



**TRANSITION
INFORMATION FOR
PARENTS
2020-21**

YEAR 6 TO 7 TRANSITION

Our priority in Year 7 is to ensure a smooth transition from primary to secondary school. We aim to encourage in all our Year 7 students:

- An enthusiasm for learning
- Confidence in themselves as learners
- Emotional and social well-being
- A sense of achievement and purpose

In order to ensure that this happens, our transition programme includes:

- Asking parents to provide any relevant information regarding students, to allow us to help provide a successful and positive transition.
- A request is sent to primary schools asking for information about new students including academic attainment, any SEN information, friendship groups, aspects of social, emotional or medical concerns and any other information which might help the transition process.
- Wherever possible a visit will be made to students in their primary school by the Head of Year so that we meet all our new students and talk to Year 6 teachers.
- Communication of Welcome and further information in April for students and parents
- Induction Day in July when students have the chance to learn more about a day at UCGS and parents have the opportunity to communicate with teachers and the Head of Year.
- Transition booklets for both parents and students, which are available on the school website.
- Graduated homework timetable. We know that going to secondary school is tiring so over the first few weeks students will only be set homework in core subjects.
- Early lunch time for Year 7, to ensure students have time to settle into routines.

All these stages of the transition allow us to learn as much as possible about students before they join us, as well as providing as much information as possible to both students and parents.

Extra Help

Most students settle quickly and easily into the routine of school, making new friends, taking up new interests and dealing well with the academic challenges. For those few who do not, there are support systems available which include:

- The Head of Year and the Year 7 tutor team are dedicated to supporting the personal and academic development of all students – any student that is experiencing concerns or difficulties is encouraged to speak to any of these staff members, who will be able to help.
- There is a system of peer mentors drawn from the older students who work with any student who may need them.
- Peer support groups, run by students, work to support everyone in the school.
- Academic mentors can be assigned to any student who is finding their academic work challenging.
- Circle time and the PSHE program aims to promote successful transition to secondary school, and team building activities are used to help with class-wide issues.

MONITORING THE PROGRESS OF STUDENTS

At UCGS we believe that parents and carers have an important role to play in supporting the school and ensuring that their child makes significant progress. Our aim is to give parents and carers timely and relevant information about attainment, objectives, progress and well-being. We also recognise that communication is a two-way process and encourage parents and carers to participate in these discussions.

Interim Reports are issued for every student regularly at key points in the year and contain information on the current attainment of students and a grade for their attitude to their learning.

Parents' Evenings are held annually for all students. During appointments, parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's current attainment and understand precisely what needs to be done for them to make further progress.

Learning Review Day is held for all students and their parents in the autumn term. Parents/carers are invited to with tutors and/or the Head of Year.

Tutors meet with pupils and their parents in order to:

- Review the student's first term and identify strengths and any areas of concern
- Explain assessment data and the school's target setting arrangements

Communication

You can communicate with form tutors via the student diary, which has a section for notes/communication. Form tutors and the Head of Year are contactable by email – these can be provided at the start of term.

Alternatively you are welcome to contact a member of staff via school office on 01753 522892, or by email through office@uptoncourgrammar.org.uk.

- Information about the school can be found on the school website and students will be able to access the VLE.
- Questionnaires are sent to all parents to enable us to further improve our procedures on transition and parents' evenings in subsequent years.
- During the first term parents will be invited in to meet other parents and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee.

AS A PARENT, HOW CAN I HELP?

Generally, you should not do anything regularly for your child that they are capable of doing for themselves. This includes packing and unpacking your child's bag, completing and checking homework, checking that PE Kit/technology equipment is remembered. The best thing for your child will be to establish a routine as soon as possible and stick to it.

Students will undoubtedly have questions and concerns about moving up to Secondary School, as it is both an exciting and daunting move! Therefore both parents and teachers can support students by reassuring them about their concerns.

Below are a list of the top 10 concerns students often have when joining secondary school:

Being bullied

- UCGS operates a 'telling' culture whether your child is a victim of bullying or knows someone who is. Students should immediately report any incidents to their form tutor, the Head of Year, class teacher or any member of staff.
- Bullying is intentional, on-going and implies an imbalance of power. Isolated incidents or arguments over specific issues or friendship issues are not bullying but should still be reported so that they can be dealt with.

