



Sturminster Newton High School



Essential Information for Families

Respectful | Responsible | Resilient

WELCOME TO STURMINSTER NEWTON HIGH SCHOOL



Dear Parents, Carers, and Students,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to Sturminster Newton High School.

We are a values-driven school rooted in the heart of our beautiful local community. Serving the town of Sturminster Newton and its surrounding villages, we take immense pride in the strong relationships we build with families, local organisations, and the wider community. We believe that education is a shared journey — one that thrives through collaboration, trust, and mutual support. We strongly believe that it takes a village to raise a child, and we are very proud to be part of that village.

Our school offers the best of both worlds: the warmth and individual attention of a smaller setting, combined with high expectations for academic achievement and personal development. In 2025, we celebrated some of our strongest ever GCSE results that showcased our outcomes as some of the best in Dorset - a reflection of our students' hard work, our staff's dedication, and the strength of our school culture.

At Sturminster Newton, we are committed to nurturing the whole child. Our broad and balanced curriculum is designed to inspire curiosity, build resilience, and prepare students for the challenges and opportunities ahead. We foster a love of learning in an environment where every student is known, supported, and encouraged to flourish.

We hope this prospectus gives you a clear sense of what makes our school special. If you would like to visit us during the school day, please don't hesitate to get in touch. We would be delighted to welcome you, show you around, and answer any questions you may have.

We look forward to welcoming you to our school.

With warm regards
Mr Mike Motteram, Headteacher





Introduction

This Guide is designed to outline everyday school routines, policies and general expectations. We have attempted to cover all essential information but please do not hesitate to contact your child's Tutor or Head of Year if you have additional questions. We would also welcome your comments if you feel that there is vital information missing which would be helpful to parents.



**Contact your Child's Tutor
in the first instance**



**Office Email:
office@mynhs.net**



**Further information is
available on our website
www.mynhs.net**



**Follow our Facebook
and Instagram Pages for
regular updates**





Communication

Parents' Evening

All year groups will have at least one formal 'Parents' Evening' to meet and discuss your child's progress.

We run a 'hybrid' format, with half the evening available as video calls and half the evening as in person appointments.

Headteacher Newsletter

Every week our Headteacher sends out a newsletter, ensuring all families are kept up to date with what has happened at SNHS this week and what events we have coming up. The Student Bulletin is also sent out, containing many important reminders!

Emailing the School

Remember that staff teach during the working day, so please leave a message with the School Office or via the school's email: office@mysnhs.net and the member of staff will contact you as soon as possible. We will always try and respond within 48hrs.

Reports

During Years 7, 8 and 9 a report is produced each term. Two reports give progress grades, and are made available to view in the assessment area of Arbor Parent App. Alongside progress data each student will get an Attitude to Learning (ATL) grade.





Communication



Arbor

The Arbor Parent App is our Parental Online Reporting System. It has been set up by the school to enable you to view the progress your child is making. It allows you to access more than just a paper version of reports and also allows you to report an absence

Details of how to sign up for Parent App will follow once your child has started at SNHS.



Home-School Planner

Each student will receive a Home-School Planner on the first day of term. It is the first point of contact between you and your child's Form Tutor.

The planner will have a copy of your child's timetable and key information about our school.

Students will write in homework which has been set each day. The Form Tutor will also sign the Planner on a regular basis.

If you have any problems or notes you wish the Form Tutor to see, you can write them in the Planner. Form Tutors can also add notes for you.





The School Day



Arrive on time
and prepared

Arrival

We welcome students from 8:15 and school starts at 8:30am. Students put their phones away and head to morning tutor on arrival.



Morning and
Afternoon
Tutor Time

Tutor Check In

Students will have the chance for a morning check in with their tutor before heading to Period 1. They get a longer tutor period after lunch.



5 x one hour
lessons

Five Periods

Each day is split into 5 x one hour lessons. Students will experience a wide-ranging and exciting curriculum.



Lunch and
After School
Clubs

Enrichment and Clubs

Lunchtime provides opportunities for activities (and fun!). We also run clubs and activities after school - including sports, academic and performing arts.



