



Biddenham

International School & Sports College

Principal: Mr David Bailey

Head of School: Ms Eleanor Grylls

Welcome!

Welcome to Biddenham International and Sports College, we are looking forward to meeting you and hope that you will have a really happy and successful time here with us.

At Biddenham you will have the opportunity to enjoy a wide range of subjects and activities, sports, Music, Art, Drama, Textiles are just some of the opportunities and experiences that are waiting for you here.

Leaving your primary school and moving to the new, much bigger world of secondary education can be worrying and stressful. Our aim is to make all our new students feel welcome and safe so that you hit the ground running at the start of year 7 and make a great start to what will hopefully be some of the best years of your life.

If you are joining us from your primary school there is a special Induction Day when you will visit the school, meet all the other new students, make some new friends and try out some lessons! There is also an Induction Evening for parents when they can come to find out about how we do things at Biddenham, and spend some time with members of staff and ask any questions.

If you are the only student joining from your primary school there is no need to worry. You are extremely important to us and you will also be given an extra opportunity to visit us on single student day when you will get the opportunity to meet other students who are also the only ones joining from their schools.

First Few Weeks

You will find it strange and we are here to help you. You will have a selection of introduction sessions where you will learn how to use your chromebook and how to use the online platforms. We will also be carrying out some baseline assessments to see what you know and what gaps we need to fill in so that you are able to access the work or whether we can put further support in place for you. There is nothing to worry about just try your best!

You will take part in a special induction programme that gives you all the basics you need to be able to use your chromebook and all online resources. There will also be an opportunity for your parents to attend a workshop so they know how to help you too.

The school will feel big and there will be times when you feel lost and that is okay. We have a supportive school community where teachers and students will help you find your way. Here is what our year 7s said last year about starting at Biddenham School.

"The best thing about secondary school is it makes you more confident, there are lots of things to do after school, loads of clubs, I am never bored. Go and have some fun".

"There are much more fun activities and lessons here at secondary school and more teachers and new subjects that I have never done before like Drama."

"It was easy to make new friends on induction day, especially if you are not very social and a bit shy. I would recommend you try out lots of new clubs, it gives you confidence and responsibilities."

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"I was really scared and felt anxious that I would not know anyone but I made two new friends immediately."

"I felt mixed feelings about coming to secondary school, worried and excited at the same time, but once I got here and settled into my form group I feel like I have been here for ages now. I thought I would get lost but everyone helps you out."

Typical Day

Our school day starts at 7:45am and finishes at 2:30pm. We do not have school bells at Biddenham so having a watch is very important to know when and where you need to be. Particularly after lunchtime.

[Please see the times of the day](#)

Homework club is held after school in R9 where staff can help you with your homework.

Lateness

Teachers adore students who are on time. On the first day you arrive early, you want to make a good impression on both your new teachers and fellow students. First impressions have a resounding impact and you want to make sure you present yourself as a reliable and trusted student. This will benefit you throughout school life and set a good example to others.

On the odd occasion you might find yourself getting held up and you do not make it into school on time. It is really important that this does not happen because you are not just displaying poor timekeeping (future employers will know this information) but you will also be missing out on valuable lesson time. As a school we do understand this can happen so please let attendance know.

Firstly, you need to sign in at the Attendance Office in R block. You then need to head straight to your lesson apologising for your lateness. If you have missed a lesson or part of a lesson you will be expected to see the subject teacher and ask for the work you have missed and complete it as homework (this will be checked). In addition to this because of the lateness you will be given a 'Late' mark which will unfortunately result in a lunchtime detention.

Attendance

Attendance is very important if you want to achieve your very best at Biddenham. Every Friday morning we will review your attendance and keep a record of what percentage of time you have been in school.

- If you achieve 100% attendance every term you will receive a certificate from the Head of School and house points.
- If you receive 95% at the end of a half term or above you will receive house points.
- If you receive between 95%- 90% you will receive a house point.
- Students who achieve below 90% at the end of term this will result in a meeting with parents.

In addition to this if you drop below 85% the Education Officer will be invited to attend a meeting as you will be classed as a persistent absentee.

Equipment

Your bag needs to be a good size because at secondary school you will naturally need to bring more equipment with you. In your bag you will need a pencil case with the following contents:

Pencil
Pens (more than one if one runs out)
Protractor set
Glue stick
Colouring pencils
Rubber
Black fine liner pen
30 cm ruler
Pencil sharpener
Highlighter

In addition to this, in your bag you will need to keep your planner (signed every week by your parent/carer) and an A4 folder to keep homework neat when transporting homework to and from school.

Uniform

Look Your Best: Make sure you are presentable at all times! It is very important for school survival to maintain a high standard of outward appearance. Our uniform is our corporate identity and we wish to maintain its tradition. Do not waste time trying to customize your appearance because it will only succeed in making you look worse in the eyes of your peers and teachers, especially your tutor, head of year and Ms Simpson! And will more than often induce some form of punishment.

