



Norton Hill School

Handbook for Parents/Carers

Please keep this booklet

Contents

Welcome to Norton Hill School	4
School	5
Aims	5
.....	5
School Policies	5
.....	5
.....	5
Governing Body	6
.....	6
.....	6
The Staff	7
.....	7
.....	8
The Parent	8
Forum.....	8
.....	9
The Midsomer Norton Schools	10
Partnership.....	11
...	12
The 7 Character Strengths	12
.....	12
.....	12
Codes of	13
Conduct	14
.....	14
Rewards/Merits	15
.....	16
.....	16
School	16
Rules.....	16
.....	16
Sanctions.....	17
.....	18
Pastoral	18
Care	18
.....	18
School	19
Uniform	20
.....	20
Physical Education Clothing/Kit	20
List	20
.....	20
School	20
Routines	20
.....	20
Attendance.....	20
.....	20
Absence.....	20
.....	20
Family holidays in term	20
time.....	20
.....	20
The School	20
Day	20
.....	20
Transport	20
.....	20

School	
Catering	
.....	
Care of	
Property	
.....	
Contact	
Book	
.....	
Newsletter.....	
.....	
Equipment Required	
Daily.....	
.....	
Arbor	
.....	
Curriculum	
.....	
The Wellbeing	
Hub.....	
.....	
Study Work Visits to Enrich and Extend the	
Curriculum.....	
Homework	
.....	
Report and Parents/carers	
Evenings	
.....	
Extra-Curricular	
Activities.....	
.....	
Enhanced	
Transition.....	
.....	

Welcome to Norton Hill School

On behalf of the Governors and Staff I would like to welcome you to Norton Hill School. You will have high expectations of us and we will do our utmost to live up to those expectations!

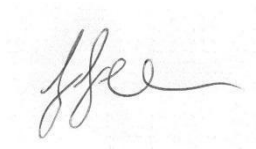
As a parent/carers you will be very keen to see your child realise their full potential in all that they do and we are confident we can work with you to ensure this wish is fulfilled.

If you have any concerns about your child, please do not hesitate to contact the school. The first point of contact will usually be your child's Tutor who is responsible for monitoring the general progress and welfare of your child. The contact book is used as a weekly line of communication. If you wish to see your child's tutor please write or telephone beforehand to make an appointment.

The other key members of staff that will work closely with your child are Mr Player (Assistant Headteacher), the Head of House and the Assistant Head of House.

Norton Hill School prides itself on creating a safe and happy environment, conducive to learning. Being a large school enables us to offer fantastic opportunities beyond the classroom with extra-curricular and outdoor education programmes that are second to none. Finally we instil a sense of drive and independence in our students that result in fantastic outcomes both in terms of attainment, but more importantly, progress. Our vision now includes the 7 character strengths to be successful pupils and citizens in the wider world.

I look forward to working with you over the coming years and wish you and your child a very warm welcome to Norton Hill.



Gordon Green
Headteacher

School Aims

"The best for all our students. The best from all our students"

The School Aims were drawn up in consultation with staff, parents/carers, House Councils, Governors and outside agencies such as the Attendance & Welfare Support Service, healthcare professionals and the police.

Norton Hill School is committed to

- value and develop each individual
- emphasise learning and achievement
- raise aspirations and promote ambition
- expect high standards - in behaviour, appearance, work and citizenship
- build partnerships with parents/carers
- work with the wider community
- support a highly skilled and motivated team
- look for innovative ways of improvement
- be a centre of excellence in the use and development of technology

School Policies

This handbook provides you with the basic information needed for your child starting school. Our full policies are located on our website and the Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership website.

Governing Body

The full Governing Body meets 6 times a year and is shared with Somervale School. The Governing Body are always pleased to receive parental comments on matters relating to the School. All governors can be contacted via the Clerk to Governors at Norton Hill School. Some of their responsibilities include:

- the overview of the School's Curriculum
- the upkeep of the School's buildings
- the supervision of the School's finances
- Admission and Charging Policy
- Discipline and Attendance

The Staff

The Governing Body is keen to acknowledge that the community's continued confidence and trust in Norton Hill owes much to the skill, energy, expertise and commitment of the Teaching and Support Staff. A staff list can be found on the website.

The Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

Norton Hill School is part of the Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership (MNSP) and Mr Alun Williams is the CEO. The aim of the partnership is to ensure Secondary and Primary schools work closely together to produce a more consistent approach to teaching and learning. We can create a seamless transition across the key stages. In essence, all of the children within the partnership can benefit from a sharing of best practice between all of the partners.

