



**Ormiston**  
**RIVERS**  
**Academy**

## Welcome to Ormiston Rivers Academy

Year 6 is a very exciting year of your child's education. The children are on the verge of becoming young adults, developing their inquisitive minds and preparing to make new friends.

At Ormiston Rivers Academy we aim to encourage them to develop into outstanding learners through 'Deepening Learning, raising aspiration': by showing a positive attitude through our CARE Values.

For children to feel ready for life at secondary school it is essential that they should reflect on their own strengths, celebrate these and recognise how they learn best. They should also know their areas for development, ask for help when needed, and recognise ways in which they can support themselves to make progress. The most successful children show resilience and are aspirational.

We also hope you will join us in supporting your child as we help them to achieve their potential.

We are pleased to welcome your child to Ormiston Rivers Academy and thank you for placing your trust in us. We understand that the transition from primary to secondary school is a significant milestone, and we are committed to ensuring it is a smooth and positive experience. Induction day activities have given students a valuable introduction to life at Rivers, helping them to begin building friendships, exploring the school environment, and developing confidence for the journey ahead.

At Ormiston Rivers Academy, we believe that strong partnerships with parents and carers are vital to student success. We are dedicated to working closely with you to support your child both academically and personally. Our experienced pastoral and teaching teams are here to ensure every student feels safe, valued, and inspired to achieve their best. We look forward to welcoming you into our school community.

# Welcome the Head of Year 7

We are pleased to welcome you to Ormiston Rivers Academy,

Starting a new academic year brings with it a range of emotions for both students and parents alike. As Head of Year 7 I understand this and will be sharing these emotions with all of you as your child takes the next step in their educational journey.

Ormiston Rivers Academy prides itself on its core values: Community, Ambition, Respect, Resilience, and Excellence. As Head of Year 7 I am committed to upholding and promoting these values every day, working closely with students and families to maintain the high standards expected at the school.

The academy's policies relating to education, safety, and wellbeing are available on the school website. These guidelines are consistently followed to ensure a safe and supportive learning environment. Parents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these policies so that together, we can provide the best possible support for every student.

Academic achievement, continuous progress across subjects, and a love for learning are central to the academy's mission. Equally important is the development of young people into responsible, confident individuals who make positive contributions both inside school and in the wider community.

I look forward to welcoming each and every student entering year 7 in September and know that with the hard work and collaboration of both Ormiston Rivers and Academy and the support structure you provide at home we can achieve outstanding outcomes for every child who steps through our doors.


## Building Independence

We ask all students to make sure that they are ready to learn for all lessons. This includes having their writing equipment, a purple pen, planners, reading books and calculators with them.

All form tutors and teachers will be checking at the start of every lesson. The school shop is open every day to purchase equipment too.

There will be an opportunity to buy all the stationery items your child will need at the uniform event.

We are also aiming to reduce our plastic use in school and ask all students to bring in their own refillable water bottles each day.



**Are you Ready to Learn?**

**Be ready to learn by...**

- Being on time
- Having all your equipment
- Having all your books

- Pen - Pencil - Rubber - Ruler - Sharpener - All your exercise books -  
- Student Planner - Reading book - Calculator -  
**AND** a good bag to carry it all in

**Be respectful by...**

- Looking after school equipment
- Stopping and listening when an adult speaks
- Showing pride in your learning and presentation

Ormiston RIVERS Academy

# Mobile Phone Policy from September 2025

Research from the Department for Education published this year shows that the use of mobile phones impacts students' mental health, wellbeing and learning.

## **Impact on mental health & wellbeing:**

- There has been an increase in major depression (145% in girls / 161% in boys) since 2010 when smart phones were launched.
- Rates of self harm have also tripled and rates of suicide have increased by 91% in boys and 167% in girls.
- There has been a 52% Increase in screen time between 2020 and 2022, with 25% of young people using mobile phones in a way that is consistent with behavioural addiction.

## **Impact on learning:**

- The presence of a smart phone affects attention and concentration, impacting learning and recall [of knowledge]
- It can take up to 20 minutes for students to refocus on what they were learning after receiving a notification on their device
- Young people exposed to more than 2 hours of screen time on smart phones per day have worse working memory, processing speed, attention levels, language skills and executive function compared to those who do not.

We have a duty to create a learning environment which is calm, safe and free from distraction so all students can learn and thrive.

To achieve this we will be using Focus pouches to ensure mobile phones are not seen, heard or used during the school day.

# **Mobile Phone Policy from September 2025**

Every student will be assigned a personal Focus Pouch – Year 7 will get these in September on their first day.

It is each student's responsibility to bring their pouch with them to school every day and keep it in good working condition.

During morning line up students will turn off their phone and place it in their pouch locking it for the day so it cannot be accessed.

At the end of the day students will unlock their pouch at the unlocking stations at exit points around the building.

Students with a documented medical need that requires phone monitoring, e.g. diabetes, will have a medical phone pouch that allows them to meet their need. This will be approved by the DSL.

