

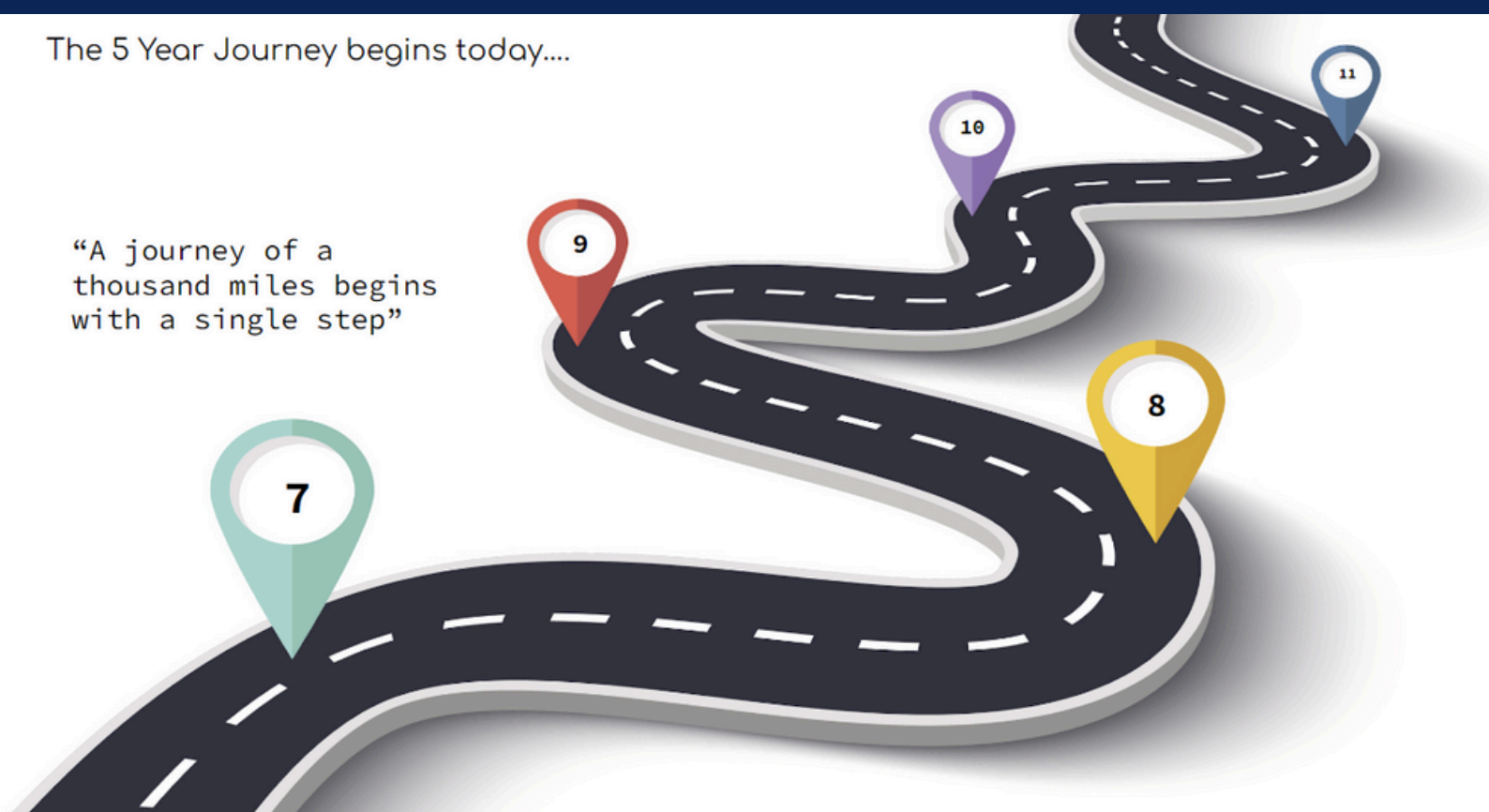


# Holbrook Academy:

## A Guide to Transition

The 5 Year Journey begins today....

“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step”



Aspire.Engage.Achieve

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## STAFF

# Who's who?



Mrs C Elliott

Headteacher



Mr G Anstee-Parry

Deputy Headteacher



Mr K Newstead

Assistant Headteacher



Mr D Sansom

Assistant Headteacher



Mrs A King

Assistant Headteacher



Mrs K Darby

Assistant Headteacher and SENCo



# Headteacher's Welcome



We are thrilled to welcome you to Holbrook Academy, nestled in the stunning rural and coastal landscape of the Shotley Peninsula.

## **Our vision for your child's success**

At Holbrook, we are incredibly proud of our vibrant school community. We are dedicated to providing every student with the support and opportunities they need to flourish into successful, well-rounded individuals. Our core values — aspire, engage, and achieve — are woven into the fabric of daily school life and define 'The Holbrook Way' of being a Holbrook student.

