

# BIG SCHOOL - BIG QUESTIONS



## Where will I go on my first day?

It's your first day at St Benedict's and often students biggest concern is "I will not know where to go", please do not worry, when you arrive on that first morning in September, there will be lots of staff outside to welcome you and ensure you find your way to the correct place.

Students can arrive by bus, by car or may choose to walk to school, either way you will arrive on site via the main pathway at the front of Campus Whitehaven. Our student entrance is at the rear of the building, therefore staff will be outside school, at the main entrance, on the walkway and around the playground area to welcome you and point you in the right direction.



On that first morning, you will spend an extended period with your form tutor, they will use this time to get to know you, take you on a tour of the school, answer any questions you have and generally ensure you are happy and settled. They will also give you a copy of your school timetable, will talk you through how the school day operates, the different lessons you will have and the arrangements for break and lunch times.

At the end of the school day, buses will arrive and collect students from the same layby at the front of school, students who walk home can leave site via the footpath and onto Red Lonning.

We would ask parents who are collecting their child by car to be considerate of others and not block the driveway, our school gates will open 45 minutes before the end of the school day.

## What will I wear?

### School uniform

Our students are always extremely smart, we place the highest regard on your personal presentation, and the way you wear our uniform. Please read carefully our uniform policy outlined below to ensure you too are dressed to impress!



All students **must** wear full school uniform, as described below and pictured above:

- School tie - traditional or clip-on
- Navy school trousers (**no leggings, jeggings, jeans, track suit bottoms, joggers - not tight material**)
- Navy school skirt: A-line (**no more than 5cm above the knee and not rolled**). Belts on skirts are not allowed.
- Footwear should be flat and entirely black in appearance, Dr Martens with yellow stitching are allowed (no boots/sandals)
- Dark blue/black belt (optional item). If students choose to wear a belt with trousers, the belt should be a thin / narrow belt, no wider than 4cms, be plain in appearance with an unadorned buckle.

Students are to **leave headphones at home** and **that no facial piercings** are allowed in school. **Students are allowed to wear one stud per ear and a watch.** No other jewellery is permitted. In addition, **nail varnish can be clear only. Acrylic/Gel/nails are not permitted.**

### PE Kit

Our compulsory school PE kit comprises of the following:

- Navy blue and red official school **polo shirt** or **rugby shirt**
- Navy blue and red official school **shorts** or a **skort** (students can choose to wear either)
- Red Football **socks**
- Suitable **trainers**

Students will have indoor and outdoor lessons and so we do allow two **additional optional extras** to be worn when the weather is not favourable:

- Navy blue/red official school hoody
- Navy blue leggings/thermals (these need to be plain **NAVY BLUE** and without large logos)

Our official uniform suppliers have visited school with their pop up shop however you can still order online from our suppliers [Slaters](#) – click here to visit their website.

## What equipment will I need?

It is important that you are organised and prepared for school, we expect each student to arrive ready to learn and having the equipment you need to be successful is a key part of this process.

You should bring an appropriate school bag each day to carry your equipment, we expect students to bring a pencil case with the following in as a minimum:

**Pens (black or blue)**

**Pencil**

**Ruler**

**Rubber**

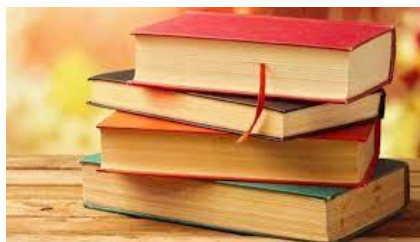
**Pencil sharpener**

**Colouring pencils**



Individual subjects may require specialist equipment for example calculators, protractors, highlighters, green/red biros but students will be told of this in advance and not expected to have them from day one.

We also require students as part of their equipment to bring a **reading book** of their choice to school. We have set private and paired reading times timetabled into the year 7 tutor programme.



The Maths department require students to have a scientific calculator, we recommend the below calculator as it has everything they will need to take them through both KS3 and KS4

Calculators can be purchased directly from school at cost price and are available to pre-order via parent pay for collection in September.



