

3rd September 2025

Dear Families,

Start of year update

Welcome back to the new school year! We're starting this September in a really positive mood. Following on from our very pleasing Ofsted report, our Year 11 and 13 students received an excellent set of exam results in August. In fact, our GCSE results were the highest we've seen since 2018, putting us in a really strong position locally and within the Lighthouse Schools Partnership, whilst our Sixth Form students exceeded all expectations with their superb achievements. You can read more and see lots of very happy students [on our website](#) - many congratulations to them all!

I'm writing with some key updates and reminders for the new year, so that we can work together to support our students to be as successful as possible.

Important updates

New arrangements for school food

Many students and families made helpful suggestions in our surveys about improvements that could be made to school food. Working with our student leaders and our catering provider, Aspens, we're pleased to announce that we are introducing new arrangements for dining this year.

Main school students will have three lunchtime dining options to choose from:

- **Streateries range:** this is an appetising, plated sit-down meal that will be available to all students in the Academy Hall. The offer here is great value and we anticipate it being very popular!
- **Hot Grab and Go:** all students will be able to get a hot, nutritious meal to take away and eat in the social areas or outdoors. This service will be available from the right-hand side of Windsor Kitchens, and exactly the same offer can be found in the food pods near the Music canopy.

- **Cold Deli Kitchen:** a range of cold sandwiches, baguettes, salads and other delicious treats will be available to all students from the left-hand side of Windsor kitchens.

At break time, all food serveries will have the same food on offer, and students can use whichever outlet they choose. Students can eat their grab-and-go or deli meals, or their packed lunches, in any of the social areas or many outdoor spaces available, ensuring that any litter is disposed of in a bin.

The Sixth Form continues to have its own dedicated catering service in the Sixth Form Centre.

We hope that this new food offer will encourage our students to enjoy a healthy, nutritious meal and look forward to working with Aspens and our student leaders to continue to enhance this provision.

Attendance matters

Good attendance improves students' academic achievements, social development and mental health by providing strong and consistent routines. Department for Education research shows that students who were absent from school less than 5% of the time are twice as likely to achieve GCSE grade 5+ in English and Maths than someone who missed 5-10% of school. It also showed that students who miss on average one day per fortnight reduced their future earnings potential by £750 per missed day¹. This is why attendance matters! We look forward to your support as we continue to encourage students to attend every single day that it is possible for them to.

Punctuality

The vast majority of our students are punctual to their lessons, arriving promptly and ready to learn. Those few students who do arrive late disrupt the all-important start to a lesson and interrupt the learning of those who have arrived on time. We want to maximise learning time and ensure that all students build good habits of punctuality. Therefore, this year, any student who arrives late to a lesson without a permission slip will be issued with a behaviour point and a 20-minute detention to be served at the start of the next lunchtime. Students will be able to access the catering facilities after their detention. Persistent lateness will result in more serious sanctions and closer monitoring and support. We hope that this will incentivise students to be

¹ See the charts here:

<https://churchillhead.com/2025/03/20/the-link-between-attendance-attainment-and-lifetime-earnings/>

punctual to their lessons, and we look forward to your support with maintaining good timekeeping habits.

Reminders

Uniform and equipment

Many thanks to everyone who responded to our uniform consultation. We are analysing the results and will write later this year with the outcomes of this helpful feedback. In the meantime, the uniform code is unchanged and available [on our website](#). Please note that the new style $\frac{3}{4}$ zip house coloured top is acceptable to wear as part of the uniform in the same way as the PE hoodie.

This [webpage](#) also includes our list of essential and desirable equipment. Please check this carefully; we are very grateful for your support in ensuring that students are properly dressed and equipped for school. All students **must** have a pencil case containing:

- Two black pens
- Two sharp pencils
- Rubber
- Ruler
- Scientific calculator (Casio fx-85GTCW preferred)
- A reading book (can be borrowed from the library)

Paper and laminated timetables will be issued on the first day. The laminates have been designed to keep safe in a bag pocket - please encourage your children to look after their timetables so they know where they are going!

Dates for the diary

Parent Information Evenings

Throughout September, we will be hosting a parent information evening for each year group. These evenings are designed to provide you with detailed information about the curriculum, outline the expectations and offer an overview of the year ahead. Staff will also make suggestions on how you can support your children and the Academy throughout the year.

We look forward to seeing you in the Academy Hall on the following dates and times:

- Year 7: Monday 22nd September, 18:00-19:00
- Year 8: Tuesday 9th September, 18:00-19:00
- Year 9: Tuesday 16th September, 18:00-19:00
- Year 10: Monday 15th September, 18:00-19:00
- Year 11: Monday 8th September, 18:00-19:30
- Year 12: Wednesday 17th September, 18:00-19:00
- Year 13: Tuesday 23rd September, 18:30-20:00

INSET Days

Please note the **INSET days** for this school year:

- Term 1: Thursday 25th September 2025
- Term 1: Friday 24th October 2025
- Term 2: Monday 3rd November 2025
- Term 2: Wednesday 19th November 2025
- Term 3: Friday 13th February 2026

You can find a complete list of all term dates and INSET days on our website here, <https://www.churchill-academy.org/Information/Term-Dates/>.

We look forward to working with you and your wonderful children this year; it promises to be a really good one.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Hildrew

Headteacher