

# Parent Handbook

## Lower School

LEARNING FOR LIFE



Wellington  
SCHOOL



## Head of Lower School Welcome

The Lower School aims to maximise the potential of every one of its pupils. We achieve this aim with our pastoral structure, where each pupil will have a tutor and be part of a School house. The house structure promotes healthy competition in the Pearce Cup and the pupils will all enjoy representing their houses in a wide range of sports and activities. The competition encourages them to enhance the key attributes of teamwork, confidence and respect. These are all qualities that will prepare the pupils for their time at school and as young adults.

Our supportive and inspirational staff will always be on hand to provide guidance and encouragement as pupils start their time at Wellington School. Every pupil's happiness is paramount to their achievement. As you will soon discover, we pride ourselves on our pastoral care and excellent teaching, all within our happy, caring school.

Wherever you are arriving from, you will soon find yourself engaged in an exciting and challenging academic curriculum and a wide range of extra-curricular activities. With such outstanding opportunities, we expect all the pupils to have a 'give it a go' attitude. When they arrive, the pupils should take every opportunity to try something new, to make new friends and to challenge themselves.

We look forward to a wonderful time together.



**Head of Lower School**

**Jason Swarbrick**

# First Steps

There are several induction events designed to settle the pupils in quickly and make friends for life!

In addition, a variety of events and opportunities will be available for you to come into School and meet parents and staff and new friends over the coming term.

## Pre-season sport

We run some pre-season session in the weeks before the start of term. You will receive information about pre-season training over the coming weeks.

## Introduction to Year 7

In the third week of term, we invite parents to come into school for a chance to meet your child's tutor at the "Introduction to Year 7 Evening". It is also a chance to meet some of the other parents you will be standing on a touchline with for the next 7 years!

## Camping

In the first few weeks of term, we all go camping! Staff and pupils all have a chance to get to know each other, enjoy the beautiful Somerset countryside and cook sausages!

## Open Evening

After a few weeks, we ask the pupils to bring their parents into school. This is a chance for parents to see where the lessons take place, where their children meet their friends, meet some teachers and become more familiar with the School.

## Parents' Evening

Regular Parents' Evenings are held throughout the year to provide an opportunity to talk to individual subject teachers about each pupil's progress.

## Carol Service

A chance to join staff and our fabulous Chapel Choir for a delightful seasonal celebration, followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

## **Sports Fixtures**

We do hope you will come along and support the various teams at home and away matches where possible. They are always very social and enjoyable event and a chance to meet other parents.

## **Drama and Concerts**

There are frequent drama productions and musical concerts, which give everyone the chance to perform and parents are always most welcome.

## **Head's Open Forums**

The Head holds regular open forums for parents to come along, hear from him and raise any queries they may have about any aspect of school life.

## **The Friends of Wellington School**

We are fortunate to have a very active and positive Friends groups, which comprises parents, teachers, ex-parents and individuals from the local community who wish to be involved. They hold many fund-raising and social events, and always meet on the first Friday of each month in the Café for cake, chat and camaraderie. You are warmly invited to join them in any capacity.



# Communication

## My School Portal

Much of the information about your child and communication with the School is done through My School Portal. This will have your child's timetable, grades, reports, activities and much more. You will be sent details of how to sign up – it is an excellent tool for keeping track of everything.

## Calendar

A full school calendar is on the website and on My School Portal, so you can plan events, holidays and school commitments. We also produce a termly diary which lists all school activities, fixtures, trips, contact details, staff, parents' meetings and all planned events for the term – it is a fabulously useful little booklet!

## Marketing and Admissions

You will always be able to get hold of someone to answer any questions you may have. You have, so far been dealing with the Marketing and Admissions team and they will continue to guide you until you join the School...and beyond.

[admissions@wellington-school.org.uk](mailto:admissions@wellington-school.org.uk)

## Tutors and Head of Year

Pupils are put into tutor groups comprising around 12-15 children. Tutors will be the first port of call for any queries, concerns, questions or conversations – they will see you child daily and will know any issues arising, the background and the context. They play a crucial role in overseeing pastoral care and academic progress.

A separate Head of Year for both Year 7 and 8 will have general oversight of all activities within that year group who will closely monitor day-to-day progress. Both years sit within the Lower School, which is headed up by a Head of Lower School,. The Lower School meets regularly for assemblies, has shared common rooms and is a tight-knit community.

## Requesting Absence

All requests for absence from School (excluding medical issues) must be made in writing. If it is for one day, this should come to Mr Swarbrick, [j.swarbrick@wellington-school.org.uk](mailto:j.swarbrick@wellington-school.org.uk) or if more than one day, then it should come to the Headmaster, [headmastersoffice@wellington-school.org.uk](mailto:headmastersoffice@wellington-school.org.uk)

## General enquiries

The office is staffed from 7.45am – 5.30pm and the staff will be pleased to assist you with any queries or if you need to get hold of any member of staff.