Your form tutors will check each morning you are fully equipped for the day, it is helpful if parents can support us in ensuring your child is prepared and ready to learn.



## Mobile Phones

Students may bring their mobile phones to school, however this is at their own risk and school will not take responsibility for any damage to or loss of these items.



Mobile phones are not to be used during lesson time for personal/social reasons. If this is the case the member of staff may ask for the phone, it will be kept on their desk for the remainder of the lesson, if the problem is persistent a mobile phone may be taken to the school office and kept safe until a parent/Carer can come to collect.

There are however occasions where staff may permit the use of a mobile phone in lessons as a tool for learning, students must at all times adhere to the instructions set out by the individual teacher around the use of phones in these circumstances.

Mobile phones should **not** be used in the corridors or on the staircases, they can be used at break and lunch in designated areas but we do not permit them to make phone calls and earphones should not be worn.

Finally we would encourage students to **“be kind”** at all times in respect of using social media.

## Will I know anyone?

Over 1100 pupils make up our St Benedict's student community, over 200 of which will be part of our Year 7 group. Some of you may be transferring from large primary schools and will therefore know many other Year 7 students. Others will be coming from smaller primaries, and will not have as many familiar faces in September. Either way our Year 7 pastoral team work extremely hard and are on hand to help ensure all students settle quickly into secondary school. We understand the importance of students feeling happy, safe and having a good social network, form tutors will help you get to know other students and make friends.

So whether you know one person or a hundred people, whether you are in a tutor group with ten friends or one friend, your first year at secondary school is as a fantastic opportunity to make new friends, mix in different social circles and get involved in activities or clubs you may have never tried before.



## Which tutor group will I be in?

Your tutor group is the class you will be in for the first 15 minutes of every day, it is where we help you prepare for the day ahead, join in collective worship and are given any key information you will need to help you succeed at St. Benedict's.

We have 8 tutor groups in Year 7 they are:

- ❖ 7 Bernadette
- ❖ 7 John Paul
- ❖ 7 Bosco
- ❖ 7 Josephine
- ❖ 7 Kolbe
- ❖ 7 Carlo
- ❖ 7 Teresa
- ❖ 7 Chiara



I hope that you have completed our "Pupil Passport" via the website, on this form you have indicated some friends you would like to be placed in a tutor group with, we always aim to place you in a tutor group with **at least one** person from your list of friends.

For curriculum lessons you will not be with your tutor group; your teaching groups will be different and are not based on any friendship groups/preferences.

## What lessons will I have?

One of the biggest differences between primary and secondary school is the movement between lessons. In September you will be issued with a timetable; this divides your day up into individual lessons and indicates where you need to move to at lesson changeover.

Your timetable is a very important document and you need to get into the habit of checking it each evening to ensure your bag is packed and you are prepared for the next day's lessons.

Below is an example of our school timetable:

	08:40 — 08:55	08:55 — 09:50	09:50 — 10:45	10:45 — 11:00	11:00 — 11:55	11:55 — 12:50	12:50 — 13:35	13:35 — 14:30	14:30 — 15:25
<b>Monday</b>	Tutor	P1	P2	Break	P3	P4	Lunch	P5	P6
<b>Tuesday</b>	Tutor	P1	P2	Break	P3	P4	Lunch	P5	P6
<b>Wednesday</b>	Tutor	P1	P2	Break	P3	P4	Lunch	P5	P6
<b>Thursday</b>	Tutor	P1	P2	Break	P3	P4	Lunch	P5	
<b>Friday</b>	Tutor	P1	P2	Break	P3	P4	Lunch	P5	

The school day begins at **8.40 am** and finishes at **3.25 pm**  
(except on Thursday & Friday when the day ends at **2.30 pm**).

There is a Movement Bell at **8.38 am**. This bell is the signal for all to move to the Assembly point/Tutor Group room as appropriate in time for a prompt **8.40 am** start.

We have split breaks and lunch times an Year 7 is as follows

Morning Break is **10.45 am - 11.00 am**.

The lunch break lasts from **12.50 - 1.35 pm**.