Timetable

Timings of the School Day

Arrival	8:15
Morning Tutor	8:30-8:40
Period 1	8:40-9:40
Period 2	9:40-10:40
Breaktime	10:40-11:00
Period 3	11:00-12:00
Period 4	12:00-13:00
Lunch	13:00-13:35
Afternoon Tutor	13:35-14:00
Period 5	14:00-15:00
After School Clubs	15:00-16:00





Preparing for School

School Transport

Dorset Council provides free transport for all our students who live three miles or more from the school, the distance measured from door to door by the shortest suitable route. Bus passes need to be applied for on the Dorset Council website.

On some bus routes where there is space on a bus, they may be able to offer a "Surplus Seat" to students who live within three miles or outside the catchment area. The present charge is from £975 per student per academic year and is reviewed annually. Payment can be made in full or in instalments. Parents should contact Dorset Travel for further details on 01305 224537.

Students who are entitled will be issued with a bus pass which they should carry with them at all times. Bus drivers will check bus passes on a regular basis. There is a charge for a replacement bus pass, costs vary depending on the Bus Company and range from £15 - £25; they need to be purchased from Dorset Travel or direct from the bus company.

Students should obey the school code of conduct on their way to and from school. This is especially important when using buses and taxis provided by the Local Education Authority.

Personal Property

All clothing and personal property must be clearly marked with the owner's name. Named lost property, if found, can be easily returned to owners. Money or valuables should not be left unattended in classrooms, changing rooms, desks or bags. Neither the school nor the Education Authority will accept responsibility for loss of/or damage to personal property. Lockers are available for all students and can be requested from the main office.

If students mislay something, they should look for it thoroughly. After that they should check with the School Office, where items of lost property are handed in. It must be stressed that the care of personal property is the student's responsibility.





Preparing for School

Bad Weather and Emergency Procedure

From time to time, especially in winter, a situation can arise which makes it necessary to close the school. Reasons for such a closure could include failure of the power or heating supply or bad road conditions. A decision to close the school is always made in the interests of the students, particularly with regard to their safe arrival and departure. If a decision is taken to close the school, we inform parents by using the school website (www.mysnhs.net). This will be updated at regular intervals giving guidance on the school's position. You can also look at Dorset County Council's "snow closure" list: [School Closures](#) or the school's Facebook page: [SNHS Facebook](#).

Lockers & Resource Contribution

A one-off £10 contribution is payable when a student joins our school, this is required towards the provision of student lockers, schoolbook loans and other shared educational resources. This contribution is non-refundable and payable via WisePay.

Once payment has been received, your child will be issued with a locker key, for which they are responsible. To reduce the likelihood of this being lost, we recommend attaching the key to the inside pocket of their blazer. Replacement keys are available from the School Office at a cost of £5 per key. If a lock is damaged by a student and requires replacement, a charge of £8.50 will apply.

Printer Card

Each student will be issued with an electronic card which is used to access printers in the school, for signing in and out of afterschool activities and as they progress through the school it is used for Sixth Form registration. The cost of a replacement card is £3. Payment can be made on WisePay.





Preparing for School

Cashless Catering

Each student will be issued with an electronic card which may be loaded via the web. Further details will be given when the card is issued. Students in receipt of free school meals will have their card automatically loaded each evening with the Free School Meal allowance (currently £2.80 as of 2026). The cost of a replacement card is £3. Payment can be made on WisePay.

Mobile Phone and Smart Devices

While the school accepts that mobile phones & smart devices are now a part of everyday life, increasing evidence is emerging that links mobile phone usage with lower academic performance, increased bullying and increased truancy rates.

If pupils have a mobile phone in school it must be switched off at all times throughout the school day and kept in a safe place (ideally in a lockable locker or switched off in their bag). Using a camera on a phone or smart device to take photographs of people in school is a serious breach of the school code of conduct and would lead to an investigation and possible suspension.

If pupils are using their mobile phone/smart device during the school day or have a mobile upon their person, the policy is to confiscate the phone and hand it in to Reception. Parents/carers or an Arbor adult contact, will be contacted to collect the phone from Reception.

Smart devices such as watches should only be used to tell the time. They must not be used to access social media, send messages, make verbal calls, take photos or other activity deemed inappropriate.

