



COTTENHAM VILLAGE COLLEGE

Our Family Handbook: Stepping up

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All the information in this booklet (and more) can be found on our website in the Parental Information area:

<https://www.astreacottenham.org/>

If you are viewing the PDF version of this document, you will be able to make use of the hyperlinks

Principal's Welcome

Dear Families,

Welcome to Cottenham Village College. We are delighted you have chosen our College and believe you have made a fantastic decision which will have a positive impact on your child's future. At Cottenham Village College we aim to provide outstanding, personalised support for every student which meets both their pastoral and academic needs. This allows all students to achieve their full potential. At the heart of our work sits the belief that you aspire to succeed, we endeavour to achieve and produce our best so that we all flourish.

We are a Village College. This means we place learning and education in the heart of the community and our community in the heart of our college.

Here at Cottenham Village College we have an academic curriculum which challenges our students to flourish, acquire rich knowledge and understanding and develop an effective range of skills. Learning is at the heart of everything we do, and expectations of your child are high. We complement our academic curriculum with an extensive enrichment programme. From after school clubs to international trips, we give our students access to cultural literacy to enable them to fully participate in educated adult life.

Whilst we are focused on academic outcomes, Cottenham is small enough for us to know all our students as individuals. We take great pride in developing relationships between students, staff, and families, in order that we can ensure that success is desirable, demanded, and achievable. Our pastoral teams support our students and families with additional support when there are problems and 'Form Tutors' are the first port of call, much as class teachers during primary years, as form tutors have daily contact with their tutor groups each day in registration. In addition to form tutors, each year group has a 'Head of Year' and 'Assistant Head of Year' who support your child if there are any issues that arise. This means that a team of adults is there to support every child to have a happy and positive experience at school. Our SEN team also work to support children with additional learning needs and link in regularly with our families.

We do operate a warm strict approach to discipline ensuring our students develop the habits that will be necessary to be successful independent adults. Expectations and standards of behaviour are high so that all our learning environments are always calm and purposeful, supporting staff to teach effectively and all students to learn and achieve well.

The move from primary school to a secondary is an exciting time but can also be daunting. We recognise this and understand that students need to feel reassured, happy, and safe during this transition period. This booklet aims to provide information which will help you through the transition process so there are no unexpected surprises.

If you have any questions between now and the start of term in September, please do not hesitate to contact us. We very much look forward to welcoming you to our College community.

With very best wishes,

Zoe Andrews
Principal



Who can I contact at the College?

One of the key questions we know all students and families will be thinking is who can they contact at Cottenham to ask for help or guidance. Whilst this booklet should address many key questions, there will always be more questions. If this is the case, please do not hesitate to contact us at cvcyear7@astreacottenham.org

What if I want further information?

The aim of this booklet is to provide you with the key information to help your child engage in the upcoming Step Up day. We will be providing all primary schools with our Family Handbook later this term which will provide the one-stop-shop for all your subsequent transition questions. In the mean time, if there are any questions do not hesitate to contact cvcyear7@astreacottenham.org

Senior Leadership Team

Principal	Zoe Andrews
Vice Principal – Curriculum	Kath Goudie
Vice Principal – Pastoral	Clive Crisford
Vice Principal – Safeguarding	Hanan McKeand
Assistant Principal – Assessment and reporting	Amelia Parker
Assistant Principal – Behaviour and Culture	Patrick Winter
Assistant Principal – SEND provision	Judith Chipps
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Helen Stearn
Operations Manager	Sarah Powell

How does my child get to and from CVC from September?

Most of our students either walk to school, are dropped off by family, or take the bus to school. School buses arrive between 8:20am and 8:35am. There is a bus collection at the end of the school day, at 3:20pm. School buses and taxis are organised by Education Transport at Cambridgeshire County Council. Their contact number is **0345 045 5208**.

Applications for Cambridgeshire County Council bus passes can be made at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/schools-learning/school-transport> or alternatively please go on the school website for the link to the application for a bus pass.

[CVC Homepage → Parents → Transport](#)

Please note that your child **must** carry their bus pass at all times. Bus drivers do not necessarily check every morning and afternoon but will do “spot checks”. If your child doesn’t have their bus pass on them, then the bus driver has the authority to refuse travel on the bus and it would be your responsibility to get them to and from school at that time.

If you are out of catchment, you will receive further information regarding the option of a private bus/es.

What should my child wear on 9th July?

On 9th July your child should attend school in their current school's PE kit. This will enable all students to take part in our PE Festival. The PE Team are very much looking forward to working with the students for this.

What uniform and equipment does my child need in September?