The 7 Character Strengths

Enthusiasm

- Actively participates
- Shows enthusiasm
- Approaches new situations with excitement and energy
- Is eager to take on demanding challenges



Determination

- Finishes whatever they began
- Sticks with a project or activity for extended period of time
- Tries their best even after experiencing failure
- Stays committed to goals
- Keeps working hard even when they feel like quitting



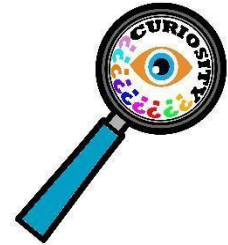
Optimism

- Believes that effort would improve their future
- When bad things happen, they think about things they could do to make it better
- Stays motivated, even when things don't go well
- Believes that they can improve on things they are not good at



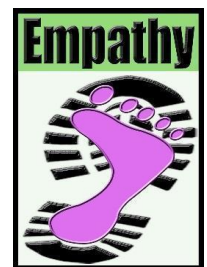
Curiosity

- Is eager to explore new things
- Asks questions to further understanding
- Takes an active interest in learning and shows a thirst for knowledge



Empathy

- Shows that they care about the feelings of others
- Adapts to different social situations
- Is able to find solutions during conflicts with others



Self-control

With Work

- Is organised and ready for work
- Remembers and follows instructions
- Gets to work right away
- Pays attention and resists distractions



With others

- Remains calm even when criticised or otherwise provoked
- Allows others to speak without interrupting
- Is polite to adults and peers
- Keeps temper in check

Respect

- Recognises what other people do for them
- Shows appreciation for opportunities
- Expresses appreciation
- Does something nice for someone else as a way of saying thank you
- Celebrates differences



Codes of Conduct

Norton Hill encourages and expects all members of the school to conduct themselves with courtesy and consideration for others and to promote within themselves self-discipline. Only the highest standards of behaviour and personal relationships are acceptable. The following codes of conduct are included in the contact book and outline what we expect of students.

Working Well at Norton Hill

To be successful in my work at Norton Hill School I should:

- work well and behave well by developing the 7 Character Strengths
- arrive on time at every lesson with the right books and equipment
- keep all my exercise books and folders in good clean condition
- complete all my written pieces of work in blue or black ink, using the correct headings and titles
- read all my work carefully and check it before I hand it in
- think about my teachers' comments, complete my EBI tasks and try to improve by setting myself appropriate targets
- concentrate in lessons and always do my homework on time and to the best of my ability
- always carry my Contact Book with me for use in all my lessons

Behaving Well at Norton Hill

If Norton Hill School is to be successful in helping you succeed and enjoy school there must be a good standard of behaviour. Every student has a part to play. You must:

- have consideration and respect for yourself and other people: there is no excuse for rudeness, disrespect, insolence or offensive language
- look after your own property and respect the property of others
- listen carefully to your teachers and to follow their instructions
- work sensibly with your classmates and to make the most of learning opportunities
- move quietly about the school in a sensible and safe manner
- be honest and trustworthy and remember that you are responsible for your actions

Rewards

Merits

- Merits are given for:
- Grades in tests
- Correct and clear written work
- Persistent good behaviour
- Participation/working hard in lesson
- Being supportive in lesson
- Behaviour sustained throughout the lesson
- Good progress in lesson
- Participation in community events.
- Persistent good behaviour around the school site
- Being a supportive house member
- Following the Norton Hill Way & being supportive outside of lessons

Merits are awarded by the teachers on the school computer system. The number can be viewed via the Parent Portal.

Year 7-11

Celebrating success and achievement at Norton Hill School is an essential and valued element of school life. Pupils are awarded merits for reasons outlined below and win certificates, medals and prizes for the various numbers of merits they gain. The merit count is reset at the end of Term 2, 4 and 6.

50 merits = Bronze Certificate, communication home + Item from House Store

75 merits = Silver Certificate, communication home + Items from House Store

100 + merits = Gold Certificate, communication home+ Items from House Store + Non uniform day end of Term

Pupils who have achieved Gold certificates will also be entered into the voucher raffle which will be drawn at the end of the academic year.

Postcards can be sent home when pupils have displayed one of the 7 Character Strengths or a high level of effort / attainment.

Year 11

Year 11 will require 30 merits in addition to good behaviour and effort to attend leavers day.

