



Middleton Technology School
“...an outstanding school”

Handbook for New Parents

2009-10

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People
Are our most valuable asset

Our Mission
“In Pursuit of Excellence”

To sustain Middleton Technology School as a very high achieving Specialist Technology School and a centre for Vocational Education in pursuit of excellence.

Within the school community we aim to realise the full potential of all individuals.

To do this we will

- Develop the talents and interests of all individuals.
- Help all members of the school community grow into emotionally intelligent people, with the ability to be the leaders of tomorrow.
- Promote vigorously our core believe that GCSEs are for all.
- Promote and develop our belief that excellence in Vocational Education will enhance the educational opportunities for all learners.
- Pursue the highest standards of effective learning for all learners and consistently excellent teaching and support by all colleagues.
- Ensure consistently excellent monitoring and evaluation strategies are at the heart of all we do.
- Use all our resources and talents to the benefit of the wider learning community.

July 2009

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome!

A very warm welcome to Middleton Technology School and may I say that I am delighted that you have chosen our school as the next step in your child's education. I hope that you and your child will find that we are a warm, caring school with very high academic expectations, which means that we want your child to fulfil their potential and beyond!

The school continues to go from strength to strength and our successes are worth celebrating. As you will be aware the school was recognised by Ofsted as one of the "12 most Outstanding Schools" and that judgement really does sum up all that we strive for at MTS.

The school's main specialism is of course Technology but we also have two more specialisms in Applied Learning and RATL (Raising Achievement Transforming Learning). This means that we are able, not only to develop strong ICT and Technology skills, but also more vocational qualifications, which are eagerly sought by employers.

The school is noted for particularly the high quality of teaching and I know that your child will be well taught throughout the curriculum. We pride ourselves on the additional help that we give to students to assist their learning and high achievement. There are homework clubs and half term and Easter schools, as well as many extra-curricular activities and trips to enrich the curriculum.

This is underpinned by an outstanding system of pastoral care - we know that students who feel secure and happy are able to put their time and energy into learning. Similarly, our expectations are very high in terms of behaviour and attitudes to learning.

One area that we try to work hard at, is contact with parents and we encourage you to contact us if you have any concerns. Equally we will contact you if we also have concerns.

We feel we are entering an important partnership with you and we look forward to working with you to ensure that your child's time with us is both happy and successful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Allison Crompton', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Allison Crompton
Head Teacher



MIDDLETON TECHNOLOGY SCHOOL

Kenyon Lane
Middleton
Manchester
M24 2DG

Telephone - 0161-643-5116
Email - enquiries@midtech.com

Who to Contact	Your child's Form Tutor or Mrs Hulton, Inclusion Manager Miss Hollis, Learning and Progress Co-ordinator for Y7 Mrs Haigh, Learning and Progress Mentor for Y7 Mrs Smith, Inclusion Secretary	
Term Begins	Monday 7 th September 2009	
The School Day	Students to arrive before 8.25am for Registration at 8:30 am Finishes at 2:40 pm	
Personal Details Sheet	Please ensure that this has been returned to school. It is important to keep us informed of any changes in details, particularly telephone numbers.	
Year 7 "Settling In" Parents' Evening		26 th November 2009
Year 7 Parents' Evening		4 th February 2009

SOME IMPORTANT STAFF

Head Teacher..... Mrs A Crompton

Deputy Heads..... Mr D Roberts, Mrs C Smart, Mr L Kilgour

Assistant Heads..... Mrs A Hulton, Mrs J Clish, Mrs J Ramm, Miss J Kellett,
..... Mr A Smith

Inclusion Manager..... Mrs A Hulton

Year 7 Miss Hollis/Mr Smith (Learning and Progress Co-ordinator)
..... Mrs B Haigh (Learning and Progress Mentor)

Year 8 Miss J Norton (Learning and Progress Co-ordinator)
..... Mrs J Kilroy (Learning and Progress Mentor)

Year 9 Mrs D Lane (Learning and Progress Co-ordinator)
..... Mrs L Taylor (Learning and Progress Mentor)

Year 7 Tutors	Mrs Stansfield	Mr M Carradus
.....	Mr T Brown	Ms A Mutton
.....	Ms T Quddus	Miss M Wall
.....	Ms C Dinn	Miss H Mason

Special Needs Co-ordinator Mrs M Wroe

Child Protection Designated Teacher Mrs A Hulton

LSU Supervisor Mrs C Ferguson

Inclusion Centre Manager Mrs J Allen

Inclusion Secretary and First Aider Mrs P Smith

THE SCHOOL DAY

Registration	8.30	-	8.40am
Lesson 1	8.40	-	9.30am
Lesson 2	9.30	-	10.20am
Break	10.20	-	10.35am
Lesson 3	10.35	-	11.25am
Lesson 4	11.25	-	12.15pm
Lunch	12.15	-	12.55pm
Lesson 5	12.55	-	1.50pm
Lesson 6	1.50	-	2.40pm

PUNCTUALITY AND ATTENDANCE

Punctuality and attendance are important if students are to make good progress in lessons. If your child is ill please let us know as soon as possible by telephoning before 9.30am or sending a note. The Learning and Progress Mentors will contact you by phone if your child is absent from school without explanation. They will ring you during the morning where possible.

Please try to avoid taking family holidays during term time. The school's policy on term time holidays is as follows:

- Written permission must be sought from the Headteacher. Request forms are available from Mrs Smith in the main office. If written permission is not sought the school will not authorise the leave of absence.
- Holidays will not be authorised for students in Year 11 under any circumstances.
- Holidays requests will not be authorised for students prior to exams.
- If your child's attendance is over 94% the holiday will only be authorised for up to 10 days. If you request more than 10 days, the extra days will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

It is important that students catch up on schoolwork that they have missed.

