

# A Parent's Guide to Starting Year 7



## WELCOME TO STURMINSTER NEWTON HIGH SCHOOL



Your child's move from their primary school to SNHS is an exciting and significant event. Everyone has worries at this time; this is quite natural. We hope the induction programme and school visits have helped to reduce this anxiety. This booklet aims to make things a little clearer and point you in the right direction should you need more advice.

There are copies of documents and information on the school website ([www.mysnhs.net](http://www.mysnhs.net)) and your child will be able to log in and access resources which have been added by staff. Students will be logged onto the system during their first IT lesson and will be able to use the resources from then on.

Helping and encouraging your child to develop good strategies and organisational skills in Year 7 will increase their level of success in both school and their working life.

Please ensure that your child attends school regularly. Make as many appointments as possible out of school hours and avoid unnecessary absences. There is a clear link between attendance at school and levels of achievement, so please don't put them at a disadvantage.

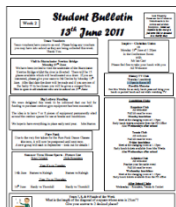


If you feel that you need to speak to the school about any concerns you may have, the first point of contact is the Form Tutor. Remember that staff teach during the working day, so please leave a message with the School Office or via the school's email: [office@mysnhs.net](mailto:office@mysnhs.net) and the member of staff will contact you as soon as possible.

## Information

Every effort is made to ensure that parents and carers know what is happening at school, in terms of events and activities as well as information about the progress a student is making.

### Student Bulletin



This is sent by email each week. It contains reminders and information for students about events happening that week (remember to keep us updated with your email address).

### Reports



During Years 7, 8 and 9 a report is produced each term. Two reports give progress grades, and are made available to view in the assessment area of SiMs Parent whilst the third includes comments from subject teachers.

### Newsletter



Published at the end of each term and sent by email or on paper. Back issues are available on the website.

### Parents' Consultation Meetings



During Year 7, there is an opportunity to meet staff. In November, parents can meet with their child's tutor to discuss how they have settled in. In June all subject teachers are available for parents' evening. These meetings normally run between 3.30 and 6.30pm via an online appointment.

The SiMs Parent App is our Parental Online Reporting System. It has been set up by the school to enable you to view the progress your child is making. It allows you to access more than just a paper version of reports.

**Details of how to sign up for Parent App will follow once your child has started at SNHS.**

**Facebook - keep up to date with school news and events on our Facebook page**



<https://www.facebook.com/Sturminster-Newton-High-School-571299693043661/>

## Communicating with School

Each student will receive a Home-School Planner on the first day of term. This is one of the most important tools that they will have in school. It is also the first point of contact between you and your child's Form Tutor.

Students will write in homework which has been set each day and parents are asked to sign it every week to show they are happy that homework has been done. The Form Tutor will also sign the Planner on a regular basis. If you have any problems or notes you wish the Form Tutor to see, you can write them in the Planner. Form Tutors can also add notes for you.



If your child cannot attend school due to illness, please phone the school office (01258 472642) before 9am on each morning of the absence. If your child is absent and the school has not been informed, you will receive a phone call concerning their absence. Alternatively, you can report an absence by sending an email to the school office - [office@mynhs.net](mailto:office@mynhs.net) or going onto Sims Parent and 'Report an Absence'.

## Being Organised in School

SNHS requires parents/carers to provide a refundable £10 cash deposit to cover the use of all books and equipment whilst at school, including a locker. The £10 is to be paid directly to the school office. Students can keep their PE kit and other items which they do not need on a daily basis in their lockers, removing books and equipment for lessons as necessary. It is strongly recommended that students use a lanyard or key ring that can be attached to their blazer. Lost locker keys can be replaced at a cost of £5. Please ensure all clothing and equipment are named. This will help to ensure that items are returned to their rightful owners. At the start of the term students will be given two copies of their timetable; one to go in their planner and the other to keep at home.

## Everyday Life

Starting secondary school is a very big change for you and your child. The school site is much bigger and there are a lot more people to get to know. Your child's first day in September will be an induction day with some timetabled lessons and tutor events.

If new students find themselves lost, older students and staff will always help them find out where they need to be and the School Office staff are there to offer assistance. You can support your child by going through their timetable with them and helping them to sort out the names of members of staff and the room numbers.



New students in Year 7 will soon learn which bus to get on and when it leaves. The Year 11 travel prefects will help, as will the duty members of staff. Bus passes should be carried at all times. Within a few weeks the school will feel much smaller and all those natural anxious feelings will disappear.

One concern for children starting secondary school is the fear of not making new friends. They will be coming from much smaller primary schools, where they know every child and teacher. However, they will soon get to know the teaching and support staff at SNHS.



