



Dear Parent/Carer,

29th August 2023

Welcome

It is a pleasure to be able to welcome you to Astrea Academy Woodfields as we look forward to what will be an extraordinary year of events, achievements and progress.

I am delighted to be able to share news that our departing Y11s and Y13s have achieved record results and are now set to succeed in the next steps of their education and training. Children are doing half a grade better than a year ago, twice as many scholars are gaining strong passes in English and Maths, and every single Y13 gained the grades needed to accept their offers at prestigious universities or training programmes. We are well on the way to make good on our promise to be the best school in Doncaster and the most improved school in the country. More than anything, I am proud of what our scholars have achieved this year and I'm heartened by the possibilities of the year ahead.

It is exceptionally important that we work together in the best interests of our scholars. I want to take the time and effort to hear your views and listen to your thoughts about how to improve the school further. We will be holding half termly "Parent Forum" events where you can share your views and see how this is shaping the direction of the school. I'd also like to extend an invitation to you to take a tour of the school so that you can see what we are doing. If this is something that would interest you, please e-mail jo.morris@astreawoodfields.org

Please read this letter carefully as there are important details about the return to school that you will need to take note of. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Return to School

Our new cohort of **Y7s (Class of 2030)** will be expected at the Academy on **Tuesday the 5th September at 8:15am**. All other scholars from the **Class of 2026-29** will be expected at the academy at **8:15am on Wednesday 6th September**.

School Day and Training Days

Please see the school website for the term dates, training days and information about the structure of the **school day which begins at 8:15am**.

<https://www.astreawoodfields.org/parent-information/school-day/>

Ethos and Culture

Scholars

As a school we want all scholars to go to university or a real alternative so that they can live a great life. To leave school with opportunity and choice requires a great deal of hard work, tenacity and curiosity. That is why we now refer to scholars as "scholars", which simply means "scholar" or "someone with profound knowledge". This better reflects our aspirations for our young people.

Year Groups

When a young person joins our school, we make a commitment to them to get to university, or a real alternative, so that they can live a great life. This normally occurs two years after they have collected their GCSE results at the age of 18. To



reflect this commitment, we are now referring to each year group by the year that they would stand on their own two feet in university, a great job or in training. Please see the table below for guidance:

Year Group	Class of...
7	2030 (Co2030)
8	2029 (Co2029)
9	2028 (Co2028)
10	2027 (Co2027)
11	2026 (Co2026)

Parent Code of Conduct

We have very positive relations with our community and families and value the support we receive in transforming the school and creating a scholarly culture. I am sure that you will agree that our staff should be able to go to work without having to suffer abuse or harassment; as my grandfather would say, "manners cost nothing". To support a minority of community members, I have placed a "Parent Code of Conduct" on the school website and a "Home School Agreement" in the behaviour policy. Please do familiarise yourself with this when coming into school so that you can model our values of curiosity, tenacity and scholarship for our children.

Attendance

Attendance at school is compulsory at 8:15am each day. There is a strong link between attendance and achievement, and we take seriously any absence from school. Scholars do not need time off school for minor ailments and should be sent to school. If there is a valid reason for an absence, please send in evidence (appointment letter, medical note, court summons etc.) to the Heads of Year who will then consider it. Holidays within term time will not be granted. Any periods of unauthorised absence will be challenged. This may result in a fine being issued. Please do contact the Head of Year for support with attendance should this become an issue and we will work with you to ensure that your child does not miss out on their education.

Scholar Conduct

Behaviour Policy

Astrea Academy Trust has updated the behaviour policy which can be found on our website. The aim of this policy is to support children to be successful and live a great life when they leave school. We have the largest amount of support per scholar than any other school in Doncaster and work hard to teach the habits that are needed to be successful. Please do understand that acceptance of a place at Astrea Academy Woodfields means an acceptance of this behaviour policy. Please ensure that you read this carefully and support your child to be successful in following it.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones (and other electronic devices) are brought into the academy at scholars' own risk and must be switched off and kept safely in the scholar's bag during the academy day.



