

Soham Village College
Achieving Excellence with Care



**The Parent and Carer Guide to
Soham Village College 2022/23**



Welcome

Dear Students, Parents and Carers,

I am delighted that you have chosen to join us at Soham Village College. We are lucky to have a school full of fabulous students and staff and we very much look forward to you joining us.

It is a splendid school to work and learn in and I look forward to meeting you at the start of your journey through the school.

With best wishes for your time ahead of you in the school.

Jon Hampson
Headteacher

Introduction

Welcome to this brief guide for parents and carers who have a child starting with us during the 2022/23 academic year and thank you for trusting us with the next important part of their education.

No doubt you already know a lot about the school and we certainly couldn't cover everything in a booklet this size, but it should give you the key information that you need so they can make a confident and positive start.

Along with information covering topics such as uniform, travel and term dates, it also explains how to report absence and get started with our Go4Schools reporting system. I look forward to meeting you and your child in the coming months and hope you find this guide useful.

Richard Pearce
Assistant Head



Home College Agreement

Aims

- Our vision is to be a consistently high quality and improving school
- We aim for all of our students, irrespective of background, to make excellent progress
- We are committed to offering a broad curriculum and extensive curricular and extra-curricular opportunities
- We encourage students to develop their personal qualities, ready for adult life
- We are committed to the well-being of all of our students and helping them to adopt healthy lifestyles
- We wish all our students to develop positive relationships and be respectful of others at all times

School

- To provide a secure and welcoming environment
- To care for each student's well-being
- To set high quality, regular, meaningful homework
- To report regularly to parents and provide opportunities to discuss students' progress
- To support parents and carers through the period of their child's transition from primary to secondary school.
- To work with parents and carers to support students' attendance, punctuality, behaviour and progress
- To provide information and guidance about careers and higher education
- To encourage high standards of behaviour from our students

Parents and Carers

- To support the aims of the school
- To ensure that your child attends school punctually and with maximum attendance and not to take your child out of school during term time without the explicit permission of the Headteacher
- To ensure that your child is smartly dressed in correct school uniform
- To ensure that your child completes all homework set on time and to the best of his/her ability
- To attend Parents' Evenings and meetings about your child's progress
- To advise the school of any concerns or problems which might affect your child's progress or well-being
- To work constructively and cooperatively with the school to resolve any concerns about attendance, punctuality, behaviour or work

Students

- To attend school punctually and with maximum attendance
- To bring necessary equipment
- To try hard and complete classwork and homework as well as you can
- To ask teachers for help when you have problems with work
- To be kind to others
- To observe the school rules
- To wear school uniform and be tidy in appearance
- To be polite and respectful to others
- To conduct yourself at all times and including when you are online in such a way as to enhance the school's reputation





School Uniform

We expect students to look smart and ready for work, we therefore insist they wear the following uniform. The senior leadership team will have the final say on queries related to smartness, decency and safety.

Lesson Uniform

- Black blazer with college badge
- Standard plain white-collar shirt (long or short sleeves) – worn with top button done up and tucked in
- Years 7 to 10: Red and black college tie
- Year 11: Blue fleur-de-lys college tie
- Plain black trousers (not leggings or jeans) or a grey knee-length skirt
- Plain black shoes or trainers. There should be no white/coloured logos and heels should be no higher than 5cm (no open backs or boots)
- Plain socks or natural coloured/black tights

PE Uniform

- School specific rugby shirt and/or polo shirt
- Plain navy shorts/skirt/tracksuit bottoms (no stripes or logos bigger than 40mm x 40mm)
- Navy blue sports socks
- Appropriate clean indoor and outdoor footwear
- Shin pads for football and hockey
- Gum shield for hockey and rugby
- Kite-marked studs for football and rugby
- No jewellery or watches may be worn during PE lessons, including no ear studs, even if recently pierced and taped over

Optional Uniform

- Netball skirt
- Grey 'V' neck pullover

General Uniform Rules

- The only body piercings allowed are; one small stud in the lower lobe of each ear, and a nose stud with a maximum diameter of 2mm. No other jewellery is allowed
- No false nails are allowed due to health and safety concerns in PE and practical subjects
- Nails and any make-up must be natural-looking
- It is unacceptable for students to dye their hair an unnatural hair colour or present themselves with extreme hair fashions
- Any clothing worn under white shirt must be plain white with no logos

We aim to make our uniform as affordable as possible by reducing the number of items that include college emblems. College badges and ties can be bought from reception during term time and other items are available from Paul Day's Sports on Ely High Street and online at:

www.schooltrendsonline.com/uniform/SohamVillageCollegeCB75AA



Getting to and from school

Driving, Cycling or Walking

If you plan to drive your child to and from school, please park away from where the buses stop near Lodeside reception as this area is very busy at the start and end of the school day.