School Rules

We only have a relatively short list of school rules because the Code of Conduct outlines our basic expectations. This is contained in the Contact Book. It applies to behaviour on the journey to and from school also. The following shortlist outlines our simple rules:-

- Harmful or illegal items may not be brought onto the premises. This includes knives, matches, lighters, tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol, drugs and vapes.
- Any smoking or drug paraphernalia that is found will be disposed of or passed to the police.
- Behaviour which can be harmful to yourself or others is not permitted e.g physical abuse.
- Chewing gum and aerosols should not be brought to school. Scooters, bikes etc should be stored in bike sheds at the beginning of the day and not used on the school site.
- Mobile phones must not be seen or heard on school premises. (See mobile phone policy for further information).
- Students are not to leave the premises during the school day without written permission from their parents or without permission of a member of SLT/Pastoral staff and they must sign out at reception.
- Movement around the school must be quiet and orderly and follow the one way systems around Maths / English.
- The following areas are out of bounds: The Astroturf and changing area unless supervised and participating, the coach road, inside the fenced area, the fields in wet weather, the bike shed (except to those arriving or leaving by bicycle/scooter). Students must stay out of areas designated for other House or year groups at break and lunchtime.
- Litter must be placed in bins
- The rules of conduct in specialist areas such as Science, Technology, PE, etc., must be followed
- Absence, no matter how short, must be explained by a note/telephone call/email from home. If planned, and not medical, a holiday form must be completed and returned to the Head of House.
- Students arriving late or leaving early must report to the Main Office
- Rooms should be left clean and tidy at the end of each lesson.
- Uniform is to be worn correctly at all times (see uniform policy for future information).
- Students can be searched for any type of drug, dangerous, illegal or stolen items as well as mobile phone and electronic devices (in line with searching, screening and confiscation at school policy February 2014).
- Students should go to House staff if there is a concern whilst at school that needs to be shared with home.

Sanctions

The sanctions we may use when pupils do not behave will vary according to the incidence of misbehaviour. Obviously, most misbehaviour will be dealt with by a few words and the matter put right. In some instances there might be some extra work to do at home. In more severe cases a **detention** might be used - either at break or lunchtime or after school. **If an after-school detention is used then parents/carers will be given notice in writing or a phone call. Parents/carers, please note, that we are allowed to detain a pupil for up to an hour after school without parental permission.** However, we appreciate parental support if this sanction is used. Only in more severe cases would an isolation or exclusion from school be used in accordance with school policy and B&NES guidelines. Copies of this are available on request.

Norton Hill is committed to promoting and ensuring that all students behave in the best manner in order to learn effectively and achieve their maximum potential. This is promoted daily through our 7 Character Strengths. The development of these strengths will help to motivate students, encouraging them to reflect on their relationships with themselves, with others and with learning.

Pastoral Care

Norton Hill School may seem like a big school to many parents/carers and pupils. However, we have tried to organise the school in such a way that each pupil is known as an individual and that their needs are met, both academically and socially.

The school is organised around five Houses and the Sixth Form. Each House is made up of at least two tutor groups from each year which is then managed by a House Head with an Assistant and a team of tutors. Each tutor group has approximately twenty eight pupils and are based in their own tutor room. The House Head will be concerned with overseeing the academic and social progress of all pupils in that House. The Sixth Form has a team of tutors managed by the Director of Sixth form.

The House structure provides a supportive environment in which form tutors and the House Head can monitor the welfare and progress of pupils. They are also able to develop opportunities for pupils of different ages to work together.

Pupils have an important voice in their House through the House Councils. Each House Council has representatives from each Year Group. These groups have been party to a number of important whole-school decisions, as well as some innovative and very successful charity work.

We have merits to reward hard work, achievement, good behaviour and community involvement. We also hold an annual celebration assembly for each year group to give awards based on the year's work. These are held at the end of the summer term and pupils receive medals, certificates and citations. Celebration assemblies are also held at the end of term 2 & 4 to recognise the hard work and effort of individual pupils and tutor groups for the term. Our extensive programme of sporting competitions is also complemented by a wide range of inter-house events and activities.

When your child joins the school the first person they will need to know well is their form tutor. The form tutor will also be your first point of contact and will be responsible for keeping a check on the academic and social progress of your child.

Your child will be allocated a tutor group using a number of different criteria. We have extensive discussions with Primary schools and will often separate students who may not work well together. We may also decide to place some students in a tutor group together if the Primary school recommends this due to a specific vulnerability. The school tries to ensure siblings are in the same house wherever possible, and that tutor groups have a good mix of academic, artistic and sporty students, as well as an even spread of students who may need additional support.

Lastly we must ensure the school has balanced academic set numbers, which is influenced by tutor group allocation, health and safety is not compromised and that there is a balance of male and females within each tutor group. We do not ask students who they would like to be in a group with, we have found in the past this creates more problems than it solves and instead we encourage and assist students to see their new tutor group as their support network at their new school.

The transition of your children from Year 6 into Norton Hill School and over the course of Year 7 is overseen by Mr S Player (Assistant Head). The team of House Heads and Tutors are led by Mr Davis (Assistant Head, Pastoral) and Mr Player (Assistant Head, Pastoral and transition year 7 and 8), who have overall responsibility for the pastoral care of pupils throughout the school.

