



YEAR 7 PARENTS' HANDBOOK

2024-25



Head of Year 7:


Mr N Widdeson





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SCHOOL ORGANISATION

THE CURRICULUM YEARS 7-9 (KEY STAGE 3)

For the first three years at Diss High School, all students study the following subjects: Art, Computing, Drama, English, a Modern Foreign Language (either French or Spanish), Geography, History, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, PSHEE (includes Religious Studies and Careers Education), Science and Technology (includes Design Technology and Food). A wider range of subjects are offered in year 9 to prepare students for the GCSE courses and broaden their education.

On entry to the School, all students are placed in mixed tutor groups, based on information provided by their primary school.

By the end of Year 9, students are given an element of choice in the examination courses they will follow, known as options subjects.

THE CURRICULUM YEARS 10-11 (KEY STAGE 4)

In Year 9 students are invited to make their preferences for subjects to study at GCSE. There is plenty of opportunity to discuss these preferences with staff at the appropriate time. They then spend two years studying for their GCSE exams that are due to take place at the end of Year 11.

THE CURRICULUM YEARS 12-13 (SIXTH FORM)

Following their GCSEs, students have an opportunity to continue their studies at Diss High School Sixth Form if that is appropriate for them. The options for courses available to them will again be discussed at the correct time. In both of the above cases, full details relating to public examination courses are published at the appropriate time in your child's schooling.

ASSESSMENT

On entry to the School, all students take standardised national tests; the information we gather from these, along with results from Year 6, helps us to determine which children may benefit from additional help and support.

Formal teacher assessments take place in Years 7 and 9. School examinations for Years 7 – 10 are held during the school year, as well as ongoing teacher assessments.

As we know, learning is not linear and, as a result students may not always achieve to their potential. Teachers will feedback on areas to improve from the formal assessments, and activities will be available for students to practise the areas requiring development. Should a student underperform relative to the group on more than one occasion, teachers will work with them to improve their approach to assessments and/or their performance during the exam itself. Key assessments will be recorded on Go4Schools, available to be seen by students and parents/carers. The performance of students in class and the results from key assessments will determine the grades reported at the end of each term. This is to allow you to follow their progress throughout each Key Stage.



THE DEPARTMENTS

ART

The Art and Design work in Diss High School aims to give students pleasure and satisfaction through experience, practice and expression in a wide range of visual art activity.

Practical work, both inside and outside the studios, together with projects linked to other subjects and the study of our artistic heritage, is planned to enrich the students' school lives and encourage a sensitive awareness of the world around them.

This work and experience provides a sound base for future examination or career development and a lasting life-long interest.

PSHEE AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

PSHE education and Religious Studies are in a number of sessions across the curriculum, as well as in discrete lessons. The aim of this course is to increase students' knowledge and awareness of the self, of others, of the school, of 'citizenship', British Values and of contemporary society. Students will be encouraged to develop skills, which will enable them to be more efficient in studying and more sensitive in their relationships with others. Some health and sex education issues are dealt with, when appropriate.

Topics of general interest and educational value, which are not normally covered by the more traditional subjects, will be studied, using a wide range of teaching methods, including role-play. World religions such as Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism and Hinduism are also studied with an emphasis on understanding and tolerance.

DRAMA

All students in Years 7, 8 and 9 undertake Drama. GCSE Drama is offered in Years 10 and 11 and A-Level Drama and Theatre Studies in the Sixth Form. Additionally, Drama Clubs and school productions provide opportunities for interested students in the Lower School, as do some lessons in English.

TECHNOLOGY AND COMPUTING

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

Students are taught Design Technology (DT) in Year 7, 8 and 9. During their time in the Department, practical and intellectual skills will be developed by solving problems and striving to achieve results, with the emphasis on quality.

The tasks set encourage ingenuity, initiative and the ability to communicate verbally and graphically. Throughout the course, students work both individually and as part of a team.

In this subject, students will be exposed to sharp tools, machinery and, occasionally, corrosive liquids, so the importance of correct clothing within the workshop cannot be overemphasised. To this end, students will be provided with aprons, which they must wear to protect their clothing.

FOOD TECHNOLOGY

The basic course is centred around Food, with a focus on cooking and developing basic skills to be confident in the kitchen. It includes both written design work and practical work carried out in three specialist rooms.

Since the practical element of the course is so important (and a consumable product is produced!), parents are asked to provide inexpensive ingredients for lessons, as required.

COMPUTING

In computing, students will acquire and apply knowledge and understanding of:

- ❖ The quality and reliability of information and how to access and combine it;
- ❖ A range of increasingly complex tasks using a variety of computing tools;
- ❖ How computing can help their work in other subjects;
- ❖ The application and use of computing in the outside world.

ENGLISH

The English course in Years 7 and 8 is devoted to developing the basic oral and written language skills.

Students will encounter the written word in many forms in order to develop comprehension and fluency in reading; they will be encouraged to write and express themselves to improve their grasp of the mechanics of language, as well as to encourage self-confidence and reasoning skills.

Powers of oral expression will be encouraged through group discussion and debate, to develop self-confidence in the formation and exchange of views, both in the peer group and the wider world.

Great importance is attached to the development of the imagination of the students; the reading of a wide range of plays, novels and poems is a major part of their English studies.

GEOGRAPHY

The aim of the Geography course in the Lower School is to give students an understanding of the variety and complexity of the Earth as the home of humanity.

Geographical skills will be acquired whilst studying human and physical aspects of the subject. Special emphasis will be placed on the Home Region, the EU and Global Issues, taught with links to PSHEE.

The course forms the basis for further study at GCSE and A-Level and we hope will give students an enlightened perspective on the world around them.

HISTORY

The aim of the course in Years 7 to 9 is to encourage an interest in, and an understanding of, the past. Through this, it is hoped students will gain a greater awareness of the present.

The course focuses on the development of historical skills through the study of Britain from the Middle Ages to the 20th Century. We hope that the course will give the students a greater understanding of their own cultural roots, as well as those shared with other countries and peoples, and provide the basis for further study of History at GCSE and A-Level.

LEARNING SUPPORT

The Learning Support Department aims to identify and support those students whose stage of development is such that they need extra help to enable them to engage fully in the curriculum and to support students who have a specific difficulty that hinders their progress.

Support may take place in several ways:

- ❖ In-class support across the curriculum aimed at helping students access the curriculum and develop basic skills whilst working with their peers in a mainstream setting.
- ❖ Small group work offering an opportunity to work intensively on specific skills to enable the student to tackle areas of weakness. This may include some group work in The Hive. The Hive Nurture Group is an intervention for Year 7 to support students with the transition from primary to high school. It operates on the six principles of Nurture; students are assessed for suitability and are invited by staff to participate in the programme.
- ❖ Individual tuition for programmes of work that need one to one support to help students make progress in specific areas.
- ❖ Provision of materials to be used at home to develop and reinforce basic skills.

