

SOUTH WILTS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Parents' Guide 2015-16



Maths &
Computing



Science

nace

National Association for
Able Children's Education



Challenge Award

FOR EXCELLENCE IN PROVISION FOR
ABLE, GIFTED & TALENTED PUPILS



Healthy Schools
WILTSHIRE

Gifted &
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SOUTH WEST
ACADEMIC TRUST
INNOVATION & ASPIRATION



Eco-Schools



Ofsted
Outstanding
2007/2008

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ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL - ILLNESS

- It is important for us to know if a student is not going to be attending school. Please let us know as soon as possible on the first day of non-attendance as to the reason and expected length of absence by using one of the following options:
 - Telephone 01722 323326 and select option 1 for Years 7 to 9 absence and option 2 for Years 10 to 13 absence to leave a message
 - Send an email to Attendance@swgs.wilts.sch.uk
 - Send an email via Parent Portal
- Absences must be reported EACH day of absence for health and safety purposes.
- Reception and the school office are manned from 8.15am, although there is a school answerphone for earlier messages.
- It is important that the school is notified immediately of any contagious diseases e.g. German measles.
- In all cases, a letter or an email following a telephone call explaining the reason for absence must be sent to the Attendance Officer on the day of return to school.
- If your daughter has a music lesson you should contact the peripatetic teacher yourself – the school office will not be able to do this for you.
- If no call or email has been received to notify us of your daughter's absence, you will be contacted by the Attendance Officer over the course of the day.
- *Please note: all absences, which the school has not received notification for will be recorded as unauthorised absence.*

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL - OTHER REASONS

- Permission for a pupil to be absent from school, including medical appointments, should be requested as far in advance of the event as possible.
- A letter or the appointment card must be given to Reception or the Attendance Officer in advance where possible, or produced on the day at the time of signing out.
- For absence other than a medical appointment, please use the Absence Request Form, available on the school website www.swgs.wilts.sch.uk under Parents/Letters, Trips & Forms/Forms/Absence Request Form, or hardcopy forms are available from Reception.
- The law authorises certain categories of absence and these include: sickness or other unavoidable cause, religious observance, if suitable transport has not been provided and the school is not within walking distance and educational visits.
- Holiday requests during term-time will not be authorised unless it is considered to be an exceptional circumstance. Please note this does not include convenience of flights or cost of holidays. Please give as much detail as possible on the Absence Request Form.
- If you take your daughter out of school for other reasons, this will be unauthorised absence and will be recorded as such.

ASSESSMENT & REPORTING

A variety of assessment methods are used at regular intervals to help students develop as independent learners, raise motivation and provide feedback on commitment, attainment and progress, as well as targets for improvement.

Observation

Some tasks or skills are assessed through observing the students when they are working and the students receive verbal feedback. This may be especially true in practical lessons and in areas such as: PE, Music, Languages or Drama.

Peer and Self-Assessment

Students mark their own work or that of others in the class, using clear guidelines. They learn how to develop the skills of reporting back on their own and each other's work, give each other positive encouragement and share ideas on how to improve their work.

Checking

This is marking to check that a piece of work has been completed e.g. for class notes. This work is not given a grade and may only be given a tick.

Detailed Written Feedback

This is a formative piece of marking with a written comment and target for improvement which is used for key pieces of work. In many cases there will be no mark or grade as the comment will make clear how well the student has done and what they should do to improve.

Formal Assessment

Common assessment tasks, which are set across the whole year groups, are used at appropriate intervals. These are used by the teacher to monitor progress and may be awarded a National Curriculum level. The National Curriculum Target Level for the end of Key Stage 3 will appear on the twice annual Progress Report and Full Reports.

Mentoring Support

Students will sometimes have 1:1 meetings with members of staff to follow up Progress Grades and discuss any additional help they may need to support their progress.

BICYCLES

Should be stored and locked in the bike sheds and should not be ridden on the school site. The School Travel Plan encourages students to cycle and walk to school. Cycling helmets are strongly advised as traffic close to the school site is extremely busy.

CONTACT WITH SCHOOL

If you have any academic or personal concerns about your daughter, her Tutor is the first person to contact; he/she will then refer the problem to the appropriate person, if necessary. However, it is sometimes difficult to contact the tutor during the school day and so concerns should be raised with Mrs Passam, our Pastoral Support Manager, by phone on 01722 343754 or email at PastoralSupport@swgs.wilts.sch.uk and she will pass the message on. In the case of Year 10 and 11 Students, Mrs Bishop can be contacted for advice and support via the email address above or on 01722 343753.