CONTACT WITH THE SCHOOL

Just as it is hard to know how to achieve the balance between offering your child too much support (and being accused of fussing) or leaving them to flounder, it is also hard to achieve the balance between becoming the "over-anxious" parent (on the phone every time your child falls out with a friend or grazes their knee) and letting things go on too long because you don't want to interfere.

The job is made much easier if you keep talking to your child about how things are at school. You know your children best, and if any aspect of school life is persistently distressing them it is probably best to intervene early. If you have talked to your child, offered reassurance, helped them come up with ways of solving the problem themselves and things still haven't changed after a couple of weeks, then it is time to speak to the school.

The school welcomes contact with parents.

The most important person in the school is your child's form tutor. Please contact him/her if you have any concerns regarding your child's progress.

If you would like to see a particular teacher or a senior member of staff please contact our Inclusion Secretary, Mrs Smith in the first instance and she will arrange an appointment for you.

HOW THE FIRST YEAR IS ORGANISED

In a primary school, the roles of staff are quite straightforward, and you are likely to have had a lot of informal contact with members of staff and to have built a close relationship with your child's teacher. In comparison the structure of a large secondary school such as MTS has many more adults involved, some with rather mystifying titles as "Learning and Progress Co-ordinator", and can seem impossibly complex.

Although schools vary, at MTS there is a Headteacher, three deputy heads and five Assistant Heads, each with one or more area of responsibility. All staff have responsibility for teaching in an academic area (such as English or Technology) and most have, in addition, responsibilities for students' well-being.

The school is divided into Curriculum Areas (such as English, Maths, Humanities, Science, Technology etc), and each has a Curriculum Leader (or CL).

Generally the staff you will have most contact with will be your child's tutor, the Learning and Progress Co-ordinator or Assistant Leaders, and the Key Stage 3 Learning and Progress Mentors.

The other person that you may need to make contact with, if your child has special needs of any sort, will be the school's special needs co-ordinator (or SENCO for short), Mrs Wroe.

Tutor Groups

On the support side, your child will be placed in a mixed ability tutor group of other Year 7 students and the tutor has responsibility for your child's overall well being. They will generally know your child best, and students will register in the mornings in their tutor group with their Tutor. Miss Hollis, Learning and Progress Co-ordinator, has responsibility for all of the tutor groups in Year 7 and will continue with the year group through Years 8 and 9. You may if you need to telephone or write a message for the form tutor or Learning and Progress Co-ordinator in your child's school journal.

Lessons

All our students spend time working in each curriculum area and they therefore follow broad and balanced courses. Within each of these areas there is a great deal of choice that caters for individual needs and interests.

Students will be taught in the same broadly banded groups for all subjects in Year 7. This not only helps your child's academic progress; it also allows secure friendships to develop.

Some students may need extra help in some lessons. An extra teacher or assistant working within the class or through students attending homework clubs will give this. If children are very good at their studies they will be given extension work to provide them with an additional challenge.

Out of Lessons

The school is open from 7.30am. Students may wish to use the computers or other resources to do homework. There will be some activities and homework clubs at lunchtimes. After school there are homework clubs and various activities for students. All students must stay on site throughout the school day and as the lunch period is so short there is not opportunity to go home for lunch. The computer rooms remain open until 5.00 pm.

Food at school

Snacks and drinks are available from the canteen at breakfast and at morning break, and students may have toast, teacakes, soup and hot chocolate, etc. At lunchtime all students must remain in school for lunch unless parents have requested permission in writing, and it has been approved by the Headteacher. Students may eat their packed lunch in the canteen or purchase a full meal for £1.65. The school operates a cashless system for purchasing food in the cafeteria and your child will be given full instructions on how to use this system when they start at MTS.

Families on Income Support may qualify for free school meals.

Application forms are available from School Education Welfare, telephone 01706 925638 or from Mrs Smith in the main office.

Any Concerns

If students have any worries they should approach their Form Tutor or Mrs Haigh. Year 7 students will also have a Guardian Angel attached to their tutor group – a Year 10 student who will look after them and sort out problems for them.

Although OFSTED found no evidence of bullying in our school it does exist in every organisation. We are vigilant and try to stamp out bullying whenever we are aware of it but if your child feels bullied it is important that he/she tells someone.

OUR AIMS FOR STUDENTS

At Middleton Technology School we aim to develop an environment where our students will

- become high achieving, committed, life long learners
- develop lively, creative and enquiring minds
- develop information and communication skills relevant to a world of fast developing technologies
- acquire skills, knowledge, concepts and attitudes relevant to adult life and employment in a rapidly changing world
- respect moral values in society
- be free of prejudices and stereotyping

OUR CODE OF CONDUCT

If the school is to run effectively as a community then all our students must keep to the Code of Conduct. The one rule for all is that **everyone acts with courtesy and consideration to others at all times**. Significant breaches of our Code of Conduct will be viewed very seriously and may result in permanent exclusion.

This means that:

- You will always respect our “Four Rights”
- You always try to understand other people’s point of view
- In class your behaviour makes it as easy as possible for students to learn and for the teacher to teach. You should arrive on time with everything you need for the lesson, begin and end the lesson in an orderly and courteous way, listen carefully, follow instructions, help each other when appropriate and act sensibly at all times
- You move quietly and courteously around school. You should keep to the left and stand back to let people pass and you may also help by opening doors and helping to carry things
- You should always speak politely to everyone using a low voice
- You should be silent whenever you are required to be
- You should keep the school clean and tidy so that it is a welcoming place that we can all be proud of. This means putting litter in bins, keeping walls and furniture clean and unmarked and taking great care of the displays, particularly if they are other students’ work.
- Out of school, walking locally or with a school group, you must always remember that the school’s reputation depends on the way that you behave. You must wear your full uniform to and from school, including your blazer.

A further note to Parents:

It is important that you realise that the school is very disciplined to ensure that students achieve. We expect high standards from all who are involved in its working.

