



## HOME/SCHOOL AGREEMENT

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page Number</b>
1. Signing the Home/School Agreement	2
2. School Culture and Ethos	2
3. Academic Standards	3
4. Homework	3
5. Developing a Positive Culture	4
6. School Rules	5
7. Use of Drugs Testing Swabs in School	7
8. E-mail and Internet Good Use Practice: Rules for ICT Users – Students	8
9. Mobile Phone Policy	8
10. Images of Students	9
11. Uniform	9
12. Attendance	13
13. Parental Responsibility	13
14. Policy for Supporting Students with Medical Conditions in School	15
15. Free School Meals	16
16. Biddulph High School HUB	16
17. Compliments, Comments and Concerns	17
18. ParentPay	18
19. Biometric Cashless Catering System	19

## 1. SIGNING THE HOME/SCHOOL AGREEMENT

*We realise that this is quite a lengthy document but it contains important information for you and your child. Please take the time to read it thoroughly and discuss it with your son/daughter. Sign and return the agreement if you feel that you can subscribe to what is written here. If not, please contact us to discuss your reservations with the Headteacher or Mrs Carroll Wright, Assistant Headteacher.*

Our Home School Agreement was compiled following lengthy consultation with parents, trustees, staff and students and as a result we hope that what we have reflects the partnership approach to which we are all committed.

We trust that you and your son/daughter will be in a position to sign the agreement and return it to school, where it will be placed on file. A copy of the agreement will also be in the student planner for reference purposes.

### CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Parents can feel confident that careful procedures are in place to ensure that all staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children. Staff hope that parents and children will feel free to talk about any concerns or worries which may affect educational progress and that they will see the School as a safe place. Children will be taken seriously if they seek help from a member of staff. Parents will normally be consulted and their consent obtained before any referral is made to any outside agency under local 'children in need' procedures. However, staff cannot guarantee to consult parents first, or to keep children's concerns confidential, if a referral must be made to the appropriate agencies in order to safeguard the child's welfare.

We also need your ongoing co-operation to ensure student safety:

- Parking on site and outside the school is extremely limited. To ensure student safety, to maintain access for emergency vehicles and to minimise any disruption to local residents, it is important to keep Conway Road and the entrance to the school clear at all times.
- In the interests of safety, we ask that you drop off or collect students on Conway Road and **do not drive onto the site.**
- We should also like to remind you that the yellow zig-zag lines are there to give drivers a clear view of the school exit in order to see any students who may be crossing the road, and that it is a traffic offence to stop on the zig-zag lines.
- The Safeguarding Policy is available at:  
<http://biddulph.staffs.sch.uk/file-pages/online-safety/>

## 2. SCHOOL CULTURE AND ETHOS

Biddulph High School is a 13-18 comprehensive School. We pride ourselves on being a family-type community, where staff and students know each other well and work together in a positive learning environment. We provide the opportunity for all students to realise their personal potential and help them to achieve an awareness of their role in the community.

We trust that parents who choose this school for their child endorse our standards, support us fully in the work we are doing and are willing to enter into a genuine partnership to ensure the best secondary educational experience for their child.

Biddulph High School sets high standards in all areas:

- students are expected to behave in a polite and responsible way, with courtesy and respect;
- we offer a range of extra-curricular activities and experiences, which we value highly as part of the educational process, and as being important in themselves;
- we work hard to maintain a happy and positive atmosphere in school, welcoming parents' involvement and working in partnership to develop self-confidence and self-esteem for all students.

In order to maintain these standards, we have in place a variety of systems, both to support students and to regulate their behaviour. These systems, for which we seek the full support of parents and students, are in place in a number of key areas of school life:

- homework;
- student planners;
- developing a positive culture;
- behaviour and discipline;
- uniform;
- attendance.

### **3. ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

We are determined to retain our high academic standards. This is not our only aim, but it is an important one and one which requires a great deal of time and commitment by staff, students and parents. We all have our part to play and to some extent are all accountable for failures and successes.

Learning requires a calm and disciplined atmosphere in which to work. We have put in place codes of conduct and rules to ensure that this is possible. These are described more fully below.

### **4. HOMEWORK**

Homework is an important tool for learning and parents play a vital role in this area.

Young people need a suitable place in which to do their homework, they need to spend sufficient time on each task (and not too long – as sometimes happens) but above all they need the interest and involvement of parents. Just talking to your child about what he/she has been asked to do, and showing an interest can be a real boost to the young person and help him/her to take more pride in their work.

A homework club operates in school, with a member of staff available to help students. A weekly bulletin is provided to all year groups promoting all extra-curricular support before school, lunchtimes and after school.

If in the teacher's professional judgement, homework is occasionally not suitable, 'no homework set' will be written in the planner. Homework will be set where it is appropriate to the scheme of work and will further the student's learning. We undertake, therefore, to set homework regularly and suitably, using a variety of different tasks which may include written work, reading, drawing/painting, research, watching a television programme, conducting an interview etc.

Do not automatically believe your child if he/she says there has been no homework set or if he/she has none written down in the planner! If you have concerns, a quick telephone call leaving a message for the Head of Year will soon provide accurate information.

**School responsibility:** to set homework tasks regularly as part of a positive learning programme, to mark homework promptly and give feedback, either in writing or verbally.