If students need to contact home during the school day, they should go to the Reception. All forms of personal music devices should not be used in school unless students have specific permission for their use (on a long trip for example) and even then the school cannot take responsibility for loss, theft or damage.

A school mobile phone is taken on all trips and sports fixtures, so there is rarely a need for students to use their own personal phone. As mobile phones are not necessary in school, the school will not take responsibility for the loss, theft or damage to any mobile phone.

Students are not permitted to get their phones out at the end of the day until they have left the school building and are either:

- on their school bus, or
- have left the school site



Preparing for School

Equipment

It is essential that students come to school with the correct equipment. The school feels strongly that a student's writing is best when completed in fountain/cartridge ink pen and it is therefore included with the essential items listed.

- Pen (preferred - black ink)
- Purple pen
- Pencil
- Rubber
- Ruler
- Coloured pencils
- Scientific Calculator
- Basic geometry set (including compasses and protractor)
- Soft sketching pencil

An up-to-date atlas or electronic equivalent is recommended by the Geography Department for each family, and a French/English dictionary by the Modern Languages Department.

Medication & Health and Safety in School

Parents must inform the school when their child requires medication and, where necessary, take personal responsibility for any action that is beyond that which can be reasonably expected of the school and its staff. If your child is on medication and requires this in school hours, parents must complete a Parental Agreement form which can be obtained from the School Office. Medicines must be in the original container as dispensed by the Pharmacy. If your child needs several medicines/tablets, then a separate form for each one is needed. Parents should hand the medication to the School Office, clearly labelled with the child's name, the name of the medication and the dosage to be given. The quantity of medication supplied should not be excessive. If necessary, please request the chemist to provide separate supplies for use at school. In most cases it should, however, be possible for medication to be given before and after school, thus avoiding having to take any during the school day.

Parents of children who need to wear a Medic-alert bracelet/necklace should notify the school office of this and provide information about the medical condition involved.

If a student has an injury which affects their movement around school (e.g. using crutches, in plaster) parents/carers are asked to contact the Head of Year before returning to school. A risk assessment will need to be carried out prior to your child being able to access the classrooms around the school.



Curriculum

Key Stage 3

Our curriculum consists of subjects that meet all National Curriculum Requirements and there are thirty 60 minutes lessons each week in Years 7-9. Our curriculum is both broad and balanced, carefully designed to support progress and represent the diversity of the communities we serve. At Sturminster Newton we have a two-week timetable.

Key Stage 4

In Years 10 and 11, all students follow our Core Curriculum consisting of GCSE English Language and Literature, Mathematics and Science. Students will also study several Options subjects including a range of courses such as Art, Art 3D, Photography, Hospitality and Food, Music, Drama, Sport and Fitness, French, Computer Science, Business Studies, History, Geography, RE and King's Trust. In Year 9 students begin to pick their Options for GCSE's.

Key Stage 5 - Sixth Form

In Years 12 and 13, students can opt for three BTEC or A-level subjects and will be supported at the end of Year 11 to make informed decisions about their future careers and their destinations for further qualifications.





Sixth Form Study

Independent Study

Independent study is an essential skill that has to be learned in order to be successful at A-level. There is a vast difference between study at GCSE and A level and we work hard to help students to develop into independent learners who go beyond just completing home learning set by teachers, and who will read around their subjects and review their own work, producing summaries, revision notes and extension work. Students can expect teachers to regularly set challenging independent learning tasks which are relevant to their courses. They can also expect teachers to provide constructive feedback indicating how to improve their work.

Students may choose where they spend this time, either in the Sixth Form quiet study areas at both sites, which are equipped with computers and laptop charging sockets or in the Sixth Form Cafés. The cafés have a more relaxed environment where students can carry out group work or enjoy a drink or something to eat while they work.

Many departments, particularly in practical subjects such as Art, Graphics, Hospitality or IT, encourage students to spend study time in department areas. Students can study in subject rooms at SNHS when they are available.

Students will be expected to do at least one hour of learning outside the classroom for every hour they spend in the classroom. Both Home Study and Independent Learning are an essential part of success in Years 12 & 13 and meeting deadlines is a requirement of the Sixth Form.