We ask for your support for our policies and code of conduct. You must expect a response from us if your child does not come to school with the necessary equipment or wears clothes that are not part of the official school uniform eg caps, neck-warmers, denim jackets, hooded coats, trainers or anything that we consider to be “street culture”. Walkmans/MP3s/iPODs or other such electrical equipment are not permitted.

Mobile Phone Policy

The school understands that students will want to use mobile technology outside of the school day. We also understand that parents need to contact children, particularly after school. Therefore students who wish to bring a mobile phone to school must abide by the following rules:

- Mobile phones must not be seen in lessons, assemblies, registrations or at social times.
- Mobile phones must be turned off during lessons, assemblies, registrations and social times.

- If a phone is seen or heard during the stated times it will be confiscated for 4 days. A letter stating when it can be collected will be sent home and it will be available for a parent to collect at Reception between 2.30 p.m. - 3.30 p.m. on this day.
- If the phone is confiscated for a second time, there will be a complete ban on the named student bringing a phone to school.
- Phones may not be used in lessons as calculators.
- Phones are not allowed in examination rooms.
- Failure to inform the Key Stage Office of a change of phone number will result in a complete ban.
- Phones may not be used in school for music playing.
- Students found abusing the use of a phone e.g. making threatening calls, etc. will be banned from bringing a phone to school.
- The taking of any images, whilst in school, by mobile phone camera is strictly forbidden. Any abuse of this may result in exclusion from school.
- Students may not use mobile phones to contact parents during the school day unless given express permission by a member of staff.
- School Trips - the above also applies to school trips.
- The Head Teacher's decision on all matters of mobile phone protocol is final.

We do not expect your child to be out of school at any time, including dinnertime, unless you have contacted school previously and it has been approved by the Headteacher.

We are very proud of our school's achievements and we know you want your child to be part of it. Therefore, we ask for your full co-operation if we are to further improve in the coming years.

DEALING WITH OPPRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Every school in the country has incidents of bullying. Unfortunately as part of growing up children have to learn not to put themselves first and to take account in their behaviour of the thoughts and feelings of others. This is all part of the social learning that schools need to develop in every single one of their students.

Here at MTS we use several strategies to combat oppressive behaviour. All our views about conduct are summed up in our four rights, which were generated by students some ten years ago. These state:

- *All students have the right to learn*
- *All teachers have the right to teach*
- *Everyone has a right to safety*
- *Everyone has a right to fair treatment*

We emphasize that it is the responsibility of everyone to safeguard these rights and the **culture of support** that exists within the school.

We have worked to establish a **culture where students can tell**. We therefore try to deal very early with simple problems the idea being that the big problems will not develop. The Guardian Angels are our approach to this, as students will tell a student when research has shown that they would be unwilling to tell a teacher. Our Angels have been trained to work very effectively particularly with children transferring into Year 7 from primary school which is a much smaller and more sheltered environment.

“The “Guardian Angels” are well trained to deal with relationships, welfare and bullying and make an excellent contribution to making the school a safe and secure environment for learning. (OFSTED)

In addition we emphasize our **disapproval of bullying** and other sorts of oppressive behaviour. We do this through assemblies to the whole school community, to small groups and to individuals as appropriate. This public disapproval is designed to sustain a culture where students tell when unpleasant things happen to them or indeed to anyone. They are confident that action will be taken.

We also look for meaning behind behaviour e.g. if children regularly borrow money or pens we investigate to see whether they are just careless or whether a bully is taking these things from them.

We provide a safe environment at lunchtime. There are supervised clubs and groups for children to attend if they are at all worried about being in a more robust environment with 1000 other students.

No parent ever wants to hear that his/her child is a bully. We make it clear that it is about that child learning new behaviour. One incident does not turn a person into a bully for the rest of his/her life. It simply means that that child must learn how to interact with others. Often long established friendship groups will break down particularly in the early years of secondary school and this can cause significant distress to individuals. When a child is faced with a difficult situation in secondary school they pick from the repertoire of behaviour that they have already established about how they are going to relate to others. Children often bully because they have seen other people do it or they simply want to see what happens. In most cases bullies do not set out to make other people’s lives miserable.

Anti-bullying Policy

Bullying is repeated behaviour which makes other people feel uncomfortable or threatened whether that is intended or not. The aim of our anti-bullying policy is to clarify for pupils and staff that bullying is always unacceptable. We wish to encourage an environment where independence is valued and individuals can flourish without fear. Every pupil has the right to be safe and happy in school, and to be protected when he or she is feeling vulnerable.

It is important that we create an atmosphere in school where pupils who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that action taken will be swift but sensitive to their concerns. Not telling protects the bully or bullies, and gives the message that they can continue, perhaps bullying others too.

We have trained staff and students in school to deal with these types of situations. Tell your friends, tutor, teacher, LPC, LPM or parents. Don’t suffer in silence.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

We believe that a smart uniform worn properly is very important because it demonstrates the pride that students take in the school and signals their readiness to be part of the learning community. We expect all students to wear full uniform at all times. **The uniform is:**

- Black school trousers or designated school skirt (school design only)
- White school shirt
- **Optional** School jumper /tank top (school design only)
- Black blazer
- School tie
- Black shoes
- Black or white socks (if worn under trousers)
- Plain black tights, or black ankle socks (if worn with a skirt)
- School bag

Items of uniform must be serviceable and hardwearing. Please stick to our guidelines:

Trousers must not be too tight and the style of the trouser must allow a shirt to be tucked in properly. Ski pants, combat trousers, leggings or low-rise (hipster) trousers are not allowed, nor are any adornments to the trousers like big buttons, buckles etc.