## **A nurturing environment for individual growth**

While Holbrook Academy may be modest in size, our commitment to excellence is boundless. We encourage every student to reach 'to infinity and beyond.' Our size is actually one of our greatest strengths, allowing us to truly see and value each student as an individual. We foster the development of essential skills and characteristics that will benefit them far beyond their time with us, regardless of their prior learning, perceived ability, or circumstances.

## **Unwavering support and high expectations**

Our ethos is built on the belief that strong pastoral care and academic achievement go hand-in-hand. Our dedicated staff provide unwavering support, building relationships with students that ensure every individual feels valued, nurtured, and empowered to reach their full potential.

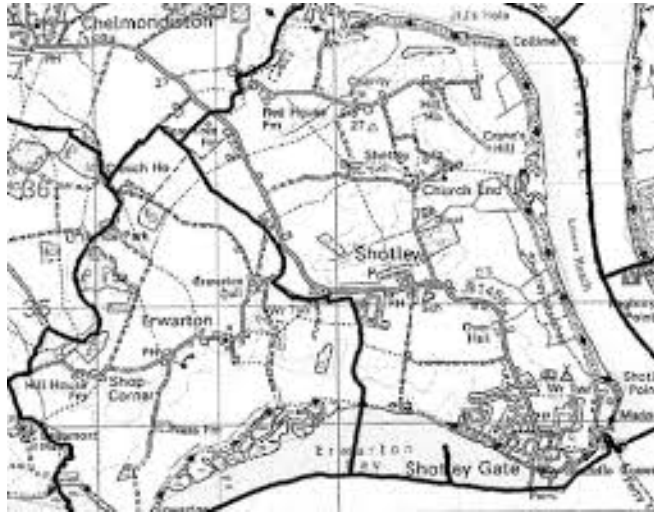
We offer a broad curriculum designed to promote excellent achievement. We also make no apologies for our high standards and expectations for behaviour and attitudes. We firmly believe that through a collaborative approach, working together with you, we can ensure the best social and academic outcomes for every single student.

I am immensely proud to be the Headteacher of Holbrook Academy and look forward to embarking on this exciting journey with you.

Mrs C Elliott

# Our History

There has been a village school in Holbrook for more than 150 years. Originally, the building now known as the Primary School was called Holbrook Elementary School, teaching Holbrook children from age 5 to 13 or 14, with a Pupil Teacher Class for more able pupils. In the 1930s, what was called the 'Top School' was built. The two buildings were run by one headteacher and became known as Holbrook Area School. This arrangement continued until September 1954 at which time the two parts of the school separated; the Primary appointing its own head and the 'Top School' becoming Holbrook Secondary Modern School. With the coming of comprehensive education in the 1970s, it became a High School. The school opted out of local authority control in 2011 and was renamed Holbrook Academy in 2013.



The Academy is grateful to Marion Leeson, Holbrook Parish Recorder and a former teacher at the School, for her agreement to help prepare a more detailed history. If you have material, particularly photographs, you believe might be useful, please let Marion know via the Academy.



# Our Aims and Values

## Values

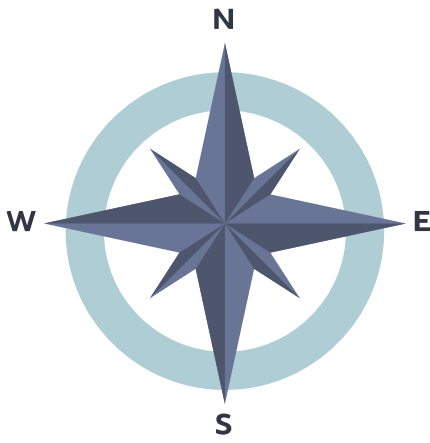
Holbrook is a happy, vibrant, aspirational place where each and every person feels valued and inspired to do their very best every day.

Holbrook is a school for everyone – we welcome all children from across the peninsula and beyond and we treat each child as an individual. We are an ambitious Academy, now part of the East Anglian Schools Trust, with a staff team who are determined and passionate about their work. We want to make sure each student achieves their very best from their time with us and grows into an exceptional and confident young adult ready for the next stage of their life. We are a small school which means we really get to know our students, our staff, our families, friends and our community. Holbrook is a caring and compassionate place, where our students have the space to flourish and feel nurtured.



