

Parents of Samuel Whitbread Academy



Frequently Asked Questions

Setting for Core Subjects

How are the sets decided?

Sets are decided by looking at KS2 results, which provide the KS4 target grades. Other factors, including any exit data from Middle Schools, are taken into consideration when fine-tuning sets.

Will my child be told what set they are in?

We don't do this; students are put in a set that is appropriate for their ability in comparison to the rest of the cohort.

My child was in a top set at middle school but not at upper school. Can you explain this?

Our year groups are very large, so there are more groups. Your child will be placed in a group matched to their need.

Are the sets reviewed and can my child be moved?

Year 9 sets are reviewed after baseline assessments to ensure all students are in the most suitable group.

Parents Evenings in Year 9

Why is Year 9 parents' evening so late in the year?

This is so that we can really get to know our students and provide you with a full account of their progress and to give them very clear guidance on how to improve as they approach year 10.

Can Year 9 parents' evening be at a similar time to when the students choose their options?

There is time to meet tutors in November, which will also include an options evening where you can speak to subject specialists about the courses on offer. You will get a report from us in January with subject recommendations from your child's class teachers.

Will my child have to choose a language?

No, but we encourage students to choose their options so that they have a broad and balanced curriculum, so that we are offering a curriculum in line with government proposals which are continuing to move towards the English Baccalaureate.

My child is regretting choosing a particular option; can they change?

Your child can speak to the subject teacher and their form tutor to discuss this.

Lessons and Homework

Over the summer, some children were set different homeworks, even within subjects. Why was this?

Our homework policy is clear that homework is based on a "quality not quantity" approach, and staff should set homework that meets the needs of individuals. This means that we do not have a one-size fits all approach to homework.

Is my child's homework always shown on SMHW?

Yes, all homework is set on Show My Homework

Parents of Samuel Whitbread Academy



Frequently Asked Questions

Why does SMHW not show the homework marks?

It is up to individual teachers as to where they record their assessment data.

Is it necessary for my child to be set homework on an option they have not chosen in the summer term of year 9?

In the summer term of year 9, we try to target homework to core subjects, and in those areas the student is continuing with into year 10

My 6th form student had some lessons cancelled last year. Why does this happen and what provision is made in this instance?

From time to time and for different reasons, teachers may be absent from class. We try to limit this as much as possible, but where it is unavoidable, teachers should set their lesson work on Show My Homework for sixth form students to complete in one of our dedicated study areas where they will be registered.

My Child's Progress

What updates will I have on my child's progress and how often?

You will get a progress report from us every term which will tell you their target grade, their attitude to learning, and also a predicted grade which is what the teacher thinks they will get at the end of year 11 based on current progress. In year 9, you will also get current attainment grades.

Buying food at school

Will I be able to top up my child's account online?

We are waiting for a software update that will allow you to top up online via Parentmail.

How do I check what my child is spending and on what?

Contact your child's form tutor. We can get this information from the catering company.

Is there a way of limiting how much they spend?

Yes, all students have a limit of £6 per day. If you would like that to be reduced, then please let your child's form tutor know.

Lost property

If my child loses something, what should they do?

Lost property can be found in student services.

Timetable

Where do I find my child's timetable?

Go onto the e praise app, click on the clock symbol in the top righthand corner.

Epraise

Parents of Samuel Whitbread Academy



Frequently Asked Questions

What is e praise and what information does it give me?

Epraise allows you to view the praise points your child has received. It can tell you which subjects these were for and which of our values they were awarded for. You can also access your child's timetable using Epraise.

How do I register and access it?

You will need to follow the following link

<https://www.epraise.co.uk/index.php?school=samuelwhitbread&login=parents> and register.

Attendance

Who do I report my child's absence to and by what method?

Please phone in on the morning of the absence and leave a message on our voicemail. If you aren't able to do this, you will get a message from us on the day of absence with information on how to report it.

If my child is off for more than one day in a row, do I need to let you know each day?

