



THE WELLS ACADEMY

# Family Handbook 2023/24



# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>04</b>
Welcome	05
Critical questions	06
Term dates	07
Key staff	08
Timings of the day	09
Communication	10
<b>High Expectations</b>	<b>12</b>
Warm Strict	13
Learning Habits	13
1. In School, On Time	
2. Perfect Uniform	
3. Ready to Learn	
4. Hand Up, Stop Talking	
5. First Time, Every Time	
6. Right Place, Right Time, Doing the Right Thing	
Recognition and rewards	17
Disruption free learning	18
Mobile phones	18
Staying safe and healthy	19
Break and lunchtimes	20
Medical matters	20
Inclusion	21
<b>Ambitious Curriculum</b>	<b>22</b>
Curriculum principles	23
Lessons	24
Tutor time	25
PSHE and RSE	25
Careers	26
Literacy	27
◦ Writing	
◦ Oracy	
◦ Reading	
◦ Library	
Enrichment	30
<b>Expert Teaching</b>	<b>31</b>
Teaching Framework	32
Presentation	32
Homework	33
Your child’s progress	33





## Welcome

Dear Families

Welcome to our Family Handbook. This handbook has been designed to help you understand key information about our academy.

We believe that families are an integral part of a student's education and we want to ensure that you have all the necessary information to support your child's learning. The Family Handbook includes details about our mission and vision, policies and procedures, and expectations regarding student conduct.

Additionally, the handbook outlines information about our curriculum and how we approach teaching and learning. We hope this will help you to support your child's academic progress throughout the year.

We encourage you to review the Family Handbook carefully and keep it handy throughout the year. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We value your partnership and look forward to working with you to ensure your child's success.

**Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education.**

Best wishes

Mr G Coles, Principal





## Critical questions

### Why do we exist?

We exist to provide our students with an education that allows them to live a life of meaning and purpose. By the end of Year 11, we want each of our students to be equipped with the knowledge, character and qualifications required to make a positive and lasting contribution to their family, community and the world.

### How do we behave?

#### Integrity

the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles.

#### Resilience

the capacity to withstand or to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.

#### Ambition

a strong desire to do or achieve something.

### What do we do?

We teach students a knowledge rich curriculum and support them to gain the very best qualifications.

### How will we succeed?

- 1 Uphold a culture of high expectations
- 2 Develop an ambitious and inclusive knowledge-rich curriculum
- 3 Raise standards of expert, evidence-informed teaching

## Term dates 2023 to 2024

	AUGUST 2023					SEPTEMBER 2023					OCTOBER 2023				
M		7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30
T	1	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26	3	10	17	24	31
W	2	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	
Th	3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28	5	12	19	26	
F	4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	
S	5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	30	7	14	21	28	
S	6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	

	NOVEMBER 2023					DECEMBER 2023					JANUARY 2024				
M		6	13	20	27		4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29
T		7	14	21	28		5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	30
W	1	8	15	22	29		6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31
Th	2	9	16	23	30		7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25	
F	3	10	17	24		1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	
S	4	11	18	25		2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	
S	5	12	19	26		3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	

	FEBRUARY 2024					MARCH 2024					APRIL 2024				
M		5	12	19	26		4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29
T		6	13	20	27		5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	30
W		7	14	21	28		6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	
Th	1	8	15	22	29		7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25	
F	2	9	16	23		1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	
S	3	10	17	24		2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	
S	4	11	18	25		3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	

	MAY 2024					JUNE 2024					JULY 2024				
M		6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29
T		7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30
W	1	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26	3	10	17	24	31
Th	2	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	
F	3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28	5	12	19	26	
S	4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	
S	5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	30	7	14	21	28	

School Holiday
  Bank Holiday
  Staff Training Days



# Key staff

## Senior Leadership Team

Mr G Coles	Principal
Ms N Aveyard	Vice Principal
Ms S Bailey-Wiles	Vice Principal
Mr A Lawlor	Senior Assistant Principal
Mr S Gibson	Assistant Principal – Maths
Ms A Hylton	Assistant Principal – Creative
Ms E Poland	Assistant Principal – Cultural
Mr A Phillips	Assistant Principal – Vocational
Ms D Mason	Assistant Principal – Science
Ms S Bailey	Assistant Principal – Pastoral KS3
Ms L Boag	Assistant Principal – Pastoral KS4
Ms H Thorpe	SENCO

## Heads of Year

Mr A Middleton	Head of Year 7
Ms D Bradley	Head of Year 8
Ms E Gillen	Head of Year 9
Ms E Hill	Head of Year 10
Mr H Gamble	Head of Year 11

# Timings of the day

08:20	Gates open
08:30 - 08:40	Line up and entry
08:40 - 09:00	Tutor time
09:00 - 10:00	Period 1
10:00 - 11:00	Period 2
11:00 - 11:15	Break
11:15 - 11:20	Line up and entry
11:20 - 12:20	Period 3
12:20 - 12:55	Lunch*
12:55 - 13:00	Line up and entry
13:00 - 14:00	Period 4
14:00 - 15:00	Period 5

*\*Year 7 students go to lunch at 12:10*





## Communication

We value open communication between families and staff to ensure we achieve the very best support and outcomes for the students in our care.