We want students to develop a sense of appropriate professional dress and we expect all students to wear the school uniform. The school has a clear uniform policy and we do expect students to adhere to the policy. Please pay particular attention to the rules for shoes; we know these can be a costly item to replace if they fall outside the school rules. They may also be required to have specialist clothing for some lessons.

[CVC Homepage](#) → [About Us](#) → [Uniform](#)

- A navy blue jacket with the College logo (supplied by SWI).
- A navy blue V-neck jumper (optional) with College logo (supplied by SWI).
- Grey trousers, classic or slim leg
- Tartan grey pleated skirt. Skirts should be no shorter than knee length, no longer than mid-calf/shin and should not be fitted.
- Grey tailored shorts are permitted which must in length be no longer than just below the knee or no shorter than in line with the knee (cargo, beach, casual, sport, chino, denim style are not permitted). The College reserves the right to remove this as a school uniform item if this is not consistently followed. It is essential that students who choose to wear tailored shorts are dressed smartly and promote the high uniform presentation and standards.
- Plain white school shirt/blouse (short or long sleeved). A plain white vest top only maybe worn under the blouse/shirt.
- College tie which has the logo and your child's appropriate house colour (supplied by SWI).
- Plain black or dark grey socks or black/grey/neutral tights.
- No hoodies, track suit tops are allowed.
- All students must carry a school bag large enough to carry an A4 folder; handbags are not permitted.



Plain, black, polishable shoes with no visible branding (trainers, pumps, canvas shoes, boots, 'Nike Air Force Ones', and blacked out trainers are NOT permitted). Students, where they choose to wear a heel, should wear one with more than 2cm in height.

What is PE uniform is needed for September?

From September, the following PE kit must be worn when participating in PE lessons and can be ordered from our supplier:

- PE T-shirt (with CVC logo)
- navy blue $\frac{3}{4}$ zip training top (with CVC logo)
- navy blue shorts or skort
- navy blue leggings or tracksuit bottoms
- navy blue football socks
- optional – rugby shirt
- optional – navy blue base layer
- optional – under armour
- appropriate footwear for the activity including training shoes suitable for indoor use and a second pair of trainers or boots for outdoor use; pumps are not suitable footwear
- shin pads to be worn when playing competitive games such as football and hockey (by law)
- a gum shield is necessary when playing hockey and rugby

Please ensure that all items of uniform are **clearly labelled** with the child's name. Please note that students are not allowed to wear the formal Cottenham Village College uniform for their PE lessons and the appropriate behaviour sanction will be given for lack of equipment/ PE kit.

Our uniform supplier is Sportswear International (SWI):

Online Orders: <https://www.swischoolwear.co.uk/>

To make orders online you can also use the link on our website, it can be found in Parental Information section.

[CVC Homepage](#) → [About Us](#) → [Uniform](#)

You will need to create a login to create purchases.

Alternatively, postal orders can be made on an order form which is downloadable from the website (and sent to the address above). Orders can also be made directly over the phone on the number stated above.

What equipment does my child need to bring?

Please can we ask you to ensure that your child has a pencil case and pens on 9th July.

In September the essentials that all students need to have in a pencil case:

- Pens: At least 2x blue/black. 1x green pen
- A pencil and a rubber
- At least 2 highlighters
- A protractor and a ruler
- A pair of compasses
- A glue stick
- A scientific calculator

To support all students having access to this equipment, a stationery shop is run in the library at break and lunch times. Also, students with a certain number of Shine points will be able to swap these for items of equipment



What will my child be doing on 9th July?

The college operates on a two-week timetable (Week A and Week B)

Time	Activity
08.30 - 08.40	Students to arrive – through dining room
08.40 – 09.10	Assembly in the main hall before going to their form group for some ice breaking activities.
09.10 – 10.05	Period 1
10.05 – 11.00	Period 2
11.00 – 11.20	Break – students will go to an early break to support their transition around the school site
11.20 – 12.15	Period 3
12.15 – 13.10	Period 4
13.10 – 13.50	Lunch – students will go to an early break to support their transition around the school site
13.50 – 14.15	Read programme
14.10 – 15.10	Period 5
15.10 – 15.20	Extra-curricular clubs and detention

On 9th July students will be going to a welcome assembly and so on this day should go straight through to the Hall. There will be staff on hand to direct them to the right place.

On the day students will be taking part in a range of lessons including Maths, English, Art, Computer Science, DT, Geography, History, RE, as well as a PE Festival across periods 3 and 4.

When will my child be given their timetable for the day?

Rather than giving students individual timetables for Step Up Day, we provide two Head Students, from year 10, to act as guides and supports for the group all day. This ensures that every group will be taken to and from their lessons. Most importantly they will also be taken to break and lunch.