CURRICULUM

Below is the number of periods per subject that students are taught in Year 7. Parents will receive a Homework Timetable at the beginning of the September term.

You will receive a separate letter which informs you which modern foreign language your daughter will study in Year 7.

Subject	Number of periods taught per week
Science	5
Mathematics	5
English	4
French or German	4
PE	4
Design Technology	3
ICT	2
Geography	2
History	2
Religious Education	2
Art	2
Music	2
Personal Social Education	2
Drama	1
Total	40

DROP-IN HEALTH CLINIC/SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

As an addition to our pastoral care system, we are fortunate to have the support of the Community Child Health Service which provides a confidential drop-in clinic at school. This is run by our school nurse, one lunch-time each week, from 12 noon to 12.50pm. She is happy to help with physical, mental, emotional or health related issues.

We also have a school counsellor, Didge Gray, who is available on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 8.00am to 1.00pm for booked appointments and lunchtime/breaktime drop-in sessions. Our Lay-Chaplain from 'The Bridge Project' runs a 'drop-in' for students in school during Monday and Friday lunchtimes.

These health professionals will be introduced to new students in an early assembly. To contact them, please go through PastoralSupport@swgs.wilts.sch.uk or email Didge Gray directly in confidence dbg@swgs.wilts.sch.uk.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Throughout her school career, your daughter will take part in educational visits which sometimes return to school after normal school hours. Your co-operation by being at the designated place of return by the time your daughter is due to arrive is greatly valued. Staff will make every effort to inform you if there is an unavoidable delay but unfortunately this is not always possible.

You will be asked to sign an insurance form for visits out of school. If this is not returned, your daughter will not be allowed to participate in any visits.

If you are unable to meet the cost of any educational visit, then please contact the Finance Office: finance@swgs.wilts.sch.uk as we may be able to help.

EMAIL/SCHOOLCOMMS

We regularly use this system to send out letters to parents and many parents prefer receiving communications from school via email. The link to the most recent termly school newsletter - 'Onwards' is also sent out this way. Please ensure that we have an up to date email address for you. If you would prefer to receive paper copies of letters, or do not have access to an email account, please let us know and we will send paper copies of letters to you, via your daughter.

EMERGENCY CLOSURE OF THE SCHOOL

It is essential to look at the [school website \(www.swgs.wilts.sch.uk\)](http://www.swgs.wilts.sch.uk) for up to date information, as detailed instructions are posted there as soon as possible. In the event of problems affecting school opening (e.g. emergency closure due to heavy snow), parents can also tune in to the radio stations or check their websites for details of arrangements:

BBC Wiltshire (103.5 FM/104.3 FM)
Spire FM (102 FM)

(www.bbc.co.uk/bbcwiltshire)
(www.spirefm.co.uk)

EMERGENCY CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS

It is important that in cases of emergency the school office has up to date contact numbers for parents. The school office should be notified, in writing, of any change of: telephone numbers, email addresses, home address, place of employment or any change in circumstances. These letters should be addressed 'For the attention of Mrs George' or she can be emailed on: SJG@swgs.wilts.sch.uk.

E SAFETY

This is an area which is continually changing and developing. In school, access to social networking such as Instagram and Facebook are blocked. We also have filters which prevent students viewing inappropriate material. However every year students are upset by the use of email, text messages and comments on networking sites which are sent and posted outside the school day and so it is very important that as parents you monitor your daughter's use of these media. It is essential that she uses the correct privacy settings and keeps her passwords secure for her own safety. Of course she should report any misuse or cases of cyber-bullying to her form tutor in the first instance.

On our school website www.swgs.wilts.sch.uk in the 'Parents' area, there is an E-Safety section with links to numerous websites that offer current advice and guidance for students and parents.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

A timetable with details of all clubs inside and outside school hours can be found on our website under School/Extra Curricular Clubs & Activities.

FRIENDS OF SOUTH WILTS GRAMMAR SCHOOL (FOSWGS) – PARENT/TEACHER ASSOCIATION

All parents/guardians of girls attending the school are members of the association that assists school in different ways. They raise funds to help finance purchases not covered by statutory funds. They also support the school by assisting with activities such as parent evenings, music evenings, sports day etc. and hold events such as Year 7/8 discos and the Year 13 Leavers' Ball. These activities enrich the lives of everyone in the school community.