[enquiries@wellington-school.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@wellington-school.org.uk)

01823 668800

# Academic

## Prep (Homework)

You will have Prep to do every day.

Often there is time to do some prep at school. The best place for this is in the library which is quiet and supervised; the computer room is also close by should you need it. If it is taking significantly longer than the time given to complete all prep set for one evening, you need to let your teacher or tutor know.

## Academic Work

Grades are given every half term - dates of when grades are due are put in the school diary. They are also published on the School Portal. They are a good way to see how you are progressing. You can also be awarded merits, usually for excellent work, effort and for behaviour.

## Learning Support

We have a fantastic learning support department, and pupils requiring individual support will have their needs assessed and a plan created.

## Grades tracking/Report Cards

Grades are issued in each subject every 5 weeks. Conversations will be had with tutors if there is a cause for concern. Reports are issued and there is a Parents Evening at the end of the Autumn and Summer terms.

If there is persistent lack of effort, pupils may be given a report card which needs to be signed by the tutor daily to ensure focus.

## Rewards

Merits and super merits are regularly given to encourage pupils and these will be issued through an email.

## Class structures

All pupils in the Lower School are put into a class, and they take all their lessons in that class (with the exception of Maths, for which they are in sets).

# Activities

## After School Activities

A wide range of clubs and after school activities are available to all pupils in the Lower School. You sign up to activities through SOCS, and your tutor will help you.

Activities run from 4:00pm until 4:45pm each day and enable the school to account for every pupil during that time if they are remaining at school to catch buses or waiting to be collected. In addition, there are many lunchtime activities which you can participate in.

Activities may vary slightly from term to term. Some of the clubs have limited availability so it is important to get your form in as early as possible to secure places. There is a Prep club every evening.

## Music / instrumental lessons and LAMDA

If you study an instrument or sing, you can have lessons at school. We have a wide and experienced range of visiting music teacher. You can sign up in the joining pack forms, or let your tutor know. You can also study for your LAMDA (drama) qualifications.

**When:** Once a week, in class time. The lesson will be in a different period each week.

**Where:** George Corner Music School (Music) – Southside (LAMDA)

**How:** You will be told by the Music/ Drama Departments when your next lesson is. There are also notice boards with timetables in the Music School and outside the Drama office - check the boards regularly.

**Procedure:** Ask permission from the teachers whose lessons you are going to miss, at least 24 hours in advance. Make sure you catch up with any missed work.

## Sport and Fixtures

Team coaches will give everyone the chance to grasp the basics and inter-school fixtures are arranged for pupils in all age groups. We have a reputation to uphold and want the very best participants in the 'A' teams. However, we try to cater for all skill levels and in the Lower School there are A, B & C teams for most sports.

If you are picked to be part of a team you are representing the school. You need to show the right level of commitment and attend practice sessions and matches when asked.

Should you be unable to attend a practice, meeting or a match for any reason please let the team coach or relevant teacher know as soon as possible so that a replacement can be found.



## Matches

### Please remember that School matches on Saturday take priority over social activities

- ⚽ Make sure you know if you have a match and all of the relevant details.
- ⚽ Look at your calendar and the notice boards. Make sure you can play and have the right equipment. Tell your coach as soon as possible if you have a problem.
- ⚽ Make sure your parents know you are in a match especially if it is an away game and you will need to be collected at an unusual time.
- ⚽ If you are playing at home look after your guests right up to the point they go home and sit with them at tea.
- ⚽ If you have an away game, be good guests.
- ⚽ Listen to your coach's instructions.
- ⚽ Play your hardest (even if things aren't going your way) and support your team mates.
- ⚽ Never retaliate or argue with the referee/umpire. Remember she/he is right, even if she/he is wrong!
- ⚽ You are representing the school so be a good ambassador!

Don't forget, there are match teas for parents at home matches after the games and the café is open for you to grab a much-needed coffee before, or during the matches. Match teas at Wellington are legendary and a fabulous time to meet other parents and socialise.

The activities are designed to stimulate interest and allow pupils to make the most of opportunities. We strongly encourage all pupils to participate in as many activities as possible, but we do not want them to be overloaded! If you feel there is too much going on and the pressure is mounting, or if there are clashes between activities, please speak to your tutor who will sort it out – we do not expect pupils to have been caught in the middle of departmental demands on their time.



# The School Day

8:25am Registration & Tutor time (arrive ready for a prompt start at 8.30am)

(One morning each week is Chapel, and one morning an Assembly).