Which tutor group will my child be in?

Groupings for 9th July will be shared shortly via email to the families to help students prepare for the day. Final groupings will then be shared before the end of the summer term so that students know their tutor group and who their tutor will be, ready for September.

It is important to note that the groups students will be in on 9th July are transition groups which allow us to meet the students. Once we have met the groups, and reviewed student dynamics, we will then review all the information we have and finalise these groups. Families will be contacted with the final information about their tutor group, and form tutor – an individual who will be integral to their life at CVC.



Tutor time is an important aspect of the college day and contributes significantly to student well-being and achievement throughout their time at the school. Students are with their form tutors from 8.40am to 9.10am every morning, with one morning given to a year group assembly. During tutor time, and after the register has been taken, there is dedicated time for a specific activity to ensure that students are ready for learning.

The weekly programme for year 7 is listed below:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Assembly	Notices, equipment, and uniform support	PSHE focus	Be Kind Work Hard	Year 7 focus

Throughout the year students will focus on the following areas in their tutor times to support their transition to secondary school, as well as embed the key skills needed to flourish at the school.

Time	Key area of focus
Autumn 1	Building new friendships
Autumn 2	Embedding a successful transition to CVC
Spring 1	Making the most of the SHINE award
Spring 2	What tools make for a really successful time at CVC?
Summer 1	How can I take responsibility?
Summer 2	Reflecting and planning for year 8

How will my child's behaviour be supported?

How do I find out about my child's behaviour at school?

MyChildAtSchool [MCAS] is a portal enabling parents to view their child's academic performance in real-time via a web browser and an app. This facility allows exclusive access to the child's Attendance, Assessment and Behaviour whenever the parent/carer wishes. Details to support setting this up will be shared shortly.

To supplement the behaviour and attendance management information system that we use (MCAS), we also provide a central place for all communication and payments from the school.

Once your child has joined CVC in the summer, we will send you all guidance documents to support setting up these important accounts.



Positive behaviour

Students are reminded regularly that we pride ourselves on being kind and working hard. If students work to these essential values, they will thrive at the College.

In practice, we see excellent behaviour at CVC when students demonstrate that they can:

- Arrive at college and all lessons on time
- Wear full college uniform and look smart at all times
- Have the correct equipment for all lessons
- Move around the site quietly, sensibly and with purpose
- Refrain from conflict or physical contact with others
- Be kind, polite and treat others with respect
- Work hard and remain focused on the task in all lessons
- Listen to and always follow all instructions from all staff
- Take responsibility for their own actions
- Take care of the buildings and resources
- Behave appropriately on the way to and from college
- Be ambassadors for CVC on college trips and when in the community
- Make a significant contribution to the life of the college and their local community
- Complete all homework tasks on time and to the best of their ability



How will my child be rewarded?

Students should expect to be rewarded for demonstrating excellent behaviour. At the College we reward through a range of mechanisms. Staff reward for a range of behaviours in the classroom as listed above.

Some things we feel deserve greater praise! Our half termly rewards assemblies focus on celebrating student achievements both in and out of the classroom. We also celebrate the students through Rewards Events, such as our work with the local fire brigade, our year 7 rewards trip to Cambridge for films and bowling, LaserTag, trampolining, rewards trip to Alton Towers, and finally our year 11s celebration day and Prom.



SHINE

SHINE was created with a view to raising aspiration and participation in all areas of our students' lives, both inside and outside of college. SHINE stands for Succeed, Help Others, Inspire, Never Give Up and Engage.

SHINE works on three levels: Silver, Gold and Platinum. Each level is divided into the categories above (S, H, I, N and E) and students are challenged to meet criteria in each category before they complete a level. Successful completion of a level sees achievement rewarded with a SHINE badge and rewards. This supports students in understanding that success is rewarded both in, and outside the classroom. This will be launched in more detail for the students during their first term.



House System

Students are placed in one of four houses and take part in a wide range of inter-house competitions across all faculties. Houses are largely student led and all students are encouraged to take on leadership roles or positions of responsibility during their time at the school. Our house names were chosen by members of the school community and represent individuals from different walks of life and with varying areas of expertise who all demonstrated the values that SHINE embodies.

