

Dormston School



An Information Guide for Parents/Carers
2025 - 2026



Useful Contacts

Switchboard/Reception

01384 816395

Attendance Officer

Mrs J Innes

01384 816401

Head of Year 7

Mr S Cooksey

scooksey@dormston.dudley.sch.uk

Deputy Head of Year 7

Mrs N Garrett

ngarrett@dormston.dudley.sch.uk

Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion

Mrs K Beer

kbeer@dormston.dudley.sch.uk

SENDCO

Mrs A Keen

akeen@dormston.dudley.sch.uk

Please consult our school website for updated school information, forthcoming events, newsletters, curriculum guidance, policies and documentation.

www.dormston.dudley.sch.uk

Headteacher's Message

'Dormston School aims to inspire confident, motivated students who have a passion for learning and are fully equipped to contribute to society'.

At Dormston we want to prepare all of our students so they are 'determined, persistent, disciplined, collaborative and inquiring citizens who are increasingly independent. We want them to foster a love of learning and to make the most of all of the opportunities on offer to them'.

Our core values are 'Effort, Knowledge, Respect, Responsibility & Resilience'.

Effort – We believe that when a student tries their very best there is no end to what they can achieve. Students may not always find every subject easy but with determination and drive they will succeed. Good effort also means **attending school every day** and being on time and equipped for all lessons.

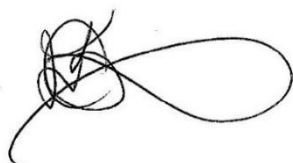
Knowledge – Children come to school to learn. It may sound obvious but every day our staff will be expecting your sons and daughters to give 100% to their school work. We think carefully about our curriculum to ensure children are provided with a broad and balanced experience. We will set all students challenging targets which they have to work hard to achieve.

Respect – Good behaviour is the key to a happy and successful school and we will expect all students to have good manners and show respect for themselves, each other, all staff and their learning environment. We will not allow any students to 'steal' the learning of others in the class through poor behaviour and we make no apologies for our behaviour system which demands high standards from students.

Responsibility – We expect all students to be responsible members of the school community. That means taking responsibility for their learning and actions but also playing their part in making the school a great place to be. We offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities that enhance the learning experience. Students are encouraged to take on leadership responsibilities whether that be in the classroom, sports field, stage or local community.

Resilience – We hope that your child is very happy at Dormston School and enjoys every day but sometimes school life, like life outside school, can become a little challenging. When the going gets tough we want our students to be strong enough mentally and physically to see their way through their problems and emerge as stronger and wiser people. Our pastoral team are always there to provide the support and encouragement to make sure no student is left behind.

I am delighted that you have chosen Dormston for your son/ daughter and I look forward to welcoming you to our wonderful school.



**Headteacher
Mrs C Sutton**

Key Information

SCHOOL DAY

The school operates on a two-week timetable. When your child starts Dormston they will be given a print out of their timetable.

8.40am - 9.00am	Registration/Assembly
9.00am - 10.00am	Lesson 1
10.05am - 11.05am	Lesson 2
11.05am - 11.25am	Break
11.25am - 12.25pm	Lesson 3
12.30pm - 1.30pm	Lesson 4
1.30pm - 2.10pm	Lunch
2.10pm - 3.10pm	Lesson 5
3.10pm	End of Day

**All students must remain in school at lunchtime. They have a choice of purchasing food from several food outlets or bringing in their own packed lunch.*

For the Autumn and Spring terms our Year 7 students have the use of the Gallery area so they can socialise with their Year group whilst settling into the school. Toilets are based in this area.



SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

At Dormston we encourage excellent attendance and punctuality. Your child's Form Tutor will carefully monitor their attendance and punctuality. We realise that sometimes absence from school is unavoidable, however, we encourage parents and carers to ensure students are in school as much as possible. If your child is away for any reason please contact the school, preferably before 8.30am, on the first day of absence.

Please be mindful that your child's attendance and punctuality will have a great impact upon their learning and the DfE requires all schools to address persistent absence as a potential safeguarding concern.