Attitude to Learning

Our School Values - The 3 R's

The three values that anchor our vision and shape our daily actions are: • Respect – for ourselves, others, and our environment • Responsibility – for our choices, learning, and community • Resilience – in the face of challenges and setbacks These values underpin our expectations and guide our behaviour. We are proud of our school, ambitious for our futures and committed to ensuring that learning is never disrupted.

Praising Positive Behaviour

Our school values provide the framework for positive behaviour. These values are explicitly taught through the tutor programme, assemblies and in teacher interactions with students. Positive reinforcement of expected behaviour should run throughout the school day, with staff explicitly commenting on positive actions and traits demonstrated by students. We aim to create an environment where positive behaviour is celebrated as a model to other students.

Rewards

There are many ways in which students can be rewarded:

- Verbal praise
- Positive Behaviour Points focussed on effort
- The 100 Club
- Certificates
- Postcards, emails, calls and contact home to share positive behaviour
- Assembly will be a time for celebrating success and rewarding students in front of their peers. At the end of each term there will be an extended assembly for recognising success
- Annual Awards Evening- the Awards Evening allows us to reward the best student in each year for effort and achievement. Certificates and badges are presented. Parents/carers are invited to this event.
- Arbor Parent app – parents/carers have access to live records of behaviour and school reports

The 100 Club

Each half term students are given a score out of a hundred for their Attitude to Learning (ATL), Achievement points, Attendance and Behaviour points. These points will be added together to give a total score, with a Bronze, Silver and Gold Threshold.

Each half term those students who have 90+ points will be invited into a 100 club reward. This may be in the form of Non-School uniform, Film afternoons and other activities.





Enrichment

Extra-Curricular

We offer an extensive range of clubs and wellbeing activities for all students to attend. After school sessions run from 3-4pm

Music & Drama

Instrumental classes are available for Voice, Brass, Strings, Woodwind, Guitar, Drums and Keyboard, for which a charge is made. Please contact Mr Magor, Music Teacher, for further details.

The singing group meets on a Friday lunchtime for an informal singalong. The students involved are from all years, some who are taking GCSE Music and others who just enjoy singing!

The Drama Department offers Acting as an enrichment option. With full school productions involving script writers, performers, designers, dancers and musicians take place regularly.

Sport

The School runs a range of sports clubs after school, with opportunities to represent SNHS against local schools in a calendar of fixtures. These reflect the sporting seasons.

Expeditions

The School offers students the opportunity to participate in the Ten Tors Challenge. There is also a Duke of Edinburgh group working towards their Bronze and Silver Qualifications.





Enrichment

School Library

This is open to all students before registration, every break and lunchtime. There is a good range of fiction and non-fiction books catering for all ages and abilities. Students may borrow up to three books at a time (six in the Sixth Form). The loan is for a fortnight, which is renewable. Students are encouraged to return or renew their books on time and any lost books must be replaced.

The School Council

Made up of an elected representative from each Tutor Group, the School Council meets regularly to discuss matters of concern to the student body.

Trips

We offer a range of trips and opportunities for students, both domestically and internationally. Trip payments can be made through WisePay.





Attendance

Attendance Matters

We believe every child has a right to attend school and to be educated. The “Keeping Children Safe in Education” (KCSIE) guidance emphasizes the importance of regular school attendance as a safeguarding priority. Schools must monitor attendance closely, identify early signs of absenteeism, and work with families to address any barriers to attendance. Consistent attendance is crucial for student welfare and safeguarding.

Parent Responsibility

As a parent, it is your legal responsibility to ensure your child attends school and allowing them to be absent without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in prosecution. Children failing to attend school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter. Only the school, within the context of the law, can approve absence, and all unapproved absences will be challenged. Where a student accumulates more than 10 unauthorised absences in a 10-week period, sanctions may be issued.

Holidays

The Department of Education advises parents do not have the right to take their child out of school during term time for holidays. All Term Time Holidays will be marked as “Unauthorised”, and parents are very likely to receive an £80 Penalty Notice per child. Therefore, parents are strongly advised to take holidays with their children during normal school holiday periods.