In essence, the department aims to help students overcome areas of difficulty as well as increasing their confidence and self-esteem.

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics is a core subject. It is a subject of interest in its own right and provides ideas and skills vital to many other areas such as Science, Geography and Technology.

In Year 7, we continue with the mastery style approach to Maths which students will be familiar with from their time in primary school. This will include the use of manipulatives and visual stimuli to support, develop and embed the key concepts, which are essential in building solid foundations for their learning journey. From September 2023 students will be following the Oxford Smart Curriculum for Maths. Special support and help is provided for students who have particular mathematical problems.

We are excited to be using The Oxford Smart Curriculum for Maths. It has been designed to incorporate the key components from educational research projects, which have shown to have had the highest positive impact on students. We also believe that their six core curriculum pillars were aligned with our philosophy of teaching and learning Maths:

- Provide clear and coherent curriculum pathways
- Hold high expectations, aspirations, and ambitions for all learners
- Support engaged, self-regulated, and metacognitive learning
- Promote development of learner identity and identification with each subject
- Enable responsive teaching and learning that continually evolves and improves
- Stimulate fascination, awe, and wonder in discovery of self and the world around us

In addition to the standard equipment listed on Page 17, all students should have a scientific calculator; although any scientific calculator will do, we would recommend any calculator from the FX-83 or FX-85 range as an easy to use, relatively inexpensive model which is sufficient for all work up to Year 11.

MODERN LANGUAGES

At Key Stage 3, students will study either French or Spanish over the three years. During Year 9, the students get the opportunity to choose the language they have been studying as a GCSE subject for Year 10 and 11 if they want to..

The aims of the Modern Language courses in the School are:

- ❖ To enable students to understand and communicate with native speakers
- ❖ To develop a wider cultural awareness of Spanish and French speaking countries across the world

We use interactive whiteboards, games, songs and puzzles to encourage students to communicate effectively in the Modern Language from the outset of their learning and provide the students with a variety of ways to learn the language. Topics studied include Personal Information, School, Hobbies, Pets, Food, Drink, Shopping and Holidays. Students are also exposed to many cultural aspects through discussions and films, are invited to take part in activities which promote their understanding of how different people live in today's society. Students will be assessed at regular intervals in the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

The Language department recommends the Collins easy learning Spanish and French Dictionaries.

MUSIC

The aims of the course are:

- ❖ To bring enjoyment of music to students through singing, playing musical instruments, composing and listening;
- ❖ To develop the creative potential in each individual;
- ❖ To train students to listen specifically in order to appreciate tone colours, rhythms, harmonies and melody;
- ❖ To develop students' ability to work co-operatively with others and to see music as a medium for sharing and transmitting cultural affinities within a community;
- ❖ To foster a love of music which can be sustained for life.

Opportunity exists to learn a musical instrument with one of our team of visiting specialist instructors. Lessons are subsidised by the School but a charge is also made to parents, unless there is financial hardship (please contact the Headteacher).

Instruments can be loaned, subject to the resources at the School's disposal. Parents are asked to include in their existing insurance policies, cover for any instrument, against damage and theft.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The aims of Physical Education at Diss are that:

- ❖ The curriculum is enjoyable, accessible and relevant to the needs of the student;
- ❖ Lessons provide the acquisition of skills and incorporate opportunities to apply these skills in a variety of situations and environments;
- ❖ Students have the opportunity to assess and reflect upon their ability and become responsible for their own and others' development;
- ❖ Teachers ensure that students are aware of health benefits and encourage the continuation of an active lifestyle after school.

The School is fortunate in having excellent playing facilities, enabling us to offer students the major games of football, rugby, hockey, netball, cricket, athletics, tennis, rounder's, basketball and volleyball. The junior students' programme also includes gymnastics and outdoor activities for both boys and girls. The students participate in a Health Related Fitness Scheme, which not only monitors their state of fitness, but hopefully educates them in a healthy lifestyle.

The Physical Education Department offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities in which all students are encouraged to participate. These include team practices; tournaments that take place during lunchtime; other matches against local schools; area tournaments. Clubs include basketball, volleyball; tennis; athletics; gymnastics; badminton. Students are also offered the opportunity to go on skiing trips.

Students are encouraged to join clubs outside school and there are close links with the local hockey, netball, cricket, rugby, tennis, football and squash clubs who all run youth schemes.

ADDITIONAL STUDIES

The need for additional studies for exceptionally able and hard-working students is recognised and catered for in a weekly lesson taught outside main curriculum time in years 8 and 9. Parents of children identified by staff as likely to benefit from this course will be consulted and given full details at the end of Year 7.

SCIENCE

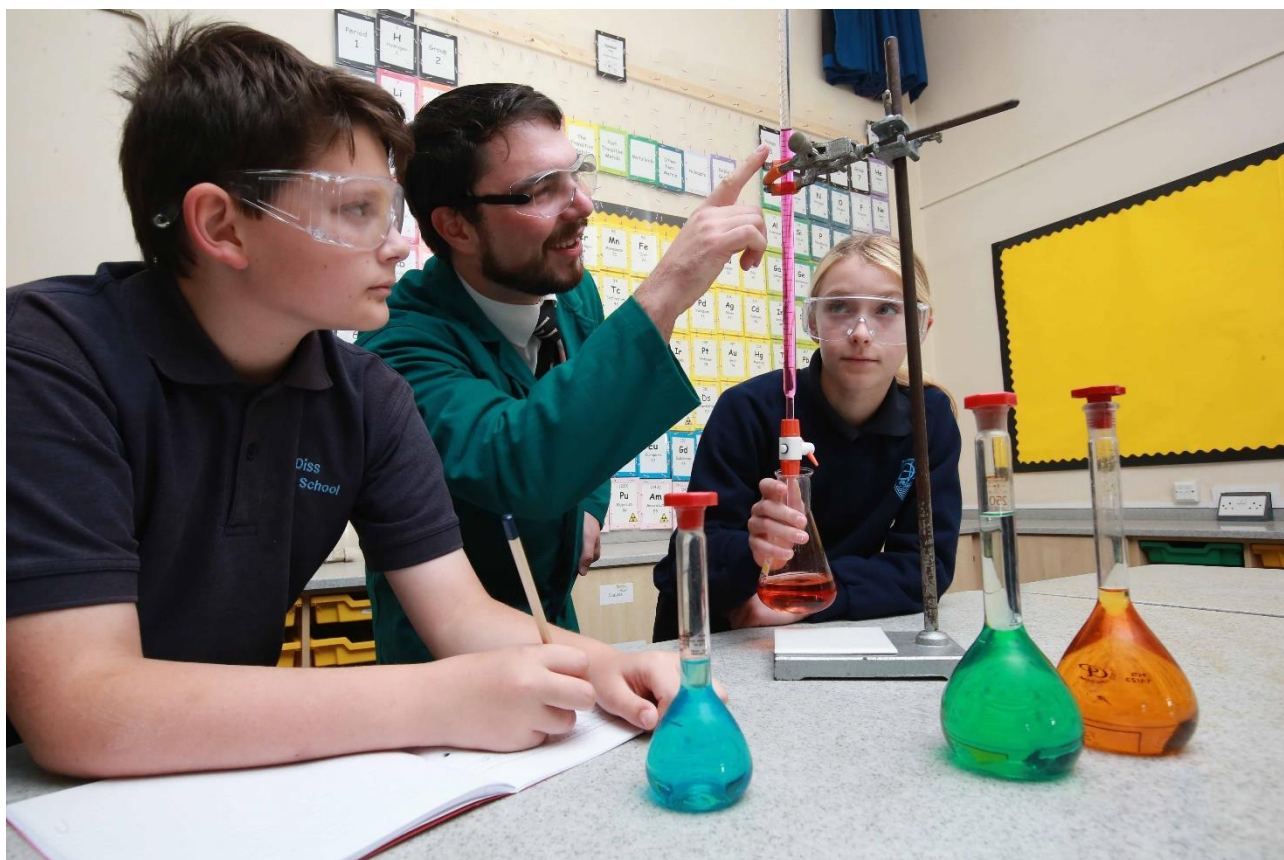
The Science course in Years 7 to 9 aims to introduce children to the areas of Physics, Biology and Chemistry, with an emphasis on the environment, plus Earth Sciences and Astronomy.