Astrea Academy Trust strongly believes that the unsupervised and unrestricted use of mobile phones has the potential to significantly undermine the safe and harmonious culture of our academies. Consequently:

- If any scholar has a mobile phone that is seen, heard, used (or we are made aware that it has been used) it will be confiscated until the end of the next school day and a detention will be issued. The phone can be collected from main reception between 3-4pm by a parent/carer the following day to the confiscation
- If this falls on a Saturday (ie the phone was confiscated on a Friday) the phone cannot be collected until the following Monday after the academy day has finished. Where a mobile phone is confiscated on a Friday of the last week of school term, scholars may collect their phone between 3-4pm on the Monday of the first day of the holiday (unless it is a Bank Holiday), or during working hours on the first Tuesday of the holiday.

If a scholar refuses to hand over their mobile phone it will be treated as defiance and the scholar will be sanctioned accordingly. Ultimately if the scholar continues to refuse, the scholar will be issued with a Fixed Term Suspension. Part of the reintegration process back into school will be a requirement to hand over their mobile phone for a fixed period of time. This can be collected at a time of the school's choosing which will be communicated during the reintegration meeting.

Toilets

Toilet use is limited to before school, break time, lunch time and after school, excepting those who have a medical need and can provide evidence of this or in case of an emergency. Toilet use during lesson time or between lessons leads to lost learning time and has led to concerning behaviour that the school has dealt with. We therefore ask that you support us by ensuring that your child understands this message and the reasoning behind these rules being in place, which are for the benefit of everyone in school.

Passes

All passes from the 22/23 academic year will be removed for the start of September. If your child requires a toilet, movement or timeout pass for medical reasons then please contact your child's pastoral leader or academic year leader to provide up to date medical evidence with specific reference as to why the pass will support academic progress or wellbeing.

Dining

Family Dining

We value the community feel of the school and want to provide opportunities for our young people to talk to each other and develop strong social skills. We also want to develop courtesy and manners. Scholars will be expected to dine together and have respectful conversations while having their lunch. They will be invited to serve each other water, tidy up after themselves and leave the table when everyone has finished. We think that this will make the school a respectful environment and set the scholars up with the right habits for success.

Meal Costs

Due to rising costs nationally, school meals will cost £2.50 from September. I appreciate that this is a difficult time for households, and I have therefore taken steps to help with this by giving free uniform and school equipment to every scholar. Please do consider whether you might be eligible to apply for free school meals



(<http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/doitonline/free-school-meals>) and get in touch with the school should you need any help applying.

Uniform

There have been some amendments to our uniform policy for this academic year. A letter and uniform guide were sent to all parents with full details, this letter and booklet can be found here:

<https://www.astreawoodfields.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Uniform-Letter-18072023.pdf>

<https://www.astreawoodfields.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/uniform-booklet-scan.pdf>

However, some of the key points to note are:

- Academy blazers must be worn at all times unless directed by the principal
- Trousers must be mid-grey in colour, full length and of tailored fit
- Shoes must be black, leather or leather style that can be polished. The style must be traditional and professional, avoiding the appearance of a trainer
- A single pair of stud earrings is permitted. Any other items of jewelry are not allowed
- False nails and nail polish are not allowed (including clear gels, acrylics, extensions, shellac)
- New year group ties will be issued on the first day of school. Scholars can wear the old-style tie on the way into school and then exchange for a new year group tie when at school

As an Academy we have spent an enormous amount of time and money to make sure all scholars can meet our new uniform requirements. We undertook two measuring events in school in which all scholars present were measured for new trousers/skirt and PE top. By now, these items will have been collected from school, however, if you have not yet had a chance to collect then the school reception is open on Monday 4th September from 11am - 4pm. If your child was absent during the measuring events then you can go into Cliffs of Doncaster (11A Printing Office St, Doncaster DN1 1TP) to be measured and collect items. Texts have been sent to affected families and this text can be shown to staff at Cliffs or by giving the name and year group of the scholar.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation with adhering to our uniform policy, as it is vital in maintaining consistency and upholding the values we strive for as an academic institution. By sending your child to school in appropriate uniform, you are not only setting a positive example but also contributing to their overall development and success.