### Form tutor

If you have a question or concern regarding your child, your first point of contact will be your child's form tutor. Form tutors are responsible for their tutor group pastorally during their 5 years at school and see them on a daily basis. The tutor is usually the best placed person to advise or signpost to an appropriate staff member to support you with your enquiry. You can contact your child's tutor by writing them a note or phoning the academy and requesting a returned call.

### Other staff

Should you wish to speak with a specific member of staff, please leave a message with the academy reception. Staff teach during most of the day so they will return your call. We aim to respond to calls within 48 hours but endeavour to respond as soon as possible.

### Letters

Letters are regularly sent to provide families with key information and updates about events taking place within the academy. To reduce our carbon footprint, letters are usually sent digitally via a link on an email. Occasionally, they may be sent via a link on a text message.

### Text messages

Text messages are predominately used to provide families with quick, brief information, for example to inform families of a student having a detention.

### Website

Our academy website is kept up to date with information regarding academy life. Our main policies and procedures can also be found there. Our website is [www.thewellsacademy.org](http://www.thewellsacademy.org)

### Social media

We regularly share news and stories about life at Wells on our Facebook and Twitter pages [@TheWellsAcademy](https://www.facebook.com/TheWellsAcademy).

### Reception

We recognise that from time-to-time issues arise that benefit from a meeting in person. Families are requested not to come into the academy without a prior appointment as staff members are busy teaching throughout the day and will be unable to accommodate an unscheduled meeting. Should you wish to meet with a member of staff, please contact our reception team who will pass a message on for you.

We would like to emphasise that our reception team should not be subjected to any form of abuse. We adopt a zero-tolerance approach towards threatening or hostile language towards staff and anyone that has been abusive will not be permitted to enter the academy premises. We believe that mutual respect is the foundation of a positive and productive relationship between home and the academy.

## Media, film and photographs

From time to time, we receive requests from the media to take photographs or films of academy events and activities. Most families are happy for their children to be photographed with appropriate safeguards in place. Families will be asked to provide permission for this.

### Lost property

Students are responsible for any items they bring into the academy. Please ensure their possessions, including uniform, are clearly marked with their name in order for lost property to be swiftly returned. Items that are not named are placed in Lost Property. These are held until the end of term and then put on display for students to look at. Any unclaimed property will then be disposed of.

### Money

As a cashless academy, there is no reason for students to bring money into school. Families of new students joining the academy will be given information about ParentPay, an online payment service which allows us to collect payments for meals, clubs and trips.

### Causes for concern

Should families have concerns about any aspect of the academy, be it curriculum-based, pastoral or administrative, they are advised to contact the academy at the earliest possible opportunity. All concerns are recorded. Where there is a significant concern, details will be forwarded to an appropriate senior member of staff for their urgent attention and investigation. Families will be informed on the outcome in respect of their own child.

### Leaving the academy

If, for any reason, you wish to withdraw your child from the academy, we require this in writing to the Principal at least one month before the leaving date. We also need to know the school your child is moving to in order to ensure a smooth transition.







# High Expectations

## Warm Strict

At The Wells Academy, we advocate a warm strict culture to create an environment where students flourish academically and socially.

Warm strict is an approach that combines high expectations with supportive relationships. A warm, supportive environment helps students feel safe and cared for, while high expectations challenge them to achieve their best.

A warm strict culture helps to create a positive learning environment where students feel valued, respected, and supported. High expectations set clear goals for students and help them to push themselves to achieve their best. Students who feel supported and challenged are more likely to be engaged in their learning and develop a sense of ownership over their education.

Our warm strict culture helps to prepare students for the challenges of the real world. In the workplace, high expectations are often placed on employees, and a supportive environment can help to build a strong team and foster a positive culture.

## Learning Habits

At The Wells Academy, we have six learning habits that we expect students to follow at all times.

### Learning Habit 1: In School, On Time

Students' attendance and punctuality is critical to their academic success and social wellbeing.

#### Students will:

- Attend school every day (unless absent due to a diagnosed medical condition that is supported by a GP)
- Strive to achieve 100% attendance
- Enter the gate from 08:20 and line up by 08:30
- Serve a community payback sanction such as litter picking if they arrive to school after 08:30
- Ensure they arrive to all their lessons on time

#### Teachers will:

- Take the register within the first 10 minutes of every lesson

#### The academy will:

- Follow up an unreported absence with a same day text and telephone call

#### In the event of an illness, families will:

- Contact the academy on the morning of each day of absence no later than 08:30

Anything less than 97% attendance is not good enough and the academy would expect this only to be the case for students with serious medical issues. Meetings will be arranged with families and students who have poor punctuality or attendance of less than 97%. Any holiday request during term time will be refused. We trust that families will only request a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.