The aims of the Science course are:

- ❖ To enable students to acquire sufficient understanding and knowledge to become confident citizens in a technological world, able to take and develop an informed interest in matters of scientific importance;
- ❖ To recognise the usefulness and limitations of scientific method and appreciate its applicability in other disciplines as well as in everyday life.

There is a strong practical basis to the work so that children are helped to develop manipulative skills, to solve problems for themselves by experiment and to develop an interest in further study.

During the first two years, assessment in the Science Department occurs throughout the teaching year, using end of topic tests, practical assessment and including project work. This approach gives excellent and continual opportunities for assessing children's progress.



INTERNET USE

There are many opportunities in School for children to access the Internet. There are strict conditions of use, which will be made known to all students.

All students must agree to our 'acceptable use policy', which provides information about what is and is not allowed.

Students who do not use the Internet responsibly can expect severe consequences.



SCHOOL ROUTINE

HOURS OF ATTENDANCE

The normal school sessions are: 8:40am – 1:20pm
2:10pm – 3:10pm

Students should aim to arrive on the premises about ten minutes before the start of each session, but not before 8.30am for the first session, as no staff are on supervisory duty before this time. Students who travel on school buses must not leave the school premises after they have been brought into school in the morning.

Parents who bring their children to school by car are asked to drop them by the entrance in Uplands Way to avoid congestion at the main gate (please note that the Tennis and Squash Club car parks are private and should not be used by parents).

THE TIMING OF THE SCHOOL DAY IS AS FOLLOWS:

8:30am	Students arrive at school
8:35am	Warning bell for registration and movement time
8:40am	Registration / Assembly
9.00am	Lesson 1
10.00am	Lesson 2
11.00am	Break
11:15am	Warning bell and movement time
11:20am	Lesson 3
12:20pm	Lesson 4
1:20pm	Lunch
2:05pm	Warning bell and movement time
2.10pm	Lesson 5 (incl. Afternoon registration)
3:10pm	Lessons finish

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE

When a student is too unwell to attend, a parent should contact the School on 01379 642424, option one (option two for sixth form students), before 9am on the first and every subsequent day of absence, stating the student name, tutor group and a reason for the absence. Alternatively, you can email the student absence to attendance@disshigh.co.uk ensuring you give the full name and tutor group of the student and the reason for their absence. If the absence is to be more than one day, it is helpful if some indication of its likely length could be given. Students are expected to bring an absence note, marked for the attention of the Attendance Officer via the school office, on their return to school.

The law about student attendance at school is very strict and any absence, other than illness, which has not been sanctioned in advance by the Headteacher, must be treated as truancy. If a parent fails to send in a note soon after absence, the absence may also be perceived as truancy, as it has not been authorised.

We would not normally expect to send work home for sick students where absence is for a week or less. The practice is generally counter-productive when children are ill and not feeling up to academic work.

A letter is also required when a parent wishes a student to be excused from any activity.

HOLIDAYS

On the 1st September 2013, the Education (Student Registration, England) Regulations came into force, changing the rules about term time holidays. The amendments remove references to family holidays and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of 10 school days. The amendments specify that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless they consider there to be "exceptional circumstances" for doing so. This means the Headteacher can only authorise absence for Year 7-11 students, if an explanation is given as to why the circumstances are exceptional. The Headteacher can also issue a fixed penalty fine to parents who disregard this regulation.

Parents who believe there are exceptional circumstances for taking a child on holiday during term time must obtain the appropriate form from the school office which must be submitted at least a month in advance of the proposed absence - even if it is just for a day.

PUNCTUALITY

Diss High School is committed to preparing students for the world beyond and we believe attendance, punctuality and presentation are key areas that can make a difference. We have employed a 'late' procedure, which supports the need for our students to recognise the necessity for punctuality. Students who are late without a valid reason will be sanctioned accordingly. Students who are persistently late could be put onto a Punctuality Report with their tutor or Head of Year. Please contact Mr Lea if you require further information regarding our late procedure.

ILLNESS

We have first-aid cover available at School. It is very important that we have your telephone number in case of emergencies and some other contact names and numbers in the event of not being able to contact you. It is vital that the school is informed immediately of any change of contact numbers or details. A form is issued to all parents of new entrants to allow them to record this information and any other medical information. Please contact the school if your child requires a medical plan.

If you believe your child to be ill, then it is important that you seek an opinion from your own doctor; please do not send your child to school in the hope that our first-aiders will make a diagnosis.

Please ensure that all inhalers are clearly named, for rapid return if lost.

The school will only retain medication, which has been prescribed by a doctor. It must be brought in its original packaging from the Pharmacy with printed instructions on it. The school will not give any other medication to students, including analgesics (unless prescribed by a doctor).

MEDICALS

Various medical 'checks' are held in School and parents will be notified in advance on each occasion.