**Student responsibility:** to complete homework on time, thoroughly and to the best of your ability.

**Parent responsibility:** to ensure that your child has a suitable place to work at home, to take an interest in homework tasks and work generally and to support the school systems for ensuring that homework is completed.

## STUDENT PLANNERS

Every student is issued with a planner at the start of the year. This contains important information, e.g. dates, daily spaces for recording homework tasks with completion deadlines and spaces for parent/ teacher communication. The planners have been met with almost universal support from students themselves and most are using them very effectively indeed. All students are expected to carry the planner with them at all times in school and may be disciplined for not using it. We evaluate these each year and involve students in discussions on how to improve their format. Any student who loses his/her planner will be expected to buy a replacement. Planners should not be defaced in any way.

**School responsibility:** to provide each child with a student planner at the start of each year, to remind students to use their planner effectively, to make use of the planner as a method of communication with parents and to require form tutors to check each child's planner at regular intervals to encourage good practice.

**Student responsibility:** to carry your planner with you to all lessons, to write down all homework tasks and other information clearly, to get your parents to check and sign your planner weekly.

**Parent responsibility:** to discuss use of the planner with your child, to check his/her planner weekly at least, to sign the planner weekly and to use the planner as one method of communication with teaching staff.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR

I would request that you refer to the calendar on a regular basis as it will provide information on the many aspects of School life for the coming year. **Please note that some GCSE examinations take place in Year 9 so please be aware of the dates.** You will find a copy of the calendar and other school publications on our website: [www.biddulphhigh.co.uk](http://www.biddulphhigh.co.uk). However, if you prefer a printed version please contact reception and we will be happy to provide this.

## MY CHILD AT SCHOOL

This is a useful online tool to which all parents with Parental Responsibility will have access to. There is also an App which you can download from your App store.

It is full of information on a student's learning journey including attendance, grade and reports. It also gives parents the opportunity to update records and share information with the school.

## 5. DEVELOPING A POSITIVE CULTURE

### MERIT POINTS

Collect merits by taking part in House events such as football, netball and swimming, helping at Open and Parents' Evenings, achieving outstanding attendance, representing your year group at School/Sport/Year Council, effort and attainment in lessons.

## **YEAR AND SPORT COUNCILS/SCHOOL COUNCIL**

We have Student Councils made up of representatives from each year group, which meet regularly to make suggestions to improve student experience/facilities and are also used as a sounding board by the school management for any initiatives, policies etc. on which student opinion would be helpful.

## **PREFECTS**

The School could not run effectively without the excellent support of our prefects. The duties they carry out are often difficult and it is a tribute to the quality of our students generally that selection remains an honour. Unfailingly they do their duties cheerfully and efficiently, setting an example of maturity and service to younger students.

**School responsibility:** *to review all support systems regularly to ensure a positive learning atmosphere and a culture, which assists self-esteem.*

**Student responsibility:** *to use, support and (where possible) to take part in those systems which encourage a positive self-confidence and ethos.*

**Parent responsibility:** *to encourage your child to participate in our systems of support, encouragement and celebration as an aid to success and self-esteem.*

## **BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE**

We have a full policy on [Behaviour and Discipline](#), [Bullying](#), and e-Safety, which are available online or from the school office.

## **6. SCHOOL RULES**

Any community needs to have rules in order to remain effective and peaceful.

In order to establish a framework for acceptable behaviour and positive attitudes we have drawn up a list of rules. These were drawn up after discussion involving staff and students and the reasons for them are explained to students.

It is our job to help students to learn appropriate behaviour by making our standards very plain, by treating students with courtesy and respect, investigating incidents fairly and thoroughly and by imposing punishments for misbehaviour.

### **GENERAL SCHOOL RULES**

- no offensive weapons allowed in school;
- no cigarettes, e cigarettes, alcohol, other drugs, aerosols or solvent based products allowed;
- no smoking on school premises, this includes the grounds. Smokers and anyone with them will be disciplined. E-Cigarettes are not allowed in school under any circumstances – see smoking and vaping policy.
- drinks and food should only be consumed in the dining areas or designated zones;
- no chewing gum in school;
- remove outdoor coat or hooded jumper/jacket when entering building and keep it in your bag or locker;
- full School uniform must be worn at all times around school;
- no sweat shirts or cardigans to be worn;
- mobile phones and other digital devices should not be turned on or used on the school premises (as we do not feel that mobile phones are necessary in school we accept no responsibility for any loss/theft of them);

- trainers worn at lunchtime must be removed and proper shoes worn before returning into school – trainers must be worn only when playing sport;
- students must not go to lockers or water coolers between lessons unless given permission to do so by a member of staff;
- students must not use the main entrance doors into the foyer;
- students should move around the corridors sensibly, quietly – using the one-way system;
- the main car park and the outside area by the Science rooms are out of bounds to students. Students should not be in the corridors by the English, Mathematics and Science rooms at break and lunchtime;
- no dropping of litter around the school, including around the main entrance in Conway Road and social areas.
- students are not allowed to bring mopeds or motorbikes of any description to school.

In addition to these rules are others which regulate pre-school, break time and lunchtime arrangements.

Students who break these rules can expect to be reprimanded and sometimes disciplined. We have a range of sanctions which we use to establish our Code of Conduct. These involve such things as lunchtime/after school detention, SLG detentions and temporary exclusion from school for serious misbehaviour. There is a flexible learning room to support students and also an exclusion room for internal exclusions.