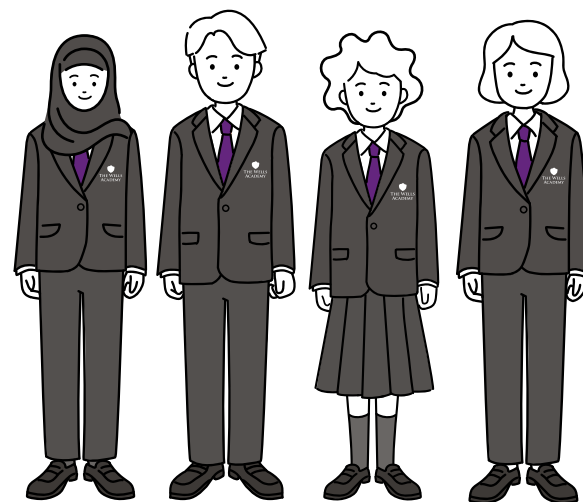


## Learning Habit 2: Perfect Uniform

Uniform is an important aspect of our identity. It reinforces our community values and helps students to feel a sense of pride in their academy. We expect students to wear Perfect Uniform every day.

### To support students:

- Staff will check students' uniform every morning on the gate
- Staff will check students' uniform during morning line up
- Heads of Year will support tutors to ensure that missing uniform items are addressed and uniform has been corrected
- Staff will check students' uniform throughout the day at the start and end of every lesson and at each line up
- Students will ensure their uniform is worn perfectly for the duration of the academy day
- Students will only take their blazers off in lessons after they have been given permission by their teacher



If students fail to wear Perfect Uniform, they will either be lent temporary uniform to wear or families will be contacted and asked to bring in appropriate uniform. Failing this, students will be sent to our academy isolation room until their uniform meets our expectations. We will do this to ensure that all our students take pride in their appearance and to make sure that all students are treated fairly.

## PE Uniform

All students are expected to have the following items of PE kit with them for every PE lesson:

- A Wells Academy sports t-shirt from our supplier Price & Buckland or a plain black t-shirt with no logos (please be aware that students are not allowed to wear branded t-shirts or tracksuit/sweatshirt tops.)



- Plain black tracksuit bottoms or shorts. These may have a small logo on them.
- A Wells Academy ¼ zip mid layer long sleeve tracksuit top available from Price & Buckland or a plain black tracksuit top/sweatshirt with no logos.
- Trainers suitable for indoor and outdoor use.

Students will only need to bring their PE kit with them on the day they are timetabled for PE. We do not have any storage for PE kits on site so students will be expected to carry it with them in a suitable bag for the duration of that day. Failure to bring correct PE kit for lessons will result in a consequence.

## Academy uniform

- ✓ White shirt (regular fit, not fitted) tucked in with top button done up
- ✓ Academy tie
- ✓ Plain black trousers (off the leg – straight cut, not skinny style) or formal academy skirt that's down to the knees
- ✓ Plain, black shoes with black socks/black tights
- ✓ Academy blazer to be worn at all times
- ✓ V-neck jumper

### Inappropriate uniform (what we will not accept)

#### Footwear

- × Canvas shoes or trainers
- × Open front shoes
- × Boots

#### Trousers

- × Skinny/tight fit  
This is a particular issue for girls and these trousers cannot be skin tight either across the whole leg or at the thigh
- × Elastic/legging/Lycra based
- × Cropped/showing skin or ankles  
This is a particular issue for girls which, along with short socks, show ankles
- × Turned up legs

#### Skirts

- × Short skirts that do not touch the knee
- × Tight fit Lycra based skirts
- × Skirts with embroidery, patterns or ridges

#### Socks

- × White or coloured socks
- × Trainer socks or socks with frills
- × Any short socks which show ankles
- × Socks with tights

#### Coat

- × Hoodies
- × Cardigans
- × Fleeces
- × Sweatshirts or zipped fabric jackets
- × Wearing additional jumpers to travel to school in
- × Any top that is not included in our uniform

#### Head wear

- Head wear worn for religious reasons should be black
- × Sweat bands
  - × Caps

#### Jewellery

- × No bracelets
- × No necklaces
- × No rings

#### Hair

- × Any extreme hair style or unnatural hair colours

#### Make up/Nails

- × Heavy make-up
- × Acrylic or gel nail extensions
- × Bright eye shadow

#### Piercings

**Ear piercings:** Students CAN wear one pair of small studs

- × Multiple ear piercings
- × Hooped earrings
- × Hanging earrings
- × All other types of ear piercings
- × Ear stretchers/Ear expanders

**Nose piercings:** Students CAN wear a small stud in their nose

- × Nose rings
- × Septum piercings

#### Facial piercings:

- × Any existing unacceptable piercings need to be removed regardless of when the piercings have been done (eyebrow, lip, tongue, or any other facial piercings are not permitted).