If students need to contact home in an emergency, they should go to student reception.

If a student does not comply with this procedure their phone will be confiscated and parents contacted to collect it, and the mobile phone misuse pathway will be followed.

Further details are in our mobile device management policy on our website.

# Attendance

## Attendance Officer – Mrs D Parry

Regular school attendance is essential for all of our students to make good progress, achieve their academic potential and consequently have better chances in life. There is clear evidence to show that any time missed by a student has a detrimental effect on their learning and in particular, their final academic achievement in terms of GCSE qualifications.

**The attendance target for every student at the school is 100%**, however, we understand that the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex and that some children find it harder than others to attend. We would work with you to identify any barriers. We have a strong network of support staff and Heads of Year here at ORA who can offer support if your child is experiencing barriers due to attending school regularly. We also have counselling support for any students who have been absent due to bereavement or other personal circumstances, as well as the Mental Health Schools Team who offer sessions in school for students who are referred for support.

### Absence reporting:

Students should attend school unless they are very unwell. On every day of absence please contact the school with the reason why your son/daughter is not attending. Please contact us as early as possible and at the latest by 8am on the first day of absence. This can be via the following methods:

**MyEd messaging App** - [www.myedschoolapp.com](http://www.myedschoolapp.com)

**Attendance line** on – 01621 787855

We want our students to wear their uniform with Pride. We have taken steps to make sure our uniform is affordable and practical as possible.

- Academy Blazer with blue trim and Ormiston Rivers Academy Badge
- Ormiston Rivers school tie, self-tie or clip-on
- Plain black tailored school trousers or Academy tartan mock kilt, kilts should be no more than 5cm above the knee
- Black socks or black/neutral tights
- White school shirt that can be done up to the top button (long or short sleeves)
- Black leather school shoes – not Vans, or canvas shoes/trainers or boots.
  
- Leggings are not permitted at all
- Decorative belts, combat style trousers and cropped trousers are not permitted
- Only the official Academy jumper is permitted, although this is no longer a compulsory item, sweatshirts and hoodies are not to be worn.
- Tailored shorts can be worn in the summer term only.
  
- **Our uniform policy can be located on our website – Key Info – Policies – ORA Uniform Policy**

## Compulsory physical education uniform:

- Black polo shirt with blue trim and Academy logo
- Plain black shorts with Academy logo
- Long black socks
- Football/rugby boots
- Training shoes with non-marking soles, not plimsolls, Vans, Converse etc.
- Shin pads for football

## Optional P.E. items:

- Plain back underlayers, to be worn underneath the compulsory P.E. kit (no logos)
- ORA leggings
- ORA PE Jumper

## Our Senior Designated Lead is Ms Goodfellow, Assistant Principal

We also have a team of Student Support Assistants (SSAs) to report issues to. If you have any concerns about the welfare of any of the children within the school, please do speak with them.

When concerns are raised or noticed, we must make sure that any information is recorded. Parents will be contacted to discuss any concerns as soon as possible. On a few occasions, where there may be serious concerns, the information must be shared with our partners in the Police, Social Services and Health care as well.

Let your child's form tutor or class teacher know if something has happened that means your child is upset or unhappy; or if there is something you feel we ought to know. This will enable us to support your child. The sooner we know there has been an issue the sooner we can resolve it.

## Travelling to and from school

Some children will be walking or cycling home from school. At primary school, students will have been taught about road safety and may have done their cycling proficiency award. We will continue to discuss these themes, plus rail and water safety, and being safe in the local community. We work closely with the local policing team to support our students and will invite them into school to discuss these topics.

Children may be using the school bus for the first time. Check the times and locations of the pick-up/drop offs carefully. We work closely with the bus companies – they do have CCTV on each bus to monitor students' safety.

We use Fords of Althorne as our main bus provider – please make applications for your child's travel on the Essex County Council website for your child's bus pass.

We carry out daily Community walks in the morning to make sure everyone is OK on the journey to school.

# Internet Safety

Being safe online and when using social media –  
in school and at home

Within school we have strict filters on our computers that help block inappropriate sites for the children. The children are frequently reminded of Internet Safety Rules through the curriculum and assemblies, and we ask parents/carers to sign our Acceptable use Policy in students' planners.

We urge parents to keep a close eye on the Internet usage that children access at home. Children may be using social media sites on their phones at home – we always advise parents/carers to monitor this and know their contacts and passwords.

