is affected if books and equipment are forgotten. It is important that your child has writing pens (and spares), pencils, colouring pens / pencils and specialist equipment for lessons such as Maths. Your child will be told by the Maths teachers in the first couple of lessons exactly what this includes.

Failure to be appropriately equipped will not only lead to sub-standard work but also detentions.

PE kit should only be brought in on days when PE takes place. Unlike in many primary schools, kit cannot be left in school all week.

***TOP TIP**: Have a copy of your child's timetable displayed where they do their homework. Until they are used to the new routine it may help to unpack your child's school bag each night with them and pack only what they need for the following day.*



The Academy Day

You must be onsite for 8.30am each morning. Registration time is between 8.35am and 9.00am. Any student arriving to registration after 8.35am will be marked late.

All lessons are one hour long and split up as follows:



Lesson 1	09.00 - 10.00
Lesson 2	10.00- 11.00
Breaktime	**11.00 -11.20**
Lesson 3	11.20 - 12.20
Lesson 4	12.20 – 1.20
Lunchtime	**1.20 – 2.00**
Lesson 5	2.00 - 3.00
Session 6 (optional)	3.00 - 4.00

Rewards

If you consistently work hard in lessons or produce outstanding work you will be rewarded with Striving & Valuing marks. 50 will lead to a Bronze award, 100 to a Silver award, 150 to a Gold award and 200 for the Diamond award. You will also gain points for your House. If you work hard throughout the year and consistently show pride in your work, you could be nominated for special recognition at the end of the academic year. We also have half termly subject, behaviour and attendance rewards as well as weekly honours boards within houses. We love to celebrate student success on Facebook as well.

Homework

In year 7, students will only be set 3 or 4 pieces of homework per week. These should all be around 30mins to 45 per homework. Sparx Maths, Sparx Reader and Tassomai Science. These are all designed to support learning through practice of what already has been learnt to develop long term memory. We only set a few pieces of homework a week as we love to see Year 7 students at as many clubs as possible.

Note to Parents / Carers

We strongly recommend parents downloading the MCAS parent app and taking an interest in your child's homework, attendance, credits and behaviour. If you have any concerns about homework, please contact the subject teacher concerned as soon as possible

Chapter Four

Uniform

The first impression you make is how you look in the academy uniform. Always try to be smart in your appearance and wear only the approved items of uniform and not the latest fashion alternative.

Note to Parents / Carers

Name absolutely everything, even shoes. *Have spares just in case your son/daughter misplaces an item of uniform or PE kit. This should avoid early morning panics.*



Jewellery

You may wear a watch to make sure you are not arriving late to lessons. The academy also allows a pair of plain stud earrings (2 in each ear maximum). No other piercings, necklaces, bracelets or rings are allowed. These will be confiscated if a teacher sees you wearing them and a letter sent home.

Note to Parents / Carers.

The 'No Jewellery' rule avoids items being lost, damaged or stolen. It also avoids potential health and safety issues in practical subjects.

Make Up

Discrete make up only at the academy. If you wear excessive make-up (including nail varnish) to school, you will be sent to the House office and asked to remove it. Names are recorded of students who fail to comply with this rule and sanctions are implemented to regular offenders.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are not allowed at the academy. If you have a mobile phone and it is seen or heard by a member of staff, it will be confiscated and a letter sent home. You must produce the tear off slip from this letter to get your phone back. Parents/carers will be asked to make an appointment to collect your phone if it is confiscated more than once.

Note to Parents / Carers

The academy is particularly strict with confiscating mobile phones. Not only do they affect lessons if they go off in class, but they could also lead to distress if damaged or lost. The Academy accepts no responsibility for a phone which is lost, stolen or damaged on site.

Chapter Five

Lost Belongings

This is common for Year 7 students and potentially very expensive for parents/carers. If it becomes a persistent problem, please sit down with your tutor to work out how to look after your belongings more carefully. If an item does go missing go to the First Aid Room at break or lunchtime to see if someone has handed it in or look at the list of found items which is displayed outside the First Aid Room.

Chapter Six



Lunch Arrangements

Lunchtime is 40 minutes – 1.20pm-2.00pm.

If you bring a packed lunch, you can eat it in the Main Hall or Refectory. If you use the canteen you may have to be patient when you queue up for your food.

The academy canteen uses a cashless system. Parents / carers can pay money into an account for you, through an on-line system (MCAS). Logins will be by sent July.

Note to Parents / Carers

There is a MCAS application form in the induction pack.

Chapter Seven

Parents Evenings

The exact date is published at the start of the academic year on the Academy website. Appointments are made online to ensure parents / carers can see all of your subject teachers. It is a good idea to accompany your parents / carers so that you can hear, and respond to, comments made by teachers.

Note to Parents / Carers

We aim for 100% attendance at parents' evenings *and believe they are vital in ensuring students maximise their potential. Year 7 parents will be on the calendar in the September of the academic year. (It is usually in the summer term.) Although Parents Evenings are an important way to check your child's progress, don't wait until then if you have any immediate concerns.*

Chapter Eight

Parent/Student/School

At first, it is difficult for parents/carers to know how to get the balance right between giving you too much or not enough support in the first few weeks of secondary school. The most important thing in the first few weeks is to put aside at least ten minutes each night to discuss how the day has gone and make sure that homework is completed for each subject.

It is always good for your parents to double check your timetable and make sure you have the correct equipment each day.

Parents/students/teachers will all sign the home school agreement in September.

Parents will be able to see how many Striving and Valuing credits if they download the MCAS app as well.

Note to Parents / Carers

You know your children better than anyone and if after the first few days you are concerned about your child's behaviour or if they are having difficulties sorting out issues it is best to contact your child's tutor. The quickest way to do this is email your child's tutor. It is important for your child to understand that the school and parents work closely and together to ensure your child fulfils their potential at SVA.

Chapter Nine

Our expectations

At SVA we have high expectations of students because we care. We want students to show good behaviour and effort in lessons as we know calm and focused classes learn very well. To make our expectations very easy to remember we only have 3; **Ready, Respectful, Responsible.**



In Conclusion

I hope this booklet has been reassuring and helped to answer some of the many questions you may have at this time. It is very important to remember that this is a big step in your life - for you *and* your parents/carers. It is important to express how you feel every day to someone to ensure that concerns are sorted out as soon as possible. In no time at all you will know your way around the Academy and even be able to show next year's Year 6 students and their parents/carers around the Open Evening in October. I look forward to meeting you all in your primary schools over the coming weeks. For those of you who are out of catchment we will organise a time for you to come into school.



Mr Yeomans
Transition Coordinator