Not making friends

- Every student is as anxious about this and everyone will be in the same position in September!
- It is quite normal for friendship groups to change quite a lot over the first year of secondary school so the friends your child has at the beginning of the year may not be the same at the end of the year.
- Friends often fall out during the year but most arguments will be short-lived. Students who are not talking to each other at registration will frequently be best of friends again by lunch time so parents should try not to get too involved in friendship breakdowns.

Getting lost

- There is a virtual school tour available on our website. There will be an opportunity on the first day of term for your child to walk all around the school to get an idea of the layout. The school is organised in 'subject blocks' and a map available in the student planner.
- Teachers will be very understanding during the first few weeks – students will not be sanctioned for getting lost in the first few weeks.

Homework

- Homework is only set in core subjects for the first two weeks to allow students to become accustomed to the routine.
- In year 7, three pieces of homework may be set each evening which should take students 1 ½ hours to complete in total.
- Go through use of the diary with your child making sure that things are written in full - one word or 'finish stuff' is not exact enough. They should also put in the date homework is due. Highlight urgent homework in one colour and the next most important in another so that it is clear what needs doing first.
- Your child should ask the class teacher for clarification if they are not absolutely clear about what they need to do and when it is due.
- Have a specific homework space with, if possible, good light and storage space for books. Set a time for homework to be done which fits in with the family's evening routine. It is usually best to let them have a short break after getting in from school and then get on with it. It is unlikely that your child will want to start homework if it is left until 7.00pm.
- Your child will have written their homework timetable in their planner so you will be able to check whether homework is due to be set on a particular day.

Not being able to do the work

- If your child is having problems with any subject or piece of work, they should speak to their subject teacher or Form Tutor. Teachers want their students to succeed so will be happy to help with any problems.

Getting to school and back if it involves a bus/train journey

- Practise the journey several times during the summer holidays so that your child knows where to go and knows how long it should take.
- Make sure they have contact telephone numbers in case of emergencies during the journey.

Not having the right books and equipment

- Make sure your child develops a routine of checking the diary every evening to see what is needed for the next day and packs their bag accordingly. Planners and a pencil case must be brought in every day.

- They should put PE kit next to their schoolbag so it is not forgotten.
- Books, PE kit, tech folders, etc., should be put in a special place so that they can be found again later.

Not knowing what to do if there's a problem

- Students can ask for help from their form tutor, class teacher, the receptionist or Head of Year. Everyone is committed to making sure that new Year 7 students settle quickly and will be happy to help.

Teachers

- Year 7 students will have a different teacher for each subject and each teacher will have their own style of teaching and classroom management but they are all enthusiastic to help and support the learning of every student.

Getting into trouble

- Allowances will be made for lateness, forgotten books or equipment and general mistakes over the first few weeks which should let all students learn the ropes without incurring any punishments.
- UCGS's School Culture is based on common sense and respect for other pupils, staff and school property. It is set out in full in the Student Planner.
- Teaching Staff will deal with for minor infractions of the rules including disruptive behaviour, lateness for lessons, missing homework, etc. in lessons. If they are to be kept after school for detention, you will be given prior notice.
- If a student continues to misbehave, they may be removed from the lesson by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- More serious offences may be dealt with by a Head of Department, Head of Year or Senior Leadership Team detention. If your child is to be kept after school, you will be given prior notice.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Rewards

- Students who work or behave well may be given a Culture Point (previously called a House Point). The CPs are totalled every term and accumulations recognised when reached a certain number.
- At the end of each term a Celebration Assembly is held at which certificates and prizes are given out to students who have excellent attendance or behaviour. Students may also be named as an UCGS Hero, Subject Hero or Form Hero.
- If a student receives an excellent report or contributes to the school in some way, a certificate may be presented congratulating them on their achievement.
- Student achievements are also celebrated on the Wall of Achievement which is regularly updated.

Uniform

Students are required to be in correct school uniform and the full uniform list can be found in the Student Planner and on the school website. A supply of uniform is held in school and, if your child is not correctly dressed, they will be asked to wear this while they are in school that day. If the uniform is not corrected, your child may be socially excluded or sent home from school until they are correctly dressed.

Please ensure that all items of uniform and other property, including shoes, are labelled.