Temporary exclusion from school is our most serious sanction (apart from permanent exclusion), and this will be recorded not only in the student's own file but a record with details is also required by the Local Authority.

We also practice a 'report' system; whereby a student may be monitored daily through written comments from each class teacher. This is checked and signed daily by both the parent and the form tutor. Being on report can be instigated by a student's misbehaviour, but is also sometimes used as a positive encouragement to a child who may have set his/her own personal targets for improvement and wishes to produce evidence for this. It is not necessarily a punishment.

**We rely on parents to support us in our efforts to maintain high standards of behaviour.** Where serious offences occur, a very thorough investigation of circumstances is carried out and written statements taken from those involved and any witnesses. Minor misbehaviour is usually dealt with immediately. Should parents have any concern about a sanction their child has been given they are welcome to seek further clarification from the Head of Year involved who will be able to give them more information. However, we do expect support from parents and their trust that we are carrying out our job professionally.

## **DETENTION**

From September 1998 the law concerning after-school detentions was changed. Schools now have the legal right to insist on detentions, providing written notice is provided to parents. The School always provides written information about the date, time and cause for any detention and asks parents to sign to confirm the arrangements.

It is important for parents to realise that it is their responsibility to ensure safe transport or collection for their child and to accept that there would have been no need for a detention had the child behaved appropriately in the first place. We hope that we will never feel the need to impose an after-school detention without parental consent, but we reserve the right to do so.

**School responsibility:** *to ensure that all students are aware of the standards expected of them, to monitor behaviour and to impose sanctions where misbehaviour occurs.*

**Student responsibility:** *to make sure that you fully understand the school rules and codes of behaviour, to do your best to obey these rules, to accept punishments for misbehaviour without argument and to seek to do better in the future.*

**Parent responsibility:** *to support the school in ensuring high standards of behaviour from your child, by accepting the need for clear rules and appropriate punishments.*

## **7. USE OF DRUGS TESTING SWABS IN SCHOOLS**

The Secondary Schools in the Staffordshire Moorlands area have a long tradition of working in partnership with each other and with external agencies to ensure the safety of the many thousands of students in our schools. A key partner in these discussions is the Staffordshire Police Authority.

The abuse of drugs is a major concern for parents across the whole country. Although most young people do not take drugs, we have a responsibility to deal appropriately with the issues related to the minority who might do so.

Unfortunately, no community these days is devoid of drug activity. Therefore, it would be quite wrong for those of us in charge of schools not to do all within our powers to ensure a safe educational environment for all our students.

For this reason, Headteachers in the North Staffordshire Area will work in close partnership with Divisional Police Officers to tackle this difficult issue. Staffordshire Police Authority has trialled drugs testing equipment successfully where they swab a person's hand or other surfaces (e.g. bag or tables) and obtain a reading which shows whether that person has been in contact with a range of illegal substances or drugs in recent days. This is a non-intrusive process.

The Headteachers of Staffordshire Moorlands Secondary Schools have accepted the offer from the police to use such equipment in our schools in order to continue to work together to deter the small number of people who might potentially become involved with drugs from doing so. This will help preserve the safe learning environment of our schools. Police Officers may visit schools across the Moorlands to explain the use of such equipment in assemblies or lessons or they may, on occasions, visit during the school day to carry out tests.

### **The dates of these visits will not be announced in advance.**

The Police will screen the students and if this process indicates that any individual might have been in contact with drugs, then the Police will exercise their legal powers to conduct a search. In the unfortunate event of drugs being found, they will be dealt with by the Police in the appropriate way. Any student found in possession of drugs would be in breach of the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy and subject to penalties imposed by the School.

If a positive indication is made but no illegal substances are found, you will, of course, be informed. We should mention that all searches will be logged and recorded in line with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984.

Should you have any questions in relation to this matter please contact Mrs E Moss on telephone number 01782 523977.

The Staffordshire Moorlands Secondary Schools in this partnership comprise of:

- Biddulph High School
- Blythe Bridge High School
- Cheadle High School
- Endon High School
- Leek Specialist Technology High School
- Moorside High School
- Painsley Catholic College
- Westwood High School

## 8. E-MAIL AND INTERNET USE GOOD PRACTICE: RULES FOR ICT USERS – STUDENTS

The school computer system provides Internet access to students for learning. All students and parents must sign an “Acceptable User Agreement” (AUP).

- School computer and Internet use must be appropriate to your education.
- Access must only be made via your personal area and password, which must not be given to any other person.
- You must not attempt to bypass the school ICT filtering system.
- Copyright and intellectual property rights must be respected.
- You must respect the work of others which might be stored in common areas on the system. Also you should always try and store your files and data in your own secure area or on removable media. Files and data stored in common areas of the system must be transferred at the earliest opportunity to the user’s own area. Such files will be regularly removed from the system.
- You are responsible for any e-mail that is sent and for contacts made. E-mail should be written carefully and politely. As messages may be forwarded on, e-mail is regarded as public property. Anonymous messages and chain letters must not be sent.
- You should report any unpleasant material or messages received. The report will be confidential and will help protect others.
- The use of public chat rooms is not allowed.
- The school ICT systems may not be used for private business purposes.
- Irresponsible or improper use may result in the loss of Internet access.