Attendance

Reporting Absence

If your child is unable to attend school please report their absence either by telephone - there is a telephone messaging service for the times when the office is unmanned - or via email to office@mynhs.net, 'Report an Absence'.

Authorised Absence

The school operates a first day calling - if your child is not at school or has not been marked in attendance, a call to the first contact will be made during the morning to confirm their whereabouts. An absence e-mail will be sent if no contact can be made by phone.

You can view the Dorset Council's website [School attendance and absence](#)

Children must attend school regularly and on time during term time.

Your child can only miss school if:

- they are too ill to go to school
- the school has authorised the absence

You must get permission from the headteacher if you're planning to take your child out of school during term time. This is called authorised absence.

Your child may be allowed to miss school for

- a death in the family or funeral
- doctor, hospital or dental appointments

If you don't get permission and you take your child out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.





ATTENDANCE

WHY IT MATTERS



Persistent absence means pupils who miss more than **10% of school** every year.

-£750

For each additional day of absence between years 7 to 11, the typical pupil could miss out on an average of **£750** in future lifetime earnings

-£10,000

Persistently absent pupils in year 10 and 11 could earn **£10,000 less** on average at age 28, compared to pupils with near perfect attendance

This **risks to almost £20k less** on average at age 28 for those who are **severely absent**

-£20k

For **employability over a sustained period**, people age 28 were around:



Less likely to be employed when **persistently absent***



Less likely to be employed when **severely absent***

*Compared to their peers with near perfect attendance



Uniform

We are very proud of our students, of their achievements and of our school, and want them to reflect this in the way they dress. Our school uniform helps to give students a sense of identity and belonging. If you have any queries regarding the suitability of an item of school clothing before purchase, please contact the school.

Winter Uniform



Summer Uniform



PE Kit



For further guidance regarding our school uniform expectations and how to order items, please visit the 'Uniform' part of our school website www.mysnhs.net



Student Support

Counselling

The school is fortunate in having the services of a professional counsellor on site. Students may self-refer for counselling (usually six one-hour sessions) or may be referred by staff. In some instances contact may be made with parents.

SEN

A variety of support is offered depending on individual student needs. Our SENDCO and Support Staff ensure that individual students' needs are clearly communicated to staff as well as planning the support required to be successful in the classroom and the wider curriculum.

We have high expectations of all our students and quality first teaching tailored to pupil needs is a key factor in ensuring that students learn and make progress. This is complemented by adaptive teaching that responds in real time to students learning to ensure that knowledge and skills are mastered.

For students that need support that require an out-of-class intervention we offer a range of graduated interventions and work in partnership with several local charities and organisations to provide group and targeted interventions.





Student Support

English as an Additional Language

We are proud that in our school community there are more than twenty-five languages spoken and recent migration trends from across Europe, Asia and South America continue to increase the diversity of our student population.

We assess all EAL students on entry to ensure they can access the right level of support. Our designated EAL Coordinator carries out initial assessments and monitors the progress of all EAL students. The initial assessment includes a conversation with parents, previous schooling information and a written and spoken English test.

Careers Guidance

We have a range of whole school, year group and specific student group events that run each year with the aim of supporting our students in making positive choices about their future.

Every year group will take part in a variety of different events in their time with us from employer workshops, university talks/visits and careers fayres to visits from Alumni students to help current students plan their futures.

Careers Education continues throughout a student's life at Sturminster Newton High, including 1:1 support from the Careers Officer, industry visits and work experience, University trips, mentoring, CV writing, application support and interview practice.





Financial Support

Pupil Premium

The Pupil Premium is government funding designed to improve the educational experiences and outcomes of pupils from low-income families. At Sturminster Newton High School, we are committed to ensuring that disadvantaged pupils make strong progress and achieve highly across all areas of the curriculum.

Free School Meals

The Pupil Premium Grant is allocated to schools to support eligible students with their learning and to help fund Free School Meals.