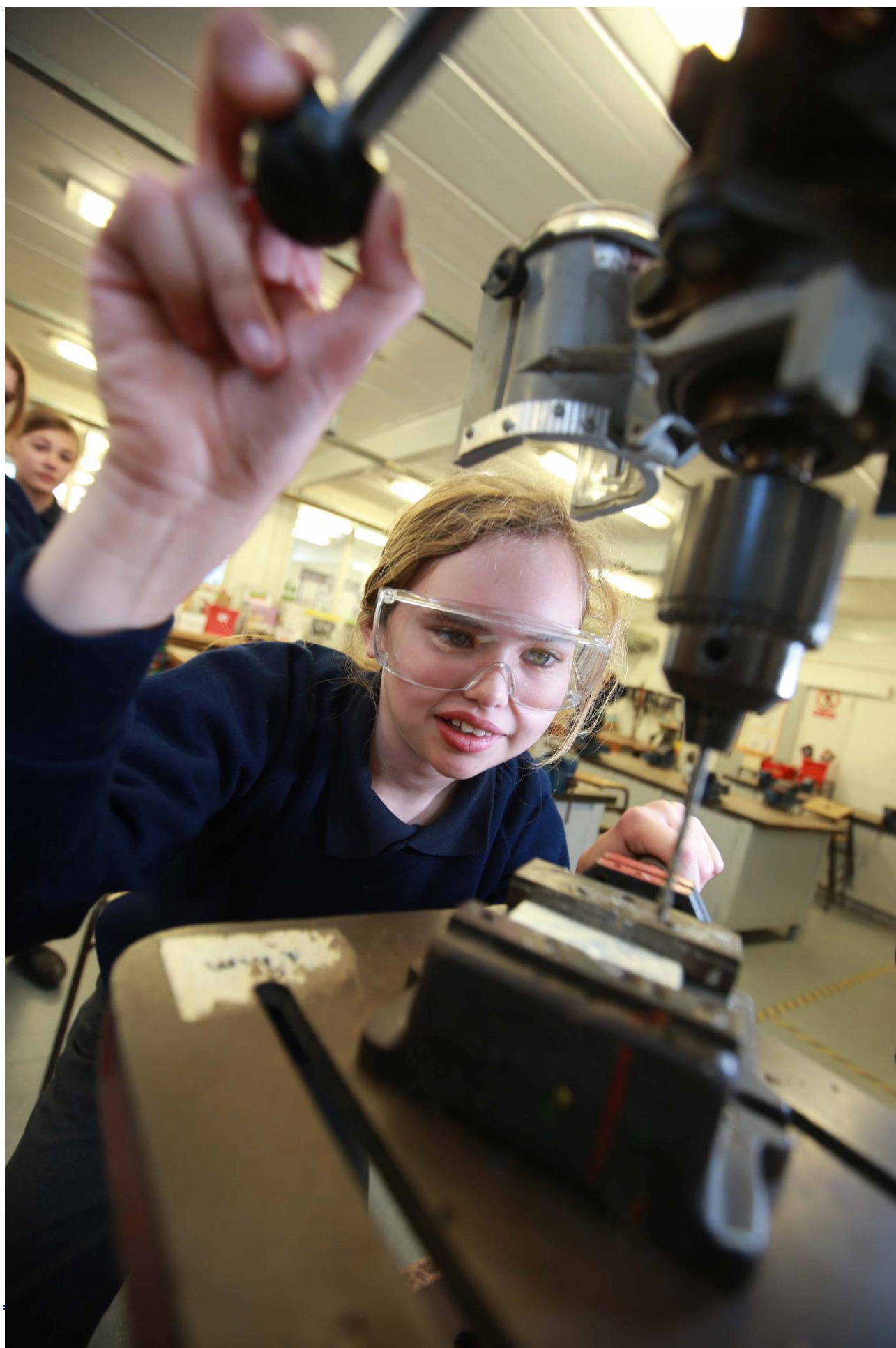
SCHOOL BUSES

Students who travel to school by bus are expected to behave in a sensible manner and, in particular, must not distract the driver in any way. Students must only use the bus they are assigned to and wear seatbelts for the journey to and from school.

Students who persistently behave badly on school buses may be banned by the Local Authority from travelling on them.

For all transport enquiries please call Norfolk County Council on 0844 800 8020 or visit <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-and-college-transport/home-to-school-transport/apply-for-school-transport>

Please note applications can be made from 3rd June 2024 and need to be in by 31st July 2024 to ensure you have a bus place for the start of the academic year.



BOOKS, APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT

Students should come equipped with a pen, pencil, ruler, set square, protractor, pair of compasses, a rubber and set of coloured pencils. It is also essential that a dictionary and a calculator be provided. Subject teachers will be pleased to give further advice where required (see 'Mathematics' for some information on calculators).

LOCKERS AND PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

All clothing and personal possessions must be clearly identifiable through indelible marking, so that they can be returned to the owners.

We hope to be able to provide each Year 7 student with a locker, if they want one, for a modest rental fee. We cannot accept responsibility for items left unattended. Valuable items, such as electronic equipment, expensive jewellery and mobile telephones, must not be brought to school. Students should not bring large sums of money into school, as payment for food and trips can be made by a card. If a large sum is needed to contribute to a visit, charity event, etc., it should be lodged with a member of the Pastoral Team (Head of Year) for safekeeping until needed.

HOMEWORK

This will be set for all students and the demand increases as students move up the school. In the first year, the formal homework demand will not normally exceed an hour per subject per evening. All tasks are set on Go4Schools, and students should be given at least one week to complete it. By helping them manage their time, there should not be any bottlenecks where they are left with 3 homework tasks to complete in an evening.

Parents and students can check the homework situation using the Go4Schools app to ensure students do not fall behind or have the incorrect equipment/resources for the following day. Some subjects, such as Art, Drama or Music, may prefer to set work fortnightly, or using longer-term projects.

Homework may take various forms (anything from completing a worksheet to researching for a project and so on) according to the demands of particular subjects. At some points in the year, homework may include exam revision. Apart from formal homework, however, it is important that students learn to review and digest the work they have done in school.

We also encourage students to read widely and to develop interests and hobbies, which support their studies. We would appreciate your co-operation in taking an interest in the work that is done at home and its presentation. Should you have any worries about homework, please contact the Head of Year.

MEALS AND LUNCHTIME ARRANGEMENTS

As laid down in the School rules, students are not allowed to leave school during the school day without special permission from the Head of Year. Such permission is granted only in exceptional circumstances and must be requested by a letter from the parents on each occasion. This letter should be signed and dated in addition to explaining why the request has been made.

This means at lunchtime students will either take a school lunch or bring a packed lunch.

School lunches are provided in a cashless dining room and snack bar and the cost will depend upon the choice of dishes. Those who bring a packed lunch will normally eat these only in the dining room or in the designated picnic areas. See the next section for details about the Dining Room.

DISS HIGH DINING ROOM

A cheerful welcome awaits all students in the school dining room. We serve food at morning and lunch breaks. All dietary requirements can be catered for; please telephone to discuss these.