The Sixth Form is led by Mrs K Ward and her deputy.



School Uniform

Norton Hill School is not judged solely on its academic, sporting or musical performances. The appearance and behaviour of all pupils are of paramount importance. There is a standard uniform for all pupils at Norton Hill in Years 7 to 11. Any difficulties experienced by parents/carers in providing school uniform, whatever the reason, should be communicated to the school and the matter will be dealt with strict confidentiality.

No jewellery is allowed except a watch and a stud in the lobe of each ear. Extremes of make-up and hairstyle are not permitted e.g. nothing shorter than a number '2', and no unnatural colours or dip dyes, highlights, hair extensions etc. Nail varnish or fake nails should not be worn. A break of these rules may result in the pupil having a loss of social time, being isolated in school or sent home. The Headteacher, with the support of the Governing Body, reserves the right to ask any pupil considered inappropriately dressed to leave the site and return dressed in the appropriate manner.

ALL the School Uniform is available for purchase at Norton Sports & Camping, Midsomer Norton.

All articles of clothing and sports equipment must be clearly marked with the owner's name

Students wear a coloured clip on house tie: Blackdown – Purple, Cotswold – Yellow, Exmoor - Blue, Mendip – Red and Quantock - Green

- Norton Hill branded black blazer must be worn. A Norton Hill branded jumper may be worn in addition to the blazer
- Black conventional cut trousers. No jeans, lycra or cotton (chino) style. Only black belts may be worn.
- Black pleated skirts of reasonable length or black conventional cut trousers. Skirts should be no more than two inches above or below the knee that do not ride up when walking with no split seams. No tight fitting skirts or trousers are permitted and the fabric should not be cotton (chino), jean or lycra material. Only black belts may be worn. Standard skirts should be purchased from Norton Sports and Camping or the website.
- White short or long-sleeved shirt/ blouse that can be buttoned to the top of the neck, tucked firmly into skirts, or trousers
- Plain black socks or plain black or flesh coloured tights only
- Black conventional leather look shoes (no trainers, branded shoes or trainer fashion to be worn. Boots are not permitted. Heels no more than 2 inches)
- Outdoor wear should be practical and not denim or leather
- Jean jackets and hoodies are not allowed to be worn in school
- Trainers may be worn for sport only at lunchtime
- Extremes of hairstyle are not permitted (see above for guidance)
- No jewellery may be worn except for one stud in the lobe of each ear and a watch
- No extreme make up to be worn
- No nail varnish, gel nails or false nails may be worn. Nails must be cut to a safe length for school.
- One charity band only

Physical Education Clothing/Kit List

All Norton Hill School branded and plain uniform options can be purchased from Midsomer Norton Sports and Camping. Where an item is optional, it is worn **in addition** to compulsory kit.

PE Kit summary

Compulsory

- Norton Hill branded polo shirt
- Norton Hill branded shorts or skort
- Norton Hill branded PE socks
- Norton Hill branded rugby shirt (for rugby lessons only)
- Sports trainers with non-marking soles
- Football boots (moulded studs - no AstroTurf trainers, blades or metal studs)
- Mouth guard and shin pads (for hockey, rugby, and football)
- Towel and complete change of underwear
- Bag to hold PE equipment and clothing

Optional

- Norton Hill branded PE Leggings or 'skin type' black compression leggings
- Norton Hill branded tracksuit bottoms
- Norton Hill branded Hoodie or fleece top
- Norton Hill branded waterproof sports jacket

Important – please note:

- Jewellery, including ear studs, are NOT to be worn for PE or Games by either boys or girls. Parents/carers are strongly advised that Health & Safety issues makes Body Piercing impracticable in a school working environment.
- A letter or note in the Contact Book is required if students are unable to take part in Physical Education. However there is an expectation that they will take part in some capacity e.g. coach.

School Routines

Attendance

In every subject at Secondary School work is "cumulative"; that is, one lesson builds on the previous one. In light of this, the school will **not authorise family holidays** in term time unless there are **very exceptional circumstances**.

The school will keep a record of attendance and punctuality and this will be communicated to all parents/carers on an annual basis. In cases where attendance or punctuality give cause for concern parents/carers will be contacted by the school.

Absence

- If your child is absent from school for any reason please telephone the Assistant Head of House in the morning of that day.
- Any absence, however short, must be then explained by a note from home, preferably entered in the child's Contact Book, giving date(s) of absence and the reason. Such notes should be addressed to the Tutor or Assistant Head of House. Medical evidence may be required after 3 days' absence.
- In the case of longer illnesses, please keep in regular contact with the Assistant Head of House either by telephone, letter or email.
- If your child has an appointment for either medical or dental treatment, please try to arrange it outside school hours. If this is not possible, please notify the Assistant Head of House or Tutor in advance. This must be in the form of a note in the contact book and verbal confirmation. Without verbal confirmation, your child will not be permitted to leave the site.
- Following absence, please encourage your child to look at the google classroom to catch up on work missed.

