

Year 6 - Frequently Asked Questions

~ Virtual Guide to Westbourne ~

Q1: How much homework do students get and how quickly must they do it?

This will depend on the amount of curriculum time within a subject. The minimum guidelines are outlined below for all subjects studied. The latest research suggests that more than 60 minutes per evening starts to lose its impact. It is expected that any home learning set will allow at least 3 days for completion to allow students an opportunity to contact their teacher to discuss anything they are uncertain about and to organise their time.

Key Stage 3	English, Maths, MFL and Science	Geography, History, DT,	Drama, Music, Art, PE, Religious Studies, Computing
Minimum Requirement	At least 1 hour per fortnight	At least 30 minutes per fortnight	1 hour per half term (Note: This could be split e.g. 2X30 mins etc.)

Key Stage 4	English Maths and Science	All other subjects
Minimum Requirement	At least 1 hour per week	At least 1 hour a fortnight

You can view our current Home Learning Policy on the About/Academy Policies page of our website.

Q2: How many lessons of each subject will my child have in Year7?

In Year 7, students will have:

- eight lessons of English
- seven lessons of Science and 7 lessons of Maths
- four lessons of Spanish and 4 of PE
- three lessons of History and 3 of Geography
- two lessons each of RS, Art, Drama, Music, DT, Computing and Enrichment/PSHE

The curriculum time allocated to students in other year groups is available to view on the About/Curriculum page of our website.

Q3: How long are lessons and how many are there each day?

Each lesson is 60 minutes long and there are five lessons a day. Students have 25 lessons a week which equates to 50 lessons over a two-week timetable.

Morning break is 20 minutes and lunch break is 40 minutes.

At the moment, the COVID-19 pandemic has altered the start times, finish times and break times for all year groups. By September 2021, we hope to be back to normal with the first lesson starting at 8:25 and the last lesson ending at 14:50.

Q4: What support is available for children in the way of improving their reading or their handwriting?

As an academy, we aim to support all students who require extra help with their literacy skills, in terms of reading, writing and spelling. We offer a range of intervention programmes and ensure that students are placed into the appropriate intervention group, according to their specific needs. Parents are informed by letter of the literacy interventions in which their child is involved. More details about our Literacy improvement and support strategies can be found on the About/Literacy page of our website.

Q5: Who will manage my child's prescribed medication?

We take our responsibility to keep children safe very seriously and that includes when administering medicines and/or providing first aid or medical assistance when a child is feeling unwell or has sustained an injury. There is a designated member of staff in our pastoral team who is responsible for storing medicines safely and securely and ensuring that students take their medication when they need to do so. We also keep named epi-pens and named diabetes monitoring kits for students in school in case they are needed in an emergency.

Q6: What is the academy's policy on mobile phones and handheld devices?

Students are allowed to bring their mobile phones to school but once onsite they must remain switched off and in bags to avoid them going off or pinging in class. If a student's phone is seen or heard in school, then it will be confiscated. Parents will be contacted by SMS message and asked to collect it from Reception. Smart watches are not permitted to be worn in school. We cannot accept liability for any valuables that students bring to school that are lost, stolen or damaged and this includes mobile devices.

Q7: How likely is it that the academy be oversubscribed for 2021?

The academy has been oversubscribed for Year 7 admissions for September 2019 and September 2020; our Pupil Admission Number (PAN) is 224 in all year groups. In the event we are oversubscribed for Year 7 in September 2021, we will follow the oversubscription criteria set out in our Admissions Policy and preference will be given to children according to the following rules and in this order of priority:

- 1] Children who have a Statement of Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan*
- 2] Looked after children and all previously looked after children*
- 3] Siblings of current students (ie living permanently at the same address as a child attending the academy at the time of admission)*
- 4] Other children by distance from the academy, with priority given to those living nearest to the academy employing the measuring system used by the local authority*

Q8: What extra-curricular clubs can my child do after school?

There are a range of free clubs and activities that take place after school. The academy competes against other local and regional schools, in all year groups and in all sorts of team and individual sports including football, cricket, table tennis, rugby, badminton, trampolining, cross country, athletics, netball, basketball. The library is open after school for students to do their home learning or enjoy reading.

The COVID-19 pandemic means that we are, unfortunately, unable to run extra-curricular activities for students at lunch or after school but we hope this changes by September 2021.

Q9: My child's first language is not English, how will they be taught?

Children who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are taught in mainstream classes with their monolingual peers. Class teachers will make the language of the lesson accessible so that progress in the subject is not affected.

We also have a very established EAL department, which offers additional support when needed. The interventions and support will be time limited as EAL pupils learn best in class with other children and being fully immersed in the language.

The support offered consists of:

- an induction for pupils who are recent arrivals to the UK*
- specialist EAL sessions during KS3 to boost literacy and numeracy*
- EAL option at KS4*
- classroom support with a specialist EAL teaching assistant*
- 1:1 study skills sessions*
- homework club*
- specialist transition meetings in Year 6*
- support with transition to post-16 providers in Year 11*

In addition, Mrs Graziani, our EAL coordinator, organises parent clinics and supports attendance at parents evenings throughout the year. We also encourage all EAL pupils to continue practising their first language at home as this supports their learning of English as well as giving them the opportunity to sit their home language GCSE where available.

If you would like to talk to Mrs Graziani, please contact her directly to make an appointment and she will go through all your questions in more detail.

Mobile: 07850 901422 or email: maria.graziani@westbourne.attrust.org.uk

Q10: What is Vertical Tutoring and why do you have it at Westbourne?

