

Frequently Asked Questions for Parents/Carers of new students

Pastoral Care:

Who is the Head of Academic Standards for Year 7? Mrs Rachael Blakey. If you missed the video sent out back in July here is the link to it so that you can put a face to a name. [LINK](#) Mrs Blakey is supported by a Pastoral Support Officer, Elena Istrati.

Who do I contact if I, or my child, wishes to raise a concern? In the first instance your child's tutor is the best person to contact. You can phone the school 01604679540 and leave a message or you can email your tutor directly. Please allow some time for a response as it is likely they have a full day of teaching before they can get to any messages that have been sent. We also have a Pastoral Support officer in Year 7 called Elena Istrati eistrati@nsg.northants.sch.uk who can be contacted to support you and your child.

What do I do if my child is unwell or unable to attend school? For speed and efficiency please use Edulinkone app or webpage - by clicking on the 'Absence Reporting' icon, or email absence@nsg.northants.sch.uk to report your child's reason for absence.

Extra- Curricular

What is on and where can I find it? There is a programme of all activities available on a 'live' document on our website. This enables us to add more opportunities as they arrive during the term and the academic year - so keep referring to this slideshow online.

Link: <https://www.nsg.northants.sch.uk/students/extra-curricular>

How do I sign up for activities? In the most part you will be able to turn up to the allocated room on the allocated day listed in the online programme. Some activities are listed via audition or invite only and some are specific to instruments you play. If you have lessons on an instrument or voice outside school we would love to have you part of our groups. Please let your music teacher know. The **Sport department** issued electronic sign up sheets for their clubs w/b 12th September as they are number limited and some have a cost attached. They will communicate directly with you/ your child regarding their clubs. Some of the **dance** groups that are called 'Signature 1-4' are set up based on auditions which will be held the w/b 19th September in the dance studio - all levels are welcome to audition. The activity called '**Academy**' is a multi-offer activity and provides students to use their own creativity to direct, compose, create performance pieces in drama dance music and theatre. All students are welcome and they can sign up on Friday 23rd in the theatre.

How do Instrumental/vocal lessons work? You sign up **every year** for lessons in the June / July before the next academic year via an electronic form that Mr Reid (Head of Music) sends out. You then pay a deposit for the lessons through your parent pay account to confirm the lessons. Your child will then need to check the music notice board every week to confirm the time of their lesson. The day of the lesson will stay the same throughout the year but the lessons are rotated to different times each week to avoid hitting the same lesson each week. If you would like to apply for a waiting list place please contact Mr Reid rreid@nsg.northants.sch.uk

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IT

Student: Who do I go to if I have forgotten my password? We use computers and chromebooks in many lessons around school to develop learning so it is vital that students can log in successfully into these devices. If they are having trouble logging in or have forgotten their password they should go to Design 15 and speak to the IT technicians who will help them. They should do this in break time or lunchtime in advance of lessons.

Student: Can I borrow a laptop/chromebook, to use at home if we do not have access to one temporarily, so that my child can complete their home learning tasks? The answer is **yes**. You can borrow a chromebook from our school library like you can a library book. You will be lent it for a maximum of three weeks before you must bring it back to reissue it as necessary.

What is EdulinkOne? This is our main parent/teacher interface which allows us to communicate to our parents/carers and for you to communicate with the school about absence/ changes in contact details. We also use it for virtual communications such as the Tutor parent evenings or teacher/ parent evenings - which we call **Consultation evenings**. You can also view extra-curricular clubs, home learning tasks, student timetables and learning indicators at key points throughout the year. It is vital that you are able to connect to this app/webpage whilst your child is at NSG.

Parent/Carer: Who do I contact if I am experiencing technical issues with Edulink? - Our IT technical team can help you with issues you have with your login. Contact web@nsg.northants.sch.uk or phone the school and ask for Jo Ebsworth.

Home Learning:

How can I see what home learning my child will expect on a weekly basis? Home learning timetables can be viewed via our school website [LINK](#)

How can I view my child's home learning? Both you and your child can see their home learning in the Edulinkone app. Please click on the Home Learning icon.

What is a Google classroom? We use the google suite of online programmes which are similar to Microsoft Office, which include Docs (Word) Sheets (Excel) Slides (Powerpoint) and Classroom. Each of your child's subjects will have a google classroom which students use to access learning materials, assignments and resources to enable your child to go back over learning and access work if absent from school.