We encourage students who cycle to wear a helmet and lock their cycle in the CCTV-monitored area next to the library. Students should be careful on busy roads. We ask students to walk their cycle down the central footpath.

Students who walk must be sensible and careful crossing busy roads, ideally using the pedestrian crossings. They should remember that while wearing uniform they are representing the school and should be polite and respectful to members of our local community.

Catchment Buses

There are different types of support available for travel to school. If your child is starting school in September and meets the qualifying criteria for free school transport shown below, you will need to complete an application form even for free entitled transport; [School transport - Cambridgeshire County Council](#). The Education Transport Team will then send out travel passes and details of transport arrangements directly to your home address in August.

Free school transport

Some school children may be entitled to free school transport. To qualify your child must meet all of the following criteria:

- live within the area where Cambridgeshire is the local council
- be registered at his or her catchment school
- live more than 3 miles (secondary) from their school

Secondary school pupils from low income families

Some secondary school children may qualify for help with transport costs under 'Extended Secondary Rights for Low Income Families'. To do so your child must meet certain criteria. For more information please visit:

[School transport - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

Replacement bus pass

Should your child lose their bus pass then it is your responsibility to apply for a replacement, full information on the costs and how to apply for a replacement pass can be found on the school transport section of the Cambridgeshire County Council's website.

School bus timetables

You will receive information about bus allocation and a timetable with your child's bus pass.

Behaviour on a school bus

All pupils who use transport provided by the council are expected to abide by the Travel Code of Conduct. Students who fail to abide by the Code of Conduct when using transport provided by the council may be banned from using the transport for a set period. It will become the responsibility of the student's parent or carer to arrange transport to and from school for this period of time. For more information regarding this code of conduct please see the school transport section of the Cambridgeshire County Council's website.

Contact details

Education Transport Team

Box No. SH1013 Shire Hall

Cambridge

CB3 0AP

Telephone: 0345 045 5208

Email: edtransport@cambridgeshire.gov.uk



Out of Catchment Buses

If your child lives out of catchment and is not entitled to free transport, there may be private bus routes available. To arrange a place for your child on the bus for September, or to discuss costs, you must contact Jans Coaches directly.

Please note, the routes below may be subject to change from September but these details would be sent out to all parents during August before the new school year starts.

Private Hire Bus Routes

Jans Coaches – 01353 721344

Route J1: Ely to Soham VC

07.32hrs Elyte Fitness, Broad St, Ely
07.33hrs Opposite Sainsbury's, Lisle Lane, Ely
07.35hrs Opposite Sailing Club, Prickwillow Rd, Ely
07.38hrs Kings Avenue Junction of High Barns, Ely
07.39hrs Kings Avenue Junction of Lynn Rd, Ely
07.42hrs Cam Drive Bus Stop 1, Ely
07.44hrs Cam Drive Bus Stop 2, Ely
07.45hrs The Oakery, Lynn Rd, Ely
07.46hrs Deacons Lane, Lynn Rd, Ely
07.49hrs Oliver Cromwell House Layby, St Mary's St,
07.52hrs St John's, ElyEly
07.55hrs Top of Pilgrims Way, Ely

Price Package: £73.00 per month (except August). This package includes two journeys per day, AM & PM.

Route J3: Kennett / Red Lodge / Worlington / Freckenham / Fordham to Soham VC

07.25hrs Kennett Primary
07.34hrs Boundary Road Bus Shelter, Red Lodge
07.39hrs Walnut Tree, Worlington
07.40hrs War Memorial, Worlington
07.44hrs Bus Shelter, Freckenham
07.50hrs The Church, Collins Hill Layby, Fordham.
07.51hrs Mill Lane, Fordham
White Pheasant, Fordham - See Route J4
07.55hrs Lloyds Garage, Fordham
07.56hrs The Grove, Fordham
07.57hrs Bottom of Murfitt's Lane, Fordham
07.58hrs Top of Murfitt's Lane, Fordham

Price Package:

- Kennett £265.00 per term
- Red Lodge £260.00 per term
- Worlington £240.00 per term
- Freckenham £225.00 per term
- Fordham £195.00 per term

This package includes two journeys per day, AM & PM.