<p>Bronte - Green</p> <p>Charlotte Bronte (21 April 1816 – 31 March 1855) was an English novelist and poet who left behind a rich legacy of written work which includes classic novels such as 'Jane Eyre', 'Shirley' and 'Villette'. A dominant and ambitious woman from a young age, she was someone who refused to blindly follow the norms that society demanded of women during her time. She was a fiercely independent woman who introduced to the literary world a new kind of heroine who defied age-old societal expectations to emerge as a courageous and virtuous individual in her own right.</p>	<p>Hargreaves - Red</p> <p>Alison Hargreaves (17 February 1962 – 13 August 1995) was an English mountain climber from Derbyshire. Her accomplishments included scaling Mount Everest alone without supplementary oxygen in 1995. She soloed all the great north faces of the Alps in a single season. Hargreaves also climbed 6,813 metre (22,349 ft) Ama Dablam in Nepal. In 1995 Alison Hargreaves intended to climb the three highest mountains in the world: Mount Everest, K2 and Kangchenjunga unaided. On 13 August, she was killed while descending from the summit of K2.</p>
<p>Sanger - Yellow</p> <p>Frederick Sanger, OM, CH, CBE, FRS, FAA (13 August 1918 – 19 November 2013) was a British biochemist who won the Nobel Prize for Chemistry twice (1958, 1980) "for his work on the structure of proteins, especially that of insulin". Sanger set out to determine the structure of insulin, a hormone crucial to regulating our blood sugar levels. Many of the disease treatments currently being developed for diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease, cancer and cystic fibrosis would not be possible without Sanger's work.</p>	<p>Turing - Blue</p> <p>Alan Turing, OBE, FRS (23 June 1912 – 7 June 1954) was a pioneering computer scientist, mathematician, logician and cryptanalyst. He was highly influential in the development of computer science. During the Second World War, Turing played a pivotal role in cracking intercepted coded messages that enabled the Allies to defeat the Nazis in many crucial engagements. It has been estimated that this work shortened the war in Europe by as many as two to four years.</p>



Clear Sanctions

Every child and staff member in our college deserves to feel safe, happy, and able to enjoy their time in college. We will reward positive behaviour, and will look to change the behaviour of students who might disrupt the learning of others. Equally, behaviour that might cause offence or harm to another person will be considered as a serious breach of our behaviour policy.

Teachers will implement a range of behaviour strategies to ensure a positive learning environment. Any child who chooses not to meet our expectations will be issued with a sanction. However if a child is not following expectations:

- They will be issued a verbal warning to help them see how to change their behaviour
- If they don't follow this instruction, they will be issued a same-day detention
- If the inappropriate behaviour continues, the student will be removed from the classroom and will work in our Reset Base for the remainder of the period. The member of staff will contact home to discuss the removal from the lesson.



Mobile Phones/Electronic Devices

At Cottenham, we pride ourselves on disruption free learning in lessons. To eliminate distractions in lessons, we ask that students are not distracted through using their own electronic devices. We ask that all mobile phones are switched off, and remain in the student's bag during the school day. Alternatively, if phones are not needed, we recommend that they are left at home as phones in school are brought at the owners' risk.

Any student whose phone rings out or is seen out of a bag will have their phone confiscated by a member of staff and the mobile will then be held securely until the parent/carer can come into the school to collect it. We will of course contact you if this does happen. Please note that this policy extends across the school grounds and includes the time prior to leaving the site at the end of the day.

Other electronic devices may only be used in lessons if this supports the educational learning objectives of the lesson and with direct permission from the teacher (e.g., Chromebooks/laptops).



How does my child get food at school?

We have a full catering service that provides hot and cold food during break and lunchtime. All meals are made using fresh ingredients, sourced from local suppliers, and prepared on-site in our professionally managed kitchen. The menu changes daily, with themed days and fun promotions. If students prefer, they can bring their own food to school where there are flexible eating areas to make use of. The school operates a Cashless Catering system to avoid money having to be taken each day. Cash will not be accepted at the till points and accounts must be credited in advance.

Menus can be found on our website:

[CVC Homepage → Parents → Eating at the College](#)

What food does my child need to bring on 9th July?

On the day we will provide all students with a free break and lunch. We do appreciate that some of the students may wish to bring a snack and packed lunch on the day. Alongside this, we recommend that all students bring a bottle of water on the day.

How do we pay for food at school: IRIS ParentMail

ParentMail is a system we use for parents to make payments to school for things like trips, lunch money and events at the school. ParentMail is set up using the email address and mobile number provided by you on the admissions form. You can access IRIS Parentmail either online or by downloading the app.

Free School Meals

Children from households with lower incomes may be entitled to Free School Meals. Further information on eligibility and an application form can be found by the link on our website.

[CVC Homepage → Parents → Eating at the College → Free School Meals](#)

Alternatively ask your child to collect a paper copy from Reception or contact the Education Welfare Benefits Service on **01223 703200** or email ewb.fsm@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.



Frequently asked questions about catering?