Skirts must be the designated school design available from Broadbents. **NB: No other style of skirt is permitted.**

Jumper/Tank Top must be the designated school design available from Broadbents. **NB: No other style of Jumper/Tank Top is permitted.**

Shirts must be traditional school shirt design so that they can be tucked into skirts and trousers properly and they must have a proper collar. They must not be fitted, short or fashion shirts without a proper collar or a blouse of any description.

Shoes must be completely black and low heeled. Boys shoes should not contain any white flashing. Fashion shoes including completely flat shoes, those without a grip on the sole and any open-toed or heelless shoes are not suitable for health and safety reasons. Trainers and boots may not be worn. **NB: Please do not purchase expensive designer shoes because most tend to be the styles banned in school .If in doubt consult the school .**

Socks/Tights must not be coloured or patterned.

Sweatshirts, hooded tops and denim jackets form no part of the school uniform as indoor or outdoors wear and must not be worn.

Hair

Hair must not be shaved, and the minimum length is number 2. Hair styles must not be extreme. Coloured hair is not allowed . The school will decide what is extreme and if you are in any doubt about your child's hair style, please check with a senior member of staff before bringing your child to school.

Jewellery

Students may wear an inexpensive watch and one pair of studs in the lower lobes. Hooped earrings including sleepers are not allowed. Students who choose to wear studs must remove them for PE. No body jewellery is allowed (nose, tongue, lip, eyebrow, belly button etc). Any jewellery brought into school is at students' own risk.

Baseball caps are not to be worn to, from or in school.

Nail varnish is not allowed.

Make-up is not allowed in KS3.

Students in KS4 may wear mascara and a light foundation which is to be applied minimally. No other make-up is allowed including eye make-up, thick mascara, blusher and thick orange/unnatural looking foundation .

Summer uniform

Students may, in the Summer Term (after Easter holidays) wear the school embroidered black polo shirt instead of a white shirt and tie. This may be worn untucked.

The main supplier of our school uniform is:

Broadbent Fashions, 656 Long Street, Middleton

Telephone: 0161 649 5193

The shop is located opposite the Assheton Arms. The uniform shop is on the lower floor. Some items may also be bought from other shops. Applications forms for a grant to help with the cost of school uniform is available from Mrs Smith in the school office, or from Education Welfare, telephone 01706 715638.

PE UNIFORM

Indoor

Green polo shirt (with school crest) and black skirt/shorts, white socks and trainers.

Outdoor

Black rugby shirt with green band (with school crest), black shorts/skirt and black football socks. Trainers/boots as required

A towel is optional for use after each lesson. A black tracksuit may, at the teacher's discretion, be worn for outdoor PE lessons up to Easter, but must not be worn for indoor lessons.

Leggings are not allowed.

Nail varnish is NOT allowed.

ALL watches etc must be removed before PE lesson. Money and valuables must be handed in to the teacher at the start of the lesson and not left in students' pockets or bag. The teacher will lock them away until the end of the lesson. The school will not be responsible for missing items or money if they are not handed in to the teacher.

EQUIPMENT

This is a large school and students will have lessons in many different rooms. It is important that students look after their equipment and uniform and put their names on everything. A suitable **bag** to carry equipment is essential.

Handbags and small “man” bags are not allowed. A suitable bag must be big enough to contain all books and equipment and is not a fashion item! Usually students prefer to have a separate drawstring bag for PE.

We will ask students to replace bags if we consider them unsuitable so please avoid any fashion pressure!

To be properly equipped for lessons your child will need the following: -

Coloured pencils

Pen, Pencil, Ruler, Rubber

Sharpener

A scientific electronic calculator - either Casio or Sharp

A dictionary would be useful

PE kit on the appropriate days

PLEASE PUT STUDENT’S NAME ON ALL ITEMS OF UNIFORM AND KIT.

THE CURRICULUM

We are pleased to offer pre-vocational courses as well as G.C.S.E. subjects. All areas of learning are enhanced through the use of information and communications technology and all students leave school with an accreditation for their I.C.T. skills.

Subjects studied at Key Stage 3 (Years 7 - 9) are:

Core Subjects

English
Mathematics
Science

Foundation Subjects

Art
Citizenship
Drama
Geography
German
History
Information Communication Technology
Music
Life Education
P.E./Games
Cultural Studies
Technology

Policies on Sex Education and Cultural Studies have been approved by the Governors and are available upon request. You may make a request in writing to the Headteacher to withdraw your child from Cultural Studies lessons. If it is deemed appropriate, permission will be granted.

Subjects available at Key Stage 4 (Years 10 - 11) include:

Access
Additional Science
Applied Science
Art
Biology
Business Studies
Chemistry
Construction
COPE
Drama
Engineering
English
English Literature
Geography
German

Health and Social Care
History
ICT
IT Diploma
Maths
Media
Music
PE
Physics
Resistant Materials
Science
SHD Diploma
Statistics
Textiles
Travel and Tourism

HOMEWORK

Our Philosophy

We believe that homework is necessary for students to become successful, independent life-long learners. Homework helps students to:

consolidate what they learn in school;
practice self discipline in structuring and managing their own learning;
apply research skills, with support at first but later independently;
practice learning by doing. This includes work that may not be suited to the classroom.

To be effective homework involves a partnership between the school and students and their parents.

The Amount

Most teachers will set homework every week. Your child will be given a school journal to record homework in, which we would ask you to check regularly to monitor progress. In Years 7, 8 and 9 students receive a new journal each term.

The amount of time per week night that students spend doing homework varies according to their maturity:

Year 7	1 Hour
Year 8 and 9	1½ Hours
Year 10 and 11	Much more time is required but at least part of this may be spent in school where students have access to teachers and resources.

The Tasks

Not all homework involves writing. Your child may be asked to do:

investigations	interviews	simple experiments	essay writing
research	public library visit	drafting	report writing
reading	designing	revision	making a model
drawing	word processing	desktop publishing	projects
spelling	comprehension	revision exercises	planning

The Sanctions

If your child misses the occasional homework more time may be given for them to complete the task. If this recurs a detention may follow and if the problem continues we may contact you.