### Learning Habit 3: Ready to Learn

Students are expected to bring the right equipment to the academy every day.

**They should have with them:**



### Learning Habit 4: Hand Up, Stop Talking

At Wells, staff raise their hand to gain student attention.

When a teacher needs silence to deliver an instruction, they will simply raise their hand. At this point, students will also raise their hand and immediately stop talking. Staff will achieve 100% compliance from students before following with an instruction.

### Learning Habit 5: First Time, Every Time

Teachers will give students clear instructions. All students will follow instructions first time, every time. Students will trust staff and never question an adult's decision anywhere in the academy.

If students fail to demonstrate this learning habit, they could be removed from lessons and placed in our isolation provision for a fixed period of time. In some circumstances, students may be suspended for displaying persistent disruptive behaviour.

If a student feels unfairly treated, they must still follow the instruction first time, every time. Later, in their own time, students may approach the adult to discuss the situation. We expect students to ask politely and respectfully. If a student feels uncomfortable approaching the member of staff, they should speak to their Head of Year or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.



### Learning Habit 6: Right Place, Right Time, Doing the Right Thing

Our expectations at Wells are intentionally simple because we thrive where there is clarity.

#### Right Place

During lessons, the default location of all students is in classrooms with their teacher. Students that would like to speak with another member of staff will be permitted to do so outside of lesson time. During break times students will be in the dining hall, library or outside. It is essential that students are in the right place so we can keep them safe.

#### Right Time

Punctuality to lessons is critical to maximise learning time with teachers, it is also good manners and shows respect to teachers that have spent time planning lessons. Students that intentionally take too long to arrive to a lesson will be considered truanting and will receive an immediate sanction.

#### Doing the Right Thing

Students are explicitly taught about our core value of integrity. We expect students to do the right thing, even when no one is watching. This means following the other learning habits, but also being an active member of our academy community by being helpful and kind.

## Recognition and Rewards

Recognition and rewards are used to celebrate and motivate students getting it right.

#### Verbal praise

Around the academy, and in lessons, staff use positive language and reinforcement to signal to students that they are demonstrating good learning habits. They may also provide students with positive points on ClassCharts.

#### Positive phone calls home

If a student has gone above and beyond, staff will phone home to share good news with students' families.

#### Praise post cards

Staff may also send postcards home where students have demonstrated our academy values of integrity, resilience and ambition within lessons and throughout the academy.

#### Recognition events

At points throughout the year, students attend recognition events to celebrate sustained attitude, effort and commitment over time.



## Disruption free learning

At Wells, we have a two-stage consequence process for managing disruptive behaviour in the classroom.

### Stage 1: Warning

If a student intentionally disrupts learning, they will be given a verbal warning. Examples of disruption might include interrupting the teacher, talking when asked to work in silence, chewing gum, refusing to follow instructions or not sitting in the correct seat.

Following a warning, staff will implement strategies to support the student to make the right choice. This might include:

- Change to the seating plan
- Quiet conversation outside of the classroom
- Additional support in the lesson such as extra scaffolding

### Stage 2: Remove

A student will be removed from a lesson and isolated from the rest of their class if:

- They have failed to correct behaviour following the staged warning system and additional teacher intervention
- A critical incident has occurred

Following this, they will receive a 40-minute same day detention.

### Mobile phones

The Wells Academy does not permit students to use mobile phones, headphones or other electronic devices on the academy site.

If families wish for students to bring their mobile phone to the academy it must be turned off and put away in their bag. If a student's mobile phone, headphones or other electronic devices are seen or heard they will be confiscated by the member of staff who saw/heard it and can be collected, by the student, from reception at the end of the day.

If a student refuses to hand over their mobile phone, headphones or other electronic devices to any member of staff they will be issued with an immediate 3-day fixed term suspension for defiance.



## Staying safe and healthy

### Bullying

Bullying is when a person or group deliberately and persistently intends to cause someone else to feel hurt, distressed, threatened, or humiliated. Bullying can take many forms, this could include physical assault, teasing, making threats, name calling or cyberbullying. Bullying is considered a 'red line' behaviour at The Wells Academy and will be dealt with robustly. Everyone deserves to feel safe in school.

If students are being bullied, they are taught to report it to a member of staff immediately.

If students witness bullying, they are taught to report it to a member of staff immediately.

If you are concerned about your child being bullied, please contact the academy and arrange to speak with your child's Head of Year.

### Online safety

While mobile phones are banned within the academy, we recognise that some families may wish their child to have a mobile phone on them to use to and from school. We remind families that the legal age to access most social media sites such as Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat is 13 and strongly advise families to monitor their child's use of social media and more general use of the internet.