[Please see uniform requirements](#)

Year 7 Extra-Curricular Clubs

At Biddenham we strive to ensure that there are plenty of opportunities to participate and succeed in every type of sport possible. Participating in one of the many school clubs is a great way to make friends and this is vital to school survival. Everyone needs friends to help them with school life and to make it more enjoyable. A key part of school is the social side and in order to survive, try to be as friendly as possible and maintain a good group of friends.

[Please see example of extra-curricular opportunities](#)

Top Tips for Year 7

Always be on time: Teachers adore students who are on time. Always arrive at least 15 minutes early, you want to make a good impression on both your new teachers and fellow students. First impressions have a resounding impact and you want to make sure you present yourself as a reliable and trusted student. This will benefit you throughout school life and set a good example to others.

Plan: Another key skill that you will require in order to survive year 7 and to indeed prosper is the ability to plan your time effectively. Organisation is one of the key ingredients to success throughout school life and beyond the boundaries of the classroom. Being organised will help make your school life more pleasant and will make meeting deadlines and completing homework a lot easier. This will give your teachers and fellow students a good impression of you.

Study: Personal study or revising is one of the fundamental foundations of survival and in fact success at any level both at school and throughout university. It is such a simple principle and yet it is surprising how many people ignore the true significance of its importance. Revision needs to be done properly and we all learn in different ways. You will need to try a few different techniques to find out which one best suits your character. Stick to it and it will aid your survival of any exams that may occur throughout the year.

Balance: It is important to maintain a healthy balance between work and play. You need to make sure you have enough time to have fun and relax but not too the extent at which your school work is threatened as a consequence. A healthy balance is easy to find but hard to maintain, but in doing so you will be assured to survive year 7.

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Join or Start a Club: At Biddenham we strive to ensure that there is plenty of opportunity to participate and succeed in every type of sport possible. Participating in one of the many school clubs is a great way to make friends and this is vital to school survival. Everyone needs friends to help them with school life and to make it more enjoyable. A key part of school is the social side and in order to survive try to be as friendly as possible and maintain a good group of friends.

Smile: Something small like this may not seem like much, but it can bring changes in other peoples' attitudes all around you. It will also make you appear to be a friendly, happy, fun and warm person. You will have some new friends soon enough if you keep a good attitude, and keep smiling!

Focus: To succeed in secondary school, you have to have the right frame of mind. Think of it like this - work hard now and reap the benefits later. The incentive to do well at school is a long term commitment and one that can be easily forgotten, you need sharp focus to remember your motives. Do not let friends or other environmental or social factors detract you from the path that leads to success. This is essential to school survival.

Get help if you are being bullied: At this school we pride ourselves in the peaceful co-existence and social harmony we have. In our recent Ofsted inspection special mention was made to the 'buzzing school community'. This feature of our school is very evident from the attitudes of our students and maintained through the use of the 'Anti-bullying Forum' representatives, which is elected at the start of the term. If, in the unusual circumstance you are bullied, you **MUST** talk to someone! Do not keep it bottled up.

Instil discipline: Make sure you show respect for the school rules and traditions. At Biddenham we have a keen staffing body dedicated to the maintenance of discipline and the upholding of school rules and traditions. To survive year 7 without getting a bad mark against your name from teachers or prefects is another vital part of succeeding in school. Biddenham has no tolerance for ill-discipline. It is best to just abide by the rules and appreciate their wider importance in maintaining the school structure and functions.

Know your strengths and set targets: Make sure you are realistic with your own abilities and do not stretch yourself too far or you will fail. You have to gain an understanding of you own limits and abilities; set yourself realistic targets to give you something to work towards in the short term that is achievable. The teachers are not expecting you to all be geniuses in every subject and if you admit to needing help or if you are struggling, they will always do their best to dedicate extra time and effort to make sure you do not fall behind.

Stay Positive: Having a good attitude will help you keep your spirits up when things seem to be falling apart around you. Stay calm and relaxed if you get into some kind of trouble in school. Do these things: sincerely apologise when you need to; learn from mistakes and do not make them again. This enables you to move on a wiser and happier person.

Stay True To Yourself: Secondary school is a new world - you can lose yourself. Stay grounded - that does not mean you cannot try new things though.

Make sure you have a few friends in other years: Older friends can be a vital source of information, comfort and support. At Biddenham we are launching many mentoring schemes to help the younger students in the school with all aspects of school life. It is often the case that students find it easier to approach fellow students with their concerns, and fellow students also tend to show more empathy. Let me know if you are interested.

Remember that your teachers are just people too: Talk to them and they will help you, they only want the best for you!

I am really looking forward to meeting you all and if you need any further support please see our [transition booklet](#) for more support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simpson', written in a cursive style.

Ms Simpson
Assistant Headteacher, Key Stage 3