

## REORGANISATION - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*Have you got enough classrooms to accommodate all of the students?*

In short, yes! The original 13-18 school was built to accommodate a much larger number of students than are currently living in the area. There will be some need to change the use of some areas but there is no immediate need for more buildings. The projections on numbers going forward indicate the potential need for additional classrooms and the Local Authority has planned for this.

*How will you prepare for the different learning approaches to KS3?*

All our teachers are qualified to teach the secondary age-range from age 11 and many have recently taught in regular 11-16/18 secondary schools. We have started a programme of visits to other secondary schools, to enhance further what we are doing in school already as part of our training programme for staff.

*Will you be setting students in Year 7 and Year 8?*

Certainly not at the start of Year 7 and at the moment, when and how we introduce different grouping, is being considered. It is likely there will be a different approach in different subject areas, which is likely to include setting at some point.

*What improvements are being made to the site?*

There are a number of projects planned and ongoing to improve the school site. As well as general classroom refurbishment, we will have some new toilet facilities by November 2021 and the programme of replacing all our windows will continue too.

In sport, our tennis courts have been resurfaced and the lighting improved. This space is now also able to be used for netball. For cricket we recently had a new artificial wicket installed and we are close to agreeing arrangements, so that we can work in partnership with Somerset FA and The Football Foundation, to have a 3G artificial pitch put on our site.

Our dining facilities will be expanded and some areas will be re-purposed as classrooms.

At the front of school, the Local Authority will increase our space for coaches to accommodate the increased number that will be needed.

*What is the plan for transporting Year 7 and Year 8 into Wadham? I am worried that my son who will be in Year 7 will be on a bus with Year 11s.*

Transport arrangements are the responsibility of Somerset County Council. In common with all secondary schools, it is likely that buses will have all age groups on each bus. We understand that some parents may be hesitant about this and can assure you that students soon get used to the arrangements. CCTV is present on buses and we will work with you and your child if there are any issues on buses.

*I live in Ilminster and if my child comes to Wadham I would like them to take part in extra-curricular activities. Will there be a late bus?*

Somerset County Council have undertaken to provide a free bus back to Ilminster to enable this to happen.

*Will you still have a sixth form?*

Across Somerset (indeed nationally) there is currently a bulge in young people aged 16+. There will be an increasing need for post-16 places going forward. 16-18-year-olds bring a positive dimension to any school and we believe it helps young people to show leadership and thrive. In addition, as we know the strengths and weaknesses of students who are already with us, we believe we are best placed to make that transition from Year 11 to post-16 learning, where we offer the subjects they wish to study. There are no plans to reduce our age-range and remove the 6<sup>th</sup> form. If students choose to stay here there is no need to think this will change.

*Have you got the expertise to support students with special education needs who will be in Year 7 and Year 8?*

Yes. We have a team of expert teaching assistants and our SENDCo is one of the Deputy Headteachers. Our staffing structure for next year envisages increasing our personnel in this area and having a stand-alone SENDCo post. This will strengthen what is already in place. We have dedicated facilities, where this is needed, including the former caretaker's bungalow (The Bridge) which has been adapted for use by students with SEN and/or emotional support.

*What subjects will be taught in Year 7 and Year 8?*

Our offer is broad and includes the creative arts and technologies and goes beyond what is required in Key Stage 3 (Yrs 7-9). Our planning assumes that we will continue to offer a curriculum which is broad and rich and not just what is strictly required. Beyond English, Mathematics and Science, it will include the creative arts, humanities and various technologies.

*Are you working with the middle/Primary schools to make this transition as smooth as possible? How many visits to Wadham will my Year 6 daughter have?*

Yes, we are working closely with partner schools. In the summer of 2021 we started initial discussions about a transition programme throughout the 2021-22 academic year, involving all students who will join us in September 2022. Indeed, we see this as a model for future work, beyond 2022. The aim is that each student will have multiple opportunities to visit their new school, through the year.

The staff of the schools, meet regularly already and this will facilitate the transfer of information, so that we understand your child, from that point of view, as best as we can.

*Can we plan to visit Wadham other than during an open evening?*

Of course. Please contact us and we will arrange a time for you.

*Are you getting any of the staff from the middle schools?*

There is an agreed process which we are currently entering around the deployment of staff. We have notified the extra staff we will need and these posts will be offered to colleagues in schools where their current post is under threat, first, before being advertised more widely.

*Will the uniform be changing for September 2022?*

The question of change of uniform has inevitably been raised as a way of marking a new school. Any proposal to change would be consulted upon, including the option to keep the uniform as it is. Costs associated with each version would also be made known.

*Who do I contact if my child has educational needs that need to be supported?*

When your child arrives, their Director of Learning (Head of Year) would be the person to ask for. If your child has an Education and Health care Plan (Statement of SEN), this will be looked at as part of the transition process and you will be involved in any discussion.

If your child is on their current schools SEN Register (without a statement), this will also be part of the normal transition process.

When we have determined who the Director Learning (Head of Year) will be, we will provide their contact details, so that you raise any issues you wish to raise at that time. This is unlikely to be before March 2022

*Will your staff be coming to the middle schools to meet my children?*

As part of our programme to help staff and students get to know each other, we will do some activities, which we are calling 'flipped teaching'. This will mean that current Wadham staff will teach some Y7 and Y8 lessons in the students' current school and teachers joining Wadham, will come and teach some lessons with students already here. While we cannot guarantee that all children will see their new teachers, we hope this will help all to get to know each other better.