#### Tips for families to support keeping children safe online:

- Educate your children about online safety and privacy, including the dangers of sharing personal information online.
- Set ground rules for internet usage, such as time limits and appropriate websites and apps.
- Use parental controls and monitoring software to limit access to inappropriate content and track your child's online activity.
- Encourage open communication with your child about their online experiences and any concerns they may have.
- Teach your child to be respectful and kind online, and to report any cyberbullying or harassment they may encounter.
- Keep your own devices secure and model safe online behaviour for your child.
- Stay up-to-date on current online threats and trends to better protect your child.

### Personal safety

Our students' safety is important to us. At The Wells Academy, we do everything we can to make sure that students learn in a safe environment. If students feel unsafe at any time, they are reminded that they should report any concerns to a trusted adult or a member of the safeguarding team immediately.

#### Tips for families to support keeping children safe outside of school:

- Set clear boundaries and rules for where they can go, who they can spend time with and what time they should return home.
- Ensure they know how to call for help if they need it, and have a designated safe space, such as a neighbour's house, for emergencies.
- Teach them the importance of stranger danger and how to recognise risky situations.
- Encourage them to walk in groups rather than alone and always wear visible clothing when out in the dark.
- Remind them that alcohol and drugs can harm their health and cause them to take unnecessary risks.
- Have open and honest conversations about their experiences to help them feel supported and safe, reminding them that if an adult tries to hurt them it's not their fault.





## Break and lunchtimes

The opportunity to relax and socialise with friends is an important part of students' wider educational experience. Furthermore, we know that breaks from lessons support students to regain focus and energy, making it easier for them to concentrate in class.

### Breakfast Club

All students at Wells are welcome to our free Breakfast Club which is open from 08:00 each morning. Our breakfast menu includes toast, bagels, yoghurts, fresh fruit and fruit juices.

### Break

At 11:00, all students take a 15-minute break. Students may use the toilets, fill up water bottles and go outside with their year group to benefit from fresh air and the opportunity to socialise or engage in physical activity.

### Lunch

Lunch is available from 12.10 for Year 7 and from 12.20 for students in all other year groups. Our on-site catering team serve a balanced and healthy choice of meals, catering to all students' dietary requirements, religious beliefs and cultural practices. Alternatively, students may bring a packed lunch into school. If you send your child to school with a packed lunch, please avoid foods high in fat or sugar. Energy drinks are banned in school and only water is allowed in lessons. During our lunch break, students spend half of their break in the Dining Hall and the other half outside. In the event of rain, all year groups have an allocated alternative indoor space.

## Medical matters

Academy staff cannot administer medication without permission from families. Please ensure you have completed a Medical Form and returned this to the academy office, along with any prescribed medicine that you want your child to take during the academy day.

Medicines should be given to staff at reception for safe storage. When a student is feeling unwell, they will remain in lessons as we know they will be near a member of staff at that point. Students should only miss learning in exceptional circumstances. We have trained First Aiders, but staff cannot help if a student is simply feeling unwell. We will monitor the situation if a student feels unwell and contact home if appropriate.

Families of students with medical needs should complete a Medical Health Care Plan to ensure that appropriate support and provision is in place.

## Inclusion

We value inclusion highly to ensure all students have a full access to their education.

We adhere to all aspects of the SEND Code of Practice. A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

For children aged two or more, special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools, mainstream post-16 institutions or by relevant early years providers.

**Students will be supported by our SEND Team, which comprises of:**

- Vice Principal: Inclusion
- SENCO
- Inclusion Officer
- SEN Intervention Tutors
- SEN Learning Mentors

**In addition to the team in school, we work with a range of external support agencies, including but not limited to:**

- Nottingham City Autism, Cognition and Learning, Behaviour Support and Educational Psychologist Teams
- CAMHS and the Mental Health Support Team
- Police Liaison Officer
- Nottingham City Safeguarding Team
- Targeted Family Support Team
- JUNO
- School Counselling Services

Further information about SEND Support at The Wells Academy can be found in the SEN Information Report and through the Local Offer via [www.asklion.co.uk](http://www.asklion.co.uk)







# Ambitious Curriculum

## Curriculum principles

At The Wells Academy, we advocate a curriculum that is ambitious, inclusive and knowledge rich. These principles guide the design and implementation of our curriculum.

### Ambitious

We believe our curriculum should be unapologetically ambitious so students may achieve the highest possible levels of academic achievement. We set high expectations for all students and provide them with the resources and support they need to reach their goals. We teach our ambitious curriculum explicitly so students may confidently grasp challenging content and ideas.

### Inclusive

We believe in a curriculum that is inclusive in terms of what is taught and how we teach it.

- **Content:** we celebrate difference and champion diversity. We believe our curriculum should reflect and celebrate the diversity of our academy community and the world beyond us.
- **Design:** we believe all students, regardless of their starting point, are entitled to the same ambitious curriculum. This means that our curriculum is designed to be accessible to all students. The implementation of the curriculum may vary to ensure that all students may access it.
- **Reading:** we view reading as the gateway to the curriculum. Reading is prioritised within each curriculum area. Students are provided with individualised reading support to ensure that they may access the curriculum fully.