## Aims

- A school of excellence: academic and vocational outcomes, sport, music and live performance : well beyond our local counterparts
- All staff have such high standards and aspirations that pupils are self-motivated – our investment in transition, Year 7 and 8 will create the qualities, attitudes and momentum for all students to achieve their potential
- Teaching and leadership is of the highest standard in all areas of the curriculum and this is underpinned by a robust and well sequenced curriculum that reflects pupil needs
- A place where we retain teachers and support staff who want to be a part of the Academy because of the support, respect and coaching they receive from leaders and their peers
- We are community-centred and the wellbeing of all is that its members are respected and supported. We have strong and collaborative relationships with our local schools and have a developed a calendar of shared events that become community rites of passage
- We link meaningfully locally, nationally and internationally to other groups and organisations which broadens our horizons to look beyond the Peninsula – Other schools and organisations/ Kampala Children's Centre in Uganda.



# *The Holbrook Way*

## What is 'The Holbrook way'?

The Holbrook Way represents our commitment to fostering a supportive, respectful, and ambitious community. It is based on the characteristics of:

1. Tolerance
2. Confidence
3. Kindness
4. Resilience
5. Determination

### Shaping Character, Experiences, and Behaviours

At Holbrook Academy, we believe that education goes beyond academic achievement. We aim to develop well-rounded individuals who embody a **moral compass** that will guide them throughout their lives. 'The Holbrook Way' is our shared vision of the characteristics, experiences, and behaviours we want every student to develop during their time with us.

These values are embedded in every aspect of school life – from the classroom to the sports field, and from leadership opportunities to community service.

By embracing 'The Holbrook Way' students not only strive for academic success but also develop the personal qualities needed to thrive in an ever-changing world. This approach encourages students to take ownership of their learning, contribute positively to society, and cultivate the skills that will prepare them for life beyond school.

In everything we do, from daily interactions to broader challenges, 'The Holbrook Way' sets the foundation for a positive, nurturing environment where every student can grow into a confident, capable, and caring individual.



# 6

# HOLBROOK HABITS



1

## Punctual



Being punctual is about respecting time – both your own and that of others. It reflects a sense of responsibility and dedication to learning.

2

## Prepared



Being prepared is about having all necessary materials and being mentally ready for learning. It reflects an organized approach to schoolwork.

3

## Polite



Politeness means treating others with respect, kindness, and consideration. It's essential for creating a positive, inclusive classroom atmosphere.

4

## Presentable



Wearing the uniform correctly and with pride is a strong indication of your attitude towards yourself, others and your community.

5

## Positive



A positive mindset promotes perseverance and fosters a love of learning, especially when subjects are difficult. This leads to better problem-solving, reduces stress, and encourages a collaborative atmosphere.

6

## Productive



Being productive means using time and energy effectively to accomplish learning goals. It is about staying focused and on tasks; allowing you to make the most of your study time, leading to better academic outcomes.

# Home / School Agreement



## FOR THE ACADEMY:

The Academy will:

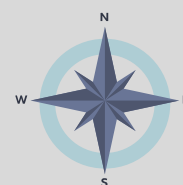
- Provide all students with a broad, balanced and engaging curriculum
- Encourage and challenge every student to Aspire, Engage, Achieve in all areas of school life
- Create a safe, caring and positive environment for learning
- Teach students to behave responsibly and safely both in person and online
- Ensure all students use ICT responsibly and safely in line with the Academy's policies
- Monitor and report regularly on student progress, attainment, attendance, and punctuality
- Fully support the learning needs of all students to support their achievement of their potential
- Set and uphold high expectations for conduct, attitude and behaviour
- Offer a range of enrichment and extracurricular opportunities
- Keep parents and carers informed about school activities, events, and developments
- Respond to concerns in a timely, respectful and professional manner

## FOR STUDENTS : I WILL:-

- Always work to the best of my ability and strive to Aspire, Engage, Achieve
- Arrive on time to school and to every lesson
- Complete all homework and coursework to the best of my ability, meeting deadlines
- Follow all instructions and expectations respectfully
- Achieve at least 96% attendance and maintain excellent punctuality
- Wear the correct school uniform with pride
- Bring all necessary equipment every day (e.g. stationery, PE kit)
- Be a safe, respectful and responsible member of the Academy community
- Represent Holbrook Academy positively within the local and wider community
- Follow the Academy's ICT Acceptable Use and E-Safety policy
- Not bring dangerous or illegal items onto the school site
- Engage fully in the wider life of the school and the community
- Not use my mobile phone or any other personal electronic device during the school day
- Not bring the school into disrepute, including through misuse of social media
- Seek help when needed in order to reach my full potential and live The Holbrook Way

## FOR PARENTS/CARERS : I/WE WILL:-

- Encourage my child to Aspire, Engage, Achieve and support their learning journey
- Take a full and active interest in my child's education and wellbeing
- Support all Academy policies, procedures and expectations – including arrangements outside of school hours where necessary
- Ensure my child:
  - Achieves at least 96% attendance with excellent punctuality
  - Wears the correct school uniform each day
  - Brings the required equipment for learning
- Support my child in completing homework and meeting academic targets
- Attend all parent evenings, review days, and meetings
- Encourage my child to participate in the broader life of the school
- Communicate openly and courteously with staff, respecting the Academy's processes
- Inform the school of any issues or concerns that may affect my child's education
- Avoid taking holidays during term time
- Not bring the school into disrepute through the use of social media



# Safeguarding

If you are worried about your child please do get in touch with their form tutor and we will do our very best to help. If it is a concern about progress in a subject, friendship problems, bullying, health issues or their emotional well-being, we will try to help find a solution with you and to give them the best possible support in school.