Family Holidays in Term Time

As mentioned previously, family holidays in term time **will not be authorised** unless there are **very exceptional** circumstances. Parents/carers must request leave of absence from the Head of House, a minimum of two weeks in advance using the absence form which is available from the main school office giving the exact dates and reason for taking the holiday in term time. Holidays will not be authorised if attendance is under 96% or at the following times:

- Beginning of Year 7 as pupils find it difficult to settle
- Year 10 and 11
- During test periods
- If the pupil should be taking external examinations
- If more than ten days holiday in any academic year

If holidays are not authorised, and they are still taken, the Attendance & Welfare Support Service will be informed and a fixed penalty notice may be issued.

The School Day

8.50 am	Registration (<i>warning bell for registration: 8.45</i>)
9.00 am	Lesson 1
9.50 am	Lesson 2
10.40 am	Break (<i>warning bell for end of break: 10.55</i>)
11.00 am	Lesson 3
11.50 am	Lesson 4
12.40 pm	1 st Lunch 1 st Tutor
1.00 pm	Lunch for All (<i>warning bell for start of 2nd tutor: 1.20</i>)
1.25 pm	2 nd Lunch 2 nd Tutor
1.45 pm	Lesson 5
2.35 pm	Lesson 6
3.25 pm	End of School

Due to the size of the school, we operate a split lunchtime. This means that half the students are on lunch while half have tutor time. This is organised by house and the timings swap throughout the year.

- Terms 1/3/5 – Mendip and Quantock have 1st Lunch, 2nd Tutor
- Terms 2/4/6 – Cotswold and Exmoor have 1st Lunch, 2nd Tutor
- Blackdown always has 1st lunch.

The Library and IT Centre are open until 5.00pm, Mondays to Thursdays, for pupils to work. The centres have staff available to support your child's learning.

Pupils arriving late **MUST** report to the Main Office. Pupils leaving school early for any reason **MUST** have a note from parents/carers followed by verbal confirmation and sign out at the Main Office. If a pupil is unwell they must report to their House staff in the first instance. Their situation will be assessed and, when necessary, parents/carers contacted.

Transport

COUNCIL RUN SCHOOL COACHES

Important Notice: Routes can change slightly from year to year. They are not finalised by B&NES and Somerset until later in the year. Anyone who is entitled to transport receives confirmation of arrangements directly from B&NES and Somerset local authorities before the start of the academic year, and anyone whose transport has changed also gets notified. For information re. transport please visit the following websites:

B&NES LA: <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/get-school-transport>

Somerset LA: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-and-families/school-transport/>

ROUTE C351A

Clutton

Hallatrow

Temple Cloud (not catchment - only for low income families or fare paying passenger scheme)

ROUTE C351B

Clutton

ROUTE C351C

High Littleton

Hallatrow

ROUTE C835C (Somerset LA)

Leigh on Mendip

Coleford

Holcombe

Stratton on the Fosse

ROUTE C351E

Farrington Gurney

ROUTE C351N

Farmborough

ROUTE C351D

High Littleton

Hallatrow

Farrington Gurney

ROUTE C341P

Radford

Withy Mills

School Catering

The catering team's main aim is to ensure healthy eating for all pupils regardless of means or background, through the provision of a well-balanced school lunch, served in a warm, welcoming dining environment in a way that is convenient for the pupils' needs. A healthy balanced lunch has been demonstrated to improve pupils' concentration, attention, energy levels and academic performance, and as such improve the overall results obtained by pupils and the standing of the school as a whole.

The school operates a cashless catering system. The students will be allocated an account and monies paid into this account can be spent at breakfast, break and lunch time services. Further details about the system can be found on the school website or will be sent with other important documents relating to the new year in September.

In line with our commitment to encouraging a healthy start to the day, Norton Hill runs a breakfast club, serving from 8.15am until the bell goes for school. At morning break (10.40am – 11.00am) pupils can purchase snack items which are available from the canteen or pod. We also have a selection of 'Grab & Go' items for those pupils that are involved in lunchtime or after school activities or that would prefer to sit outside. Lunch is served between 12.40pm and 1.30pm. The canteen operates on a 3 week menu which can be found on the website.

We believe it is in everyone's interest that school is able to provide as good a lunch service as possible to their pupils. We know how important it is to create the healthy eating habits that can last a lifetime, and teach children about the importance to not only their physical wellbeing but how food can affect their mood, temperament and energy levels. In light of this ethos, pupils eligible for free school meals will be able to access their daily food allowance from lunchtime only so that it is not used for mid-morning snacks.