### Knowledge rich

A knowledge rich curriculum is one that prioritises the acquisition of knowledge and facts and where knowledge is taught as an end in itself.

We believe that knowledge is power. Every student, regardless of their background, deserves to learn about 'the best that has been thought and said'. We view the curriculum as a vehicle for social justice and believe students deserve to have a deep and broad understanding of the world around them. A knowledge rich curriculum provides students with a strong foundation of core knowledge. Once students have acquired core knowledge, they are able to build upon that knowledge and develop their understanding of more complex concepts and ideas in a range of different contexts.

We understand that the sequence in which knowledge is taught is essential and so the curriculum is structured in a way that allows students to commit knowledge to their long-term memory, which is critical for their academic success.





# Lessons

In Years 7 – 9, students access a broad curriculum comprising the following lessons:

English	Physical Education
Maths	Music
Science	Art
History	Drama
Geography	Technology
Religious Education	PSHE
French	IT

In Years 10 and 11, all students study:

GCSE English Language	GCSE Science
GCSE English Literature	Core PE
GCSE Maths	

Then also choose 3 options from a range or courses, including:

Art and Design	Hospitality and Catering
Drama	IT
Enterprise and Marketing	Music
French	Religious Education
Geography	Sport Science
Health and Social Care	Triple Science
History	



# Tutor time

All students are placed in a tutor group which is a class comprising of students from the same year group. Form tutors are responsible for their tutor group pastorally during their 5 years at the academy. Each morning, tutors lead a 20-minute tutor time session before lessons begin. During tutor time, tutors take the register and provide students with key updates and announcements. They also ensure that students have Perfect Uniform and are Ready to Learn with all their equipment.

## Students engage in a weekly tutor time curriculum that includes:

- Year group assembly linked to our core values of Integrity, Resilience and Ambition
- Tutor led reading
- Oracy based on current affairs

## PSHE and RSE

PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) and RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) is taught at Wells through our Personal Development curriculum.

It has a clear purpose and aligns to our academy values of Integrity, Resilience and Ambition.

Our intention when delivering Personal Development is to widen our students’ learning in order to prepare them to be successful adults upon leaving The Wells Academy.

**Our Personal Development curriculum is taught as a discrete lesson, once a week on a rotation around the key themes:**

- Sex and Relationships
- Community and Responsibility
- Health and Wellbeing
- Living in the Wider World and British Values
- Online Safety and Finance
- Careers

The Personal Development curriculum is enriched by a series of workshops and assemblies that are delivered by a range of external specialist providers.





## Careers

The Wells Academy has a full programme of careers and employability activities for students in all year groups. The programme can be found on the academy website. There is lots of information about careers on our website, including a page for students' families with a Post 16 booklet to help you help your child with their next steps. The careers page of the website has links to local colleges, 6th forms and apprenticeship providers, the termly careers newsletter, and lots of other careers resources.

### 1:1 Careers interviews

Every Year 11 student will have a series of one-to-one careers meetings with the Careers Lead. These consist of discussions around career areas and students' ideas, exploring Post 16 and Post 18 options, researching and applying for college and 6th forms and apprenticeships. Students from all other year groups can book an appointment with the Careers Lead, via their tutor.

### Careers Fairs

Each year we hold an education fair and a careers and apprenticeship fair for students to speak to visitors from lots of different organisations about college, 6th form, university, apprenticeships and many different career areas. Information will be sent out prior to these events to students and families.

### Careers Talks and Careers in the Curriculum

Throughout the year we welcome representatives from local and national organisations, to talk to our students about careers opportunities and routes into specific careers areas. These events have taken place during dropdown days, in subject lessons and in assemblies.

### Year 10 work ready activities

All Year 10 students have a CV workshop, a mock interview with local and national employers and a week of work insight visits.

### Unifrog

The Unifrog platform is designed to support students in making informed decisions about their futures. Students can complete quizzes, watch webinars and complete online courses. They can also search colleges, 6th forms, university and apprenticeship opportunities, part time jobs and much more. Each student has their own personal account and login. Families can also explore the website using the code: **WLSAparents**

### ThinkForward

ThinkForward is a charity working to empower young people in the UK through a long-term coaching programme. They equip young people with the skills and experience they need to move into work or further education. Our ThinkForward coach works with 10 students in Years 9, 10 and 11 and for two years after school, delivering one-to-one coaching, group work sessions, work insights and employer mentoring.

#### How can you help your child with future career decisions

Encourage your child to explore the many different career options available to them.  
Discuss their aspirations and support them to research the entry routes to their chosen career paths.

## Literacy

Literacy encompasses all elements of communication, enabling our students to read, write and speak in a way which is clear, effective and purposeful. Through these three key strands we teach our students how to use their literacy skills to be successful both in the varied areas of the curriculum as well as preparing them for the world beyond the academy.

