

Year 7 New School Year Address – Tuesday 8 September 2026

Good morning, Year 7.

So - you've done it! You have officially started Senior School.

Yesterday morning, some of you probably arrived feeling excited. Some nervous. Some of you may have felt completely confident right up until the moment you realised you didn't actually know where you were going.

But you made it through Day One, and now it's Day Two, your first rainy Senior School Day at Stonar! Today, things might already feel just a little more familiar. You know a few more faces. You've found some of your classrooms.

Hopefully, last night having a pizza party and then a welcome meeting with your parents made you feel more settled and reassured about what lies ahead. But you are still right at the beginning. You have years of Senior School ahead of you, and that means you are at the start of something really exciting, because over those years, you won't just learn lots of things...you will change. So, there is a question I'd like you to think about:

What sort of person do I want to become while I am here?

Stonar has been thinking about that question for a very long time. Our old school motto had just three words: **Sincerity. Honour. Service.**

Today, we use different words:

Work Hard. Be Kind. Get Involved. Shape the World.

Different words, but really, they are asking the same things of us.

Work Hard

That doesn't mean you have to be brilliant at everything, but it does mean that you have to try your best at everything.

There will be times when you think you're the only one in the room who doesn't understand. That's rarely likely to be the case, but it's also part of learning.

Working hard means giving things a proper go - especially when they don't come easily and working hard to engage with any support you might need.

Be Kind

This value matters enormously, particularly now. Look around you. Everyone in Year 7 is finding their feet. You might not meet your best friend in the first week of school, but that doesn't mean you should stop looking.

So, notice people.

Say hello. Include someone. Help someone who looks lost. Sit next to somebody new in La Cantina. Be the person who makes someone else's day a little easier.

Get Involved

One of the best things about starting Senior School is that there is so much you haven't tried yet. So, say "Yes" to opportunity!

Try the sport...audition for the play...join the club...sing...ride!

You might discover something you love that, right now, you don't even know you are any good at.

And don't decide too quickly what sort of person you are.

"I'm not musical."

"I'm not sporty."

"I'm no good at science."

"I could never stand on a stage."

Don't worry, there is plenty of time to surprise yourself. And finally:

Shape the World

That might sound like quite a big responsibility when you've only been in Senior School for a day, but shaping the world doesn't have to mean doing something enormous.

- You shape the world every time you change the little bit of it around you.
- You shape a classroom by how you behave in it.
- You shape a team by how you treat your teammates.
- You shape a friendship when you listen.

And from now on, you help shape Stonar by what you bring to it – the best of yourselves each one as an individual.

That's the exciting thing about where you are right now. Your Senior School journey has begun, but almost all of it is still ahead of you. You don't yet know which subjects you will

come to love, which teams you might play for, which performances you might be part of, which friendships you will make, or what you will discover about yourself.

And you don't need to know.

For now, just be willing to find out.

Next week will be an important part of that as you go on your Year 7 teambuilding camp – I have to admit that I'm a little jealous not to be going caving with you, not to mention all the other exciting activities. This is going to be a great opportunity for you to challenge yourself; step outside your comfort zone; learn new things; find out about yourself and all the other pupils in Year 7; and to build relationships with many of the important staff who will be supporting your journey this year.

So, my challenge to you as you begin Year 7 is simple:

Work hard.

Be kind.

Get involved, and

Shape the world.