Holidays within term time will not be authorised unless under exceptional circumstances.

PARENTAL ADVICE ABOUT SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Simple things you can do today to help your child to attend school:

- Ensure they arrive to school on time, properly dressed and fully equipped, Ready to learn
- Instill in your children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly
- Impress upon children the need to observe our core values
- Take an active interest in your child's school career, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour and attending parent's evenings and other relevant meetings
- Work in partnership with us to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance
- Ensure you are aware of our attendance policy and procedures
- Notify us if your child is going to be absent. This should be done as soon as possible and definitely on the first day of absence. You should also provide a reason for the absence.
- Keep them in a routine
- Avoid making medical/Dental appointments during school hours
- Avoid booking holidays during term time
- If you are having difficulty with your child attending school, ask the school for help today. Do not wait!

EQUIPMENT

We encourage our students to become independent learners and as such it is vital they are always fully prepared for their learning. **All students are required to bring a sturdy bag to school containing the following necessary equipment and stationery:**

- ✓ pens - blue or black
- ✓ purple pen to mark corrections – optional as each classroom has a small supply
- ✓ pencils
- ✓ ruler
- ✓ rubber
- ✓ pencil sharpener
- ✓ scientific calculator - we recommend for our 5-year curriculum (Casio fx-83GT X)
- ✓ reading book



Equipment checks will take place each morning in registration. Parents/carers will be notified if students are not fully prepared for learning and a behaviour event will be issued following an initial warning.

Calculators

All students are required to have a scientific calculator with them to aid with their learning and progress. As such, the calculators we recommend for our 5-year curriculum (Casio fx-83GT X) these will be available to purchase in school normally at a discounted price. Further information will follow at the start of our September term. The maths department welcomes the use of other models of scientific calculator, however, please note that both staff and students are more proficient in using the Casio model.

MOBILE PHONES/VALUABLE ITEMS

Students must not use mobile phones, AirPods, smartwatches, or other valuable items during the school day, as they are a distraction to learning.

We kindly ask parents and carers not to contact their child directly via their mobile phone during school hours. Should you need to get in touch, please contact the main reception or email your child's form tutor, year leader, or deputy year leader. Email addresses can be found at the beginning of this booklet.

If you would like your child to bring a mobile phone for use when travelling to and from school, it must be handed in at pupil reception before morning registration and collected at the end of the school day.

If a student is seen using a mobile phone during school hours, they will be asked to turn off the device, hand it in at pupil reception, and a detention will be issued. This detention will be removed only if a parent or carer collects the phone. If a parent or carer is unable to collect the phone, the detention will remain in place without exception.

Please note: School will take no responsibility for valuable lost or broken items brought into school.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Some of you may be eligible for free school meals. When your child joins us in September free school meals currently applied for through Dudley MBC will automatically continue. If you live outside of the Dudley Borough you will need to re-apply via Dudley MBC's Free School Meals Team. If you wish to apply please go to <https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/benefits/free-school-meals/>.

If you need any further information please contact the Free School Meals Team on 01384 814988 or by emailing freeschoolmeals.benefits@dudley.gov.uk.

If your child is entitled to free school meals we feel that it was important to clarify their entitlement so that you are aware of our provisions for free school meals for your child. Any child in receipt of free school meals is entitled to:

- Attend our pre-school breakfast club from 8.15am in the River Café with breakfast options of pastries, toast, hash browns, cereal or porridge (currently up to the value of £1 per day) provided. Water/squash is provided free of charge.
- Receive a free school meal which includes a 'meal deal' consisting of a hot meal and dessert **or** a sandwich and dessert (currently up to a current value of £2.50 per day). The allowance does not include a drink as water/squash is provided in our school canteen.
- Support is provided for DPA Music lessons.
- Contributions towards curriculum-based trips and resources.

To support the government guidelines on healthy eating, students are not permitted to use the free school meal allowance to solely purchase a dessert – we will only serve a dessert as part of the meal deal. Additionally, the allowance cannot be used to purchase drinks.