If the absence is up to two days, you do not need to phone on the second day. If it is likely to be a longer period, then please phone every couple of days to keep us informed.

Where do I find my child's attendance levels?

Please contact your child's form tutor who can tell you about your child's attendance.

How will I know if my child has tranted from school?

In the unlikely event of this happening, we will contact you to discuss this.

Behaviour

What are the reasons for detention and the different levels of detention?

Department Detentions can be given for poor behaviour in class, failure to follow instructions, poor attitude, lack of work and not completing homework. Department detentions will also be given if students are sent out of class due to attitude or rudeness.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT) lunchtime detentions are given for inappropriate mobile use in class, dangerous behaviour or for any other behaviour that the Head of Department feels appropriate to send for an immediate SLT detention.

SLT detentions are given if students fail to attend departmental detentions or SLT lunchtime detentions. SLT detentions can also be given by Heads of Year and Heads of Department for behaviour that doesn't follow the school values which are Equality, Teamwork, Integrity, Empathy, Respect, Ingenuity, Determination

Will I be informed if my child has been given a detention?

Parents should be informed if their child receives a detention by phone, e-mail, automated message or letter.

Communication

What's the best way to contact my child's teacher?

Parents of Samuel Whitbread Academy



Frequently Asked Questions

Please use their email address or phone reception to be put through to the relevant department. We'll try our best to respond within 24 hours.

Can we have more notice of non-uniform days, inter house competitions, sports days?

These are all on the calendar for the whole year, which you can find on our website here

<https://www.samuelwhitbread.org.uk/calendar>

Resources and revision guides

How do I find out what revision guides to buy and when is the best time to obtain these?

Go to our website <https://www.samuelwhitbread.org.uk/revision/> where you will find subject specific information. You can get them at any time, the sooner the better we think. Some departments also sell recommended guides.

The website also contains details of textbooks for courses

<https://www.samuelwhitbread.org.uk/year-11-201718-textbooks/>

Lockers/ Security

My child did not get a locker on the first day of term. What can they do?

We're encouraging students to share in the first instance while we investigate other options.

Are there any plans to get more lockers?

We're looking into this to see if we can safely add any more lockers around the site

If they do not have a locker, what should they do with their valuables, especially during PE?

All valuables are brought into school at the child's own risk, students can hand valuables to their PE teacher at the start of the lesson to keep them safe.

Buses

There was no room for my child on the bus. What happens in this instance and is this likely to reoccur?

Transport to and from school is operated by Central Bedfordshire Council. Please contact them in the first instance.

CBC work hard to accommodate transport requests, but as post 16 transport is sorted after GCSE results and 6th form acceptance, then this can take up to 2 weeks to finalise. This might explain why numbers on buses may be different in the first couple of weeks.

<https://www.samuelwhitbread.org.uk/travel/>

P.E.

How do I know if clubs are running or cancelled?

We try to make sure that clubs are on even if a member of staff is at a fixture. Very rarely are they cancelled as members of staff cover each other. If they are cancelled, we try getting the word out to everyone and we

Parents of Samuel Whitbread Academy



Frequently Asked Questions

put it on the PE notice board by the office. A member of staff will be by the entrance to PE making sure they get their bus.

How is my child informed if they are picked for a team?

For fixtures, the team sheets are placed on the PE notice board. There is a section for each year group's teams with all the details of the fixture (address, start time, pick up time, equipment needed etc.). We try to get this up on the notice board a week in advance.

Parent Forum

When do you meet?

All parents are invited to join this group, which is early evening roughly every half term in the school library. This year we are planning to meet on the following dates.

9th October

27th November

12th March

14th May

9th July

What do you discuss?

The group has been set up so that the school and parents can work together to improve our school, to improve outcomes for children. We discuss a wide range of topics, and try to answer parent's questions as well as develop areas of the school. This year the forum is working with teachers on the praise system.

For more information about this group, please contact Thomas Rowell by email

trowell@bestacademies.org.uk