Lateness

Students must arrive by 8.25 a.m. A student arriving late must:

- sign in at the Reception and
- explain the reason for lateness to the form tutor at next registration/form tutor period

A student arriving after 9.00 am must sign in with the Attendance Officer in the Front Office.

Students who fail to report themselves late are counted as absent and the matter may be followed up with parents. This may be recorded as unauthorised absence (truancy) and a detention may be issued.

Sickness

If a student is unwell parents/carers should contact the Attendance Officer (by calling the school office and using extension 720) on the first day of absence. If no telephone call or email is received, you may be contacted by the Attendance Officer.

Office Contact Number: 01753 522892

If the period of sickness is more than 5 days, parents/carers are required to provide medical evidence, eg, a doctor's note or prescription.

If the period of sickness falls immediately before or after a holiday period, medical evidence is also required.

Money, valuables and mobile phones

Articles of considerable value, such as cameras, phones and large sums of money should not be brought to school. Anything which is brought to school is the responsibility of the student. Money and valuables, such as watches, mobile phones and bus passes should not be left in pockets of clothes or in unattended bags at any time.

Students should buy a zippy bag from the PE Department (cost £1) so that valuables can be left in the valuables box during PE lessons to reduce the risk of items being lost. Under no circumstances should money or mobiles be left in bags or blazers in the changing rooms.

Students are allowed to carry mobile phones, provided they obey the following conditions:

- They are switched off on entry to school and are not used for any purpose during school time.
- Students are responsible for keeping them safe and bring them to school at their own risk.

If a phone is in sight at an inappropriate time the phone may be confiscated. If a phone is confiscated three times during the year, it will be kept by a staff member until collected by a parent.

Lost Property

The lost property cupboard is located in the Head of Year office in the new block and is open at the end of every school day. Students who lose anything should search there first and look again over several days. Lost planners, phones, keys, wallets, etc will be held at Reception if found.

Leave of Absence

Application should be made in advance for any leave of absence for things such as medical appointments. UCGS is not permitted by law to grant leave of absence for family holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances. Leave of absence will not normally be granted to students in public examination years or to those whose attendance record is below the expected 95%.

A leave of absence form can be collected from reception and should be completed and returned as far in advance as possible.

Medicines and First Aid

If it is necessary to bring medicines of any kind into school these should be handed into reception where it can be looked after by staff trained in First Aid. Our trained first aiders are also able to make a judgement about an injury and whether a child should go to hospital or not.

Please ensure that the school has up to date contact details as it may be necessary to contact home in the case of an emergency.

Student Planner

It is extremely important that students have their planners with them every day in order to record homework and any comments a member of staff may wish to make. If your child loses their planner, they will need to speak to their tutor or Head of Year. If a diary is not found within 3 days, a new one must be purchased from at a cost of £5.00.

Parents' Evening Booking System

UCGS has an on-line Parents' Evening booking system to make booking appointments with your child's teachers easier and more secure. In September, you will be provided with a unique log in code and can find the link to the system on our website. You will be notified by email about Parents' Evening dates and these can also be found on the school calendar. The booking system opens one month before the date of the Parents' Evening.

Parent Pay

In order to remove the need for cash and cheques in school we are asking parents to use Parent Pay as the e-payment method to pay for trips, books, equipment, etc. You will be provided with a log in to set up Parent Pay account. Please make sure you enter your most up to date contact details and email address. Parent Pay is an electronic record of your payments. Please do not hesitate to contact Student Services if you need assistance.

Cashless catering system

The school restaurant operates a cashless catering system which eliminates the need for pupils to carry cash or a card. The system is biometric and recognises points in the thumb print of each student at the pay point. Information on this system will be given to you separately.

There are future plans for both student printing within the school and the library borrowing system to be incorporated into the biometric system.

Parent Portal

Parents can access live information about their child 24 hours a day by logging on to INSIGHT via the UCGS Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Information available will include attendance, timetables, rewards and behaviour.

In September, each parent is issued with a unique user name and password and these must not be shared with anyone for data protection reasons. Full instructions will be issued with the user names but if you require user support, please email the support help desk at insight@uptoncourtgrammar.org.uk.

User names and passwords are issued to parents of new year 7 students in the autumn term.