Period 1

Period 2

Break

Period 3

Lower School Lunch

Activities /Practices/Rehearsals

Period 4

Period 5

3:45pm Activities/Practices/Rehearsals

5:00pm. School buses leave from the Sports Centre car park

Years 7 and 8 have games on Wednesday afternoon. They start in lesson time and sometimes do not finish until 4:30pm.



# Logistics

## Buses, start of the day

If you are coming on the bus, they arrive around 8.15am down at the Sports Centre. If you are being dropped off, the Quad or the “drop-off zone” by the zebra crossing are the best places to be. Make your way to the House Rooms to meet your friends, put your stuff in your locker – then you will go to either a tutor meeting, a house meeting on Chapel depending on the day. You will then go into your first lesson in your class groups.

## Lost Property

If you lose anything, the cleaners scoop it up and take it to a very well organised room called “The Pound”. If it is labelled, it will be sorted into houses and you can go and look to see if your items are there.

## Lunch

Most pupils have school lunches – this is all enjoyed together in the Dining Room, along with the staff. Lower School pupils go in first! If you do not want to have school lunches, you can bring a packed lunch which will be eaten in the Dining Room. The catering team provide for all diets, allergies, tastes and religions – so there will always be something delicious for you!

## Mobile Devices

Pupils are not permitted to use mobile devices at school. We completely understand that they may need to contact parents, so they can bring them in and use them between 3.45 and 4pm if necessary, but we encourage pupils to chat to each other and communicate directly, rather than via a device.

We also strongly advise parents not to allow devices in bedrooms or after 7.30pm at night.

## Common rooms

We have a delightfully large and airy social space, which is used by all Year 7 and 8 pupils. There are always members of the Lower School staff team on duty and we very often have visits from our Sixth Form mentors who engage with the pupils, advise and guide them in school matters.

## Lockers and padlocks

All pupils have a locker to store their equipment, bags and books. They will need to bring in a padlock with a combination or 2 keys (we keep one – just in case it gets lost!).

## **Café**

The café is open at break time, lunch time and after school and sells delicious home-made cakes, savouries, smoothies, drinks and snacks. Pupils can bring in money for the café.

## **Access to building – wristbands**

All pupils will be given a wristband which gives them access to the buildings they need to get into (so boarders will have different access abilities). If they are lost, there will be a £5 charge for a replacement. They are individually coded, so if one is found, we know who it belongs to.

## **Buses – End of the Day**

All buses leave at 5pm from the Sports Centre.  
Activities finish at 4.45, to allow time to collect possessions and get to the bus in time.

## **Illness**

If your child is unwell and will not be attending school, you need to notify us by telephone or email. 01823 668800 [attendance@wellington-school.org.uk](mailto:attendance@wellington-school.org.uk)

## **Medical Appointments**

Please notify the tutor that there is an appointment, and sign in and out at Reception

## **Health Centre**

If you feel unwell whilst you are in school, then the Health Centre is the place to go. The nurse will call your parents if they think it is necessary.

## **Uniform**

All uniform is supplied by SchoolBlazer <https://www.schoolblazer.com/> who will also label items for you. They have an excellent "intelligent-sizing" system and a good exchange / return service if items are the wrong size.

In addition, we do have some second-hand uniform, and have regular sales, which we will notify parents of. Pupils joining us from the Prep School are permitted to wear their WPS blazer in Year 7.

## Lower School Staff



**Mr Swarbrick: Head of Lower School  
& Year 7**



**Mr House: Head of Year 8**

## **School Houses**

All houses are co-educational and run throughout the School from Year 7 to the Sixth Form.

Various competitions will take place throughout the school year which will involve either the whole House or a select group. Not all House activities are 'sport' based and all House members will get involved in fund-raising and other engaging group activities.

Older students will mentor the younger ones and welcome them into the School and their House.

The tutors play a crucial role in overseeing pastoral care and academic progress - if you have any problems then he/she is the first person you should talk to. You will have regular sessions with your tutors and your house each week.

There is also a Head of Year 7 and Year 8 who will closely monitor day-to-day progress and be an essential point of contact.

## Our Houses

### Hardwick

History

Named after OW Duncan Hardwick who had a distinguished war record and was Chairman of the *Governors*

*House Captain*

*Finlay Chant*



### Oak

History

Named to continue the tree theme which started with The Willows (Senior Boys Boarding House)

*House Captain*

*Izzy Clist*



### Price's

History

Named after the Price Brothers (which then became Relyon).

House Captain

Georgia Wheeler



### Fox's

History

Named after local manufacturing family who have long been associated with and supported the School

*House Captain*

*Lara Moulding*



### Gillard's

History

Named after OW Frank Gillard, famous BBS radio war correspondent and Head of BBC and Chair of School Governors

*House Captain*

*Harriet Joseph-Sanders*



### Richards

History

Named after two OW brothers, WHV Richards and AH Richards. WHV was an Air Commodore and AH was in charge of Wellington Division of the County Surveyors Dept.