You can obviously provide funds for your child to purchase any additional items such as snacks and drinks.

Please be aware that the free school meal allowances are allocated on a daily basis and therefore if food is not purchased on one day, the value cannot be transferred or accumulated for a day later in the week.

We hope that this letter helps to make the free school meals entitlement clear and allows us to support your child by providing a nutritious and balanced meal without allowing students to simply spend their allowance on smaller snacks.

HARDSHIP FUND

If you are a family who are not eligible for Free School Meals but are experiencing financial difficulties please contact school to see if and how school may be able to support or offer advice.

GO4SCHOOLS

This is our school online system and it enables you as parents/carers to have access to 'live' information on your child's:

- timetable;
- homework;
- behaviour;
- attendance;
- progress.



You will be provided with more information on this when your child starts with us.

BIOMETRIC SYSTEM/PARENTPAY

The school operates a biometric system allowing students to pay for school lunches with no money exchanging hands. When students join Dormston School they will receive an individual biometric code. Students will be given an account and money can be added via our e-payment system - ParentPay. At lunchtime students select the food they want, place their finger on the biometric reader, and the process is complete. If we do not receive parental consent to take your child's fingerprint we will provide an alternative lunch card which can be used in the same way.



ParentPay allows parents and carers to add money to their child's account securely on-line. During Induction your child will be provided with a ParentPay activation letter, which will provide you with a unique username and password to help set up your ParentPay account. We ask that you set up your account at your earliest convenience.

If you have any problems please do not hesitate to call school or email churst@dormston.dudley.sch.uk.

ParentPay can also be used to pay for other school related fees such as school trips, revision guides and school related equipment.

School Systems and Procedures

FORM GROUPS

There are eight form groups in each year, with an average of 29 children. Each form group contains a mixture of students from different feeder schools, with different abilities and talents. Form groups are led by a tutor whom the children will see each morning.



Your child's form tutor is their first point of contact if they need any support or guidance in any area of school life.

During registration, some students will be selected to take part in peer mentoring with members of our Year 10 Executive Leadership Team. This programme helps students thrive in secondary school by providing positive role models from the upper year groups.

Areas of focus include reading, organisation, academic progress, and well-being.

Where needed, personalised support and interventions will also be offered on an individual basis.

BEHAVIOUR: House System and Rewards

Rewarding students for good behaviour, positive attitude, and achievement is a very powerful tool. At Dormston we firmly believe that the use of rewards can serve to increase motivation and promote positive behaviour thus reducing the use of sanctions and, in many instances, rendering them unnecessary.



At the start of year 7 students will be assigned to a House; Avon, Derwent, Severn or Trent. The House point system continually rewards student achievement in terms of attendance, effort and involvement in extra-curricular activities. House points are tallied both individually, and collectively as a House with success being celebrated at reward afternoons and in special end of term whole school assemblies. All students can achieve their bronze, silver, gold and platinum reward ties based on house points received.

300 house points = bronze tie, 600 house points = silver tie, 900 house points = gold tie and 1200 = platinum tie.

Other rewards include; Headteacher Commendations, Core Value Stripes, Learner of the Month, Attendance and Effort rewards, as well as an invitation to The Dormston School Awards Evening that celebrates academic achievement in an 'Oscar' style ceremony.

BEHAVIOUR: Prepared for Success

At Dormston we firmly believe that all students are entitled to disruption free learning. As such we operate a 'Prepared for Success' behaviour and learning system. If required sanctions are given through a central school system and carefully monitored by the Behaviour and Welfare Team (BWT), Heads of House and Senior Leadership Team.

The aims of Prepared for Success are:

1. To **eliminate disruptive behaviour**, so that there is a culture of achievement, ambition and learning everywhere in the school, and no learning time is wasted.
2. To provide **clarity for staff and students** about acceptable behaviour and the consequences of misbehaviour.

3. To encourage students to **take responsibility** for their own actions.
4. To enable teachers to **deliver engaging and creative lessons, experiment and take risks**, without concern for behavioural consequences.