For more information visit the Norton Hill School website. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us on 01761 417969/kitchen@nortonhillschool.com.

Care of Property

In a community of approximately 1700 people, it is not always easy to keep track of property. We will always try to help locate missing property, but if you, as parents/carers, could bear the following points in mind, it would help us enormously.

- All clothes, games kit, and other personal belongings must be clearly marked with the owner's full name.
- Any loss of property should be reported immediately in writing to your child's Assistant House Head (immediately, that is, after a careful search has been made by the owner!)
- When bags or other belongings are not in use pupils should put them safely in their lockers rather than leave them around the school.
- Towels, PE Kit etc., should be taken home every week for washing. This not only helps hygiene but should provide a regular check on those possessions. Before Games or a PE lesson anything of value - wristwatch, wallet, loose money etc., may then be put into the bag and handed in for safe keeping to the teacher taking the lesson.
- Money or valuables should NEVER be left in the pockets of clothes left in the Cloakrooms or the Changing Rooms, and as far as possible clothes and other property (e.g. tennis racquets, records, etc.) should not be left overnight on the school premises. The premises are increasingly used in the evenings and the School cannot accept any responsibility for losses at such times. Similarly, before school holidays, ALL personal property must be taken home.
- It helps if bicycles have some form of lock and if removable accessories are kept to a minimum.
- Property which has been found may be collected from D3 between 1-2pm on Wednesday or Thursday break time each week. If items are not claimed for more than 1 month, they will be added to the swap shop or donated to charity at the end of each term.

Lockers

Every pupil who wants one, will be issued with a locker. Lockers cost £10.00; £5.00 rental and £5.00 deposit which will be refunded when the pupil leaves. Replacement locker keys cost £5.00. **It is recommended that each pupil purchases a locker as this is the best way to keep things safe.**

Please Note

Textbooks, contact books, exercise books and certain items of games equipment supplied by the School are the property of the School. Any loss or damage must be reported at once, and whenever possible made good. Broken windows or other damage to buildings must be reported at once. Where appropriate a charge for repair or replacements may be made.

Contact Book

Every pupil will be issued with a contact book. This is a vital book which provides a quick route of communication between school and home. The Contact Book will be used every day by the pupil, because it will contain their timetable and will be used to record comments between home and school. Students may also want to record extra details about homework set, although the Google classroom is the main method for setting and recording homework - and will be available for parents to access.

The Contact book will also be used by subject teachers to write comments in for parents/carers and the Form Tutor to see.

Each week we would ask parents/carers to sign the book to indicate that they have read the week's comments. Parents/carers might also like to write something in the book which would then be read by the Form Tutor.

The Form Tutor will also sign the book each week indicating that they have read the comments written by parents/carers or teaching staff.

This is an essential part of a system of communication between home and school. If pupils lose or deface their Contact Book they are expected to pay £5.00 to replace it.

Newsletter

The school newsletter is published every term in an electronic version and is posted onto the school's website (www.nortonhillsschool.com). We would ask parents/carers to regularly visit the website as it contains important information about upcoming events.

Equipment Required Daily

- Four pens: Blue, Black, Green and Purple. Only black pens are permitted for exams
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Eraser
- Pencil Sharpener
- Protractor
- Compass
- A Scientific Calculator with Natural Textbook Display (such as Casio FX-83GTX)
- Contact Book
- Reading Book
- Headphones for use with computer equipment (USB or mini jack are acceptable)
- Exercise and text books for the day
- Specialist equipment for the day
- Glue Stick
- Highlighter

Strongly recommended

- Pocket English Dictionary
- Pocket French/Spanish Dictionary
- Coloured pencils and/or felt tips

Arbor – online home/school communication

Arbor is a platform that gives you secure access to your child's data in a clear and understandable way. It can be accessed on most computer systems. All you need is a valid email address that has been registered with us, and the rest is simple. We have designed **Arbor** so that it will provide you with a range of information about your children:

- view all home/school communications sent in bulk
- view all homework/assignments that have been set on Google Classroom
- view all of your personal details with the ability to update phone numbers and email addresses
- view all purchases made by your child in school
- view your child's timetable, including any after school clubs, scheduled detentions, and examinations
- view achievements and concerns that have been recorded by staff
- view your child's attendance record
- view all school reports and other documents

Arbor is not just for parents/carers; all pupils in the school have access to **Arbor** too, and can see information on their own progress in school. Once the school have provided you with a login, you can access the platform using this link: [Arbor Link](#) / <https://norton-hill-academy.uk.arbor.sc/?/home-ui/index>

Curriculum

At Key Stage Three, pupils follow the National Curriculum which consists of: English, Maths, Science, History, Geography, Philosophy & Belief, Technology, ICT, French, Art, Music, Dance, Drama, PE and Games. Pupils will also study Personal, Social & Health Education.