Applications are quick and straightforward. If you believe you may be eligible, you can apply directly through Dorset Council using the link below:

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/education-and-training/schools-and-learning/atschool/free-school-meals>

Other Financial Support

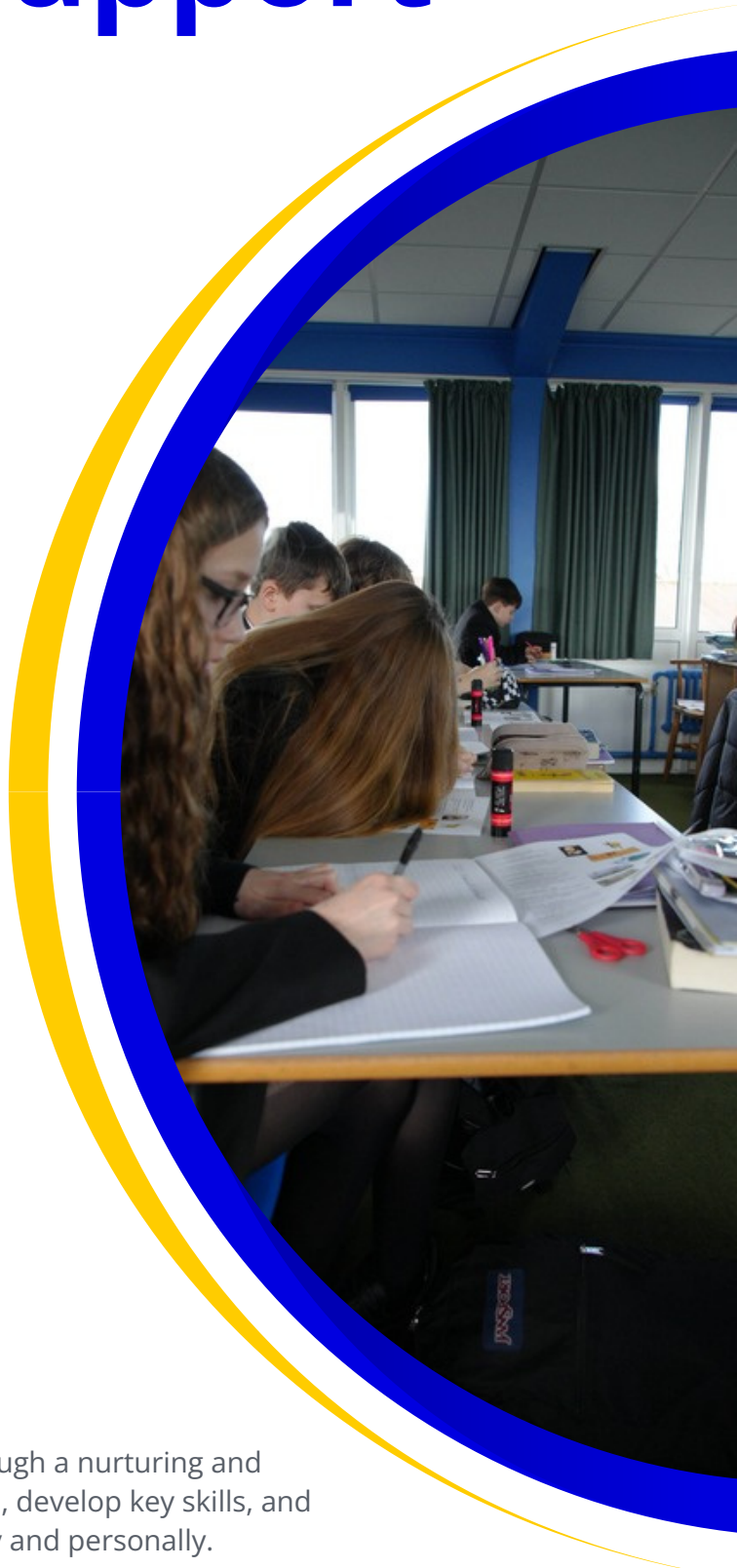
Vale Hub

The Vale Hub provides support for families. Through a nurturing and structured environment, it helps build confidence, develop key skills, and ensure local families can thrive both academically and personally.

William Williams Trust

The William Williams Trust offers financial support to help ensure students can fully access school opportunities. This may include assistance with essential resources, trips, or enrichment activities, helping remove barriers to learning and participation.

Further information is available on our website, www.mysnhs.net





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