At St. Benedict's we have 3 days (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday) where you will have 6 lessons in the day and two days (Thursday and Friday) where you will have 5 lessons.

Each day begins with either a 15 minute tutor period or Year group assembly, you will then move on to your lessons for the day, each subject lesson is 55 minutes long. We have a 15 minute break mid-morning and a 45 minutes lunch break.

In year 7 you will at some point in the week cover the following curriculum areas:

- Maths
- English
- Science
- RE
- PE
- History
- Geography
- MFL
- Art
- Music
- Computer Science
- Technology



There is a section on our website in the “Primary Transition” area which will allow you to look at the range of subjects you will cover and meet some of the staff in each subject area, there are also some examples of work you will be completing in Year 7.

I would encourage you before September to have a look around each area on the website.

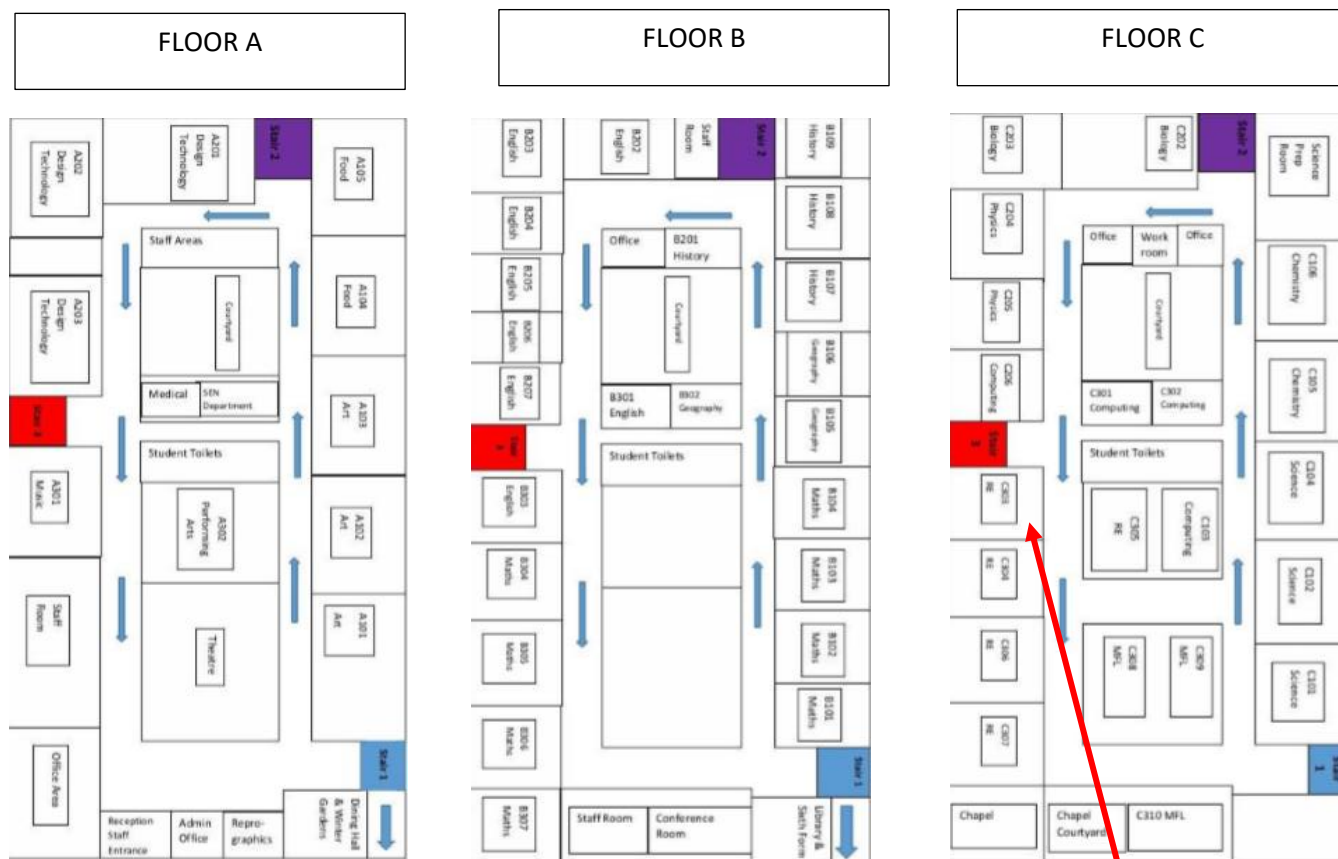
### **Will I get lost?**

One of the biggest fears for Year 6 students is getting lost; let me start by saying it is very difficult, if not impossible, to actually get physically lost!