MORNING BREAK

We offer a choice of two hot snack options along with a selection of Rolls, Sandwiches, Muffins and Cookies together with a range of hot and cold drinks.

LUNCHTIME

We offer a variety of options for lunch based on a three-week rotational menu. A set two-course meal for £2.65 is nutritionally balanced and meets all government guidelines.

Hot options are also available including Pasta dishes, Pies, 'Grab & Go' Snacks and Jacket Potatoes. Rolls, Sandwiches, Cakes and Tray Bakes are also available. A full range of drinks is on sale.

There is an outside kiosk serving take away meals, which are made up from a selection of the items listed above. Cold drinks can also be bought here.

All food is prepared in our 'on site' kitchen to a high standard, using fresh quality ingredients, by our dedicated team.

If you would like to discuss anything about our catering service please contact our Cook Manager, Anusha Ahmed, on 01379 644213.

CASHLESS CATERING

We operate a cashless system using Iris ParentMail. Please see the later section "Online Payment System", page 39.



EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

In addition to the usual school games teams, there is a wide range of clubs offering activities at lunchtime and after school. More details of the clubs on offer next year will be given out from September. In recent years, these have included:

Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme (from Year 9)

KS3 Craft Club

The main Library is open to all students at lunchtimes

Music clubs

Puzzle club

Chess club

The Allotment club

LGBTQ+ Club

School Council

Sports clubs:

Athletics

Football

Basketball

Volleyball

Netball

Tennis

Table Tennis

Gymnastic

Rounders

Hockey

Cricket

Badminton

Rugby

Circuit Training

Girls' Football

Girls' Cricket

Selection of board games in tutor rooms

SCHOOL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

To support the School Discipline Policy, students need to be self-disciplined and respect other members of the community as well as the school environment.

All members of the School are expected to abide by the rules and guidelines set out below. It would be helpful if parents read this section with their child.

Further details on the School Behaviour Policy can be found on the school website (<https://www.disshigh.norfolk.sch.uk/>).

GENERAL RULES

1. Fire alarms and fire extinguishers must only be used in the case of an appropriate emergency.
2. Laboratories, gymnasias and technology rooms cannot be used unless a member of staff supervises students.
3. In other rooms, equipment belonging to the School or members of staff should not be touched or tampered with.
4. Personal possessions should be clearly marked with the student's name.
5. Students are reminded that the following are not allowed in school:

- ❖ Chewing gum
- ❖ Make up
- ❖ Sprays of any kind
- ❖ Valuable objects including:
 - ❖ Personal music players, speakers and mobile phones
 - ❖ Jewellery (only one small gold or silver stud per ear is permitted)
 - ❖ Large amounts of money

Students who are found with the following in school may face exclusion:

- ❖ Laser pens
- ❖ Weapons (knives, guns etc.)
- ❖ Drugs, alcohol, vapes or cigarettes

BEHAVIOUR INSIDE THE BUILDING

- ❖ Students opening doors should hold them open for persons following.
- ❖ All students must walk on the left in the corridor and should not carry bags on their shoulders.
- ❖ Students should not walk in large groups, which block the corridors and should either stay in form rooms (if instructed to) or go outside at breaks and lunchtimes.
- ❖ Students must not shout inside the School buildings.
- ❖ Public displays of excessive physical affection are inappropriate anywhere in the School for all students, including the Sixth Form.
- ❖ Eating and drinking are not allowed in form rooms or corridors.

BEHAVIOUR IN THE SCHOOL GROUNDS

- ❖ All roads and car parks are out of bounds, except for access, and the playing of games should take place in the playground or on the field, when open.
- ❖ The Music Suite is out of bounds to students at breaks and lunchtimes unless they have been given explicit permission by the Music staff.
- ❖ Students playing football on the playground and field may only use the 'school approved' sized ball.
- ❖ Students must not go under the mobiles or climb on the roof or any part of the School premises.
- ❖ Any damage to school property must be reported and a charge may be made.
- ❖ In winter, throwing snowballs is strictly forbidden as this may lead to physical damage of students and school property.
- ❖ In summer, a designated area for recreation and picnicking can be used on the School field, but this privilege will be withdrawn if litter is left on the grass. Eating and drinking are forbidden in the games area of the field.

BEHAVIOUR IN LESSONS

Students must:

- ❖ Arrive at the lesson quietly and punctually.
- ❖ Always take the correct equipment to class.
- ❖ Never enter a Science laboratory or practical room without a teacher present.
- ❖ Enter rooms calmly.
- ❖ Go straight to a seat and prepare to work.
- ❖ Follow all rules set by the teacher.
- ❖ Listen.
- ❖ Put up a hand to ask a question or make a comment and wait patiently until invited to speak by the teacher.
- ❖ Not talk while the teacher or other students are speaking.
- ❖ Never shout.
- ❖ Concentrate; work to the best of their ability; not disturb others.
- ❖ Be polite and responsible at all times.
- ❖ Depart in a quiet and orderly way when the teacher dismisses them – not immediately the bell goes.
- ❖ Leave the classroom tidy.

REWARDS AND SANCTIONS

We believe that it is as important to have at least as many ways of recognising good behaviour, as punishing bad. We are able to monitor, encourage and praise students more consistently for their endeavours through our Go 4 Schools system. To this end, a detailed list of rewards (credits, certificates, letters home, celebration assemblies, etc.) and sanctions is made known to all students.

Alongside this, we run the “Positives Shop”, which is extremely popular with students. They can cash in their accrued positives for items from the Shop. This can anything from stationery to a queue jump pass for the canteen. New stock items can be requested through the school council.

After school, detentions are held every day from 3:10pm for either 30 mins or an hour depending on the sanction. Parents will be given written notice of the date and reason for the detention.

RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

All school staff members have a legal power to use reasonable force to prevent students committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others or damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline. Our guidance to staff clearly states that physical contact with students should be avoided unless absolutely necessary.

Reasonable force is defined as holding a student, physically interposing between students, leading a student by the arm, shepherding a student away by placing a hand in the centre of the back.

All incidents of this kind are recorded immediately and parents will be contacted.

Any concerns about a situation should be referred to the Headteacher.

MOBILE PHONES

We recognise that for safety reasons, students need to have access to their mobile phones on the journey to and from school. However, during the school day phones must be switched off and at the bottom of their bags. Any student seen using their phone during the school day will have their phone confiscated.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

We see the school uniform as an aid to generating a purposeful and disciplined spirit in the attitudes of students as well as a pride in the School. Parents who choose to send their children to Diss High School are deemed to support the School Uniform Policy.

The principal items of uniform are available from www.yourschoolwear.co.uk.

SCHOOL UNIFORM POLICY

The Governing Body has agreed the following.