Route J4: Newmarket / Exning / Fordham to Soham VC

07.30hrs White Lion Bus Stop, High St, Newmarket (am only)
07.33hrs New Cheveley Road (opposite St John's Avenue), Newmarket
07.36hrs Cheveley Road (opposite Stanley Road), Newmarket
07.39hrs Bus Stop (opposite Racing Centre), Newmarket
07.39hrs Layby opposite Racing Centre
07.41hrs Leisure Centre, Exning Road
07.43hrs Laureate School (opposite side facing Exning)
07.45hrs Rumbles Fish & Chip Shop, Exning
07.53hrs White Pheasant, Fordham

Price Package:

£73.00 per month (except August) which works out as 11 months x £73.00 per year, per child. This package includes two journeys per day, AM & PM

Route J5: Haddenham / Wilburton / Stretham / Little Thetford / Ely / Stuntney to Soham VC

07.32hrs Duck Lane, Haddenham
07.37hrs Post Office, Wilburton
07.43hrs Ely Road, Stretham
07.45hrs High Street, Stretham
07.48hrs Bus Stop, Little Thetford
07.58hrs Barton Square, Ely
08.00hrs Tesco Bus Stop, Ely
08.03hrs Church, Stuntney
08.03hrs Bus Stop, Stuntney

Price Package:

£82.00 per month Haddenham and Wilburton. £73.00 per month the rest (except August). This package includes two journeys per day, AM & PM.



Temporary Bus Passes

Unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate students travelling on the county council catchment school buses who do not hold a valid bus pass for that route. If your child wishes to travel home to a friend's house, you will need to arrange transport for this.

If your child wishes to go home with another child who lives out of catchment and therefore uses a **private hire** bus, we are unable to issue temporary bus passes. All private hire buses operate on a contract between the parents and bus company, with the school or county council having no involvement. The parents of your child's friend will need to contact the operator of the route their child uses and request for your child to use the service. They will then advise the parent if this is possible and what the cost for this would be, it is usually around £3 per journey.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the bus services and routes please do not hesitate to contact Student Services by email on:

studentservices@soham-college.org.uk

Contacting Home

If a student needs to communicate with parents and carers during the school day or vice versa, our Student Services staff can assist with messages in both directions.

Soham Village College has a policy of no mobile phones in use during the school day (8.30am-3pm) for two reasons:

1. To minimise disruption to learning
2. To minimise cyberbullying

To avoid breaking the school rules, students should keep mobile phones switched off and out of sight between 8.30am and 3pm unless they have the direct permission of a member of staff. We ask parents to support us with this policy by not contacting their child directly between 8.30am and 3pm by text or call. Should you need a message to be given to your child, please call Student Services and we will ensure the message is passed on.



Free School Meals

You may be entitled to claim Free School Meals if you are currently in receipt of certain benefits, including Income Support or Income-based Job Seekers Allowance. For a full list of qualifying benefits and more information about Free School Meals and how to apply, please visit: [Free school meals - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

Secondary school pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals are entitled to a two-course meal worth £2.45 per day. If you currently qualify and are in receipt of Free School Meals, this will continue throughout your child's transition to Soham Village College, requiring no further action on your part.

Cashless Catering

To avoid the need for your child to bring cash to school, the school canteen uses a biometric data system for purchasing food and drink called *BioStore*. To use the system, a finger is placed on a scanner and the student's name and photo are displayed on the screen as a double check for identity.

It is widely used in schools nationally and is a very efficient system. The biometric data held is a number of separate image points read from the finger which are stored as a string of complex electronic characteristics and not as an image. No complete fingerprint is ever taken, and the information stored on these systems is not used anywhere else or for any other purpose and is deleted when a student leaves the college.