Whilst sanctioning poor behaviour the school will also work with students to reflect upon their actions and put interventions in place to prevent repeat events. Reasonable adjustments are made to take into consideration students with specific needs.



Our 'Prepared for Success' behaviour system has three strands:

1. **Success in the lessons (Behaviour and Welfare Team Events)**

After a 'last chance' warning a student will be 'parked' in another classroom or sent to the Behaviour and Welfare Team if their behaviour does not improve. If a student is sent to the Behaviour and Welfare Team they will spend time in the Refocus Room and receive a same night 30-minute detention. Parents/carers will be made aware via a SMS groupcall. A moving forward talk will take place at the end of the school day to ensure a no grudges approach next lesson. If behavioural issues persist, further sanctions will take place and parents /carers will be notified.

2. **Success around school and in the community (Behaviour Events)**

For behaviour that breaks our rules, BEH events will be issued. Any student receiving two behaviour events in a day will receive a 30-minute same night detention. Four behaviour events across a week will result in a 60-minute Senior Leadership Team detention on Friday after school. Parents/carers will be made aware via a SMS groupcall.

3. **Success for yourself**

We expect the best from our students and poor behaviour is not tolerated. Should you have any concerns, please contact your child's Form Tutor or Head of Year immediately. Often early intervention can nip a concern in the bud. A copy of our Positive Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy can be found on the school website.

By sending your child to Dormston School you are committing to abide by the rules and approach to education and welfare laid out in our Home School Agreement. This can be found on our website. If you have any concerns regarding the school's, your child's or your own commitment to this agreement please contact the school so that a meeting can take place to discuss the situation further.

BEHAVIOUR AND WELFARE TEAM

Our Behaviour and Welfare Team (BWT) investigate incidents of concern that have caused students or parents/carers anxiety. They also work very hard to promote positive behaviour around school with groups of individuals or the wider community.

This team are non-teaching staff, specifically trained in areas of behaviour and well-being to help support your child if ever necessary. They also act as learning mentors for all children.

MORNING & AFTERSCHOOL PROVISION

Students who arrive at school early each morning are welcome to make use of our Personal Learning Centre (PLC) from 8.20am onwards. During this time students can complete homework activities and have assistance in finding information and borrowing books.

Breakfast club is also available from 8.20am onwards. It is based in our River Cafe and is supervised by Pastoral staff. All students are welcome.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

We offer a wide range of lunchtime and after-school activities during term time to enrich students' experiences beyond the classroom.

Opportunities include the school orchestra, singing groups, involvement in our annual school production, dungeons and dragons, chess club, master chef and a variety of sports activities.

For the latest programme of activities, please visit our school website.

Students can earn house points for participating in extracurricular activities, which contribute towards achieving their Bronze Tie award.



We are proud of our sports teams who play at an exceptionally high standard and are also proud to announce that we have recently been awarded Music Mark by Dudley Performing Arts in recognition of our commitment to the engagement of students in musical events both in and outside of the school day.

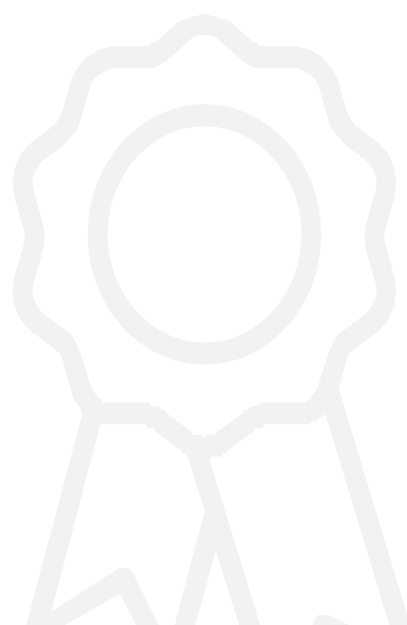
Home School Agreement



By your child attending Dormston you are automatically supporting this agreement. If you have any queries please contact your child's Head of Year

School Will:

- Keep parents/carers informed of progress in all subjects at least twice a year
- Welcome the appropriate involvement of parents/carers in the daily life of the school
- Care for your child's safety and emotional well-being
- Provide a balanced curriculum and endeavour to meet the needs of your child
- Achieve high standards of work and behaviour through good relationships and a sense of responsibility
- Endeavour to ensure that your child feels a valued member of the school community and achieves their potential
- Set, monitor and provide feedback for homework tasks (facilities are provided for your child to complete these)
- Contact parents/carers about concerns that affect your child's progress or behaviour
- Contact parents/carers if there is a problem with attendance or punctuality
- Arrange at least one Parents' Consultation Evening each year during which progress and next steps can be discussed
- Keep parents/carers informed about school activities through the weekly newsletter, letters home and notices about special events
- Actively discourage any form of discrimination/bullying



Home School Agreement

Parent/Carer: I/We will:

- Make the school aware of issues that might affect my child's work or well-being
- See that my child comes to school every day and arrives on time
- Ensure that my child is properly equipped for lessons (e.g. bag, stationery and books)
- Ensure that my child does not bring valuable items into school (e.g. mobile phone/air pods/smart watches) unless left at Student Reception
- Ensure that my child wears the correct school uniform (as detailed on website)
- Support school policies and guidelines for behaviour (see school website)
- Attend Parents' Evening and other discussions about my child's progress
- Endeavour to get to know about my child's life in school
- Not take my child out of school during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances (approved by Head Teacher)
- Inform school of any changes of address/telephone number
- Treat all staff with respect and courtesy. Any insulting, aggressive or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated

The Student: I will abide by the vision, mission and values of Dormston School and I will:

- Arrive on time to school every day, fully equipped and wearing the correct uniform (including a school bag)
- Attend all lessons or follow modified timetable as agreed.
- Have a positive and respectful attitude towards all staff, students, and other members of the school community
- Have respect for the property of others and the school environment
- Act as a positive ambassador for the school when off school premises
- Never harm, put down, bully or discriminate any member of the school community
- Listen to and be respectful of the opinions, views and beliefs of other members of the school community. Co-operate with all members of the school community
- Co-operate with systems in place designed to promote positive behaviour
- Follow school rules and be aware of the expectations of 'Prepared for Success'
- Not bring inappropriate or unlawful items to school including weapons of any type or illegal substances
- Understand that if a mobile phone is seen or heard it will be confiscated

HOMEWORK

Your child will receive homework each day which will be set on Go4Schools. We encourage parents/carers to look daily/weekly at the work being set to ensure deadlines are being adhered to. Go4Schools also offers parents/carers an insight into the homework that has been set. Homework may be set on online systems which your child will be given log in details to. If they forget their log in details they need to teacher as this shouldn't be an excuse for not completing homework.

The amount of homework and time spent upon each piece of homework will vary between year groups.

Year Group	Time to complete each piece
7	20-30 minutes

Support with Homework:

Not all homework is done at home; in fact, for some students who find it hard to work at home, or for some tasks which may require resources (books, software, equipment) more readily available at school, it is necessary or desirable to carry out tasks at school.

Students can complete work in the Personal Learning Centre before and after school and additional support is available at Homework Club as per timetable.

Homework is a very important part of student progress at school:

- Homework will be used to **reinforce prior knowledge**. It will sometimes take the format of Last week/lesson, Last month, Last term/year tasks which will reinforce prior learning. This will ensure that revision is an ongoing process and will consolidate learning.
- Homework can also be used to prepare for the next activity in a form of **flipped learning** where students prepare in advance for new topics. This may be through directed but independent research, comprehension or video resources.
- **Reading** may be set as homework. Parents/carers should acknowledge that reading homework has been completed.

The Dormston Promise

ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES/OFF SITE VISITS

Students have many opportunities to enrich their education through a wide range of activities, trips and experiences.