The school is lucky to have so many parents who volunteer to help with events by making cakes, providing raffle prizes and assisting in many other ways. This support is second to none and having a pool of volunteers means that the Friends are not always asking the same few parents to help. If you feel you would like the opportunity to volunteer, please contact Kim Glennon-Alty at foswgs@swgs.wilts.sch.uk

HOMEWORK

It is school policy to set homework on a regular basis. Each student is given a Student Planner in which she must write down the subject, the nature of the homework and the date by which the work must be completed. Parents are asked to sign the Student Planner each week by Monday morning. We hope this method will enable home and the school to work together to help the girls to develop good study habits. Please support the school by taking an interest in the work set and by ensuring the work is completed adequately. If your daughter persistently seems to be spending either far too much, or conversely far too little time on her homework, please discuss this matter with her. If necessary, please do not hesitate to contact us through Mrs Passam at PastoralSupport@swgs.wilts.sch.uk. The student planner contains a great deal of important information as well as contact details. Please encourage your daughter to take time to familiarise herself with its contents.

LATENESS/SIGNING IN AND OUT

Please encourage your daughter to recognise the importance of punctuality. Girls who arrive late, after 8.45am, will be challenged by prefects on the gate for a reason and marked late by their tutor. If a student arrives after the register has closed or the class has gone to Assembly, she should sign in at Reception. Similarly, if a pupil leaves school during the day for an approved reason, she should sign out and in again at Reception on her return. This process is vital to maintain an accurate record of student attendance for health and safety purposes.

LEARNING SUPPORT

The Learning Support Co-ordinator is Mrs Carolyn Stammers. Please contact Mrs Stammers during school hours for more information at cms@swgs.wilts.sch.uk.

LOCKER KEYS

Our students are very fortunate in that they are allocated a locker for their individual use. They are required to pay a £5.00 deposit for a key; this is refundable at the end of the school year. Please note that lockers cannot be accessed without a key. Girls may have an additional locker if they wish to store their PE kit securely. Lockers must be used to

keep valuable items in and must be kept locked at all times. The school cannot be responsible for valuable items left in classrooms, cloakrooms or unlocked lockers. If a locker key is lost, a new one can be cut for a fee of £5, students should enquire at Reception. The deposit will be repaid at the end of the school year unless the student is retaining the locker for another year.

LOST PROPERTY

Lost Property is situated in a room between the Dining Room and the Library, accessed from the side of the Dining Room. It is open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12.30pm to 12.55pm. Parents may collect items on behalf of their daughters during these hours but must sign in and out at Reception. Please would parents ensure that all school uniform, coats and trainers are clearly labelled as this helps us to return any items which may be found? All personal belongings are the responsibility of the students and should always be kept in lockers - not left in form rooms or corridors.

LUNCHTIME ARRANGEMENTS

The expectation at South Wilts Grammar School is that all our students will either buy a school lunch or bring a healthy packed lunch to eat in school during the lunch break. We are very proud of the range and quality of food provided in the canteen and would strongly recommend that you encourage your daughter to try it. We also feel that the opportunity to socialise and join in with the vast array of clubs and societies on offer make lunchtime a valuable part of the school day. Once the students have registered with their Form Tutor in the morning we know that they are on site for the rest of the day.

MAIN SCHOOL EVENTS FOR YEAR 7 STUDENTS

- Speech Day – **compulsory** attendance by all students
- Carol Service in Salisbury Cathedral – all welcome
- Year 7 Trip to France / Germany takes place during Activities week in June
- Geography field trip in June
- The Real Game in June
- Sports Day in July

MEDICAL

Students who are unwell should report to a teacher who will then complete a green slip for them to take to Reception. Unless in the case of an emergency, students *must* hand a completed slip into Reception before they can go to the Medical Room. Students are asked not to contact parents directly on mobile phones if they are unwell, but to ask Reception to make a call. Students may remain in the Medical Room for up to half an hour, after which time they must either return to lessons or arrangements will be made to send students home.