We also encourage all students, parents and staff to use the Safer Schools App which we as a school have signed up to- this is rolled out for all year groups at the beginning of every academic year

Information for Parents can be found :

CEOP: [www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk)

Think U Know: [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

Childnet: [www.childnet-int.org](http://www.childnet-int.org)

## Cashless payments

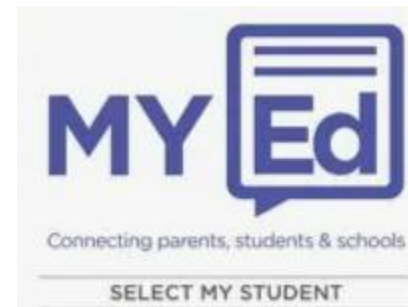
- We use Parent Pay as our online payment portal
- Details for your child's Parent Pay account will be sent out during the summer holidays
- Parent Pay allows for cashless payments using a catering card
- Catering cards will be issued on the Year 7's first day
- To allow for a quick transition through the canteen and other catering outlets, it is essential that students remember their cards,
- Replacement cards can be ordered via Parent Pay at a cost of £1
- You can also purchase items of uniform i.e. a tie via Parent Pay
  
- If you meet the criteria for Free School Meals, you need to contact Essex County Council to inform them of a change of school.

## Safer Schools App, My Ed, Go for Schools

This App will be introduced to Year 7 and parents/ carers in September. It links with advice for all when using social media and digital technology.



A messaging app for Schools and parents/carers - used for trips, events, attendance and more



## Behaviour – Attendance – Timetables – Homework – Attainment – Detentions

Students and parents have access to all the above through our new Arbor app.

We recommend all students, parents and carers download the app and log in with the email account associated with the school (Student will be ORA email address as of September). You will need to access the main Arbor website as a first-time user to create your password. Once that is set up you can download the app for ease of use.

More information will be shared on this app in September.



## Welcome to Arbor

 [Log in with Microsoft](#)

or log in with your email

Email address

Password

[First time logging in?](#)

[Forgot your password?](#)

[Log in](#)

Powered by  Arbor

## English and Maths support

Research shows that home learning has a positive impact on learning when used in a focused way. The positive side is that:

- Children become enthused when faced with investigative, open ended and practical home activities.
- Parents can support where the school clearly links the home learning with school learning.
- Children can rehearse essential skills.
- Children can develop good learning behaviours.
- Parents see the type of learning their child is doing at school.
- Parents can see the quality of written work in the class books.

- We encourage frequent reading in school and ask all students to have a library book on them as part of their equipment.
- Reading at home, like in Primary school, is still a useful way of develop your child's reading skills.
- Here are some other ways in which you can evidence your reading and develop your literacy skills.
- Most important of all; make reading with you as enjoyable as possible.

Summarise the story in 50 words	Write a review of the book	Draw a picture of an event in the story you enjoyed	Re-write the ending of the story
Re-write and decorate a poem you enjoyed	Write a postcard from a character in the book to a friend	Write the first chapter of the sequel to the book	Re-write an event in the book, changing it from positive to negative or vice versa
Write a diary entry from the point of view of one of the characters	Re-design the book's front cover	Write a poem inspired by a book you have read	Storyboard and event in the story you found interesting
Write an event in the story as a play script	Create a poster on the famous person you have read about	Write a recommendation to a friend	Write a letter to the author of the book telling them what you enjoyed

One of the most valuable things that you can do is to talk to your child about their maths learning. Ask them what they have been learning and encourage them to explain. We all use maths in our everyday lives which means that there are plenty of opportunities to help your child with their maths learning by involving them in everyday activities.

Here are some possible ideas which you could use:

- 1) Count forwards and backwards in jumps of the same size (eg. 6, 7, 8, 9, 25) and so on. Physical activities such as skipping and playing catch could be incorporated to encourage motivation.
- 2) Talk about the shape of 2D and 3D objects and discuss their properties. Try and identify different examples of 2D and 3D shapes in the environment.
- 3) Ask your child to help when you are using money in practical, real-life contexts (eg. paying for items in a shop). Ask your child to work out how much the items might cost and how much change you might receive.

4) Ask your child to help with tasks such as measuring and weighing ingredients or when measuring the length or height of an object.

5) Help them to understand time, reading and interpreting both digital and analogue clocks. Involve them with dates/diaries. Ask them to calculate time intervals (eg. 'We left the house at 9:55am and we returned at 3:35pm. How long were we out for?').

6) Help your child to read and interpret timetables by asking them to use a magazine or the Internet to find out about when TV programmes and/or films are on and how long they will last.

7) Ask your child to estimate the total price of items when shopping by rounding prices mentally to the nearest pound or ten pence.

## Who to contact ...

Please call our Main Reception, 01621 782377 where our Receptionist will be able to direct your call to:

- Head of Year 7
- Mr D Marklew – Assistant Principal I/c Behaviour and transition
- Ms Reynolds – SENDCo
- Mrs J Edwards – Admissions Officer & Admin. Support for Heads of Year
- Mrs D Parry – Attendance Officer

## Key dates

- Monday 22nd June, Year 6 transition day
- Monday 22nd June, Year 6 transition presentation with Mr Marklew, 5pm – 5.45pm
- Friday 19th June, Uniform event, 3:30pm – 6pm by appointment
- Wednesday 2nd September, registration day for Year 7
- Meet the Form Tutor evening September 2026 (to be confirmed)

Please refer to our website, **Key Info**, for information relating to the 2026/27 term dates