



Soar Valley College

A SPECIALIST MATHS AND COMPUTING COLLEGE

ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE

Y7 Newsletter

Dear Parents/Carers,

A very warm welcome to Soar Valley to the parents of all our new year 7 students. We have had a very smooth start to the school year and have been impressed by the mature and enthusiastic attitude of our new arrivals.

The transition from Primary to Secondary school is a big one, but one which we work hard to make as easy as possible for all. It can also be a daunting time for parents! Should you have any concerns or queries do please contact us. The Head of Year 7, Ms Oughton, and the Assistant Head of Year, Mrs Withers, along with your child's form tutor, are the first port of call and will endeavour to get back to you as soon as possible.

We look forward to meeting you at the Settling In Evening for year 7 next month.

Kind regards
Mrs J. Robinson
Principal

Once again it has been a real pleasure to welcome Year 7 students into our Soar Valley family. Standing at the front door on the first day of term we were greeted by an endless stream of smiling faces and our impression is that they are settling well into Key Stage 3.

As well as being friendly and confident we have noticed how independent they are; however, this doesn't mean that we expect them to manage all of the time without our support. We will continue to encourage all students that they should ask if they need any help at all.

With such a positive start to the year we all look forward very much to working with your child during their time at Soar Valley College.

Kind regards
Ms Oughton
Head of Year 7

To continue to support the transitional phase we operate an extended transition which focusses on supporting students in being prepared to learn and developing new friendships. In the next few weeks your child will be attending 3 workshops as well as participating in a team building afternoon.

Our three workshops will focus on;

1. 'Getting out of getting stuck': Students will be given a range of strategies to help them when the work becomes challenging. Students will also receive a free dictionary and a Pearson handbook.
2. 'Talk': In this session students will refine their communication skills and develop their understanding of how suitable 'talk' in the classroom can help them make progress.
3. 'Green Pen': This session provides a structure for students in reviewing their work before presenting it to the teacher so that it represents their best work.

We recognise meeting new people and making friends can be a difficult task for some young people, even those who present as confident and brave. Our team building event aims to break down barriers for students and bring them closer through a series of tasks which require them to communicate effectively with each other and ultimately celebrate their successes together.

To reinforce the learning outcomes from these sessions it would be valuable if you were able to find the time to discuss with your child what they did in these sessions. For example, you could ask "What is the best way to find a new word in the dictionary? Or how might they use their green pen.

Learning Characteristics

On Wednesday 16th September all of our Year 7 students will be tackling a new series of assessments that will give us further information about their learning characteristics. The tests will examine a range of abilities and are being trialled by the Fischer Family Trust (FFT). This is a charitable organisation that supports initiatives in education. Along with primary school assessments the tests will give a comprehensive picture of student strengths and help us to guide our future planning.

Students will get an experience of “examination” type conditions but there is nothing to worry about. The tests require no revision, therefore they are non-scary as there is no “pass” or “fail”. The students should just do their best and they will receive a breakdown of their results in November.

Assessment

You may be aware that the Government has removed the traditional assessment structures of National Curriculum Levels and A*-G GCSE grades. For this reason there will be significant differences in the feedback that students receive during year 7, 8 and 9 and the grades they will be given in Year 10 and 11. We have been proactive in developing our systems and are very well placed to implement these changes this academic year.

We will be sharing information with students in lessons and assemblies and will be contacting you again with more detailed information at the end of October ready for the first full reports being sent out. In order to explain our new assessment systems in more detail and answer any questions you may have, we will also be running an information evening on Tuesday 10th November just before you receive your child’s first full Soar Valley report. Full details of this meeting will be included in future newsletters.

Homework at Soar Valley

At Soar Valley, we believe strongly that effort, time management and independence are key to success. We also know that these are not skills that come easily to young people, so we provide structured homework to support their development.

Show My Homework is an online resource used by Soar Valley so that both students and parents can see what homework is set and when it should be handed in. Teachers are also able to upload worksheets in case any get misplaced. We would like to encourage all parents to check Show My Homework regularly in order to support children with the completion of their work. This is available both online, and through the Show My Homework App that can be downloaded from iTunes or the Google Play store. Please see the separate sheet for further information about accessing Show My Homework which includes log in details.

SAM Learning

SAM Learning is an online resource that ALL students at Soar Valley have access to. It covers most curriculum areas in Key Stages 3 and 4. Year 7 will shortly be issued with their Username and Password and will be shown how to use SAM Learning during one of their ICT lessons.

SAM Learning can help your child with their homework, research work, testing their own understanding of a topic or simply increase their knowledge in a chosen subject area. SAM Learning is free which means you can use it at home if you have internet access as well as from school.

16th September	Baseline Tests
15th October	Y7 Settling in Evening and Y7 Reports to Parents
10th November	Assessment Information Evening
19 November	Progress Check 1- Reports home
25th February	Progress Check 2 - Reports home
26th May	Y7 Parents Evening - Progress Check 3 - Reports home
30th June	Y7 Celebration Evening



Key Dates for your Diary