The school may exercise its right by electronic means to monitor the use of the school’s computer systems, including the monitoring of web-sites, the interception of E-mail and the deletion of inappropriate materials in circumstances where it believes unauthorised use of the school’s computer system is or may be taking place, or the system is or may be being used for criminal purposes or for storing text or imagery which is unauthorised or unlawful. Monitoring is managed via software called Impero which the school has a data sharing agreement with. Monitoring for safeguarding purposes can be done at any time without consent.

## 9. MOBILE PHONE POLICY

We discourage students from bringing mobile phones into school as it is considered that the principal aim for students when in school is to focus on educational achievement. Mobile phones can be a distraction when text messages and/or calls are received in school.

### **The School cannot be held responsible for theft or abuse of mobile phones.**

Our experience is that students generally do not have great regard for the security of their own property and such phones might prove an attractive target. If, despite this, mobile phones are still brought into school they should be switched off during school hours. It is absolutely unacceptable for any lesson or other school activity to be disturbed by a student’s phone ringing, bleeping or vibrating.

Furthermore, mobile phones should not be used by students in social areas at break or lunchtime and this includes using them to access music. Mobile phones are not to be used as a calculator or stop watch. If they are brought into school, they need to be switched off and not referred to at any point during the day.

In the interest of both staff and students, trustees expressly forbid the use of any devices used to photograph or record, either covertly or otherwise, on the school premises or its organised activities.

In order to discharge its duties to both students and staff the trustees will take extremely seriously and take appropriate measures, against any student who posts recorded footage or photographs of students or staff in the school environment on social networking websites such as 'YouTube', 'Facebook' and 'Twitter'. Any such use will result in the phone being confiscated, held in the school office and usually returned at 3.45 pm. Parents may be contacted and the implications of further misuses of the phone explained. If there is a repeat of an incident parents or a responsible adult will be expected to come to school to collect and sign for the phone.

Confiscated phones will be handed to the school office where they will be labelled. The phone will be returned at 3.45 pm by the school staff. Students will be asked to sign for their phone. If a mobile phone is confiscated more than once, reception will retain it and request that only parents/guardians can collect the phone from reception.

Where incidents of bullying occur through the use of a mobile phone, these will be dealt with in accordance with the bullying policy.

It is a rule of the examination boards that mobile phones must not be in the examination room/venue under any circumstances. We insist on this rule in our internal examinations in order that students are used to our expectations.

The trustees do not accept the claim that a mobile phone is needed to contact students in an emergency during school hours. Emergency contact is always possible via the main school office either in person or using the school telephone number. The established procedures should be used.

We trust that the above clarifies the position and that you will support the School.

The Academy reserves the right to monitor and view data on a students' mobile phone when a safeguarding issue occurs.

## **10. IMAGES OF STUDENTS**

Images of students and/ or staff will only be taken, and displayed according to parental consent in line with General Data Protection Regulations (May 2018).

## **11. UNIFORM**

We have a school uniform policy which is publicised regularly both to students and to parents and which we expect students and parents to support. Our policy is designed to reflect the need for a standard of dress which is smart and reflects a clear identity for Biddulph High School.

The reasons for having this policy are:

- school uniform is an effective way of preventing the differentiation between and discrimination against children from advantaged or disadvantaged backgrounds;
- uniform helps to build up a feeling of community, of belonging to a particular group to whom one owes allegiance and for which one has responsibility. It identifies a student as belonging to Biddulph High School, and as such he/she can bring praise on the whole school, or disgrace, depending on behaviour;
- school uniform helps young people to accept that there are appropriate standards of appearance for certain circumstances. We want our young people to look smart as an outward indication of a positive attitude generally;
- school uniform helps students to leave outside influences behind, focus on school work and concentrate on learning.

We expect parents to ensure that our uniform code is followed.

**School responsibility:** to ensure that all students are aware of the school uniform requirements and to implement these by the monitoring of student appearance and follow-up of infringements.

**Student responsibility:** to make sure that your appearance is in line with school rules regarding the wearing of uniform and the guidelines on hair, jewellery and make-up.

**Parent responsibility:** To ensure that your child leaves for school each day correctly dressed, without extremes of hairstyle or colour. No wearing of jewellery beyond that stated in the school policy. No excessive make-up.

Uniform is available from two suppliers, Clive Marks and Smart Uniform.

#### **HAIR**

We will not accept extreme hairstyles which tend to be in fashion as trends change. It is difficult to be prescriptive about this but it is worth noting that the following styles have never been acceptable:

1. Tram lines or patterns in the hair. An all over grade 1 haircut, including any hairstyle that has a grade 1 cut shaved into it
2. Coloured streaks or shadings such as pinks, greens, purples, blues etc.
3. Bleach used to create an obvious pattern in the hair, such as bleach used to streak down the centre of the hair, which contrasts with the rest of the hair colour.
4. Decorative inserts, such as feathers or braids etc.

#### **PIERCINGS**

**No** facial piercings of any sort (eyebrow, lip, chin, tongue etc.).

#### **JEWELLERY**

A reminder that for reasons of health and safety the only jewellery allowed to be worn in school is a watch and one pair of stud earrings (one in each lobe).