Vertical tutoring - as opposed to traditional linear or same year tutoring - means that each tutor group is made up of students from each of the five year groups instead of just one year group. Each of the 12 tutor groups belongs to one of four Houses: Ennis, Ramsey, Churchill and Nightingale. Each House has a Head of House, Pastoral Lead together with House Captains, Vice Captains, KS4 Prefects and Sports Captains for each year group.

Students spend 20 minutes each day in tutor time completing challenges, doing additional literacy or numeracy work, as well as talking and sharing advice on day-to-day problems.

We adopted vertical tutoring in 2015 and it has been very successful in shaping our vision and ethos. Westbourne is a positive, happy and healthy place to be. It has allowed us to create a better sense of community amongst our students and staff. It gives added strength to our team of teaching and support staff tutors because they form closer bonds with students and care for their welfare and progress as they grow up. Contact between tutors and parents is more effective as a result and behaviour for learning improves as conversations and positive relationships are built between students from different year groups.

Sadly, the COVID-19 restrictions in educational settings has meant that vertical tutoring has been suspended to minimise mixing between year groups at school. By September 2021, if not before, we hope to see vertical tutoring back at Westbourne.

Q11: What is the food like and how much is it?

Chartwells are our food services provider. They offer a range of tasty and nutritious hot and cold snacks, meals and drinks at morning break and at lunch. Our Food Hall is very popular with students. Every day there is a choice of filled sandwiches/baguettes, pasta main meals, pizzas and 'High Street Faves' such as Cajun Pulled Pork, Bagel Cheeseburger, Vegetable Burritos, Sweet Potato Casserole, Fish Bake, Sausage and Mash or a roast dinner. The menu rotates every three weeks. Hot meals cost from £1.10 - £1.50 and Meal Deals cost £2.30 including a homebake and a drink.

Q12: Will I need to reapply for Free School Meals at high school if my child is eligible at primary school?

No - you will not need to reapply provided you remain eligible. The local authority will let us know which students are eligible for FSM when they start at Westbourne. The allowance is currently £2.30 a day to spend on food and drink at morning break or at lunch. To find out if you are eligible, you will need to apply to Suffolk County Council online; the link can be found on the Parent/Free School Meals page of our website.

Q13: What options subjects do you offer in Years 10 and 11?

Towards the end of Year 9, students are able to make their Key Stage 4 pathway choices. This consists of four Core subjects and four Choices. Core subjects studied by all students are English, Maths, Combined Science, PE and PSHE (Personal Social and Health Education). Choices subjects include Spanish, Geography, History, Religious Studies, Business, Enterprise, Health & Social Care, Creative iMedia, Computing, Art & Design, Drama, Photography, Music, PE BTEC, 3D Design, Design Technology and Hospitality & Catering.

You can view our digital Pathway Guide for 2020 on the About/Curriculum page of our website.

Q14: How many exams will my child take in Year 11?

In Year 11, all students will take GCSEs in Maths, Combined or Triple Science, English Language, English Literature, English Speaking & Listening plus four of their options (Choices) subjects; a total of eight exams. Students who show a proficiency in Finance in Year 10 Enrichment lessons will be offered a chance to continue in Year 11 and take the Finance exam as well. Combined Science is worth two GCSEs and Triple Science is worth three GCSEs. Students who are assigned our Green Pathway will take exams in three options subjects plus English, Maths and Science.

Q15: Where do students go when they leave Westbourne in Year 11?

Students can apply to any sixth form, college or apprenticeship provider. The most popular destinations for our students when they leave us are Suffolk One, Suffolk New College or Northgate Sixth Form. Some students find the courses they want further afield at West Suffolk College, Kesgrave High School or Easton College (the new Suffolk Rural College). At the start of Year 11, our students take part in progression interviews in school to make sure they have considered their options and applied for their post-16 place of choice. All students are fully supported and tracked by our inhouse Careers Advisor to make sure they do not fall into the NEET bracket when they leave high school (Not in Education Employment or Training).

Q16: When do students get careers advice?

Careers education takes place in every year group within Enrichment lessons. There are frequently visits to higher education colleges, sixth forms, universities and careers fairs. Students in Year 10 are able to choose a taster day at either Suffolk New College, Suffolk One or Northgate Sixth Form. We have careers advisers in school every day to offer early help to students who need it and this post-16 support and advice intensifies throughout Years 10 and 11.

Q17: My child won't know anybody at Westbourne and is worried about making friends.

The greatest thing about high school is the opportunity to meet a diverse range of new people and make lots of new friends. Everyone feels the same, it is normal to feel excited and a bit anxious at the same time. We offer support at break and lunchtimes for new students who maybe feeling anxious about making new friends and we encourage them to join a club or activity to widen their social circles.

Q18: Will my child be in the same class as friends from primary school?

Not necessarily. We want to ensure that our students are prepared for life after school, where they will often find themselves in situations where they aren't with their close friends. Classes are based on academic ability but students will quickly make new friends or renew old friendships from when they were younger. Learning is the priority in lessons, not socialising. There is plenty of time for socialising out of school or at break times. Social concerns are common but most children say they are no longer worried after the first one or two weeks.

Q19: Are siblings always in the same House?

Yes - we keep siblings in the same House as one another because this makes it simpler for parents when it comes to buying uniform, laundry and recycling ties for younger siblings. We also think that House competitions and friendly rivalry need to stay at school and not spill over at home; for instance when Churchill win sports day again for the fifth time in a row!

We hope that we have answered your questions.

We will be updating this list of FAQs as new questions are sent to us.

If you have a question that you would like answered and we have not covered it here, then please send an email to:

office@westbourne.attrust.org.uk

Thank you.