- ❖ All students in Year 7 to 11 are required to wear School Uniform and to present themselves in a neat and tidy fashion at all times.
- ❖ No jewellery (apart from one stud per ear). Other forms of visible 'body piercing' are specifically forbidden.
- ❖ Style/colour of hair must not be taken to extremes.
- ❖ Leather and denim jackets are not regarded as appropriate outdoor wear, neither are casual shirts, training or hooded tops, or cardigans. Outdoor wear should be weatherproof. Garments carrying slogans or drawings, which the School deems offensive, are forbidden (e.g., racist or drugs related). Baseball caps may not be worn.

(Generally, outdoor garments should be of the kind that zip or button up the front and be free of very large slogans, brand names, decorations etc. Sober colours are preferred and lightweight training tops or other flimsy garments are really not suitable; the idea is to protect children from the cold and wet, not to allow them to wear the latest fashion garments around the buildings. We would appreciate the support of parents in this.)

- ❖ All extremes of fashion should be avoided and the School reserves the right to decide what constitutes a breach of School Uniform.
- ❖ Make-up: Years 7-11 - No Make Up Permitted.

SUMMARY OF SCHOOL UNIFORM

- ❖ Navy blue official school polo shirt.
- ❖ Navy blue official school V-necked sweater. The wearing of sweaters is compulsory after autumn half term holiday until Easter and optional thereafter (weather dependant).
- ❖ Plain black full-length trousers for boys and girls (which are purchased through Anglia Sports and School wear). No other style of trouser, such as very tight or very flared, are acceptable and neither are denim, cord or casual style trousers. Accessories such as buttons, studs and other decorative details on the trousers are unacceptable. Black tailored shorts can be worn in the Summer Term.
- ❖ Plain black or grey socks.
- ❖ Plain black leather shoes. Trainers with logos, backless or platform shoes, open sandals or shoes with heels exceeding 2 inches (5cm) are not permitted. Where injuries to feet prevent the wearing of normal school shoes, students are expected to wear the regulation plimsolls, which are loaned, by the school.

PLEASE ENSURE ALL ITEMS ARE LABELLED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION KIT

Compulsory for ALL students

- ❖ Diss High School unisex PE polo shirt* or Diss High School girls PE polo shirt*
- ❖ Trainers (non-marking soles) NOT plimsolls
- ❖ White ankle sport socks
- ❖ Plain navy shorts
- ❖ Diss High School sports socks*
- ❖ Hockey or football boots

Optional kit for all students

- ❖ Plain, navy tracksuit bottoms or leggings
- ❖ Mouth guards and shin pads are strongly recommended

Compulsory kit for BOYS

- ❖ Diss High School boys rugby shirt*

Compulsory kit for GIRLS

- ❖ Diss High School girls' sports top* (long-sleeved)

We recommend that students shower after physical activity, but this is not compulsory. Additionally, all students in appropriate weather may wear sun hats.

*This kit MUST be ordered from Anglia Sports & Schoolwear Ltd at www.yourschoolwear.co.uk.

ALL KIT MUST BE NAMED WITH INDELIBLE MARKING



PARENTS AND SCHOOL

HOW PARENTS CAN SUPPORT THE SCHOOL

A vital part of education is the support given by parents to their children and the School. We would ask parents to encourage regular attendance at school and support both the [Discipline Policy](#) and the Home/School Agreement, which is detailed in our admission form in Admissions+.

At home, you can support the School by:

- ❖ preparing your child for the school day, making sure they:
- ❖ arrive at school on time
- ❖ are properly equipped for work (books, pens, pencils, rulers, etc.)
- ❖ are wearing the correct school uniform

Helping your child with schoolwork by:

- ❖ providing a quiet place to work
- ❖ taking an interest in their work through listening and encouragement
- ❖ praising good work
- ❖ supporting the School homework arrangements (see page 17)

We look forward to working in partnership with you to create a positive environment, which will encourage students to develop their full potential.

PASTORAL CARE

Students in Years 7 to 11 are placed in Tutor groups in the care of Tutors. The Tutor Groups in each year make up a larger group under the direct care of a Head of Year. We have Senior Pastoral Leaders who oversee key areas of whole school pastoral care.

Heads of Year and their Tutor teams 'move up' through the School with the students; this ensures that every child is known well by the Pastoral Team and helps to foster a Year identity. If a problem arises in the School, you will be contacted and asked to come and discuss possible solutions. If you feel concerned about any aspect of school, you should contact the Head of Year, by letter, email or telephone during school hours.

We do hope that you will feel free to contact us and talk over problems at an early stage.

CONTACT/COMMUNICATIONS/GO4SCHOOLS

All other letters to the School should be addressed to the Headteacher, unless otherwise requested. Regular parents' bulletins are sent out, normally at the end of each half term.

Most parents who have access to the Internet have signed up for the email bulletins, which we send out on a wide variety of topics. Please contact Mr Graeme Duncan at GraemeDuncan@disshigh.co.uk if we do not have your email address.

At Diss High School, we use Go4Schools as our management information system. It helps us to track attainment, attendance, positive and negative behaviour events and also to set and monitor homework. All students and their parents will have access to it and there is an app available to download onto your smart phones.



4 SCHOOLS

Once your child has started with us you will receive an email explaining how to login for the first time. If you have any questions about Go4Schools, please contact Mr D Somers at duncansomers@disshigh.co.uk

REPORTS/PARENTS' EVENINGS

Reports are normally issued termly, at an appropriate point in the academic year. Where needed, special reports will be provided for transfer to a new school. If you have particular cause for concern about your child's academic progress, please contact the Head of Year who will arrange for an 'interim report' where appropriate.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

It would be foolish for any school to declare that it was entirely free of bullies. At Diss High School, we have a clear commitment to promoting an anti-bullying culture and dealing robustly with bullying when it occurs.

At Diss High School, we expect good behaviour from all our students and will not tolerate bullying of any kind. It is our aim to deal positively with both victims and bullies, so that we can create a safe and positive environment for learning. The School encourages a climate of openness where students can safely confide in members of staff and other students if they, or their friends, are being bullied.

Everyone has the right to a safe and secure school environment where they will be protected from bullies during the whole of the school day. No one person has the right to bully another. Bullying might take place before or after school, in lessons, during breaks and lunchtimes and on the school buses.