#### **NAILS**

Clear and pale pink nail varnish only may be worn in school. Acrylic nails or tips are not allowed and students will be asked to remove these immediately.

### **SCHOOL UNIFORM**

***Please ensure that all school uniform and PE kit is marked with the owner's name***

Blue blazer (**approved school style**)

Plain white shirt

School tie

Charcoal trousers (plain not denim and of agreed style)

Plain Charcoal skirt (should be around knee length and of agreed style)

Navy v-neck fine knit jumper

Black or white socks

Black shoes (**No training shoes, sports boots, high heels or open toes or coloured stripes**)

**PE KIT****Compulsory**

Navy polo-shirt  
 Navy shorts  
 Navy socks  
 Navy fleece  
 Navy tracksuit bottoms  
 Training shoes  
 Gum shield (Boys)

**Recommended**

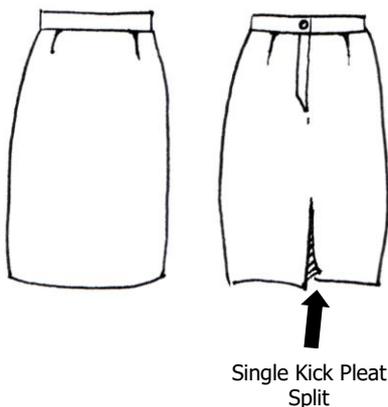
Football boots  
 Shin pads for competitive football  
 BHS School Leggings

***Football Boots are not allowed on the Astro-Turf***

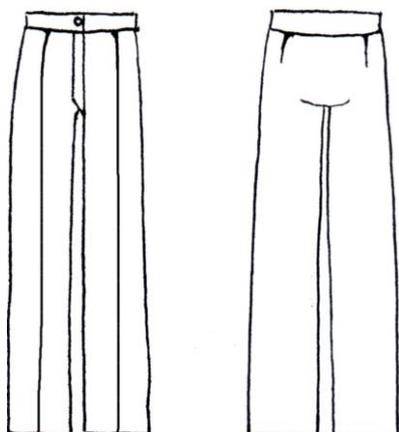
**PE Kit is available from Clive Mark Schoolwear and Smart Uniform. \*Initials can be added to the fleece at an extra cost.**

**FOOTWEAR**

All shoes (boys and girls) need to be plain black. It is worth noting for girls, shoes need to be substantial – ballet style shoes and shoes with thin soles are not appropriate. For boys, training style shoes or boots with coloured stripes on them are not appropriate.

**SKIRTS AND TROUSERS**

- The school skirt should not have any side or back splits.
- A single kick pleat, approximately 15cm (6 inches) is allowed at the back or a straight tailored skirt to the knee with no split.
- The skirt should have a waistband and the skirt should sit on the waist; it should not be shorter than approximately 2½cm (1 inch) above the knee.
- It should not fit tightly – if the skirt is too tight, it is too small!
- It should be charcoal grey.



- The trouser should have a waistband, no belt; it should be full length and charcoal grey.
- The waistband of the trouser should sit on the waist and not on the hips; the line of the trouser should be parallel; flared trousers or tight trousers are not appropriate.
- If the trousers are tight on the thighs, they are too small!
- The front of the trousers has a clear crease.
- The hem of all trousers should be at least 6cm (2½ inches) from the floor.
- The school trouser must have a crisp front crease down the legs.

- If you do not purchase the trousers from the recognised supplier you must ensure that the trouser meets all of the mentioned criteria.

As students get older, they invariably try to add their own 'style' to their uniforms and it can be, at times, difficult to keep variations of uniform in check – particularly as fashion trends change. It is for this reason that we have tried to be as clear as possible with our guidelines. We enforce our uniform guidelines firmly but fairly. We would like to thank you for your continued support of our policy and the standards that we aim to maintain.

It is worth noting that if you buy a skirt, a pair of trousers or a pair of shoes and you are concerned as to its suitability, we are more than willing to check it for you in school. All your daughter needs to do is bring it in, with the tags still attached and we will look at it for you.

## **JUMPERS**

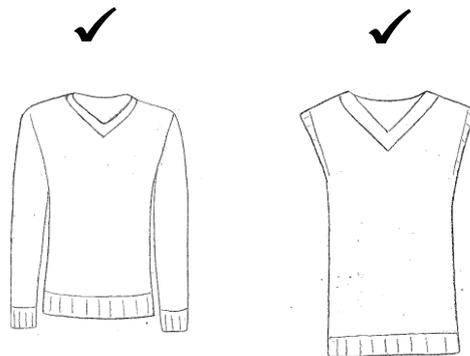
Between the Autumn Half-Term and Easter break students will be able to wear a jumper in addition to their blazer. Styles and colours are detailed below.

**Jumpers are not an alternative to the blazer - a blazer must be worn at all times.**

If a student becomes too warm with both the blazer and jumper, the jumper is the item that needs to be removed.

### **Years 9, 10 and 11**

Plain navy, long-sleeved jumper or tank top, fine knit with a v-neck. The hem should be just lower than the waistband of the skirt/trousers but not below the hem of the blazer.



### **Our School uniform stockists are:**

Clive Mark Schoolwear Limited  
25 High Street  
Town Centre  
Newcastle under Lyme  
ST5 1QZ  
Tel: 01782 621721

Smart Uniform  
1 Harvey House  
Hassell Street  
Newcastle under Lyme  
ST5 1AR  
Telephone: 01782 713650 or 07598 838 528

Please do not hesitate to contact Mrs E Moss if you require any further information.