In Year 7, from September onwards, we place pupils in broadly banded groups across a range of subjects using information from primary schools. Over the year, we will continue to review how students are progressing in these broadly banded groups, and will look at setting more finely once we have enough information on their ability.

- Mathematics groups are set by ability,
- English groups are also set by ability, with other subject groups linked to these (e.g. Science, the Humanities, Modern Foreign Languages, Philosophy & Belief and ICT). Due to the restricted amount of Science taught at KS2, students are set by their “comprehension” level from reading. They are then re-set based on progress in Science results by Year 8.
- Technology is taught in mixed ability groups with additional staffing to reduce group size to approximately twenty.
- For Art, Dance, Drama, Music, Games, PE and Personal, Social & Health Education, pupils are taught in their mixed-ability tutor groups.

The purpose of grouping in this way is to match the level of work closely to pupil need. We review the grouping regularly and you will be informed by the school of which groups your child is in, and also of any subsequent changes. During term 1 and throughout year 7, students’ sets are reviewed. When set changes occur in a subject, you will be informed by the Head of Faculty of your child’s new group.

All setting arrangements for September will be subject to change based on the amount of information we receive from Primary Schools - we may need to have an extended period of ‘tutor-based’ setting until we have enough information to make accurate setting decisions.

In Year 9 we allow pupils to specialise within the Arts so that each child can spend more time working in areas of individual strength. These Art options are chosen in the spring of Year 8.

Year 9 pupils, and parents/carers will be given guidance in choosing examination courses for Key Stage Four which are appropriate to the individual needs of pupils. Our policy is to maximise pupil choice within the framework of the National Curriculum. Currently all pupils take English, Maths, Science, Games and PE and Philosophy & Belief. Students are placed on pathways that determine whether they take a Modern Foreign Language or an IT qualification. They can also take Humanities subjects, Technology, PE, Art, Music, Drama, Business Studies, PE, Dance and a second language. There are also Vocational GCSE courses in Health and Social Care, Health and Fitness, Business and Product Design.

During Years 9, 10 and 11, pupils are given expert guidance on Careers and Further Education. Increasingly, youngsters remain in education after the age of sixteen. At Norton Hill we are proud of the reputation of our Sixth Form and hope that we provide a range of courses to meet the needs and abilities of all our students. For our most able students, we follow an “Able, Gifted and Talented” pathway, details are on our website.

The Wellbeing Hub

Within Norton Hill School there is an additional support department called The Wellbeing Hub. The Wellbeing Hub is a facility open to all students and can support them with academic and social aspects of being at the school. Pupils who need additional support from the hub will be referred by the pastoral team.

Study Work-Visits to Enrich and Extend the Curriculum

There will be occasions when it is essential to extend normal curriculum delivery beyond the confines of the classroom. All pupils are required to take part in study work-visits arranged by staff to extend and enrich learning and understanding experiences. You will appreciate reasonable charges will need to be made to cover transport and (where appropriate) admission costs.

Homework

All pupils will be expected to do homework, the amount varying according to their needs at each stage in their school life, and according to the work being done at school.

The purposes of homework are as follows - in order of priority:

1. To encourage students to read regularly, and at least once a week.
2. To give pupils the chance to learn to work on their own
3. To give pupils the chance to practise work that has been learned in class.
4. To go more deeply into a subject; this is especially true of certain subjects such as History and Geography where the essential points are explained in class and the fuller detail can be acquired by individual work sometimes using resources not available in the classroom.
5. To do routine work of memorising, note taking, etc.
6. To produce revision materials that help prepare students for the end of year exam.

Please help your child with their weekly reading by listening to them or discussing the book with them. You will be asked to sign their contact book weekly to show you have seen them read.

Parents/Carers often ask how they can help children with their homework. Firstly, your child will be encouraged if you take an interest in what they are doing: ask to see their books, or offer to test some work which has to be learnt. Please help by establishing a regular routine which includes homework, but also time for interests and hobbies. If a room can be set aside where homework can be done free from disturbance, this is ideal. Such an arrangement is not always possible but do try to give them the use of a table at which they can work.

Our Library is open after school Mondays to Thursdays until 5.00 pm. This allows pupils to do their homework at school, receive help from our support staff and to access resources. For pupils who rely on school transport there is a late bus that leaves at 5.15 pm Monday to Thursday.