We consider the following types of behaviour to be bullying, all of which are unacceptable:

- | | | |
|-----------|---|---|
| Physical | - | Deliberately pushing, hitting or hurting another person. |
| Verbal | - | Saying or shouting unpleasant things to other people knowing that what you are doing will hurt them, including starting or spreading rumours. |
| Gestures | - | Making aggressive, rude or unpleasant gestures to other people knowing that what you are doing will hurt them. |
| Extortion | - | Forcing people to part with their belongings or making them hand over money. |
| Exclusion | - | Excluding people from group activities with the intention of hurting them or making them unhappy. |
| Cyber | - | Sending unpleasant messages by electronic means e.g. mobile phone or the internet. |

Instances of bullying are thoroughly investigated and dealt with in line with our Behaviour Policy. A range of sanctions can be applied depending on the severity of the incident(s). Please see our Behaviour Policy and also our Safeguarding Policy on the school website (<https://www.disshigh.norfolk.sch.uk/>) for further details on how we deal with bullying.

SAFEGUARDING AT DISS HIGH SCHOOL

A culture of safeguarding is embedded at Diss High School. We pride ourselves in knowing our pupils and the needs of both the individuals within our community and the needs of the wider community itself.

Due to our knowledge and experience of the challenges some of our pupils face we recognise that they could be at risk of:

- Failing to stay safe online – This is addressed by an online safety programme delivered through IT lessons, assemblies, on-line assemblies, form tutor interventions, posters, parent mail and the school website.
- Self-harm and mental health – These are addressed by having access to Head of Years, The DYL Scheme, pastoral support, referral for counselling, referral to the MHST, Personal Development lessons, assemblies, on-line assemblies, form tutor interventions, posters, parent mail and the school website.
- Child on child abuse - This is addressed by having access to Head of Years, The DYL Scheme, pastoral support, referral for counselling, Personal Development lessons, assemblies, on-line assemblies, form tutor interventions, posters, parent mail and the school website.
- Sexual Harassment and sexual violence – This is addressed by having a 'it can happen here attitude'. We make pupils aware through assemblies, on-line assemblies, and posters. We also act on all reported incidents helping both parties where necessary.

Diss High School also works closely with Children's Services, and the Local Authority and referrals can also be completed to them for support. Where pupils require additional support from for example, The Matthew Project, The Harbour Centre or CAMHS, a referral will be supported.

Community issues including county lines and the cost-of-living crisis have become an increasing issue over the last few years. We continue to work with outside agencies. We must acknowledge that it can and does happen and ensure we offer intervention at the earliest opportunity. Another issue within the community is domestic abuse within the family. We are part of the Operation Encompass scheme to ensure we are kept updated so we can support the family and the pupils at our school.

· In addition to the above, all pastoral staff and DSL's have an open-door policy to ensure all pupils have someone they can talk to. There is also a pupil report form on the pupil intranet page.

Our safeguarding team consists of:

- Lead DSL – Miss O'Neill (karenoneill@disshigh.co.uk)
- Deputy DSL's – Mr Stopps, Mr Lea and Mrs Cope.
- Safeguarding trained – Miss Pittman, Miss Johnson, Mr Somers, Mr Adamson, Mrs Somers, Mr Hurley and Mrs Hughes.



KEY STAFF 2024-25

NAME	ROLE
Mr S Stopps	Headteacher
Miss V Pittman	Deputy Headteacher
Mr B Adamson	Assistant Headteacher
Miss S Johnson	Assistant Headteacher
Mr B Lea	Assistant Headteacher
Mr D Somers	Assistant Headteacher
Ms S Hawkes	Business Manager
Miss K O'Neill	Senior Pastoral Leader / Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs E Somers	Senior Pastoral Leader / SENCO
Mr N Widdeson	Head of Year 7
Miss K Jarocki	Head of Year 8
Mrs B Barrett	Joint Head of Year 9
Mrs E Bensley	Joint Head of Year 9
Dr S Busby	Head of Year 10
Miss C Kelly	Head of Year 11
Mr J Hurley	Director of Sixth Form
Miss R Bradford	Deputy Director of Sixth Form
Miss E Hughes	Deputy Director of Sixth Form

Mrs R Adams	Senior Lead for Personal Development and Vocational Skills
Mrs M Bond	Deputy Head of English
Mr K Storey	Head of Mathematics
Mr J Dugdale	Deputy Head of Mathematics
Mrs T Deepu	Head of Physics
Mr S Russell	Head of Chemistry
Ms G Smith	Head of Biology
Mr J Kemp	Head of Physical Education
Mrs V Nolan	Head of Geography
Mr M McPhail	Head of History
Mrs C Miles	Head of Languages
Mr J Outred	Head of Media Studies / EAL Co-ordinator
Miss A Bishop	Head of Drama
Mrs R Collier	Head of Music
Ms L Vernon	PA to the Headteacher
Mrs P Turrell	Attendance Officer
Mr G Cormack	Finance Manager
Mrs J Teare	Receptionist
Ms C Lewis	Receptionist
Mrs R Thompson	Receptionist

DISS HIGH SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

Chair

Mr S Drake

Details of the Governing Body, and how to contact them can be found on the School website.

ENRICH LEARNING TRUST GOVERNING BODY

Chair

Mr Jeff Lansdell

Diss High School is part of the Enrich Learning Trust family of schools. Details of the multi-academy trust can be found on the website <https://www.enrich-learning.org/index.asp>. The trust has a governing body of trustees, and details can be found about the trustees on the same website



SCHOOL TERMS/HOLIDAY DATES FOR STUDENTS

The new school year begins for students on: Wednesday 4th September

SCHOOL YEAR 2024-25

Term Dates:

Autumn: 4th September 2024 to 20th December 2024

Half-term: 25th October – 1st November 2024

Spring: 7th January 2025 to 4th April 2025

Half-term: 17th – 21st February 2025

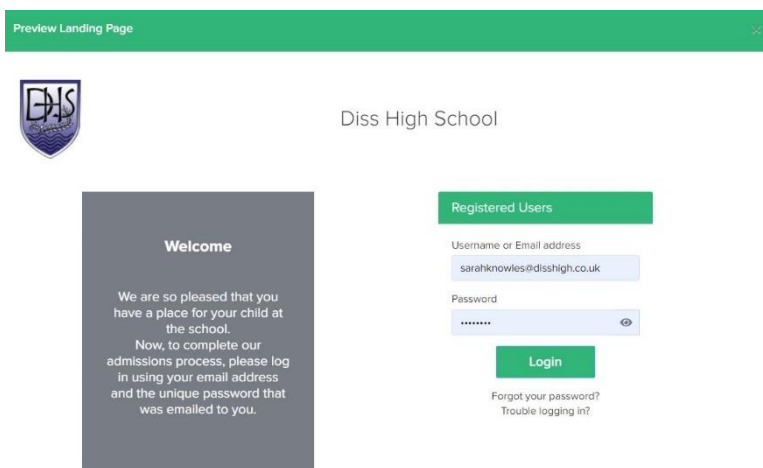
Summer: 23rd April 2025 to 22nd July 2025

Half-term: 26th – 30th May 2025

SCHOOL ADMISSION USING ADMISSIONS+

At Diss High School we use a website called Admissions+ to interact with parents/carers to process admissions. We have received some basic details from Norfolk County Council, which you submitted with your school application and we have created an account for you with those details for use on the Admissions+ website.

