



Smestow Academy
www.smestowacademy.co.uk

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am honoured to be the new headteacher at Smestow Academy and welcome you to a new phase in the academy's history. I am excited about the challenge of this new role, leading my team so we improve the educational experience and ultimately the life chances of each and every pupil at Smestow.

As of 1st January, Smestow Academy will be transferring to the Matrix Academy Trust from Greenheart Trust (formerly UWMAT). The Department for Education selected Matrix to provide rapid improvement and stability for the academy. Matrix Academy Trust has an exemplary track record for school improvement exemplified by Ofsted ratings, progress scores of its academies and the destinations of its pupils.

I have worked across other schools within the Matrix trust since it was first established, and I have seen the blueprint successfully transform other schools to become high performing establishments with positive outcomes for young people. I strongly believe in our trust's way of doing things to the point where I send my own children to be educated within the trust. This is exactly what I and all my staff will want to achieve for the children of Smestow. Above all, we want it to be an academy where we would want to send our own children.

In order to become a truly great school for children and our community it will take hard work, commitment and uncompromisingly high standards. This is where I need your support most. We will be looking to teach and support our young people to develop exemplary standards of behaviour and excellent attitudes to learning by using a behaviour policy based on cooperation and respect.

There are some key points regarding our behaviour policy (which will be available on the school website in January) which I will highlight and politely request your full support on:

Mobile phones

There will be an outright ban on mobile phones. Any phone seen on school site between the hours of 8:15am and 3:00pm will be confiscated and placed in the school office for pupils to collect at the end of the day. Should any pupils have their phones confiscated on more than two occasions, we will request parents collect them. Educational research has shown that mobiles phones have a detrimental effect on pupil outcomes. Please see below article printed in the guardian which shows the results of a study by the London school of economics. This study found that pupils at mobile-phone free schools performed better in GCSE examinations and showed a sustained improvement in examination results. [Banning mobile phones in schools can improve students' academic performance. This is how we know \(theconversation.com\)](#)



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Matrix
Academy Trust
EDUCATION WITHOUT EXCEPTION

01902 539500



Smestow School



smestowschool



Uniform

In order to create the right culture and environment for our pupils to flourish, high standards of uniform will be expected as a visible way to communicate self-pride and sense of community within the school. Pupils will be placed into one of three Houses: Dawley (Green), Holbeche (Blue) and Graiseley (Gold). All pupils will be gifted a new tie in their allocated House colour stripe on the first day at beginning of the spring term. From January 2023 the pupils will be expected to wear:

- Navy Blazer (existing one since September)
- White school shirt
- New School tie
- Navy 'V' neck long sleeve jumper (optional)
- Grey tailored trousers or Grey formal skirt (new length)
- Black socks or tights (not patterned)
- Plain black leather shoes
- No jewellery other than small stud earrings.
- No facial piercings

Footwear that was deemed acceptable on the website in September will be honoured for this academic year.

There will be sanctions for incorrect uniform which may result in pupils being removed from lessons until this is resolved.

From September 2023, there will be the following changes to the academy uniform:

- Plain black blazer
- Plain black trousers or knee length skirt
- Formal plain black shoes (guidance will be provided on the website on this in the Summer term).

The new (sew on) school badge will be available from September 2023 when the new black blazer is launched.

Equipment

All pupils will be expected to have the minimum basic equipment of:

- 2 black pens
- 1 red pen (for peer and self-assessment)
- Pencil
- Ruler

All pupils will be given a new pupil planner in January. This will form an integral part of pupil life as a means of communication with home, recording homework, collating reward stickers (commendations) and checking for pupil understanding in lessons.



Communication

Communication between home and form tutor can take place through pupil planners. This will be used to communicate rewards as well as any detentions that your child may receive. Your child should ask you to sign their planner each week and should inform you if they have been given a 30 minute or 1 hour detention through showing the sticker issued by the member of staff. All phone calls should be through your child's House office. Each House will have a Head of House and a House PA should you need to contact the school.

Our email address for general enquiries is smestow@matrixacademytrust.co.uk and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

January return to school

Monday 2nd January 2023 – Bank Holiday

Tuesday 3rd January 2023 – Whole staff training day

Wednesday 4th January 2023 - Whole staff training day

Thursday 5th January 2023 – All pupils return (staggered start; please see timings below) and assemble on the tennis courts

- Year 7 & 8 arrive at 8:30
- Year 9 & 10 arrive at 9:00
- Year 11 arrive at 9:45
- Year 12 and 13 arrive at 10:30

Friday 6th January 2023 – Normal school day timings commence

Timings of the school day

The start and finish times for the academy will not change. However, we will be making changes to the timings within the school day. This includes a 30 minute split lunch period where pupils will dine together in the canteen. These timings are consistent across the trust and have previously had an extremely positive effect on creating the right school environment.

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| 8.25 am | Entry for pupils |
| 8.30 am | Morning Registration and form time activities |
| 9.10 am | Lesson 1 |
| 10.10 am | Lesson 2 |
| 11.10 am | Break |
| 11.30 am | Lesson 3 |
| 12.30 pm | Lunch period for Years 8 and 9 Lesson 4 starts for years 7, 10 and 11 |
| 1.00 pm | Lunch period for Year 7 |



Lesson 4 starts for Years 8 and 9

Lesson 4 continues for Years 9 and 11

1.30 pm

Lunch period for Years 10 and 11

Lesson 4 continues for Years 7, 8 and 9

2.00 pm

Lesson 5

3.00 pm

Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 depart. Year 11 will also depart at 3.00pm until the end of the mock period. After then, they will have study seminars until 3.50pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. More information on this will be released in the new term.

I look forward to working together to achieve the best we can for your child and I thank you in anticipation of your support of these crucial changes to build the culture necessary for success. I strongly believe that if we work together we can rapidly rebuild Smestow to become a truly magnificent school for our children and the community.

Yours sincerely



Mr I Chamberlain