Medication

In general, very few medicines need to be taken during school hours and in most cases the appropriate dosage of medicine when prescribed to be taken “three times a day” can be given “before school, after school and at night”. The same principle can also be applied to medication such as creams/drops for conjunctivitis etc. However, this may not always be the case as some prescribed medication will have times or conditions

stipulated by the doctor. If students are recovering from a short term illness requiring medication such as tablets, any request by a parent/carer for school staff to store medicine at school must be made by completing the 'Medication Form' on our website under Parents > Letters, trips and forms > forms. The completed form, medication - and any evidence that the child needs to take medicine during school hours e.g. instructions on the container or advice from the pharmacist - should be handed into Reception in a named bag.

Students who carry vital medication such as epipens and inhalers should keep a duplicate at Reception, clearly labelled and within its expiry date, in a plastic box. **Any** medication brought into school and stored by Reception staff **must** be accompanied by a completed 'Medication Form' and it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that medication stored at school is replaced or removed from school once expired.

***Please address medical queries to Reception by email:
reception@swgs.wilts.sch.uk or by phone to Mrs King (Matron).***

Sanitary towels and tampons are available for emergency use from Reception. Please could parents inform the school immediately if, at any time, their daughter has head lice?

MESSAGES

Emergency messages may be passed to students at the start of the school day. These must be received by 8.45am. Regretfully we are unable to pass on messages after this deadline, except in exceptional circumstances.

MOBILE PHONES AND OTHER PERSONAL PROPERTY

Mobile phones are permitted in school but must be switched off in lessons and assemblies unless directed otherwise by a member of staff. Mobile phones are not permitted in examination rooms. Personal equipment, including mobile phones and iPods used inappropriately or at inappropriate times may be confiscated by any member of staff and only returned at a time agreed by the member of staff. No student is allowed to use a mobile phone to take videos or photographs of members of staff in school and any photographs of other students may only be taken with their permission. These items remain the responsibility of the student at all times.

MONEY

All money should be kept in a named purse. Large amounts of money should not be brought to school. If it is unavoidable, the money should be secured in a student's locker. If agreed in advance, it may be handed in to the Finance Office. The school cannot be responsible for any loss.

MUSIC

South Wilts Grammar School has a very active Music Department with a reputation for high standards both locally and throughout the South of England. There are many music groups, which meet regularly and participate in a great variety of musical events in and out of school. We actively encourage all new students to be involved in musical activities.

Students are very welcome to begin learning a new instrument or perhaps take up a second instrument.

PARENTPAY

The school uses ParentPay to accept payments for trips and events that your daughter may wish to participate in. This is a secure online method of payment and reduces the need for your daughter to carry cash. You will be provided with your login and password to enable you to use this system, once your daughter joins us in September.

PARENT PORTAL

The Parental Portal allows parents to access some of the information that is held electronically on the school's information management system. Data such as home address and emergency contact details can be viewed and updated online. Other information such as attendance records, reward certificates, public exam entries and exam results can also be viewed. Parents are also able to use the system to inform the school regarding reasons for absence. Login details to the portal will be issued at the Year 7 Parents 'Meet the Tutor Evening' in October.

PASTORAL/STUDENT SUPPORT

South Wilts has a team of staff to oversee student mental health and well-being throughout the school. Certain aspects of this area are covered in PSD, Assemblies and Form time. However, ongoing support is provided by Tutors and Pastoral Staff, in addition to the Counsellor, School Nurse and Lay Chaplain. Within their form time, students may also meet in small groups with their Tutor to discuss any issues that they wish to raise.

There is a supervised Pastoral area equipped with beanbags, desk space and a computer, where students can take 'time out' if they need to and sit quietly or complete some work.

We are currently in the process of updating the Student Support information on the South Wilts Grammar School website and this will be available in the near future on the home page of our website: www.swgs.wilts.sch.uk under the 'Student Support' tab: This information is designed for use by both parents and students.

PE

Please would you inform your daughter that she **must not** get changed in classrooms **at any time, this includes after school**. She should always change into or out of her PE kit in the changing rooms or toilets and leave school in her full school uniform unless immediately attending an after-school club or fixture.

QUESTIONNAIRES

Parent questionnaires are issued at Parents' Evenings. Findings are discussed by Senior Staff and Governors and are used to assist with planning.

REWARDS AND SANCTIONS

All staff can award merits when they feel it is appropriate. These can be awarded for academic achievement, individual attainment or improvement, or for service to the community. All students can and should be awarded merits; these are not just for the high achievers. Merits are recorded in the student's Student Planner. When a student has obtained 15 merits she should see her Form Tutor for a commendation certificate. Subsequent certificates are awarded by the Head of Year, Headteacher or Governors. Speech Day prizes may be awarded for achieving commendations as well as for other outstanding contributions throughout the year.