The Admissions+ website will guide you through the admission process, completing the School Admission Form, Home School Agreement and providing you with details of transition meetings and activities.



FREE SCHOOL MEALS & PUPIL PREMIUM

If you receive one of the benefits listed below, you should apply. This is because it can help raise extra funds for your child's school (called Pupil Premium). This Government funding can help with extra tuition, teaching and after school activities. You must receive one of the following benefits to get free school meals:

- ❖ Universal Credit
- ❖ Income Support
- ❖ Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- ❖ Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- ❖ Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- ❖ The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- ❖ Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for the four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- ❖ Child Tax Credit (with no Working Tax Credit)

To apply, please visit

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools/school-meals-and-milk> where you can apply online or download a PDF application.



ONLINE PAYMENT SYSTEM



At Diss High School, we operate an online payment system. Iris ParentMail is an online marketplace, which enables us to sell and collect payment for items such as school meals, trips, events, clubs, revision guides, lockers and other school activities, in a safe and secure way. The school does not accept cash or cheques and therefore all payments to the school need to be made via this method.

We hope that you will find paying this way much more convenient and from our perspective, it will save us time, as well as reduce the chances of money being lost or stolen

THE BENEFITS OF USING IRIS PARENTMAIL PAYMENTS

- ❖ the ability to make safe and secure online payments at any time of the day.
- ❖ the ability to make payments in person via PayPoint and Post Office counters.
- ❖ the ability to pay for school meals.
- ❖ the ability to identify when payments are due.
- ❖ the ability to view current balances and a payment history.

PARENT/CARERS HAVE THESE ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

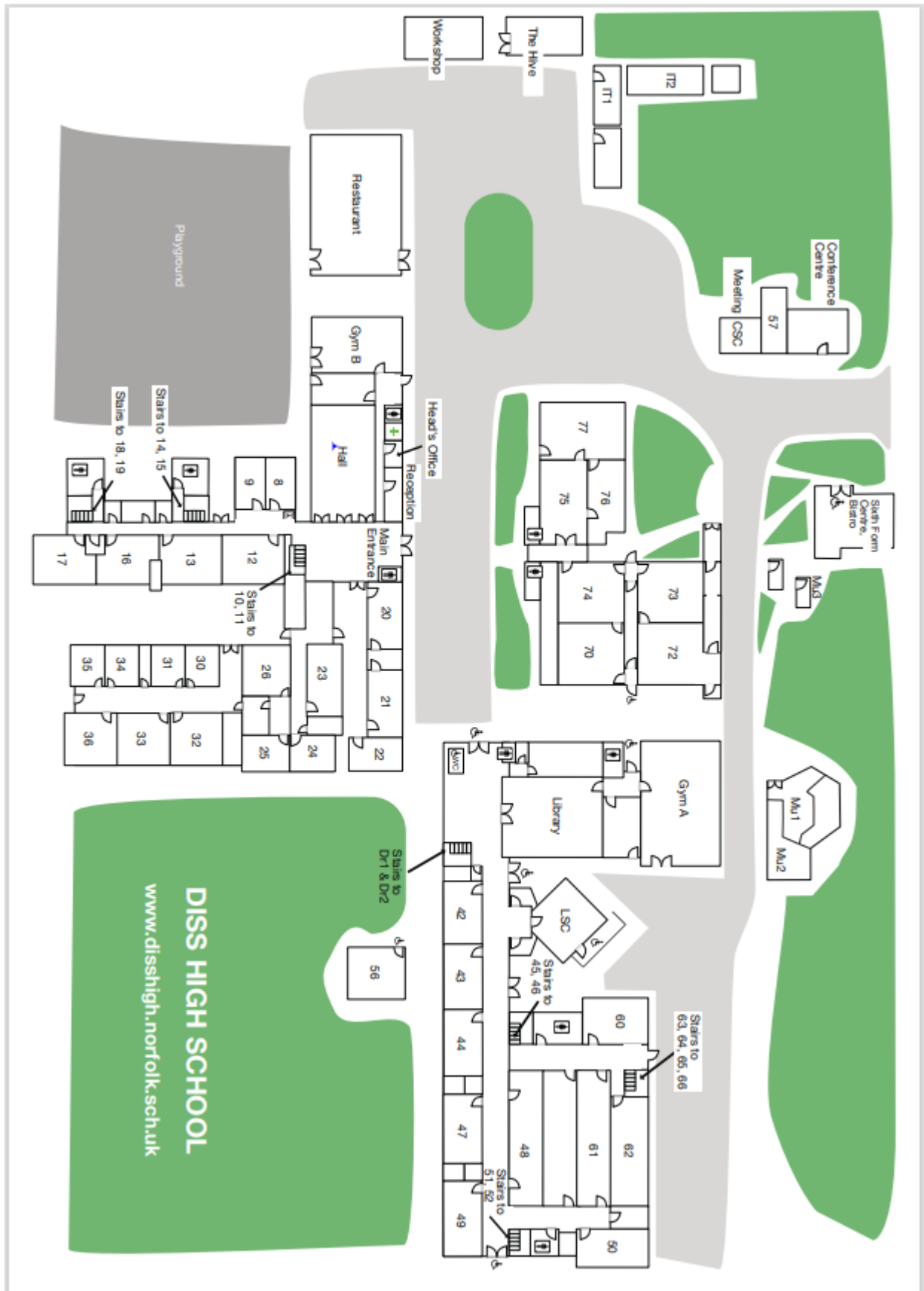
- ❖ the ability to pay for expensive items (e.g. school trips) in instalments, at the discretion of the school.
- ❖ the ability to maintain a single Iris Parentmail account that serves all of your children, even if they attend different schools (this is available only if all the schools use Iris Parentmail).
- ❖ the ability to review previous meal purchases.
- ❖ the ability to save card details to speed up the checkout process.

We use a card system for school meals; the card is linked to the student id number on our management information system and does not hold any personal information.

You can pay for school items with ParentMail on the free mobile ParentMail app (available for iOS and Android devices) or on the online portal, <https://pmx.parentmail.co.uk>.

ParentMail offers a variety of payment options including credit, debit cards and PayPoint (barcodes). Depending on your payment method, all payments processed through ParentMail will display on your statement as either 'Diss High School' or 'Iris Pay'.

An email giving further information and your individual registration details will be provided to you at the beginning of September. The ParentMail website is available to access at <https://www.iris.co.uk>





Walcot Road
Diss
Norfolk
IP22 4DH

Email: office@disshigh.norfolk.sch.uk
Telephone: 01379 642424