*House Captain*

*Isabella Vallance*



## Heads of Houses



**Hardwick**  
*Mrs Georgia Michael*  
*Drama Teacher*



**Oak**  
*Miss Sarah Middleton*  
*French & German Teacher*



**Fox's**  
*Mr Ben Elkins*  
*RS Teacher*



**Price's**  
*Mrs Kelley Bishop*  
*English Teacher*



**Gillard's**  
*Mr Toby Sampson*  
*Head of Hockey*



**Richards**  
*Mr James Bird*  
*Geography Teacher*

## What if...?

- **...I lose something**
  - ❖ Ask a friend to help you try to find it or see your House Tutor/Housestaff. If the item has been found by someone else and was named it will be handed to your Housemaster/mistress. If it was not named it will be sent to the Pound (details of when the Pound is open is available from the School Office)
- **...I forgot something (a book or games kit)**
  - ❖ See the teacher. Check with the office - it may have been brought in by parents
- **...I am unhappy about something**
  - Talk to a friend or your House tutor/Housestaff and then speak to your parents when you get home
- **...I am feeling ill**
  - ❖ Go to the Health Centre but tell someone you are going first. If you are in a lesson, ask the teacher
- **...I am late for registration**
  - ❖ Go to the School office and sign in and then go to wherever you should be.
- **...I need to find a member of staff**
  - ❖ Go to Reception - someone will be there to help you





# Rules and Advice

## Our Values



- ❖ We're kind...
- ❖ and compassionate
- ❖ We treat everyone as equals
- ❖ We're empathetic
- ❖ We're inclusive....
- ❖ and we believe in being a strong community
- ❖ We're courteous
- ❖ We value honesty...
- ❖ and integrity
- ❖ We're resilient when the going gets tough...
- ❖ and we show courage in the face of adversity
- ❖ We like to participate and contribute
- ❖ We are curious about the world around us
- ❖ We trust each other to do the right thing
- ❖ We're committed to the environment
- ❖ ...and we're optimistic about the road ahead!

## Bullying

Bullying is unkind behaviour. It may be physical, name calling or being left out of activities on a regular basis. If someone is unkind to you try to ignore it. Bullies love to get a reaction. If it is an isolated incident, don't take it too personally as it's probably just because somebody is having a bad day. If it continues you must speak to an adult - your parents or a teacher. Bullying is something you should not have to put up with and in most cases talking to an adult will result in the bullying stopping.



# The Word on the Street...

## What the Good School Guide Says About Us...

- ✓ There's no doubting its strong sense of identity; we've rarely encountered such ardent loyalty from both students and parents.
- ✓ It's the sort of school where it's cool to work hard and make something of yourself.
- ✓ Wellington is good at finding out what your child is good at.
- ✓ This is a meritocratic environment whose grammar school inheritance lives on.
- ✓ Sound and recently reinforced systems for pastoral care.
- ✓ Parents report rapid response to problems and feel their views count.
- ✓ Exceptional special needs provision.
- ✓ Novel approach to physical exercise - may even be trend-setting.
- ✓ Music exceptionally strong.
- ✓ Art department buzzy as can be, lots of big ambitious work in progress, everything from paint through ceramics to digital. Well impressive.
- ✓ Heaps of extracurricular activities likely to render students paralysed for choice.
- ✓ Down to earth. Punches above its weight. No sense of entitlement. Good value for money.

## What Our Parents Say About Us...

- ✓ We were made to feel as though we were being welcomed into a family.
- ✓ We knew we had found the right place within minutes of walking through the door.
- ✓ Happy, confident children in the corridors.
- ✓ We are very pleased with the way the school encourages our children to behave.
- ✓ The school's best marketing comes from the behaviour of the children.
- ✓ We feel that high standards of academic achievement have been met and are currently very pleased with the progress our children are making.
- ✓ The extra-curricular programme and pastoral care have developed and broadened significantly over the past few years.
- ✓ The Governors are extremely hard-working and I have had some really stimulating conversations with some of them. I have never seen any sign of discord.
- ✓ The school clearly runs efficiently and is a happy place for children.
- ✓ It is very reassuring knowing that our children are happy learning and growing in such a wonderful environment.
- ✓ I wouldn't change anything.
- ✓ A happy school with polite, grounded pupils who are confident and independent.
- ✓ An all-round, down-to-earth, unpretentious offering is greatly valued.

## And Finally...

### You will...

- Lose things
- Forget prep
- Have their moments
- Have a wobble
- Be tired
- Be hungry!

### But you will...

- Learn
- Laugh
- Have a great time!

You have a wonderful opportunity to try a variety of new skills and experiences. It is vital that you are receptive and able to take full advantage of the opportunities we offer - try to develop the 'Have a go' mentality!



