



Headteacher : Dr Simon Letman BA, MA, EdD
Deputy Head : Nicola Shelley

5 May 2017

Dear Parent/Carer,

New Year 7 Students at Holbrook Academy from September 2017

I am delighted to extend an invitation to all new students to spend some time with us at Holbrook and set out below details of the arrangements.

Key Skills / PE Day: Thursday 15th June

In the morning, students will take part in various core subjects and in the afternoon they will spend time on PE activities, for which they will need to bring a PE kit. Students will need to bring a packed lunch and drinks.

Student Induction Day: Wednesday 28th June

All new students are invited to spend a full day with us on Wednesday, 28th June to experience a taste of what life will be like at Holbrook Academy. This will be a normal school day and students will have the chance to meet their new teachers and fellow students, experience normal school lessons, enjoy a lunch and take part in other activities. There will be no PE lessons on the day so there is no need to bring PE kit.

Caterlink have arranged for all new students to receive a free school lunch on 28th June. Please note that drinks are included with some but not every meal option. Drinks may be purchased at school or brought from home and, of course, water is always available. If your child has any special dietary requirements please contact the Academy office on 01473 328317 and we will be happy to liaise with the catering staff. The attached reply slip gives the menu choices on that day. It would be helpful if your child could indicate their choice and return this slip when they attend on 15th June.

We operate a cashless catering system. Attached is some information and we would be grateful if you could complete the enclosed permissions slip and return when they attend on 15th June. We will then be able to enrol your child onto the system to ensure smooth access to our canteen facilities in September.

Transport

On both dates students from all the villages in catchment will be able to travel on the school buses. Those students living at Shotley Gate are asked to travel on the 98 service, not the 604. The Headteacher at your child's primary school will have details of the bus timetables.

At the end of each day, students will be dismissed from the main hall. Parents collecting students should wait in reception.

Arrival and Departure Times on 15th and 28th June

Lessons will follow our normal Academy day so students should arrive by 8.30am and report to the main reception where they will be met by a member of staff.

Children who are not travelling on the school bus service must be collected at **3.00pm**. Please meet at the Academy reception as your child will be dismissed from our main hall.

In catchment children who will be travelling on the school bus service will leave at 3.35pm, the end of our school day.

Drop-off/pick-up Parking

We have a busy site so parents are asked not to drive onto the Academy grounds if at all possible but park on the surrounding roads. Please do not park at the top of the drive on Ipswich Road as this causes an obstruction for buses entering our site.

Parents' Evening: Thursday 29th June

We will be holding a Transition evening for Parents/Carers on Thursday 29th June at 7.00pm in the main hall where you will receive more information about the Academy and what your child will experience here. This will be an informal occasion and will start with a brief welcome and introduction from Dr Simon Letman, Headteacher, followed by some specific information about the transition process and pastoral issues. You will then meet a member of staff who will explain the key arrangements for a successful transition in September and give you an opportunity to ask questions.

The structured part of the evening will finish at around 8.00pm when refreshments will be served in the main hall. There will be the opportunity to ask any individual questions or pass on personal information to the Senior Leadership Team.

Mr Wright, our Special Needs Coordinator, will be available in the tutorial room (signposted from the hall) to talk privately with any parents who have concerns about their child's learning or emotional behaviour at school.

Information about instrumental tuition will be available. There will be a display of uniform in the hall and it will be possible to purchase items such as calculators and art pads. The evening should finish by 8.30pm at the latest.