If you are worried about your child or any other child being at risk of harm, then we have a safeguarding responsibility to help. We will not be able to investigate but we will be able to pass the concerns on, in confidence, to the authorities who will help immediately. The person you should speak to first is Mrs King, our Designated Safeguarding Lead. Leave your number with the school and Mrs King or one of our Alternate Designated Safeguarding Leads, will call you back.

If you have worries about your child's safety online then our website has lots of useful information and can help you take steps to keep them safe. If you are worried about who your child is talking to online you can get instant advice and support on this site.



The safeguarding team (September 2025):

- Mrs A King – Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Miss S Crabtree – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)
- Mr G Anstee-Parry – Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead (ADSL)
- Mrs M Jackson – Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead (ADSL)
- Mrs F Chapman – Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead (ADSL)
- Mrs K Darby – Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead (ADSL)
- Mr D Sansom – Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead (ADSL)

## EXPECTATIONS FOR CONDUCT

# Behaviour

Here at Holbrook Academy, we pride ourselves on the warm, welcoming atmosphere where everybody truly can be somebody. Students talk of the acceptance and tolerance of different beliefs and how safe they feel coming to school. Staff and students work on the underlying principles of mutual trust and respect for one another.

We have very clear and consistent expectations of our students in terms of how they should conduct themselves in lessons, during break and lunch times, how they move around the Academy building, and how they conduct themselves in the wider community.

These expectations are laid out in our behaviour policy which can be accessed from the school website and summarised by these key points:

### **CLASS TEACHERS SHOULD:**

- Meet and greet at the door.
- Model positive behaviours and build relationships.
- Plan lessons that engage, challenge and meet the needs of all learners.
- Use the ClassCharts rewards system and follow up with phone calls/postcards home.
- Use a visible recognition mechanism throughout every lesson.
- Be calm and give 'take up time' when going through the steps. Prevent before sanctions.
- Follow up every time, retain ownership and engage in reflective dialogue with learners.
- Never ignore or walk past learners who are behaving badly.

### **STUDENTS SHOULD:**

- Be ready – All students will be ready to learn and have the correct equipment / uniform.
- Be respectful – All students to display a level of respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and their property / surroundings.
- Be safe – All to ensure the safety of others – Verbally and physically.
- Be silent and attentive whilst teacher or peers are talking.
- All students will follow and adhere to basic instructions given.

Where an individual's behaviour falls short of the high standards we expect from our students at Holbrook Academy, there are sanctions available to teaching staff which will be applied in line with the severity of the action. There will always be a restorative action involving the student and member of staff, where applicable. Further details of these can be found in our behaviour policy.

## CHOICE AND CONSEQUENCE

# Rewards and Sanctions

Both positive and negative behaviours are recorded on Class Charts.

Holbrook Academy staff routinely recognise good behaviour in their classrooms, around the school, and in the wider community by issuing positive points through Class Charts. These positive points, minus any negative points for poor behaviour, equate to spendable points on the Rewards Store on Class Charts. These spendable points can be used to purchase tickets for specific rewards. These include:

- Dinner Queue Jump Tickets
- Bus Queue Jump Tickets
- Sports Equipment Hire Tickets
- Movie Afternoon Tickets
- Non-Uniform Day Tickets



Additionally, students will also receive the opportunity to attend school excursions and experiences, provided that they demonstrate excellent behaviour and attendance throughout the school year.



For poor behaviour, it will also be logged as a minus point and will usually be coupled with a sanction depending on the severity. This could include:

- Verbal reprimand
- Loss of social time
- A period of time in the internal seclusion room (ISR)
- Suspension from school
- Directed to another secondary school, or educational establishment for a period of time
- Permanent Exclusion

Fundamentally, our goal is to recognise and reward students who make positive choices in their life, supporting their personal development and helping them understand their social responsibilities, whilst simultaneously educating those that will inevitably make negative choices by modelling consequences using the behaviour policy as guidance.

## ENGAGEMENT

# Attendance and Punctuality

Regular school attendance and good punctuality will enable your child to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available within our school. High attainment depends on good attendance.