The government has recently introduced legislation that now requires us to obtain express permission from one parent for us to do this. If a parent or student asks us not to take biometric data, we are obliged not to do so, even if one parent has given permission. Your child will still be able to use the canteen, although the process for them to do so each time will be slower and less efficient.

If you have any queries about anything to do with biometric data, or if you would like to see the system in action, please do not hesitate to contact the ICT Systems & Strategy Manager.

Please ensure you complete the section on the 'Student Details' form on biometric data.

Letters

From time to time the school will contact parents and carers. This is generally done by email, via a system called IRIS Reach. For families who we do not have an email address for, we will send out paper copies of letters.

If you are not receiving our school correspondence via IRIS Reach, it may be the case that your email provider is marking the messages as SPAM or JUNK. If you could please check your spam and junk folders for anything ending in *@schools.ps-connect.cloud* and mark it as not junk, then you will continue to receive messages in the normal way.

Attendance

At Soham Village College we understand the potential impact of a student's attendance on their progress and emotional wellbeing. We monitor attendance regularly and offer support through our pastoral system for any student who may find attending school a challenge.

Reporting Absence

If a child needs to miss a school day, this should be reported by 8.30am to our Attendance Officer, Ms Whittle, via email at: attendance@soham-college.org.uk or alternatively, telephone: 01353 724100 and select option 1 to leave a message. Please be aware that this will need to be done on every morning of absence, to avoid it being recorded as unauthorised.

If absence is due to illness, we ask that you explain in a little detail their condition and any steps taken to remedy it. If a medical professional is seen, we recommend that you keep any evidence of the visit, such as an appointment card, prescription etc.

Missing part of the school day

If your child arrives late or needs to leave early, they will need to sign in or out at the main school reception.

Planned Term Time Absence

We strongly recommend that families do not book holidays during term time. In accordance with government guidelines, any absence due to holiday during term time will be unauthorised and parents/carers liable to a penalty notice unless exceptional circumstances apply. Requests for term time leave must be made to the Head teacher in writing (using the form available here: [Soham Village College - Attendance \(sohamvc.org\)](http://sohamvc.org)), and these will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

If you have any questions about this, please contact our Attendance Officer before making any travel arrangements.



Go4Schools is a web-based system that allows us to communicate daily with parents and carers about their child's day. We use it to share how students are progressing in their subjects, to record homework set by their teacher, to record student's attendance and to track behaviour, detentions and effort. You will receive the student reports that are published three times per year via this platform.

For further details about the system and how to log in, please visit: [Soham Village College - Go4Schools \(sohamvc.org\)](http://sohamvc.org)

The School Day

Years 7 & 8

Form time	8.30 to 8.50am
Lesson 1	8.50 to 9.50am
Break	9.50 to 10.20am
Lesson 2	10.20 to 11.20am
Lesson 3	11.20 to 12.20pm
Lunch	12.20 to 1.00pm
Lesson 4	1.00 to 2.00pm
Lesson 5	2.00 to 3.00pm

Years 9 - 11

Form time	8.30 to 8.50am
Lesson 1	8.50 to 9.50am
Lesson 2	9.50 to 10.50am
Break	10.50 to 11.20am
Lesson 3	11.20 to 12.20pm
Lesson 4	12.20 to 1.20pm
Lunch	1.20 to 2.00pm
Lesson 5	2.00 to 3.00pm

School buses leave the school site at 3.10pm



Term Dates 2022/23

Autumn Term 2022

Thursday 1 September	Staff training day – school closed to students
Friday 2 September	Year 7 students start academic year
Monday 5 September	Year 8 to 11 students start academic year
Thursday 23 September	Students finish school at 1.15pm
Friday 30 September	Staff training day – school closed to students
Monday 24 to Friday 28 October	Autumn half term break
Friday 25 November	Staff training day – school closed to students
Tuesday 20 December	School closes for Christmas break

Spring Term 2023

Wednesday 4 January	School re-opens for spring term
Monday 13 to Friday 17 February	Spring half term break
Friday 31 March	School closes for Easter break

Summer Term 2023

Monday 17 April	School re-opens for summer term
Monday 1 May	May Day Bank Holiday
Monday 29 May to Friday 2 June	Summer half term break
Tuesday 18 July	School closes for academic year
Wednesday 19 July	Staff training day – school closed to students
Thursday 20 July	Staff training day – school closed to students