Throughout their time with us, your child will be challenged to complete the following activities:

- **Global Flavours Challenge** – Cook a cuisine from another country/culture
- **Lifesaver Basics** – Learn basic first aid
- **Curtain Call Experience** – Visit a theatre
- **Walk Through History** – Visit a historical place
- **Leave Your Legacy** – Represent the school (in sport, shows, or events)
- **Spelling Bee Showdown** – Compete in a spelling bee competition
- **The Dormston Dash** – Run a mini marathon
- **Hearts in Action** – Raise money for charity
- **Future Focus** – Gain careers advice
- **Step Up & Shine** – Present or perform in front of peers

There are also opportunities for overseas trips, including visits to Germany, Paris, and skiing experiences.

Please note: Students not returning the Student Information/ Key contacts form will not be permitted to attend any off-site visits.

Monitoring and Tracking Progress

Within the first few weeks at school, students will be put into groups according to ability in some subjects. Please do not be alarmed by which set your child is in. The same subject matter is taught albeit at a different pace to ensure knowledge is secure and to facilitate the best progress for each child.

Other subjects will teach in mixed ability sets.

Throughout the year, all students are monitored through assessments to check progress is being made in each subject area. Formal reports are published through Go4Schools three times per year however Go4Schools will offer you a 'live' picture of how pupils are doing in their subject areas via the 'progress' page.

Pupils will be placed in a band (Purple, Pink or Orange) dependent on their KS2 SATS scores. Within curriculum areas, pupils will be graded as 'approaching,' 'meeting' or 'exceeding' according to the curriculum expectations for their band to enable all pupils to progress from their individual starting point. Information will be shared with pupils on how they can improve their attainment by their teachers. Regardless of band, all pupils will study the same curriculum.

Effort is graded on a 1-4 scale. (1 = outstanding/4 = unsatisfactory). For students not meeting the required standard, an opportunity will be made available for parents to discuss matters further with subject teachers at Parents Consultation Evenings throughout the year.

A Year 7 Targeted Parents Consultation will also take place in the Autumn term to address and support any concerns the school may have in terms of students settling in to their secondary school life.



INDIVIDUAL NEEDS – Inclusion Hub

Learning Support Assistants work closely with many students throughout the school to encourage learning and help to develop key skills. Some students will have individual Learning Profiles that contain personalised strategies that teachers adopt to ensure the best progress. These are reviewed throughout the year by our SENCO.

Executive Student Leadership Team and Positions of Responsibility

At Dormston, students are actively encouraged to take on positions of responsibility, helping to represent the school and support their peers.

There are a wide range of leadership opportunities available, including:

- Executive Student Leadership Team (for Year 10 students only)
- Peer Mentors (Year 10 students)
- Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- Mental Health Ambassadors
- Charity Organisers
- Inter-House Event Organisers
- School Council Representatives
- Eco Group Representatives

Our Executive Leadership Team and Peer Mentors are trained Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, who play a key role in supporting a positive school culture across the school. As a school we encourage a culture of diversity and inclusion and have been awarded the Anti-Bullying Alliance Award for our dedication to tackling bullying.

Each form group also has a designated Mental Health Ambassador who helps provide information and support to promote positive mental health and resilience among students.

Our School Council is made up of students from all year groups and meets regularly to discuss key issues such as uniform, the school environment, and other important matters. Feedback from these meetings is shared with the Headteacher to ensure that student voices are heard and acted upon.

We are proud that our Eco-Group's work has been recognised nationally, and Dormston has been awarded Green Flag Status for our commitment to sustainability.

Concerns and Support

Please do not sit at home worrying. Often a short phone call is all that is needed to alleviate any initial concerns or teething problems. The aim of this booklet has been to inform you of some of the systems used at Dormston.

Please feel free to contact the school at any point in the future to discuss concerns or anxieties. We endeavour to return phone calls as quickly as possible and would be happy to meet parents with prior notification. We do not advise that parents just turn up at school expecting to see a member of staff as they have teaching commitments. Thank you for your support with this.

INFORMATION

See <https://www.gov.uk/national-curriculum> for more information on the national curriculum.

Details of training days, consultation evenings, free school meal eligibility, safeguarding advice and all of the school's policies are readily available on the school website.