Students should be in their Form Room by 8.40am Form Tutors should save registers by 8:45am.

Parents/carers key points:

- Ensure your children attend school regularly;
- Ensure that an absence form is completed or evidence is provided in advance of any planned absences;
- Ensure that medical evidence is provided to confirm absence as a result of illness if requested by the school;
- Ensure the school has accurate phone contact numbers;
- Support your children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
- Do not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school;
- Notify the school on every day of absence, using the SchoolComms or leaving a message on the absence line;
- Ensure your children arrive on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day.

Whilst the occasional day of absence may not seem to have much impact, the table below illustrates the cumulative effect on lost learning hours as overall attendance declines.

% Attendance	Daily attendance	Days absence	Learning hours lost (5½ hours per day)
100%	190 days	0	0
99%	188 days	2	11
98%	186 days	4	22
97%	184 days	6	33
96%	182.5 days	7.5	41¼
95%	180.5 days	9.5	52¼
94%	179 days	11	60½
93%	177 days	13	71½
92%	175 days	15	82 ½
91%	173 days	17	93½
90%	171 days	19	104½
89%	169 days	21	115½
88%	167 days	23	126½
87%	165 days	25	137½
86%	163 days	27	148½
85%	161.5 days	28.5	156¾
84%	159.5 days	30.5	167¾
83%	158 days	32	176
82%	156 days	34	187
81%	154 days	36	198
80%	152 days	38	209

# Student Voice and Leadership:

Student leadership is an intrinsic part of the 'Holbrook Way', fostering a vibrant and empowered school community. We believe that providing students with opportunities to lead is crucial for developing essential life skills such as responsibility, teamwork, and problem-solving. Through various leadership roles, Holbrook Academy students gain confidence, find their voice, and learn the value of contributing positively to their environment. These experiences not only enrich their time at Holbrook but also prepare them to become compassionate and effective leaders in their future endeavours.

Our Student Council is an integral part of our school community. When asked what students cherish the most about their school their responses included:

*"I cherish the atmosphere in Holbrook"*

*"...all the teachers are helpful and so welcoming"*

*"I really value the sense of community at Holbrook. Everyone knows everyone"*

*"... the homely environment is something unique to Holbrook and something that I know everyone (student and staff) appreciates greatly."*

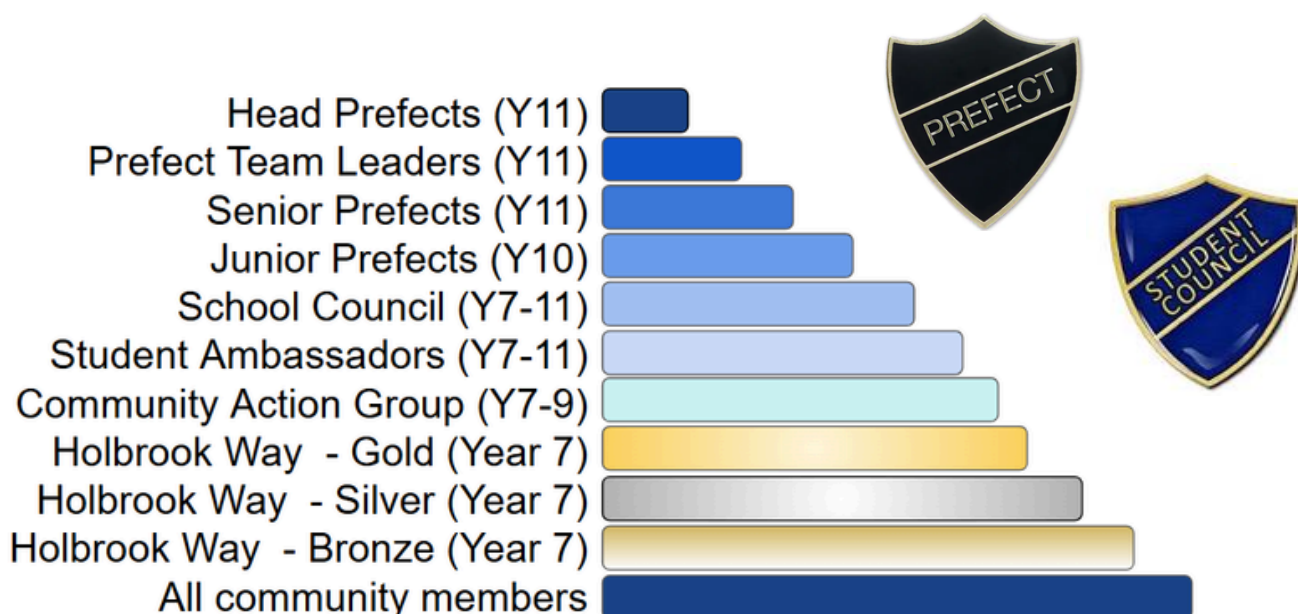
*"The school has always done an astounding job at promoting inclusivity and equality"*