Each pupil will have a **homework timetable** which will specify the subjects to be set on each night of the week. This will help parents/carers monitor homework and support the school in seeing that homework is completed. The timetable will be written into the **contact book** which is also where pupils record their homework tasks and the date due. All homework will also be included on Google classroom for each subject. A summary of this will be sent to parents/carers each week.

If you have a query concerning homework, please get in touch with the school. Pupils should consult their teachers if they have been unable to do the work set, and parents/carers are asked to inform the Head of House if this happens often.

There will be homework in up to 3 subjects each night. One piece of homework will be a **project**. This is an activity or a series of activities set by one subject. This encourages students to work independently for a longer period and help develop the study skills which will become more crucial as they head towards their GCSE qualifications. Each **project** typically lasts around three weeks. The amount of time to be spent on homework should be:

Year 7 (Part of the homework in Y7 will be one or two projects each half-term)

20-30 minutes per subject	2 or 3 subjects each night	=	about 1 hour per night
---------------------------	----------------------------	---	------------------------

Year 8

30 minutes per subject	2 or 3 subjects each night	=	over 1 hour per night
------------------------	----------------------------	---	-----------------------

Year 9

35-40 minutes per subject	2 or 3 subjects each night	=	over 1 hour per night
---------------------------	----------------------------	---	-----------------------

Years 10 and 11

45 minutes per subject	2 or 3 subjects each night	=	over 1 ½ hours per night
------------------------	----------------------------	---	--------------------------

Teachers will endeavour to set work which will take this amount of time. If the tasks set do not take so long pupils can spend time revising, learning work or reviewing previous work. Pupils may sometimes wish to spend more than the allocated time on their homework. There may be occasions when pupils are set extra work outside this schedule if they have to catch up for not working in class or after absence.

Reports and Parents’ Evenings

It is our intention to maintain regular points of contact with parents/carers when we report on pupils' progress at school. By October in Year 7, each pupil will be set target grades for all subjects. These will be expressed as GCSE grades.

Three times a year, pupils will receive a **progress report** indicating how hard they are working in class and at home, how well they are behaving and how they are progressing towards their target level. These grades will be issued to parents/carers, along with specific advice for pupils, in each subject. The final report will show if they are meeting age-related expectations, developing towards it, or exceeding it.

At the annual Parents’ Evening, parents/carers will have the opportunity to speak to each of their child’s subject teachers. These evenings are usually virtual and will play a crucial part in the evaluation and information process to ensure the best for our pupils. It is our aim to have termly contact with parents/carers on their child’s progress and attainment. In addition to this, parents/carers may request information on their child at any time.

In all communications with parents/carers, the school will use your child’s legal name (i.e. that on their birth certificate). The school is obliged to do this as there will be instances throughout your child’s school life when their legal name will need to be provided to external agencies (e.g. examination boards, application for group passports etc.). Should parents/carers wish an alternative name to be used, the school must have sight of the legal documentation confirming a change of name.

Extra-Curricular Activities

The school provides a wide range of lunchtime, after school and residential activities. Information about the activities on offer is sent out in Term 1. We would encourage all students to take part in at least one extra-curricular activity as it is an excellent way of developing their learning beyond the classroom and socialising with other students.

Some example clubs are:

● Art Club ● Computing/ICT club ● Debating ● Drama/Dance shows	● History Club ● Music Clubs: <i>Choir, Samba, Orchestra</i> ● PE Clubs: <i>Netball, Football, Hockey, Rugby, Trampolining etc.</i>	● Science Clubs ● Technology clubs: <i>Textiles, Cookery etc.</i> ● Writing Club
--	---	--

Enhanced Transition

Not all pupils will require enhanced transition, however, we work very closely with primary schools and based on their recommendations, we offer enhanced transition support to some students.

The Wellbeing Hub provides some enhanced transition for identified year 6 students, which can involve small group visits to Norton Hill School, 1:1 meetings with parents and pupils, and some enhanced transition support during the first week of the summer holidays. Once the students have joined Norton Hill there may also be small group transition sessions during the first term. The level of enhanced transition provided very much depends on how much support the individual needs and what is recommended by the pupil’s primary school.

Summer School is 2 days at the start of the summer holidays. The programme is focused on those who are unlikely to achieve age related expectations in KS2 English SATs or have been identified as having literacy difficulties; this may include a gap between Verbal and Non-Verbal ability.

This is a programme which will aim to improve a child’s knowledge of phonemes, speed and skill of sequencing, word structure, basic punctuation, comprehensive skills and key literacy terms. It will also support students to learn more about their preferred learning style and literacy packs will be available to enable parents to help support their child’s learning.

Parents/carers will receive individual invitations which will be based purely on the recommendations from the primary schools. Places will then be allocated on a first come first served basis.