We believe that sanctions provide a consistent framework of support to help the development of individual responsibility. Lunchtime detentions are set and administered by departments for late work, missed work, lateness to a lesson or poor behaviour. Students can be put on report to monitor progress in lessons and/or lunchtime. After-school detentions (parents informed) are given for three departmental detentions within a term, or may be given for repeated late arrivals to school; these are held on Fridays from 3.45 to 5.00pm. Rudeness, smoking, unruly behaviour and repeated offences of failure to follow the dress code are dealt with on an individual basis by the Pastoral team. Parents are invited in to discuss problems such as poor behaviour patterns or truancy. Bullying will be punished at the appropriate level. We believe that sanctions should be appropriate to the problem and administered with discretion. Individual cases will be considered and appropriate action taken.

SCHOOL FUND

We greatly value the voluntary contributions made by parents to the School Fund. A letter and forms are enclosed with your New Parent Pack.

SCHOOL HOURS

The school buildings are open from 8.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Thursday and from 8.00am to 4.30pm on Friday. However, would you please note that **there is no staff supervision** until 8.15am or after 5.00pm or 4.30pm on Fridays, so students will be under parental care. The Dining Room is open for breakfast from 8.00am to 8.40am and the Learning Resource Centre is open from 8.15am to 5.00pm Monday to Thursday and 8.15am to 4.30pm on Fridays. If students arrive before 8.15am they should come to the Computer Room in the N block (N5) or sit in Reception.

The school day is as follows:

8.45am	-	9.05am	Registration and Assembly
9.05am	-	9.45am	Period 1
9.45am	-	10.20am	Period 2
10.20am	-	10.40am	Break
10.40am	-	11.20am	Period 3
11.20am	-	11.55am	Period 4
11.55am	-	12.55pm	Lunch
12.55pm	-	1.35pm	Period 5 and Registration
1.35pm	-	2.15pm	Period 6

2.15pm	-	2.35pm	Break
2.35pm	-	3.10pm	Period 7
3.10pm	-	3.45pm	Period 8

SECURITY

As a girls' school with many exits and entrances, we make security a priority. Visitors are required to sign in at Reception and wear a badge. If, for any reason, you come into school, please call at Reception first. Some buildings have an entry code. Cars should not be brought onto the school premises at any time, unless prior permission has been given.

TRANSPORT

For safety reasons, when delivering to or collecting your daughter from school, we ask that you park away from the school gate and bus stop area. Please do not use the main drive as there is no parking on site and turning is difficult and dangerous for pedestrians. It is important to consider the safety of the pedestrians in the school area.

If your daughter misses her bus on the way to school or home, please ensure that she knows the procedure you wish her to follow. She may need to phone you before catching a later bus. Equally, please ensure that she is familiar with the route to/from the Bus Station or Train Station if she uses these transport systems, in case she ever misses her connection. Mrs Passam should be notified about any problem with school buses.

UNIFORM

The uniform shop is located in the room down the stairs behind the Small Hall. The shop offers good stock availability, competitive prices, consistency of uniform, a personal service and a convenient location.

During **term time** uniform is available to be correctly fitted and bought on:

Tuesdays 12.00pm to 1.00pm

Thursdays 12.00pm to 1.00pm

The 1st Saturday of each month 9.30am to 10.30am

Payment for the uniform can be made in cash, cheque (**made payable to Direct Clothing Company**), or in person by credit/debit card. If you have any queries about purchasing uniform, please e-mail: uniform@swgs.wilts.sch.uk

We appreciate your cooperation in sending your daughter appropriately dressed and with suitable shoes. We ask you to support our school policy on make-up, jewellery and outdoor clothing. Further information about the school dress code can be found in the Student Planner.

VLE – VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

FROG is South Wilts Grammar School's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). All students have access to this facility. Students can access their school work folders and school emails easily from home, allowing better communication between teachers and students.

WEBSITE

Our school website is continually being updated with recent news, events, school policies, letters/forms etc. Please visit www.swgs.wilts.sch.uk and let us know if you would like to see any additional information being posted on this site. Our school newsletter 'Onwards' is produced six times a year and is available on the school website.