## 12. ATTENDANCE

The School has an Attendance Policy, which can be read in full online under Policies or on request from the school office.

Should your child be absent for any reason the School is required to 'authorise' the absence. This means that we have to decide whether it amounts to an official, approved absence or a truancy. The fact that a parent may have written to explain the absence does not authorise it – only the School can do that and we must do so in line with Government regulations. Thus, absence for illness can be authorised, but not absence for going on a Christmas shopping trip, or other day trips or visits on a School day.

Unauthorised absences (i.e. truanancies) will go on a child's record and may be passed on to future employers, colleges etc. when references are requested. It is important that young people learn to attend regularly and punctually and we expect parents to support this.

**School responsibility:** *to encourage regular and punctual attendance, and to follow-up regular non-attendees by communication with parents. To explore reasons for non-attendance and to consider appropriate ways of alleviating the situation.*

**Student responsibility:** *to make sure that you come to school punctually and that you do not have unnecessary time off school.*

**Parent responsibility:** *to make sure that your child comes to school regularly and punctually, taking time off only for legitimate and necessary reasons. To liaise with the School (your child's Progress Tutor or Head of Year) as soon as any concerns become apparent regarding your child's attendance profile.*

## 13. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

This document may also be found at:

[www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/parents/InformationforParentsandCarers](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/parents/InformationforParentsandCarers)

### WHO IS A PARENT?

Although the answer may seem obvious, the term 'parent' in education law can include many people besides the natural parents; and the people who are parents can change more than once during a child's school life. The position is often affected by the provisions of the Children Act 1989. Anyone who has 'parental responsibility' under the Act counts as a parent.

This can lead to difficult situations. Some examples of the problems that can arise are given below. Here are some examples of people who do, or do not, count as parents.

Alice's parents are divorced and there is a court order for her to live with her mother. Her father is still a parent for the purpose of dealings with the School.

Irfan's parents are separated but not divorced. There is no court order relating to Irfan, but he lives with his grandparents. The grandparents count as parents and will, as the people who actually care for Irfan, receive the school reports and invitations to parents' meetings; but the natural parents also count as parents and will also receive reports and invitations, if they ask for them.

Christine lives with her mother, Daphne. Daphne has never been married but is living with Eric, who is not the father of Christine. Whether Eric counts as Christine's parent will depend on whether he can be said to have 'care' of her. Christine's actual father does not have 'parental responsibility'.

Freda's parents are divorced. There is a court order for her to live with her grandparents, but she now lives mainly with her mother. Unless and until that order is revoked, the grandparents count as parents in addition to Freda's father and mother.

Graham has been adopted under an adoption order. Only his adoptive parents count as parents; his natural parents do not.

### **INFORMATION ABOUT PARENTS**

The range of people who may count as parents make it important for schools to know the names and addresses of the people concerned. This is why, when you enrol your child at school, the Headteacher will ask for information about anyone (apart from yourself) who may count as a parent including those who live elsewhere.

In accordance with The Children's Act 1989, we also need the form regarding parental responsibility to be completed and returned to school.

The details you give us will help us to ensure that all those who are responsible for your child can be fully involved in their education. This is especially important if they do not live with their child.

I would request that if there are any changes in family circumstances in the future, especially if any Court Orders are made or anyone changes their address or telephone number that you notify us.

### **IF YOUR CHILD IS LIVING WITH YOU**

You should always supply the Headteacher with the necessary information about changes in the names and addresses of other people who may count as parents.

### **IF YOUR CHILD IS NOT LIVING WITH YOU**

- your child's school should help you keep in touch with your child if you have parental responsibility;
- however this will normally only be done if you make a request to the Headteacher;
- you do not normally have the right to visit your child at school during School hours.

### **SOME COMMON PROBLEMS**

Problems sometimes arise because the rights of the people who are, or count as, parents but do not have the present care of the child. Do try to resolve these problems by agreement. School Headteachers are seldom able to intervene on one side or the other.

### **RESTRICTIONS ON CONTACT**

One parent may sometimes wish to stop another from having access to the child, perhaps as the result of a sudden separation of the parents. The Headteacher cannot be expected to arbitrate on this issue. If the parents cannot agree, they must resolve the dispute through the courts.

### **RESTRICTIONS ON INFORMATION**

The parent with whom a child lives may wish to restrict another parent's access to information (e.g. copies of School reports). Generally this cannot be done. However, under the Children Act 1989 it is possible for a parent to apply for a court order ("a prohibited steps order") under which ordinary rights are restricted. For example, an order might prohibit a parent from receiving school reports or other information. The Headteacher would then be able to refuse requests for the reports or information.

### **CHANGES OF NAME**

If a child of divorced parents lives with his or her mother, the remarriage of the mother does not lead to a change in the child's surname. The surname can be changed only if the father agrees or if a court order or other legal authority is obtained. Unmarried mothers or other parents who are the **sole** person with parental responsibility can change a child's name without any other consent.

### **KEEPING THE SCHOOL IN THE PICTURE**

Families can change. Schools need to know about these changes so that student records can be kept up to date. Please always tell us if something happens.