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Supporting my child with their curriculum

How can I support my child with developing and improving their reading age and comprehension? -

Raising the reading age of all our students up to their chronological age is vitally important in maximising your child's learning experience and their progress in all subjects at school. Please watch this video created in 2021; '**Supporting reading at home**' given by Miss Skirrow, one of our English teachers at NSG [LINK](#)

How can I support my child with developing and improving their skills/knowledge in mathematics and numeracy? Raising your child's numeracy skills and confidence in mathematics is vitally important in maximising their learning experience and their progress in all subjects at school. Please watch this video from 2021; '**Supporting Maths and Numeracy**' given by Mrs Wragg, Head of Maths Faculty [LINK](#) . "Last year we used the Hegarty Maths platform, this has been replaced with DrFrost Maths which is an online platform with individualised support for students alongside practise questions and videos to help learn and understand skills. Students will become familiar with this in their maths lessons and continue to use it at home."

How can I support my child with understanding the social practices associated with the use of technology and communicate effectively and safely using it? .Please watch this informative video created in 2021, '**Supporting your child with digital literacy**' given by Miss Holmes [LINK:](#)

How can I support my child's with safe behaviours online? Please watch this informative video '**Supporting online safety at NSG and at home**' given by Mr wainwright (Head of Computing and online safety coordinator) [LINK](#)

What if I feel my child is struggling academically with their work across many subjects? The first port of call for queries and questions is your child's form tutor. If you feel your child is finding one or two subjects difficult it is best to contact that subject teacher directly.

If you have contacted the form tutor /subject teacher and your query has not been resolved or if you have specific concerns about progress across multiple subjects, then contact the **SEND** team on send@nsg.northants.sch.uk

Lockers - We are working through the list of lockers and we aim to issue Year 7 their locker before the end of September. Your child's tutor will be informed when their tutor group can get their keys/combinations during tutor time.

How can we/I apply for financial support or find out if we/I am eligible for pupil premium funding? Please read the information on our NSG website [LINK](#) . Information for Northamptonshire Free School Meals Applications can be found by [clicking here](#).

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How will I receive reports about how my child is progressing at school?

You will receive a report on how your child is progressing each term. For the first two terms these reports will include your child's learning indicators, progress data and attendance data. The third and final report of the year will also include a written tutor report.

What are 'Learning Indicators'?

At Northampton School for Girls, we use 'Learning Indicators' to provide a full and rounded picture of your child's progress.

There are **five** Learning Indicators. These are:

- Effort in Learning
- Behaviour
- Organisation
- Home Learning
- Quality of Work

Your child is assessed against each of these indicators each term.

How do I know how well my child is performing?

The '**Progress**' column is an important part of our reporting system and provides you and your child with detailed information about the progress they are making in English and Mathematics. This is an important aspect of the reporting information, in addition to the **Learning Indicators**.

Progress compares the target information for each student, based on the individual statistical information we have, with their most recent assessment score. This allows us to identify the progress they are making.

This is reported using the following criteria:

Progress is:	Meaning:
Above expected	A recent assessment was at a standard well above estimates from their prior attainment.
As expected	A recent assessment was at the standard of estimates from their prior attainment.
Just below	A recent assessment was at a standard just below estimates from their prior attainment.
Cause for concern	A recent assessment was at a standard significantly below estimates from their prior attainment.

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Progress is calculated using our most recently available assessment information. It provides a **current snapshot of progress**. The learning indicators should be seen in conjunction with the progress scores to provide a detailed picture of your child's academic performance.

On rare occasions, there may appear to be a slight mismatch, where the information on the learning indicators does not seem to match with the progress. Although this may appear unusual, there will always be important reasons for this that may not be immediately apparent.

For example, in the table below, English progress is reported as 'As Expected' and yet the learning indicators are reported as 'Not yet satisfactory' for 'Effort in Learning', 'Organisation' and 'Quality of Work'. This indicates that this student could be making more progress if they improved in the identified areas. This provides a useful starting point for conversations about how improvements could be made. It also helps teachers and your child to work even more closely together, so they can achieve their fullest potential and for your child's progress to be monitored closely by the senior leaders.

Subject	Effort in Learning	Behaviour	Organisation	Home Learning	Quality of Work	Progress
English	Not yet satisfactory	Good	Not yet satisfactory	Not yet satisfactory	Not yet satisfactory	As Expected
Maths	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good	Good	Cause for Concern

On the other hand, in the example above, Mathematics progress is reported as 'Cause for Concern' but the learning indicators are reported as 'Good' or 'Excellent'. This may suggest that the student has been working well in lessons but has not performed as expected in a recent assessment, or on a specific topic. Or, it may be that there is a particular aspect of the course that the student needs more support with in order to ensure that their performance in assessments matches their learning indicators. The progress column is intended to ensure that there is openness and transparency about the progress each of our students is making and should be seen as an opportunity to continuously enhance student's potential.