Some Common Questions Answered

Where should homework be done?

Year 7 students in particular should do their homework in a place that is easily supervised by a parent. A kitchen table is usually best, particularly if a parent is preparing a meal, whilst a bedroom might offer too many other distractions. Older students need their own space with peace and quiet so that they can pursue their work undisturbed by the distractions of other children or the television.

What is the best time to do homework?

The best time is usually when your child first arrives home from school. If you prefer your child to have a break the next best time is straight after tea. Homework should not be done at bedtime when it will be rushed or carelessly done and unusual work such as traffic surveys cannot be completed.

How often should I check my child's journal?

All students should record all their homework in their school journal. It is important to check it *every day* so that you know what homework has been set and to sign it at the *end of the week* to indicate that you are aware of the homework that your child should have completed.

The journal helps us to work more closely with you. Please write any comments in it, for example to tell us if your child found the work too difficult or if it took a long time to complete. You can also inform your child's form tutor of absences or appointments via the planner.

Should I help my child with their homework?

Whilst you should not do your child's homework for them, in Years 7 and 8 you could assist by testing them on spellings or test revision or reading through your child's work and offering ideas for improvement.

How can I help my child in Year 10 or 11?

In the upper school praise and encouragement are very important as young people face a mountain of work and strict deadlines for their GCSEs. It is important that you expect your child to meet these deadlines and check that he/she is doing so.

MANAGING THE TRANSITION - TIPS FOR PARENTS

The aim of this section is to provide you with the information you need to help your child to achieve independence, whilst supporting them in getting there. To achieve the balance of doing too much or too little for your child is hard. A useful rule of thumb is

“never do anything regularly for your child that they are capable of doing for themselves”.

The following section outlines exactly what your child needs to be able to do to succeed at secondary school and provides some practical tips and ideas to help you to help them develop the skills for success.

Time spent early on in establishing habits of work and independence is an investment that will save endless time, battles and heartache in the long run. The habits and routines that children develop in Y7 are those that will stay with them throughout their secondary schooling and often throughout their working lives - it is worth the effort of getting it right to start with. If you can help your child to do this, you will really be making a difference.

How can I support my child?

Moving from primary to secondary school is a significant event in the life of your child. It is an important milestone, which for many parents and teachers marks a change in expectations regarding crucial life-skills such as independent working and self-organisation.

When your child starts at MTS, they are expected to cope with new experiences and changes, many of which demand skills and abilities that they have not had to use before. The problem is that these skills do not suddenly appear, but have to develop in children in the summer before they begin secondary school, they have to be taught and your child needs support in developing them.

Most parents would like to help reassure their children, prepare them for these changes, and support them in developing the skills they need, but feel they lack the information and expertise to do so. For many of us our own experience of secondary schools is all we have to go on.

If your child expresses worries it is useful to tell them that many Year 6 students have similar worries, such as fears about getting lost, being bullied, not making friends, the size of the building, not being able to do the work, not having the right equipment, getting into trouble, not knowing what to do if there is a problem etc. It is important to let them know that everyone else will be feeling anxious too.

Most worries are nearly all to do with the new organisational demands that will be placed upon new students. Luckily these are the areas in which we can help the most.

So what's different at MTS?

Children often have to travel further. Some make their way to and from school independently for the first time - some travelling by bus.

Full school uniform is compulsory for perhaps the first time, and there is a whole list of new rules and regulations to remember.

Instead of one teacher, who has often known them since their early years, they will be taught by eleven or twelve teachers and have to get to know a whole range of adults in different roles within the school.

The school is much bigger and children have to find their way around, moving from classroom to classroom between lessons, often carrying their belongings with them.

They have to use and interpret a complex timetable and a school journal.

For the first time, students are fully responsible for ensuring that they have the correct books and equipment for all lessons, their dinner money, bus fare, PE kit etc EVERY DAY.

Children are given full responsibility for recording homework, completing it by the correct day and giving it in on time.

There are new subjects (eg German) and new variations on familiar ones (such as practical lessons in Science).

Teaching and learning styles are very different. Children are expected to write more frequently and for longer, and they are expected to select appropriate reference books from the library.

Break-time and lunch-time are organised differently with less adult supervision, and students have more independence in terms of buying their own lunch and getting back to lessons on time.

In general, students are expected to be more independent, self-reliant and self-organised. A welcome development for many students but a challenge for some.

Getting to and from school

Key Tasks for Parents before your child starts at MTS:

- Time the journey to school or the bus stop.
- Be sure your child is clear about what time they are expected to be home and what to do if they are late for any reason.
- Make sure they know your contact number.
- Buy an alarm clock and make sure your child knows how it works.
- Work out with your child what time they will need to get up to get to school on time. Work backwards from the time they need to be at school (8.25am).
- Agree a routine for the mornings and after school. Will they shower/bath in the morning or in the evening? Will they get their school bag ready the night before or in the morning? Who will make a packed lunch? When?

- Agree a bed-time for schooldays with your child that will ensure they get enough sleep.
- Have a practice run - set your child the challenge of getting up at the correct time and getting ready during the week before they start at MTS.

Key Tasks for Parents when your child starts at MTS:

- If possible, be around for your child for the first few days/weeks. Praise and encourage independence but be ready to offer a helping hand.
- Keep to your side of the bargain - if you have arranged to leave dinner money on top of the fridge make sure it is there!
- Go through the routine regularly with your child and if necessary provide a tick-list to help them
- Insist on the routine being kept to - it will save you hours in the long run.