For more information about how the Children Act 2004 may affect you and your child's education in Staffordshire contact the Education Welfare Service on 01782 297810.

### **GETTING FURTHER ADVICE**

If these issues raise problems for you, please feel free to discuss your concerns in confidence with your child's Headteacher.

If your family includes step-parents or an unmarried father who would like to know more about how to get parental responsibility, ask your local:

- Citizen's Advice Bureau;
- Law Centre/Solicitor;
- County or Magistrates Court.

If you have a Social Worker or Court Welfare Officer you can ask them to help you, especially if court proceedings are involved.

### **DATA COLLECTION SHEET**

In order to ensure that our records concerning your child are accurate we request that you check, complete and return the enclosed Data Collection Sheet. Please read our Privacy Notice carefully before completing the form.

In the interests of safety, unless you indicate otherwise, all students will remain on the school premises during lunchtime. Our school lunches are of a very high standard and I do recommend them to you. Alternatively, students may, of course, bring a packed lunch. There may be days when you would wish to change these arrangements. When this occurs, please write a short note naming the date(s) when you want this to happen.

## **14. POLICY FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS IN SCHOOL**

The County Council Education Service has published guidelines for schools regarding students and medicines. Biddulph High School has adopted its code of practice and procedures.

It is important that all students should be in school unless a doctor or consultant has advised you that your child is unfit and should remain at home. Should your child need medication you should endeavour to spread out the dosage that your child may require to fit in with the school day, i.e. before and after school. It is preferable that students do not have to take medicines during the school day. In the event of a dosage which must be taken during the day we will need you to contact us so that we can together organise how this may be safely achieved, and for you to complete the necessary authorisation. This is in accordance with the procedures and guidelines of the Education Service.

In the event of your child requiring over the counter analgesics (painkillers e.g. paracetamol), it is our policy that a student reports to Reception who will then contact you for permission. A record is kept of any painkillers issued. Any medication brought into School should be kept in the original container, complete with the original dispensing label.

The School has a medicines policy (Policy for Supporting Students with Medical Conditions in School) which can be available on request from the school Office.

## 15. FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Can your child get free school meals?

Do you know how to claim them?

**We can help you!**

**Read on for more details!**

Your son/daughter may be able to get free school meals. This does not mean that they have to claim them every day. It does not mean that they will be singled out in any way when they collect their free meal. It does not mean that they get less choice in what they are able to have for their dinner.

Making a claim is easy:

1. You need to be earning a total of less than £16,190.00. Anyone earning less than this amount is able to claim free school meals for their child or children. (N.B. You cannot claim if you are receiving Working Tax Credit).
2. You will need to complete the application form and send it off to the address at the top of the form. You will also need to send a copy of any benefits that you get with the form.
3. If you need any help with the form or need help in copying any benefit details, please contact the school.

**We feel that if you are eligible to claim the meals then you should take advantage of this. The School also benefits financially.**

If you think that your son/daughter may be eligible for free school meals please contact the school's reception who will be happy to issue and help you with the relevant form. Free school meals should not be thought of as a stigma – they help us as we receive additional funding proportionate to the number of students **eligible** for the meals, even if they do not take them.

## 16. Biddulph High School HUB

At present, there is the possibility for students to see the School Nurse on a drop in basis. Advice on a range of issues such as alcohol, drugs and contraception will be offered.

## 17. COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

**WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU IF YOU:**

- are happy with the service we provide and would like to complement our staff and our students;
- have any suggestions about how we can improve the quality of our provision;
- have a complaint or concern. All complaints will be taken seriously and given full and proper consideration.

### **EXPRESSING APPROVAL**

When things go well, it is very helpful if parents express their approval. Maintenance of high levels of staff commitment, morale and motivation are essential to the provision of the best education for your child. Positive feedback really helps.

To express your approval, you can write, telephone, e-mail or speak personally to the Head of Year or the Headteacher. Your words will be appreciated.

### **EXPRESSING CONCERNS**

We are committed to providing a high quality service for your child. Sometimes things may seem to go wrong which may lead you to express concerns.

Any concerns should be raised with the Head of Year or the Headteacher in the first instance. If the Headteacher considers it appropriate another member of staff may be asked to respond because they have a particular responsibility or are familiar with the circumstances that have caused you concern. We hope that this would be sufficient to resolve the difficulty.

### **MAKING A FORMAL COMPLAINT**

If it has not been possible to resolve a concern informally then you can ask to use the formal complaints procedure. Every school is required to have a policy for dealing with complaints.

#### **Step 1 – The Head of Year/Headteacher**

Having discussed your concerns with the Head of Year/Headteacher the matter will, hopefully, be resolved to the satisfaction of all concerned. If this has not proved possible then there is a procedure for accepting formal complaints. This will, in the first instance, be made to the Chair of Trustees either verbally or in writing. If necessary the School will provide you with a form you can choose to fill in for this purpose.

#### **Step 2 – The Board of Trustees**

The Chair of Trustees will ensure that your complaint is dealt with in accordance with the School's agreed policy. The Chair of Trustees may feel it appropriate for him/herself to investigate the complaint or decide to ask the Complaints Committee of the Board of Trustees to undertake a review. This should include you being given the opportunity to meet with the Chair of Trustees, or the committee, to present your complaint in person.