### Writing

In class, teachers will always seek opportunities to support your child with mastering written elements of handwriting, spelling, vocabulary and sentence structures. We encourage our students to plan their longer writing tasks before beginning so that their ideas are clear, but also to review their work as they create to ensure that they are constantly focused on the technical accuracy of their work. As an academy, we are driven to ensure every child reaches their potential and, through our actions, ensure that students are able to use writing skills to describe and explain the world around them as well as their personal experiences.

At home, encourage your child to write descriptions about images or their favourite activities. Spend time looking at their letter formation and punctuation, reading work aloud together to ensure clarity and to check for small mistakes. Revisiting written pieces is also incredibly powerful, allowing students to develop stronger word choices and use language techniques such as similes and metaphors to give their writing further depth. Use a different colour to make these changes to allow your child to see how they are improving!

### Oracy

At The Wells Academy we value every voice and hold high expectations of our students' ability to articulate their ideas and opinions both with clarity and sensitivity to the views of others. Within their lessons, your child will encounter various opportunities where they will be expected to work in groups, using the ideas of others to springboard their own, to explore different avenues of an argument or to analyse and solve problems. Collaborative working and the ability to share ideas within this setting is a vital skill which your child will need to take into the world beyond the academy.

You may also find your child being asked to create presentations to give to the rest of their class, either as part of a team or as an individual. Students will be explicitly taught oracy skills such as volume, pitch, gesture and appealing to an audience to truly develop their abilities. These are amazing opportunities for our students to exhibit their learning to both staff and students, showing their understanding of a topic as well as practising communicating to others in a more formal setting.

At home, encourage your child to speak about their day or activities. Draw attention to non-standard English, making it clear where their choices are different to those they will use in the academy or the world of work. Using 'how' and 'why' questions are also a great way to engage your child in conversation, ensuring that they can't escape with a 'yes' or 'no' answer! Being able to hold conversations with adults and share their feelings and experiences is not always easy, so practising this at home is an excellent opportunity to develop.







## Reading

Reading is the basis for accessing all areas of the curriculum and the outside world, from completing exams and assessments to reading job descriptions and work reports. We are creating a whole school reading culture at The Wells Academy, ensuring that our students acknowledge the crucial importance of reading both widely and regularly. They have opportunities to visit the library to read and exchange different reading materials, engage in competitions presented in our academy magazine 'The Messenger' as well as engage with Current Affairs articles as part of their tutor programme. Through reading, our young people learn about new experiences, different ways of writing, different formats through which to express themselves and widen their own vocabulary. It is an incredibly valuable life skill.

With the rise of the internet, reading can be a challenge to face in the home, especially with the inevitable argument of 'I don't like reading'! Remember, reading does not have to be making their way through a full novel from cover to cover; there are a whole range of different materials which can help them continue to make progress. Why not look at football programmes, magazines or leaflets that drop through the door? What about books that were used to create tv series or films that they enjoy? Look at different extracts or opening chapters to try different genres of novel – perhaps it isn't that they don't like reading, but that they haven't found the right book!

## Library

Our library is a vibrant, colourful and popular space, designed to encourage students to 'Read for Empowerment'. Students can access the Library during break, lunchtimes and after school, where they are encouraged to use the space to read, study or play board games. The Library can accommodate small groups and full class sizes, as well as having soft seating areas for relaxing with a book, magazine or a game of chess.

### The Library also offers:

- A full-time Librarian
- Over 7,500 fiction and non-fiction resources
- Themed displays throughout the year, such as World Book Week
- A dedicated Careers Resources area
- Weekly magazines
- A Book Vending Machine for rewards
- Regular activities, events and quizzes to promote enjoyment of reading

Every student receives a half-termly 'Messenger' Reading Magazine. This contains a variety of short extracts from books, magazine articles, book reviews, news items and puzzles. The magazine is designed to appeal to readers of all ages and abilities by offering accessible reading material in different interest areas. We encourage students to contribute their ideas for items to include in the magazine.

### Students can earn rewards for reading in the following ways:

- Completing competitions in the Messenger magazine
- Taking part in reading competitions in the Library and around school
- Engaging in reading during tutor periods or in lessons
- Becoming a 'top reader' as determined by Library borrowing data
- Leaving a review on the Accessit Library System
- Earning positive points for reading on ClassCharts

### Rewards include:

- Golden Tokens which can be used in the Library's Book Vending Machine
- National Book Tokens for top readers
- Termly 'Reading Rewards Afternoons' in the Library

### Reading Ambassadors

There are two student Reading Ambassadors per year group, chosen following an application process. They are trained in using the Library System to assist the Librarian at break times. They also encourage their peers to visit the Library, help them to find resources, create marketing materials and assist in Parents' Evenings, author visits and other Reading events.

### 'Accessit' Library System

The Library System is accessible to everyone via the 'Library' menu on the academy website. Students can use their school login details to leave reviews, reserve books or leave requests for resources.