Uniform Matters

Advice for Parents before your child starts at MTS:

- Check the uniform requirements including rules regarding jewellery and other regulations regarding dress and appearance.
- Contact Mrs Smith at school if you think you may be entitled to financial support for buying school uniforms.
- Beware of cast-offs. Children are very sensitive about wearing “hand me downs”, but this will usually wear off after a while as they become more confident.
- Name everything, even shoes. A marker pen is as good as labels.
- Have spares of essentials at home if possible, it prevents panic when things get mislaid at 8.00am.

When your child starts at MTS:

- Encourage your child to hang up their uniform straight away after school.
- Decide on responsibilities - who irons the shirts, when/who puts them away, etc
- If your child is very disorganised, check items one by one.
- Encourage your child to put everything out the night before
- Have a system for making sure that clothes are clean and ready - the earlier children start to take responsibility the better but whoever does it, both parties need to know the system.
- If you have a timetable displayed for your child, colour the days when your child has PE so they can see each day if they need to take their PE bag.

The New Timetable

Tips for Parents:

- Reassure your child that they will quickly get to know their way around and they move as a group to start with. Most will have mastered it within a couple of weeks. Staff are very understanding about children getting lost to begin with and help is at hand if it is needed.
- Your child will be given a map of the school on the first day of term to help them find their way about.

- Get a copy of your child's timetable which will be issued on the first day of term. Your child will be asked to write it on the back of their journal and it is useful if you can copy this timetable and keep it on display at home so that you and your child can refer to it.
- Look at your child's timetable and discuss it with your child. These can look very complicated, but talking about it will help ease your child's concerns. Break it down and talk about "how it works" by looking at room numbers and teachers initials for example. Talk about the timing of lessons and free time.
- Try to get a list of your child's teachers as soon as you can - their names will be on your child's timetable. It helps to know who teaches what.
- Encourage your child to learn what lessons they have on which days so that they can become independent.
- Make sure your child knows what to do if they are late or get lost.

Organising Books and Equipment At Home

Key Tasks for Parents before your child starts at MTS:

- Help your child organise their living space so that they have a place for everything to do with school. Try to make sure they have access to a desk.
- Equip them with the tools they will need at home. Keep two sets of everything if possible - one for school and one for home so that losing a pen at school does not stop them doing their homework. A useful home "tool kit" consists of: pencils, pens, rubber, sharpener, crayons, felt pens, whitener, ruler, maths equipment (protractor, compass, set square and calculator), sellotape, glue stick, paper (lined and plain) and plastic wallets.
- A box file or stacking system is useful for students with organisational problems - each file can be labelled with the subject and all books, worksheets etc can be kept ready to pull out and put in the school-bag when required.
- An office two-tier "in tray" is useful for "homework to be done" and "homework completed".

When your child starts at MTS:

- Teach a routine for "emptying the bag". Any subjects for which homework is required are placed in the "homework to be done" in-tray. Do this with your child to begin with if necessary, then gradually let them take over. Even when your child has "got it", do spot checks every so often.
- Encourage your child to glue and worksheet/odd bits of paper into their workbook, otherwise the volume of paper becomes impossible.
- When homework is completed, supervise the "packing of the bag". This is best done the night before.
- Encourage your child to check their journal for any reminders/notes each night. It's usually worth double-checking as there are sometimes notes from teachers to you.

Losing belongings

This is very common for children with organisational difficulties, and very expensive for parents. If after half a term your child is still experiencing organisational difficulties, contact your child's tutor and ask for their support. They can often provide "checks" at key times and be very creative in supporting your child towards independence in school.

Strategies For Managing Homework

In many ways homework makes the most demands on both Year 7 students and their parents.

- Agree a routine for homework with your child. Life can become a constant "nag" if you don't start this from the beginning. Homework becomes an increasingly important part of the curriculum as your child goes through school. What he or she starts off doing in Year 7 will set the pattern for attitude towards homework and coursework until they leave in Year 11.
- A good time for homework is after a short break when your child returns from school. Get it out of the way early leaving the rest of the evening free - who wants to start work at 7.00pm?
- Agree with your child that TV, other activities, phone calls etc will only be possible after homework is done.
- Many children will say that listening to music helps them concentrate and do their work. Agree whether this is allowed - some could say that if attention is on your favourite song, it can't also be on your homework. However, the important thing is to make an agreement and stick to it.

When your child starts at MTS:

- Stick to your agreed routine whenever possible.
- Try to ensure that homework is done on the night it is set to prevent "build-up".
- Spend time with your child in the first few weeks, establishing the routine.
- Encourage your child to unpack their bag in an organised way, placing homework to be done in their tray. Check the journal with your child for what homework needs to be done, and when it is to be done for. Check they have everything they need to complete the tasks, ask them to tell you what they will need to encourage independence.
- Recognise how hard it is to work unsupervised. Help your child structure their time and use it usefully - provide a clock and agree the tasks that should be done in each half hour period for example. Try to be available to do "progress checks" - have they completed the task in the set time? However, don't establish a pattern of always doing homework with them. It is unsustainable and they won't learn to work independently.
- Make sure your child always writes the date and title, and clearly labels it as homework in their book, worksheet or computer print out.
- Point out the rewards of working in this way - homework doesn't drag on all night, it feels good to have completed tasks etc.
- Don't let your child struggle on for longer than the recommended time - if they have done half an hour and only answered half the questions, let them stop. If they

are worried about the consequences, write a note on the homework on in the journal.