You will receive a written response from the Board of Trustees.

#### **Step 3 – The Secretary Of State**

If you think that the trustees have failed to consider your complaint properly and reasonably, you can raise the matter with the Secretary of State. However, it is important to understand that this is not a general right of appeal for any parent who disagrees with the trustees' decision. If the trustees have followed their published procedures and considered the complaint reasonably, neither the Headteacher nor the Secretary of State can reverse their decision.

In your letter please explain:

- what your complaint to the trustees was;
- what response they have made to it;
- why you think that the trustees have not followed a proper procedure in considering your complaint;

and/or

- why you think that their consideration of it was unreasonable.

The Secretary of State  
Department for Education and Skills  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London SW1P 3BT

NOTE: This does not apply where the complaint may lead to disciplinary proceedings against a teacher or child protection procedures. These matters have separate procedures.

## 19. PARENTPAY

In an attempt to remove all cash and cheques from school we have introduced an e-payment method to pay for school trips, school clothing and subject contributions etc. This can be done online using a very secure website called ParentPay or in cash at local stores where you see the PayPoint logo.

### **Already have a ParentPay account?**

If you already have a ParentPay account, either with our school or another ParentPay school, you can simply login to that account and add your other children via the **Add a child** tab on your home page.

### **New to ParentPay?**

When your child joins Biddulph High School you will be sent a letter with a unique activation username and password. You will have a secure online account, activated using the unique activation username and password; you will be prompted to change these and to keep them safe and secure as your username and password for future logins.

If you have two or more children at a ParentPay school, you only need to activate one account to create your 'main account' and then add your other children via the **Add a child tab** on your home page.

Please visit [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com) and activate your account via the **Account login** area on the home page of the site.

ParentPay holds an electronic record of your payments to view at a later date. Once you have activated your account you can make online payments straight away.

Those parents wishing to pay cash should contact the school office to request the option of paying via PayPoint.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school office if you need assistance. Your support in using ParentPay will help the school enormously, thank you.

## 20. BIOMETRIC CASHLESS SCHOOL MEAL SYSTEM

Biddulph High School's meal service operates with a cashless catering system which provides us with a faster, more efficient and ultimately better quality of service. This system incorporates the latest technology and eliminates the need for students to carry cash throughout the day.

The preferred method of payment is via ParentPay where a minimum of £5 can be paid into a student's account, and any money spent on food and drink will be deducted on a daily basis. Alternatively, if you wish to upload smaller amounts, there is an option for coin and note payments at the revaluation PayPoint near Reception.

As per current legislation we will be operating an 'Opt In' policy and therefore we require the consent of the person with parental responsibility in order that the biometric information of your child can be processed.

Please be assured that this information remains within the school and that the biometric information taken is an algorithm and not the actual finger print. If you choose not to have your child registered on the Biometric System a 4 digit PIN code will be allocated. However, please note that PIN codes do not have the same level of security and it will be your child's responsibility to remember the code and keep it secure at all times.

We strongly recommend that all students are registered for the facility even if they do not anticipate using the canteen regularly.

The information below should answer any questions you may have but if this is not the case further information is available from [www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00218617/biometric-recognition-systems-](http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00218617/biometric-recognition-systems-) or please feel free to contact the school. Thank you for your co-operation.

### **What is a Biometric Algorithm?**

The individual templates are encrypted using a 256 bit AES key that is built into the scanners hardware. Also the persisted file is encrypted using a different 256 bit AES key built into the matching algorithm supplied by Secugen and generated by a unique license purchased for each site. This is more secure than the ANSI and ISO standards that government department's use as the Secugen Template is encrypted and the ANSI and ISO standards are not. **The template data is useless and cannot be interpreted back into a usable fingerprint image.** If this was not the case then there would be no world standards and performance measures for such technologies. The data is stored in an array in the RAM of the Biometric Controller and is also permanently stored on the hard drive of the Bio Controller to be restored in the event of a reboot.

Below is an example of a template code for an individual finger:

```
0X417741414142514141414445415141414151415341414D415A4141414141414174774541414C71477734
6C5869656D6C574945494A764A6B42466D6837616C4E764D704F517874517A706A4A395A31784935686C
4177395366726E777645576357386C4573314B426F47443166694170675559704C763168423642682A7043
```

The solution is secure because the matching can only be done by the individual's consent as the finger has to be presented to the device for matching. We do not hold images of fingerprints in our system.

The technology provided for this method of identification meets with BECTA guidelines and also allows students the option to opt out of the scheme and use a PIN number instead.

Also under the data protection act the school cannot allow access to this data by anyone for any other means than for the purpose the data was collected and that is to identify an individual within the solution we supply. Any biometric data that belongs to an individual that leaves the school is purged which also is in line with the BECTA guidelines.

### **Biometric Cashless System: Frequently asked questions**

- **If a permission form is not returned, will my child be able to purchase food in the school canteen?**
  - No. If a parent doesn't want to use the biometric cashless system then they need to let the school know and a 4 digit pin number will be issued.
- **What if I don't wish to upload as much as £5?**
  - Your child can bring smaller amounts of cash and put this onto their account using the machine in the foyer.
- **Will students who have free school meals still need to register?**
  - Yes, then the payment will go straight into their account each day. If they are away then the money will be taken off. They will no longer need to get a card from reception.