## Library

- Students can search for available resources in the Library
- There is a facility to leave book reviews for rewards
- There is an interactive Homepage on the academy website with regularly updated information regarding Reading events, new resources, word puzzles, and videos
- Curriculum area resource lists, linked to learning in the classroom

### How you can improve your child's confidence in reading:

- Ask them to visit the School Library. They don't have to choose a fiction book; there are plenty of other resources available such as biographies, self-help and wellbeing books, graphic novels, comics and magazines. **All reading is important**
- Look at your child's Messenger magazine with them and discuss the news items
- Watch something together on TV that you enjoy and put the subtitles on. This is a subtle reading technique as your child will associate the words they read with the spoken words in the film/programme
- Send links to their phone from news articles or websites on subjects that interest them, or that they've talked about with you. Follow up with questions on what they thought about the article
- Ask your child to write a magazine profile of a character in their reading, or create a map, flow chart or a list of the key events in a piece of reading

## Enrichment

At The Wells Academy we take pride in providing enriching educational opportunities that extend beyond the classroom. Field trips and clubs empower students to connect with their subjects on a deeper level and foster a greater appreciation for the world around them.

Many students participate in extra-curricular sports activities and represent the academy in our teams playing football, badminton and volleyball. Students also have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of cultural activities, including art club, musical instrument lessons and school productions.

### Duke of Edinburgh Award

Following feedback from students, we are excited to launch the Duke of Edinburgh (Bronze Award) at The Wells Academy. The Duke of Edinburgh Award is held in high regard by employers and universities.

There are four sections to the Duke of Edinburgh Award: Skill, Physical, Volunteering and Expedition. In the Skill section, students need to learn and develop a new skill (e.g., computer programming, sewing). In the Physical section, students need to take part in a new physical activity. In the Volunteering section, students need to volunteer their time to a good cause. The Expedition section involves students working as a team to plan and complete a two-day (one night) expedition.

Details of our extra-curricular offer will be shared with students and families towards the start of the academic year.



# Expert Teaching





## Teaching Framework

All lessons at The Wells Academy are built upon our Teaching Framework. Our framework is based on the best educational research that supports students to acquire knowledge and commit it to their long-term memory.

There are four strands to our framework:

- Retrieve:** We support students to remember previous learning through retrieval.  
We place lessons in context, explaining how they relate to last lesson, last term or last year.
- Instruct:** We present subject matter clearly in a way that minimises cognitive overload.  
We provide precise explanations, worked examples and models so students can see success.
- Assess:** We assess and check student understanding constantly through questioning and discussion.  
We provide feedback and adjust our instruction accordingly.
- Embed:** We provide opportunities for students to embed new learning.  
When students show confidence, we begin to remove scaffolds.

## Presentation

We believe that presenting work neatly and professionally is not only a sign of respect for oneself and others, but also a critical component of learning.

In each lesson, students are expected to:

- Write in neat handwriting using a blue or black pen,
- Write a date and title at the top of each page, which should be underlined with a pencil,
- Never doodle on or in their books, as this can be a distraction and detract from the quality of their work.

This not only helps students stay organised and focused, but also serves as a reference for future studying. By emphasising the importance of presenting work well, we are helping students develop the skills and habits they need to succeed both inside and outside of the classroom.

## Homework

At The Wells Academy, we believe homework should encourage students to develop good study habits and reinforce the content taught in school. Homework will be assigned on a regular basis and will focus on reviewing and consolidating what has been taught in class. Homework will not introduce new content but instead provide opportunities for students to practice and apply what they have learned.

Homework will be set in a variety of formats including revision, written assignments, practicing previously taught knowledge and skills. The amount of homework set will be appropriate to the age and ability of the students, with a maximum of:

- one hour per night for students in Years 7-9, and
- up to two hours per night for students in Years 10 and 11.

Homework will be meaningful and relevant to the subject being studied. Teachers will provide clear instructions and guidance on how to complete homework tasks. Students are expected to complete homework to the best of their ability and to submit it on time.

Families are encouraged to support students with homework by providing a quiet and well-lit place to work, setting aside time for homework each day, and encouraging their child to ask for help if needed. We believe that by working in partnership, we can help our students to develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in their studies and beyond.

## Your child's progress

As an academy, we want to ensure you are provided with regular information about your child's progress.

### Trackers

In addition to the regular assessments that teachers undertake as part of their standard classroom practice, we also conduct internal summative assessments during the year to capture student progress. Summative assessments usually take place at the end of a unit of learning and take the form of a test or a project. Once these assessments have been checked and standardised, we publish them in the form of trackers. Trackers detail your child's progress and attitude to learning in each of their subjects. They also provide information about their attendance and behaviour.

### Parents' evenings

Parents' evenings are held once a year and provide families with a vital opportunity to meet with subject teachers in person to discuss their child's attitude to learning and academic progress.

You will be informed of your child's parents' evening a few weeks beforehand and will be given access to an online booking system where you will be able to book 5-minute appointments. Parents' evenings are mandatory at The Wells Academy as there is a strong correlation between family involvement in a child's education and their eventual academic success.





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