- If children are stuck - either because they don't understand the task they have written down, or because "they can't do it", offer support but don't do it for them.
- Encourage your child to check in the lesson if they haven't understood what the task means - it's too late by the time they get home.
- Encourage them to write down exactly what the teacher says, not "finish stuff in book" - they will have forgotten what "stuff" by the time they get home. If you and your child really cannot work out what has to be done, try ringing a friend in the same group, or as a last resort, write a note to the teacher asking for clarification and explaining that the homework will be done as soon as possible.
- If there is a problem with the level of work, it is important that the teacher knows this. If work is consistently too difficult or too easy, it is important to let the teacher know.
- Check that your child has given homework in and, if they have not, check why. For example, they may have had a supply teacher.
- Take an interest in the marks and comments on the homework your child gets back - celebrate success and give the clear message that homework is valuable and important.
- Homework may not be automatically valued by the children in school. Many will never do it and appear to "get away with it". Be very wary of excuses your child will use (see list below) and try to ensure that if an excuse is given, you check it out and that your child still does the homework as soon as the problem is sorted out. If you do this the first few times, the "excuses" will lessen but if they are successful in getting out of homework in this way to start with, they will carry on and it becomes very hard to re-establish good patterns later on when homework becomes crucial to examination grades.

If your child is consistently not getting homework over a period of two to three, not able to do the homework set, or writing down tasks that are so general that neither you nor they can work out what has to be done, do contact your child's tutor and explain the problem. If nothing changes, ask for a meeting with the teacher concerned.

Excuses for not being able to do homework

"We didn't get any"

"I don't need to do that, we did it in class"

"We had a supply teacher"

"It doesn't have to be in for ages"

"I left it at school"

"My teacher has got my book"

"My friend's borrowing my book"

"I did it on the computer and the computer wouldn't print it out/I forgot to save it/can't remember what file I saved it in..."

"I'm going to do it with my friend on the bus/at break"

"I need to do it in the library - I'll do it at lunchtime tomorrow"

"I've lost my journal"

Helping with Reading - Ages 11 to 16

How to encourage your child to read

Read yourself! Set a good example by reading for fun and talking about the reading you do at work and at home. Let your child know that books are an important part of your life.

Don't stop reading to your child. Some children enjoy being read to long after they are fluent readers themselves.

Visit the library. Take the family to join the local library - it's free! Make a weekly visit.

Make a time to read. Set aside a time for family reading - after school or before bedtime.

Don't just read books. Encourage your child to read newspapers, TV guides and magazines.

Talk about books. Talk to your child and their friends about their book preferences. Talk about the books you like to read.

Let your child read with younger children. Encourage them to read to younger members of the family.

Keep in touch with school. Talk with teachers about your child's reading. They will be able to tell you if your child needs any extra help. Find out which books your child is reading in class and read them as well. You can then discuss them together.

If English is not your child's first language. You can buy dual language books. You can talk about books and stories in any language.

How To Help With Reading

Spot words inside words. Help them to spot words they know within larger more complicated words.

Don't make them try too hard! It doesn't matter if you have to tell them the word sometimes.

Let them read their favourites. Don't worry if they want to read the same books again, or stick to one kind of book. If they get really stuck, ask the librarian or teacher to recommend something they might like.

Make the story come to life. Encourage your child to read aloud with expression so the story comes to life. This will help them read more fluently.

Discuss books. Ask your child to tell you about the books they are reading: the type of book, the characters, the plot. Encourage them to have an opinion - Was it a good book? Why?

Use a dictionary. Buy your child a dictionary and encourage them to use to check the meanings of new words.

Activities To Try At Home

Suggest that your child interviews a grandparent or family friend about what life was like when they were growing up or about some aspect of more recent history, such as the Second World War. Help them to prepare the questions in advance. If the interview comes out well try to get it printed in the school/community magazine or the local paper, or email it to rif@literacytrust.org.uk.

Suggest that your child re-writes the lyrics for their favourite song or a completely new song of their own.

A Guide To Parent's Evenings

Due to the larger numbers of students and the fact that your child now has several teachers, parents' evenings are organised rather differently in secondary schools. The dates of the Year 7 Parents' Evening are given on page 4 of this booklet. However, a letter will be sent out nearer to the time inviting you in to school. We hold the "Settling In" parents' evening in the first term. This is where you see your child's tutor and perhaps Mrs Lane and Mrs Hulton as they will have the best overview of how your child is settling in generally. It is useful to jot down any questions or concerns before the meeting.

For the remainder of the Parents' Evenings, around two weeks or so before the evening, your child will bring home a letter with an appointment sheet attached, on which the student writes the names of the teachers for each subject and then will make appointments with those teachers who you would like to speak to. If you don't receive this slip do check with the school if you are concerned that you may have missed it. Most appointments are for 5 minutes. You will need to allow some time for finding and moving between teachers. Try to see as many teachers as possible, especially if there are issues you need to raise with them. Your appointments with the teachers will provide an opportunity for them to tell you how they feel your child is getting on in very general terms, and for you to ask any questions or raise any concerns you have. If you or they have major concerns, the teacher will probably suggest a further, longer meeting at another time or refer you to the Learning and Progress Co-ordinator or the Head.

On the night itself, teachers will be sitting in the curriculum area groups at tables with the names displayed in the school hall. There will be someone to greet you in the foyer who will mark your attendance and guide you to the hall. Appointments don't always run to time as delays and over-runs are sometimes unavoidable, so be prepared for some waiting around. If you don't get to see who you were hoping to, you can always make an alternative appointment.

It's a good idea to take your child with you - one to hear what their teachers have to say, but also to guide you and find the teachers you have arranged to meet! Finally, don't feel daunted - all new parents will feel exactly the same.

COMPUTER USE AND INTERNET ACCESS

As part of the school's ICT programme, we offer pupils supervised access to the Internet, the global network of computers you will have read about and seen on television. Before the school allows students to use the Internet, they must obtain parental permission. Both they and you must sign and return the enclosed form as evidence of your approval and their acceptance of the rules on this matter. Various projects have proven the educational benefits of Internet access, which will enable pupils to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards. They will also be able to exchange messages with other learners and teachers throughout the world. Although Internet use is supervised in our school, families will wish to be aware that some pupils may find ways to access material that is inaccurate, defamatory, illegal, or potentially offensive to some people. We believe that the benefits to pupils from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages. However, as with any other area, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. The school therefore supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for access.