*"I cherish that the school is relatively small regarding the number of students and would like to keep it that way"*

*"I like that we have forms who are like our family at school and can support us emotionally"*

*"What I really cherish about Holbrook Academy is that the teachers and support staff are really fun on school trips; for example getting involved with games that the students are playing."*

*"...most importantly our teachers and support staff always support us"*



# How we measure progress?

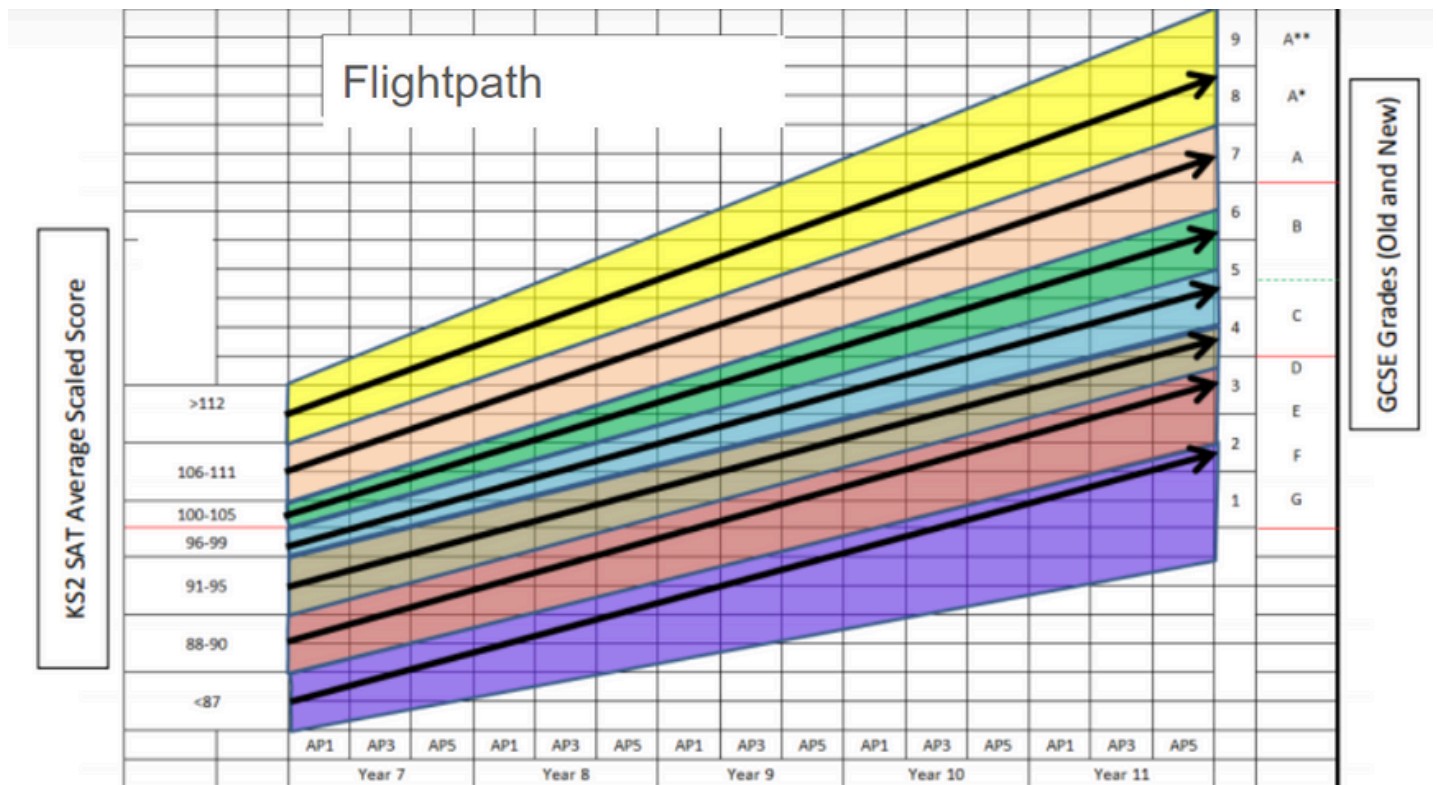
At Holbrook Academy, we measure progress in all sorts of ways. It is worthwhile explaining the GCSE grading system though as we use this throughout to ensure that there is one flightpath that we use in all 5 years.

The GCSE grades have probably changed since you last sat them so to break it down simply, there are now numerical not alphabetical grades; 9 is the highest and 1 is the lowest. Most pupils will finish in Year 11 with grades 3 to 5. However, at Holbrook Academy we want your children to be aspirational in what they achieve - we are not the average school.