In instances such as these, your child's tutor, or subject teacher, will be able to provide further information and clarity and we would always encourage you to discuss this with them.

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How do I know how my child is performing in each of the Learning Indicators?

We apply clear criteria when identifying how well your child is doing for each Learning Indicator. This is detailed in the table below.

Criteria for our Learning Indicators

Level Descriptor	Criteria for Effort in Learning	Criteria for Behaviour	Criteria for Organisation	Criteria for Home Learning	Criteria for Quality of Work
1: Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This student is always engaged in their learning and contributes consistently throughout the lesson. Contributions do not have to be verbal Work in lessons demonstrates a high level of effort. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This student's behaviour is outstanding at all times They are always polite and respectful to staff and students. They always listen to and follow instructions immediately. They remain fully focused on their learning throughout the entire lesson. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This student always has the correct equipment and/or books. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home learning is always completed to an excellent standard and always on time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work is always of an outstanding quality. Work is always done on time and reflects the very best of their ability. Work is thoughtful and well presented. Work carefully considers the instructions given and the assessment objectives. This student is prepared to improve the quality of work in response to feedback.
2: Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This student is engaged in their learning and often contributes to the lesson. Contributions do not have to be verbal. Their work in lessons demonstrates a good level of effort. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This student's behaviour is usually outstanding. They are usually polite and respectful to staff and students. They listen to and follow instructions but may have needed a reminder. They are mostly focused on <u>their learning</u> in lessons but may have needed a reminder. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This student usually has the correct equipment and/or books and may have forgotten them once. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home learning is always completed to a good standard and is mostly on time. One homework may have been missed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work is usually of a good standard. Work is completed on time and completed to the expected levels for their ability. Work is neat and tidy. This student attempts to improve the quality of their work in response to feedback.
3: Not yet satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This student sometimes engages with the learning but does not contribute often. Contributions do not have to be verbal. Their work in the lesson sometimes shows a lack of effort. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This student's behaviour has been reported on <u>EduLink</u> on more than one occasion within the term. The subject teacher has contacted home with regards to their behaviour. The student has not been polite or respectful to staff on more than one occasion. The student needs more than one reminder to listen to or follow instructions. The student needs more than one reminder to remain focused on their work. The student has been removed to another classroom on one occasion this term through the Behaviour for Respect policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This student has forgotten their equipment and/or books 2-4 times in a term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home learning is usually completed but deadlines have been missed on 2-4 occasions. Homework is completed but the quality is poor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work is not always of the standard expected for their ability. Work is sometimes left incomplete. Sometimes work is untidy and lacks care and detail. This student does respond to feedback on occasions but must do this consistently.

What are Cognitive Ability Test scores?

Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs) are marked assessments used by secondary schools to assess pupils' overall intelligence, developed abilities and likely academic potential. CATs assess students in **four** areas. These are as follows:

- **Verbal Reasoning:** thinking and problem solving with words
- **Non-Verbal Reasoning:** thinking and problem solving with shapes and space
- **Quantitative Reasoning:** thinking and problem solving with numbers
- **Spatial Reasoning:** visualising, picturing and moving shapes around

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The results for CATs are given in '**Standardised Age Scores**' (SAS). These scores take into account the student's age. For your reference, the average SAS is 100.

In addition to providing a baseline to support target setting, CATs help us to identify a student's academic abilities, unlike KS2 SATs, which test for knowledge.

Year 7 CATs allow us to identify any learning or behavioural difficulties that may not have previously been known about. This gives us an insight into what your child could achieve with the correct learning support.

Why do I need to know about my child's attendance?

Research evidence makes it very clear that good attendance supports improved academic progress and achievement. At NSG, we expect all students to be in school, all of the time, learning, giving them the best chance of achieving their potential. Sharing attendance information with you ensures that we can work together to encourage exceptional levels of attendance at all times. The Department for Education (2016) published research which found that:

- The higher the overall absence rate at KS4, the lower the likely level of attainment at the end KS4
- Pupils with no absence are 1.3 times more likely to achieve level 4 or above, and 3.1 times more likely to achieve level 5 or above, than pupils that missed 10-15% of all sessions.
- Pupils with no absence are 2.2 times more likely to achieve 5+ GCSEs A*- C or equivalent, including English and Mathematics than pupils that missed 15-20% of KS4 lessons

On our [website](#), under 'Parents/Partnership with Parents', we will continue to update this with additional videos and key information throughout the academic year.