The transition to high school can be daunting but also very exciting for students as they make new friends and experience new opportunities. Following the transition process detailed above, if you still have concerns, I would like to extend an invitation to any student to have a personal tour of the Academy with myself or Mr Wright. This will provide the opportunity for the student and you to discuss individual concerns in more detail. If you would like to take up this offer, please contact the Academy office to make an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Mr G Anstee-Parry
Senior Teacher - Transition

**PLEASE BRING THIS SLIP WITH YOU TO THE TRANSITION DAY ON
15 JUNE**

Student name

Contact name

Emergency contact number

Primary School

Please advise us of any medical information relevant to your child's transition days at the Academy

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I confirm my child is eligible as we live in catchment and will be travelling on the school bus service

YES/NO

MENU CHOICE FOR 28 JUNE

Roast turkey with roast potatoes, vegetables and gravy

YES/NO

OR

Mediterranean vegetable pasta bake and garlic bread

YES/NO

Jelly with chocolate whipped cream

PLEASE BRING THIS SLIP WITH YOU TO THE TRANSITION DAY ON 15 JUNE

PERMISSION FOR CASHLESS CATERING SYSTEM

This system offers a number of benefits. These include removing the need for students to bring cash into school, avoiding the risk of it being lost or spent on other things. Parents have the option of limiting their child's daily spend and enables them to 'top-up' students' accounts online.

The system requires students to place their fingertip on a scanner to make a payment for their food. This is their 'digital signature'. This 'signature' is stored and the system's software encrypts it into a set of letters and numbers which is hosted on our own school server.

We use a secure on-line payment system called '**Schoolcomms**' where your child's Cashless Catering account will be available to accept payments. The account can be topped up using a debit card, credit card or direct transfer and the balance, together with information about the items students have purchased, can be viewed at any time.

If you still require further information, please email our Finance Officer, Mrs Sara Rogers: sara.rogers@holbrookacademy.org

Legislation requires permission to use this technology, so please would you complete this paperwork prior to your child starting at the Academy. We have now included the option of a 'PIN' number rather than fingerprint although the fingerprint is our preference as 'PIN' numbers can be misused.

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PERMISSION SLIP

Name of Student

Year 6 (2016-2017)

I give authorisation for Holbrook Academy to obtain biometric information from my child to be stored for no other use than for the Academy's administration systems. Such biometric information will be disposed of when the student leaves the school and images will be stored as data points and not as fingerprint images.

Please supply a 'PIN' number for my child to use instead of using their fingertip on the scanner.

My child will not be purchasing food from the canteen.

Signed: Parent/Carer

Date.....

Some Frequently Asked Questions

Why biometrics and not card or PIN?

Other methods of identification can often lead to problems and misuse – cards and PIN numbers are often passed around amongst students and they can also be regularly left at home or forgotten.

Why not carry on with the existing methods of payment?

By opting for a Cashless Catering system and also opting to allow the ability for parents to make online payments, we feel that we can dramatically improve existing administration processes within the academy. With the option being offered to parents of an online payment portal, you will be able to ensure that all money being given to your son/daughter is reaching the academy and in turn, will be able to offer them a healthy and balanced nutritional meal. We feel that we would also like to improve on our free school meal uptake and these systems considerably raise these numbers.

What are the benefits of a Cashless Catering system?

By opting for a Cashless Catering system we will be able to speed up lunch services which will mean less queuing in the canteen. With less queues, more students are likely to enter the canteen. Free School Meals students will remain anonymous which will encourage these students to come and have a hot meal. By offering parents online payment, this will also ensure that all money reaches the Academy and will not be lost or spent at shops. Parents will also be able to view what their son or daughter has been eating.

What information is actually captured?

The light on the biometric reader is used solely to illuminate the fingertip of the student or staff member and the scanning device then effectively takes a photograph. On a camera the image data would be stored so that the picture can be reproduced again and again. On the fingerprint reader most of the data is discarded and only a limited number (approx. 120) of random points on the fingerprint are retained. These are not stored as images but are converted using a mathematical process to convert the image data to what is essentially a string of random numbers.

Where is this data stored?

The data captured is kept within a secure database which is in turn securely held on the school's server, this is not taken away by anybody else or by the system suppliers.

Is this technology new and un-tested?

Schools/Colleges and Academies within the UK have been using biometric systems for 10 years now. The system is been provided by a reputable company who have been in existence for over 10 years. They are also solely dedicated to the education sector.

What will happen to the biometric data captured when my son/daughter leaves the Academy?

All biometric information captured will be permanently deleted on exit from the Academy.