Old grades	New grades
A*	9
A	8
B	7
C	6 5 Strong Pass 4 Standard Pass
D	3
E	2
F	1
G	1
U	U

## How do we communicate progress?

A 'Flight Path' is a way to communicate student progress. It is a journey. We use this to assess whether a student is On track, or above, or below the line. We utilise SIMs to track progress and parents/carers will receive a progress report, a full end of year report and an opportunity to attend a Progress Evening. A pupil's target grade is determined from the SATS score.



# Metacognition

## What Is Metacognition?

Metacognition means “thinking about your thinking.” It helps students become more aware of how they learn, not just what they learn.

According to Flavell (1979), metacognition includes:

- Metacognitive knowledge – understanding your strengths, weaknesses, and learning strategies.
- Metacognitive regulation – planning, monitoring, and evaluating how you’re learning.

Research shows metacognition is one of the most effective ways to improve student progress – especially as children move into secondary school (EEF, 2018).

## Why does It matter?

At Holbrook Academy, we aim to develop independent learners. Metacognition helps pupils:

- Plan how to approach a task
- Monitor if they’re making progress
- Reflect on what worked (or didn’t) and why

Students:

- ✓ Persevere in difficult subjects
- ✓ Make faster progress
- ✓ Understand how to revise effectively
- ✓ Take responsibility for their learning

**What can  
parents do at  
home to  
support?**

Here are some simple things you can do to support your child’s metacognitive development at home:

### 1. Ask Planning Questions

Before they begin homework or revision:

- “What’s your goal for this task?”
- “What do you already know about this topic?”
- “What strategy will you use?”

### 3. Prompt Reflection

After they finish:

- “What worked well?”
- “What would you do differently next time?”
- “What did you learn about how you learn?”

### 2. Encourage Monitoring

While they work:

- “How is it going?”
- “Is this harder or easier than you expected?”
- “Do you need to change your approach?”

### 4. Talk About Mistakes

Mistakes are part of learning. Help your child see errors as feedback by asking:

- “What can you learn from this?”
- “Was your plan a good one, or do we need to adjust it?”

## THE DIGNITY OF DIFFERENCE

# Celebrating Diversity



Here at Holbrook Academy, we are committed to promoting diversity and equality in every aspect of school life. Through our curriculum, and especially subjects such as Philosophy, Religion and Ethics alongside Life Skills, we aim to explore diversity in its variety of forms.

We aim to create a united and cohesive community through our commitment to fairness and justice. We respect diversity and challenge and act upon all forms of discrimination and inequality, including racism, homophobia, sexism and other forms of discrimination and prejudice.

In assemblies, we take positive action to illuminate the pupils awareness of racial and social harmony by exploring different challenges that us, as a society, face together. This in turn is shared and discussed in form groups to create an even more personalised environment for this joint exploration.

There is an unwavering focus to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to be the best version of themselves irrespective of gender, ethnic or racial background, religion, ability or sexuality.

We promote British Values of tolerance, fairness, respect for other faiths, and the rule of law and democracy. Our shared values, consideration of each other and pride in who we are as community underpin every interaction and decision in our school. We are proud of who we are and what we represent.



# PE and SPORTS

We aim to offer a wide range of extra-curricular PE and sports clubs throughout the academic year at Holbrook Academy. Clubs run at lunchtimes and after school on a weekly basis.

Most of the clubs feed into local/county competitions; in addition, there are multiple opportunities through the year for students to compete in other sporting activities at local/county level. The club timetable changes on a half termly/termly basis to fully support as many sports as possible. Furthermore, students compete on sports day where they represent their house in activities such as dodgeball, rounders, netball, football and retro races.



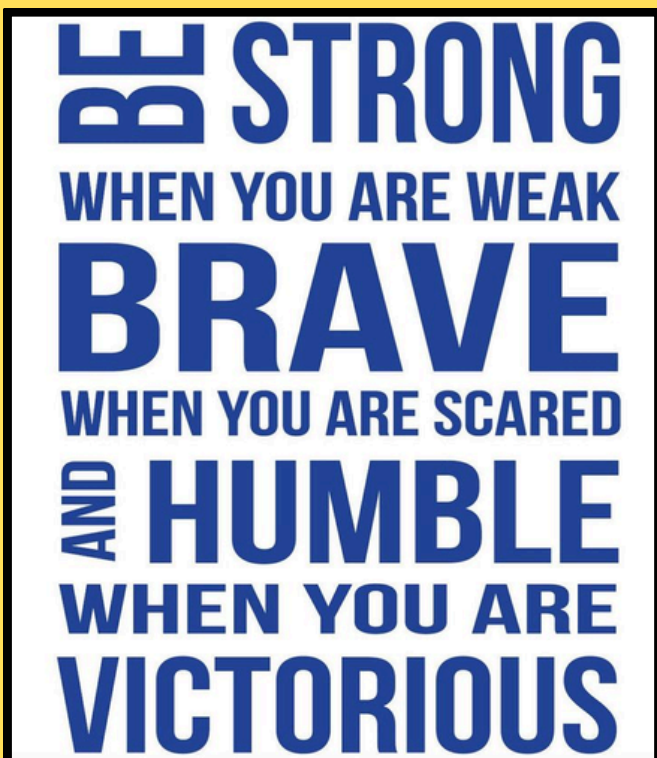
During the Autumn/Spring terms, we normally enter the following competitions at a local/county level:

Cross country, football, badminton, rugby, netball, swimming, trampolining, indoor cricket, indoor athletics, handball and futsal.

During the Summer term, we normally enter the following competitions at a local / county level: Athletics, cricket, tennis, rounders and volleyball.

“At Holbrook Academy I would say sports plays a big part – I have been in loads of sporting events such as rugby, football, athletics, dodgeball, handball, basketball and cross country. In Year 8 we were National Champions for U13 football. There is great opportunity here!”

Tommy, Year 9



# Special Educational Needs, Disabilities & Medical Needs

During the Transition process Mrs Darby, the Academy's SENCo and Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion, will be liaising with the SENCo from each feeder primary school and in many cases she will have already been in touch with you personally about meeting your child's needs when they join Holbrook. The Academy supports a wide range of Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and Medical Needs through the Pastoral Team and your child's form tutor will always be your first point of contact for any queries and concerns.

If your child has a medical need which we need to support in school, your child will have an Individual Health Care Plan created. Normally this will be created once your child joins in September, but for more complex conditions we like to begin this process before the Summer holiday.

Through the Inclusion department we are able to offer support for the four broad areas of need, which are: Social, Emotional and Mental Health, Cognition and Learning, Communication and Interaction and Sensory and Physical needs. This is achieved through our three strands, Support, Enhance and Thrive.

Support helps children to regulate during lessons, offering Emotional Literacy Support Assistants, a Youth Worker and an external counselling service. Enhance provides targeted support for children who have a prior lower attainment in Maths and English, children can be screened for dyslexia and dyscalculia and also take part in literacy interventions. Our final strand, Thrive, is new to Holbrook Academy and from September we will be able to offer the Thrive Approach for children who need support with their emotional and social development. At the Thrive Centre, we will be able to offer an in and outdoor learning experience and support from our School's dog, the wonderful Wanda!



The Thrive Approach is a dynamic, developmental, trauma-sensitive approach to meeting the emotional and social developmental needs of all children and young people. It is informed by recent developments in neuroscience research, and is underpinned by a theoretical base in child development theory, attachment theory and research into creativity, play and the arts.

# EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

- A pencil case which contains:  
blue/black pens, pencils, rubber, sharpener, ruler, scientific calculator, compass, protractor, pink highlighter and a red pen, colouring pens or pencils
- Reusable drinks bottle



## ALL STUDENTS GENERAL UNIFORM RULES:

- Black school trousers / Black culottes (No jeans or jean style trousers, leggings, yoga style trousers, Chino or combat style)
- Plain white shirt with collar and top button
- Academy tie
- Navy jumper with Academy logo
- Plain black shoes (No branded logos, must be polishable)
- Socks – black, grey or navy
- Belts should be black and fit belt loops of school trousers
- Jewellery – watch, one stud per earlobe. A discreet, single nose stud is allowed but no other facial or body piercing is permitted
- Make up should be discreet. No long, stick on or acrylic nails. No false eyelashes
- No inappropriate hair colours/extreme styles.



# Timings of the School Day:

<b>Time:</b>	<b>Activity:</b>
8.40 – 9.00	Registration / Form time / Assembly
9.00 – 10.40	Lesson 1
10.40 – 11.00	Break
11.00 – 12.40	Lesson 2
12.40 – 1.35	Lunch
1.35 – 3.15	Period 3

## Key dates and actions:

- A Transition Day at Holbrook Academy on Tuesday 1st July for all Year 6 pupils.
- A Transition Evening for Parents/Carers on Thursday 3rd July at 6.30pm in the main hall at the Academy. This will include presentations from key members of staff and current Holbrook Academy students and will give Parents/Carers the opportunity to ask questions.
- Visits to the primary schools to meet pupils and teachers from Mr Anstee-Parry or members of the Pastoral Team
- The opportunity of a personal phone call to every Parent / Carer from a member of the pastoral team.
- A 'Frequently Asked Questions' document and other information will be available on the Academy website from June.



**Aspire.**  
**Engage.**  
**Achieve.**