Hardship Fund

If you are currently facing financial difficulty and are struggling to pay for academic related costs you may be eligible for our hardship fund. Payments can cover any of the following.

- Curriculum Trips/residentials
- Uniform, school shoes or PE wear
- Other materials required for academic studies
- Emergency travel expenses



We have a set amount of funding to offer a discretionary source of financial help for any of our registered scholars. Any support from the hardship fund would not need to be repaid. To make an application, please contact your Head of Year or Office@AstreaWoodfields.org

Curriculum

Homework

Homework supports scholars to be successful and develops a sense of personal responsibility for meeting deadlines. Research shows that homework contributes to rapid academic development, and the skills that you gain support you when you go to university or to get a top job.

Completion of homework is compulsory. We do offer homework support every lunchtime and after school should scholars need the support of teachers, or access to computers in school. We will schedule a compulsory homework support session if homework is not complete, however scholars are free to leave once they provide evidence that the homework is finished to the member of staff on duty. Failure to attend this session or to complete homework will result in a 45-minute detention. Please support your child to be successful by completing homework to the deadlines that teachers communicate.

Every week your child will complete homework on Sparx Maths and Sparx Reader. These are leading national programmes that support scholars to make rapid progress. The programme teaches scholars how to complete the problems that are set, and it is possible to gain 100% if the right effort is put in. The expectation is that they gain 100% for the homework to be considered complete.

Key Stage 4 scholars are also set work on GCSEPod for Science. This involves watching tutorial videos that have been set by the Science team. In Languages, scholars will be required to complete homework weekly on The Funky Club. This involves a series of quizzes and a dictation, which should take around 30 minutes.

Key Stage 3 scholars are given knowledge organisers and homework booklets every half term and will be required to complete a subject per night using the knowledge organiser booklet. This will help scholars to memorise essential knowledge in their subject areas and help them in their lessons. Once they have been issued, scholars will be expected to bring both the homework booklet (which will be checked by tutors), as well as the knowledge organiser booklet every day.

We value your support with helping your child in completing the homework: we hope you can provide them a space where they can work free from distractions, where you can look at the knowledge organiser with them and assist with quizzing, so they eventually memorise 100% of the knowledge. This will give them the best chance of doing well in their qualifications and therefore having opportunities and choices when they leave school.

Personal Development

In the autumn term all scholars in Key Stage 3 will have one lesson of Personal Development every week. In Key Stage 4, scholars will have one lesson of Personal Development every fortnight. This will give all scholars sufficient time to learn about important topics such as consent, equality, mental health and other Personal Development themes. We'd like to take this opportunity to remind parents and carers that on Thursday 14th September we'll be hosting two sessions for

ASTREA ACADEMY WOODFIELDS
Weston Road, Balby, Doncaster, DN4 8ND
01302 312140

Principal: Mr David Scales



parents and carers to come into the academy and discuss any matters relating to Personal Development. Sessions will take place at 10am-11am and 4-5pm on this date. Parents and carers of scholars in all year groups are welcome to attend. To confirm your attendance of one of the sessions please contact Mr Sadler, Assistant Principal (luke.sadler@astreawoodfields.org).

Careers Advice

All scholars are reminded that should they require any support in relation to their next steps for their education, employment or training the academy's experienced Careers Advisor, Liz Yoxall can be contacted via the following email address liz.yoxall@astreaacademytrust.org.

Finally

I would like to thank you for the support that you have given to the school. When we work together, we can achieve remarkable things. This school is rapidly improving and will continue this rapid pace throughout the next academic year. Please do get in touch if you have any questions, or would simply like to see what we are doing firsthand.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Scales'.



David Scales

Principal of Astrea Academy Woodfields

MSc, MA (Teach First), MA (Cantab), NPQH

Teach First Ambassador 2008

KC 2004

Always Ascending
Woodfields