I agree there will be times in the first few days where you may find yourself on the wrong floor or at the wrong end of the school. This is completely normal and understandable; we have staff at the entrance to all classrooms, learning mentors guiding students, sixth form students acting as prefects so any of these adults will very quickly point you in the right direction.

## Map of the school

- Divided into 3 floors (A-ground, B-middle and C-top),
- Each floor is accessible by 3 staircases (1-blue ,2-purple and 3-red)
- The classrooms are numbered depending on the floor they are situated on and proximity to a staircase, for example room B202 is on the second floor, closest to staircase 2 and 2 doors away anticlockwise from that staircase.



Room C301 is on C floor, closest to staircase 3 and 1 door away anti-clockwise

Please do not worry about finding your way around school

There are a number of staff who will be on hand to help you if ever there is a problem these people include your **class teachers**, your **Tutor**, our **Year 7 Learning Mentor**, your **Head of Year** and our **school nurse**.

## **What will I do break and lunch times?**

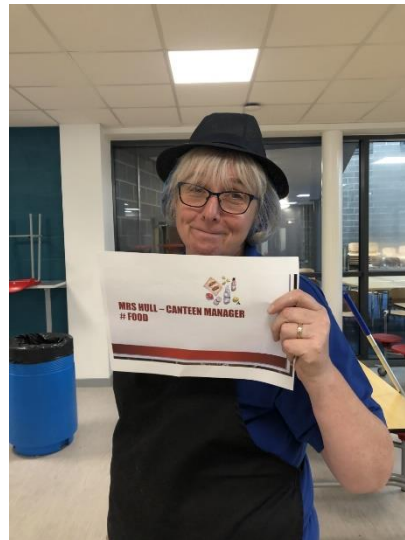
Break and lunch times are an opportunity for students to socialise with their friends or get involved with the wide range of extra-curricular activities that are on offer at St.Benedict's.

Our canteen serves a variety of meal options at lunchtime. We use a cashless catering system at St Benedict's and prior to your admission we will provide parents with details of how to register and upload money on to student accounts. We use a biometric payment system (fingerprints) or alternatively a personal identification number (PIN), children who qualify for free school meals will have their account credited each day prior to lunch service (please note this allowance can only be used for lunch service, not breakfast or break time snacks).

Students can bring packed lunches to school if they prefer and will eat them alongside their friends in the canteen. All food whether purchased or brought from home must be eaten in the canteen area, we do not allow food to be eaten in any other area of the school.

## **What will I eat?**

Our school canteen serves a range of food and drinks; there is literally something for everyone!



At lunch times students have the choice of hot or cold food there is always range of sandwiches available, hot baguettes, salads, pasta pots, jacket potatoes and a soup of the day in addition to 3 set hot meal options one of which will always be a vegetarian option.

Our canteen manager Mrs Hull and her team work closely with the school and the menu is publicised daily to the students.

Mrs Hull will also cater for any medical dietary requirement, please ensure the school are aware if your child does have any severe allergies or medical dietary requirements.

Students have access to both indoor and outdoor space at lunch times, the indoor provision is the canteen and the school theatre and students have access to a large playground area with benched seating outside.



Many departments run lunchtime clubs and activities, these range from sporting activities, music, drama, dance, art, science activities, homework club to name but a few, students don't have to sign up for the majority of these activities it is a case of turning up at the right place at the right time and getting involved.



We are looking forward to meeting you all.

Any other questions please visit our “Primary Transition” section on our school website and send us a message via our e-mail

[transition@st-benedicts.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:transition@st-benedicts.cumbria.sch.uk)