What is the Cashless Catering System?

The College is a cash free site. The Cashless Catering System recognises payments made into your child's ParentMail account and works alongside software to recognise each student by their fingerprint or name.

How will my child be recognised by the system?

Each student will have their fingerprint scanned on the transition days unless you have contacted the Admin Team explaining that you do not give consent reception@astrecottenham.org. Formal consent is obtained via your Admission Form. The cashless system uses the fingerprint record to create a login pattern to identify students; the actual image is then discarded. We do not store the image of the fingerprint, only the code that is created to identify each student. No part of this process can be used by any other external organisations for any other purpose.

How will my child obtain a school meal?

Your child simply takes the items they wish to purchase to the tills and places their finger on the scanner; a display will then show the server the student's name, class and current cash balance held within the system. If a student does not have their fingerprint scanned, they will still be able to purchase items by stating their full name. If the student does not have sufficient balance remaining for these items, they will let them know rather than allowing a debt to build up. The selected food/drink items will be entered into the system from an itemised keyboard while the amount spent and the new cash balance will be shown on the display. Please ensure account balances are always in credit.

What if my child is entitled to a Free School Meal?

Your child's balance will be automatically credited daily with £2.35. The purchase process works exactly the same for all students whether they pay or they are entitled to a Free School Meal. At the point of purchase the till system will automatically notify the catering staff to Free School Meal accounts so students will not need to declare this. If you would like to restrict the use of the free school meal entitlement to a lunch-time meal only, please contact the Admin Team reception@astrecottenham.org.

Each student has their own account on ParentMail and any credit you might wish to apply for additional purchases can be made but accounts must be credited in advance.

Please note that any underspent or missed meal will not be carried forward to the next day.

How is money entered onto our child's account?

The school uses ParentMail as the payment portal.

- a) You will be able to register for this service before your child starts school, so that you can login and set up your ParentMail account either on-line or using the app.
- b) You can access your ParentMail account through the school website www.astrecottenham.org and selecting the **Payments** link (situated along the top of the page).

If we pay for a set number of school meals, can this all be spent in one day?

No, a daily spend limit of £4.50 will be set for all students and no items exceeding this limit can be bought. However, on request, an individual student's limit (higher or lower) can be altered, this can be to include lunch and break-time snacks. Any requests should be emailed to Reception@astrecottenham.org or by phone on 01954 288944.

How do I top up my child/ren's account online?

To top up your child's account online, go to our website www.astrecottenham.org and select the Payments icon (at the top of the page – maroon strip).

What if my child does not hold a sufficient cash balance to pay for their school dinner?

No student is refused a school lunch. However, if your child knows they are overdrawn they will be provided with a pink slip to allow them to purchase food at lunchtime (not at breaktime), parents/carers will be informed. The college will allow the student to borrow money for one day. However, we then expect you to repay the money borrowed by re-crediting the system online before the next day. If your child's account is overdrawn, you will be contacted by the college.

How will we be able to check what our child's current balance is held on the system at any time?

- a) Online, via the 'Student/Parent Payments' link on our website. You can login to your ParentMail account at any time and see the fund balance by selecting Shop in the overview section.
- b) Your child can view the remaining balance at the till, with or without making a payment as they use their fingerprint at the till to display the balance.

Will my child have problems in using this system?

Some students may find it difficult to control their accounts for the first couple of weeks but, because of a daily spend limit, most learn this important life skill very quickly.

What do we do if we forget the password of our ParentMail account?

On the login screen enter your email address and select forgotten your password link.

What is meant by 'dietary control'?

Should the student have a specific food allergy, or be a diagnosed diabetic, this medical information can be coded into the system, preventing foods with allergy ingredients from being served to a particular student, by automatically locking out relevant buttons on the till point.

How do I tell you about my child's allergies?

Aspen's allergen policy can be found under the 'Eating at the College' section of the College's website. Should you child have an allergy, please inform the School as soon as possible. You must complete a Special Diets/Allergy Form (available from the Admin Team) and return this to the school, providing a medical support for food allergies. Where necessary please contact the school to discuss any specific requirements relating to your child's allergy. Once an allergy form is in place, please update the School of any changes.

Can my child bring peanuts onto site?

As a school, we have no dishes on the menu that contain nuts but some of our products we use come from factories that have other nut products within them and therefore a few items have "may contain" on the allergen sheet. However Due to allergies amongst students and staff, we ask that parents do not pack peanuts into pack lunches. Thank you for your support in this.





We are very much looking forward to working with your child and you. Should you have any other questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

From all of us at CVC – have a fantastic summer and we look forward to welcoming you in September.