During school, teachers will guide students towards appropriate material. At home, families bear the same responsibility for guidance as they exercise with other information sources such as television, telephones, films and radio, within school we are constantly updating our computer systems to provide a "Duty of Care" to our students by this we operate a CEOP programme (Child Exploitation and Online Protection agency) this demonstrates both the good and bad sides to internet use, we also use products like Securus and Ranger within school to monitor student & staff internet and email access and usage. We have also included in your welcome pack a very useful CD "Know IT all" for you to watch on a computer at home, this will give you help and hints and has been produced as a guide to getting the most out of the internet and keeping children safe online.

LINKS WITH PARENTS

Excellent schools can only operate if there is a strong partnership with dedicated teachers, well-motivated, hard working students and of course supportive parents. We feel that it is important for parents to be fully involved in the education of their child and we also invite you to support the school and its activities.

Governors

The school needs Governors of all types and backgrounds. If you are interested please ask Mrs Crompton, our Headteacher, about becoming a Governor yourself. You do not have to be an expert on education - common sense and an interest in the school are what matter.

Parents can access current information about the progress of the school via the School Profile which can be found using the links on the school website at www.middtech.com.

Other Assistance

We welcome parents who wish to help on an informal basis in the school. If you would like to get involved in any way please contact Mrs Hulton in the first instance.

Free School Meals and Uniform Vouchers

If you are unsure about whether you are eligible to claim for Free School Meals or Uniform Grant, please contact our Inclusion Secretary, Mrs Smith at the school on 0161 643 5116, or the Education Welfare Service on 01706 925638.

Middleton Technology School: Officially a Healthy place to Be!

We are all too aware these days about the importance of a healthy lifestyle. We switch on the TV to watch endless programmes about how a poor diet and a lack of exercise can have a detrimental effect on our health, particularly that of our growing children. That is why Middleton Technology School is proud to be awarded 'National Healthy Schools' status.

So, what have we done to achieve this?

We have shown that we are committed to the following four core themes: improving the standards of healthy eating, providing opportunities pupils to keep physically active, promoting the importance of positive emotional health and well being and implementing an inclusive Life Education curriculum.

So how will this benefit our pupils, staff and local community?

There is a wealth of information and facilities available for learning about the importance of a healthy lifestyle in the hope to keep the children of Middleton Technology School are the safest, happiest and healthiest they can be.

If you require any more information about Healthy Schools please contact Miss Elleray in school.

ROAD SAFETY ADVICE

Advice On How To Beat The Single Biggest Killer Of 11-16's In The U.K.

FACT-The majority of road traffic collisions in Rochdale involve young people between the ages 11-14

FACT-The biggest single killer of 11-16 year olds in the UK is road traffic collisions

FACT-The majority of collisions occur between 8-9 a.m. & 3-4 p.m.

Why Do The Figures Increase As Children Go To High School?

- Children travelling independently for the first time
- Making their own decisions
- Longer journeys
- New roads/busier roads
- Distractions/new friends, mobile phones

How Can You Help?

- Before school starts in September help your child plan their route to school
- Go on a practise run and look for potential dangers
- Talk to your child about making responsible decisions e.g. using safe places to cross roads
- Time the journey so your child is not panicking or rushing in the morning
- If it's dark make sure your child wears reflective material so they can be clearly seen by drivers
- If you child has a mobile phone make sure it's topped up so they can contact you in an emergency

Help With Planning The Journey

Greater Manchester buses have an excellent website to help with planning all bus journeys, including advice about school buses for individual schools.

Log onto www.gmpte.com

Click on JOURNEY PLANNER

Follow the step by step instructions entering the start & end points for your journey.

The last screen will show you

- Where to catch your bus
- The bus number
- The time it arrives
- The time you will arrive at your destination
- The total journey time, from leaving your home to arriving at your destination

For any road safety advice contact Jacqui Hogg on 01706-924654 or email jacqui.hogg@theimpactpartnership.com

BUS SERVICES

Number 17 Bus from Rochdale and Castleton to School

Number 59 Bus from Manchester and Blackley to School

Number 80 (GM Bus) and Number 112 runs from Manchester to Middleton via Moston (alight at Grimshaw Lane)

Number 145 (JP Travel) runs from Piccadilly/Arndale to Middleton (alight at the bottom of Sandy Lane)



Parents are therefore advised to contact:

GMPTE Telephone Enquiry Unit on 0161-228-7811
BEFORE the start of the school year on Monday 7th September 2009

BICYCLES

A bike shed is available on the premises which is locked throughout the day. Students are advised to wear a helmet if they ride to school, and to provide their own lock for added security.

Term Dates – 2009/10

Autumn Term

Staff Training

**Thursday 3rd and Friday 4th September 2009
NO STUDENTS**

Students return to school
Half Term Ends

Monday 7th September 2009
Friday 23rd October 2009

Half Term Holiday
2009

Monday 26th October 2009 – Friday 30th October

Students return to school
Autumn Term Ends

Monday 2nd November 2009
Friday 18th December 2009

Christmas Holiday
2010

Monday 21st December 2009 – Friday 1st January

Spring Term

Staff Training

Monday 4th January 2010 - NO STUDENTS

Students return to school
Half Term Ends

Tuesday 5th January 2010
Friday 12th February 2010

Half Term Holiday
2010

Monday 15th February 2010 – Friday 19th February

Students return to school
Spring Term Ends

Monday 22nd February 2010
Thursday 1st April 2010

Easter Holiday

Friday 2nd April 2010 – Friday 16th April 2010

Summer Term

Students return to school

Monday 19th April 2010

Bank Holiday

Monday 3rd May 2010

Half Term Ends

Friday 28th May 2010

Half Term Holiday

Monday 31st May 2010 – Friday 4th June 2010

Students return to school
Summer Term Ends

Monday 7th June 2010
Wednesday 21st July 2010