Year 7 will feel much bigger than their Year 6 class. They may not be in the same tutor group or lessons as their friends from primary school, but they will soon become acquainted with other students, who all have the same concerns. They will also learn where they can go for some peace and quiet during the school day and which areas are set aside for them during breaks.

### **Homework**

Homework is a vital part of your child's education and can be very rewarding for them. They will receive a homework timetable at the start of the year, which also gives guidance on the time that they should be spending on each piece. Homework will take up more time as they go through the school.

- Homework routines need to be set up at the start of term. As a result of feedback from parents, homework in Year 7 has a staggered start.
- It is a good idea to set aside a quiet area at home, where your child can work away from distractions.
- Some ground rules may also be a good idea, such as no phone calls or TV until the homework has been finished.
- Getting down to homework soon after they come home from school means that the rest of the evening can be spent however they want.
- Ideally, homework should be done on the day it is set, not the night before it is due in.
- Before they start, look through the homework with your child so that they understand what they need to do.
- Have a second set of equipment, if possible, for use with homework, so school equipment can stay in their bags ready for school the next day.
- Encourage them to ask during or after the lesson if they have not understood the homework set. It is too late once they get home.
- Encourage them to take pride in their homework and present it neatly and clearly.
- Be wary of excuses for not having homework.
- If they have been working for the set time, but are still struggling, allow them to stop and write a note to the teacher in the Home-School Planner.



## Remember:

If you have any queries, contact your child's Form Tutor via the front office, or email.

Sometimes it's hard to achieve the right balance with your child; being supportive might be seen as fussing, leaving them to do things by themselves may look like not caring. It can also be difficult to know when to contact the school; do you phone the school every time your child falls out with their friend, or let things carry on because you don't want to interfere?

These decisions can be made much easier by talking about school to your child. This will give you a good idea about how your child is coping with school and their work. You will then be in a good position to know when to contact the school.

You know your own child best and if they are constantly upset about something in school, then it is probably better to make contact with the school sooner rather than later. However, there are some very common problems faced by students and helping them to come to their own solutions is better in the long run:-

- Falling out with friends often happens when children change school and new friendships are made. Advice is useful, but don't over-react; most friendship issues are resolved without adult help.
- Problems in particular lessons could occur. Try to find out if the difficulty lies with the subject or a particular teacher. If they are finding the work hard, try to spend some time helping them. If it is the member of staff, remind them that everyone is an individual and that they all have their own teaching styles.

Good routines and practices set in place in Year 7 will be invaluable as your child progresses up the school.

More useful information for parents can be found on our website:

<https://www.mysnhs.net/transition-to-snhs>

## Equipment

Your child will need:

- Ink Pen
- Colouring Pencils
- Pencils
- Rubber
- Ruler
- Scientific Calculator
- Purple Pen
- Sharpener
- Protractor
- Compass
- Glue Stick
- Plastic Wallets



Equipment both at home and school needs to be well organised. Encourage your child to have a specific place for school books (and library books), preferably where they do their homework, so that belongings do not get spread around the house. At school, sensible use of their lockers should help them to always know where their belongings are.

Students need to know what equipment is required for each lesson (e.g. maths: ruler, compass, calculator) and ensure that they bring in the required equipment on the right days.

Get your child into the routine of emptying their bags daily, so that they can organise their homework and give you any letters or notes from school.

## What is the school doing about bullying?

We know that bullying sometimes happens; we work very hard to prevent it and to deal with it well when it does happen.

We have an anti-bullying policy. One of our preventative measures is to teach students about bullying - what it is, the effect it has on those who are bullied, the reasons that people bully and what to do if they are bullied or know that bullying is going on.

This work will be part of both the personal, social and health education (PSHE) and the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) curriculum. We also do a lot of work on bullying during National Anti-Bullying Week which takes place at the end of November.

This work helps us to stop bullying happening by:

- Making sure that all pupils and adults mean the same thing when they talk about bullying.
- Helping pupils to understand how bullying feels for the person being bullied.
- Making sure that all pupils feel confident about telling an adult when they know that bullying is going on.
- Making sure that all pupils know exactly what to do if they are being bullied and to feel confident that something will be done to stop it.
- Helping pupils enjoy, celebrate and respect the ways we are all different and to feel good about themselves.



### Quick Checklist: What bullying is (and isn't)

At Secondary School your child will learn that bullying:

- Goes on for a while or happens regularly.
- Is deliberate; the other person wants to hurt, humiliate or harm the target.
- Involves someone (or several people) who are stronger in some way than the person being bullied. The person doing the bullying has more power; they are older, stronger, there are more of them or they have some 'hold' over the target (e.g. they know a secret about them).



Because these three things have to happen together for something to be called 'bullying', **they will learn that bullying is not:**

- A one-off fight or argument.
- A friend sometimes being nasty.
- An argument with a friend.

