



Essential guide  
to Retford Oaks  
Academy

**Retford Oaks Academy**

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We empower | We respect | We care



## Principal's welcome

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**Welcome to Retford Oaks Academy. I am delighted you have chosen our academy to continue your child's education and our staff and students look forward to welcoming you. We are dedicated to providing all children with an outstanding experience within the academy through a broad curriculum offer and a diverse range of enrichment opportunities.**

The following pages, along with our website, will hopefully answer some of the many questions you and your child will have about the beginning of their journey into secondary education.

Further information will follow, including information about our parent portal, lunch payment systems and an academic calendar. If you have any additional questions you feel are still unanswered, please contact [transition@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk](mailto:transition@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk)

We hope you and your child look forward to this next step in their education journey and embrace the opportunities on offer within the academy. We have a range of activities and support available to ensure they transition from their primary setting and enjoy becoming part of our community.

Thank you for choosing Retford Oaks Academy and we hope your child's experience over the coming years will be inspiring, rewarding and memorable.



**Mr L Dickinson**  
Principal

# Starting at Retford Oaks Academy

## The essentials

**We understand that it can be overwhelming for both students and their parents when starting a new school. Staff at Retford Oaks will be available to guide you through this process.**

The information here, outlines the essential information you will need to get organised prior to your child starting with us, and will help you prepare for your son or daughter's first few days and weeks.

## Equipment

Students must have the following items with them at each lesson:

- Scientific calculator
- 30cm ruler
- 2 x HB pencils
- 2 x black pens
- Protractor/angle measure
- Eraser
- Pencil sharpener
- Red pen
- Reading book



## Our uniform

We operate high standards of uniform and expect students to look smart and presentable at all times. Below are the uniform items you will need ready for your child starting at the academy.

### Uniform

- Compulsory black blazer with academy logo
- Academy tie - your child will be advised of their house
- Black trousers in a formal cut, or black, straight, pleated or A-line skirt
- Formal black shoes (boots, trainers or shoes with logos are not allowed)
- Black jumper with academy logo (optional)
- Plain white, formal style shirt with stiffened collar (no logos or fitted blouses)
- Outdoor coats may be worn, but hoodies, sweatshirts, denim coats and denim jackets are not allowed
- No jewellery, other than a plain pair of ear studs and a watch, is permitted
- Subtle makeup can be worn by students. Please see our full uniform policy
- Hair styles should be formal - patterns and lines may not be cut into hair and only colours which could occur naturally may be used for hair dye or highlights

### PE kit

- Black bottoms, which can be:
  - shorts
  - tracksuit bottoms
  - running leggings (which must be sports leggings and not normal leggings)
- Black base layers (optional) and black socks
- Retford Oaks Academy PE shirt
- A pair of strong trainers and rugby/football boots
- Any items with large branding will not be allowed
- Although uniform policy permits one pair of stud earrings to be worn, these must be removed for PE activities

### Uniform supplier

Some items of academy uniform can be purchased through our specialist supplier below, either online or at their shop. All other items, regardless of which supplier is used, must conform to our uniform specifications to ensure high standards are maintained.

Uniform Direct, 9 Market Street,  
Gainsborough, DN21 2BL

**Phone: 01427 616105**  
**[www.uniform-direct.com](http://www.uniform-direct.com)**

## Travelling to the academy

### By bus

Students from outside of the local area are encouraged to travel by bus. Details for main routes can be found here. Further information is available from the Nottinghamshire County Council website.

### Kettlewells

**985** West Stockwith, Misterton, Beckingham, Sandby

### Wilfreda Beehive

**987** Walkeringham, Misterton, Gringley on the Hill, Clayworth, Claborough, Hayton

### Stagecoach

**43** Worksop area

**29** Bawtry, Bircotes, Harworth, Blyth, Ranskill, Torworth and Barnby Moor

**27** Bawtry, Everton, Mattersey, Lound and Sutton

**95** Gainsborough, North Wheatley, Sturton, Leverton North and South

## Parent checklist

- Familiarise myself with the academy day
- Buy uniform and equipment
- Check bus and travel routes to the academy

### On foot or by bicycle

Students living close by are encouraged to be environmentally responsible, and we recommend that they walk or cycle if they are able.

All cycles should be wheeled across the zebra crossing on arrival at the academy and must be locked within the cycle pen.

Students should ensure their bike has been checked for safety and wearing a helmet is strongly recommended. If concerns arise about the safety of the bike, or the way in which it is ridden, the academy reserves the right to ban a student from travelling to and from the academy in this way.

### By car

For parents wishing to drop off and pick up students in cars or taxis, we have designated drop off and pick up points which are clearly sign-posted, in addition to traffic controllers to ensure student safety. This is a very busy area of the academy at the start and end of the day - we urge all drivers to enter and leave the site with extreme caution.



# Settling in

**Our priority is to make your child feel welcome and comfortable at our academy. We aim to ensure that the transition from primary school, or indeed any other school when joining us mid-year, is as smooth as possible.**

## House system

Retford Oaks operates a house system – there are four houses, **Thoresby, Clumber, Rufford** and **Sherwood**. There are several tutor groups within each house.

Tutor groups meet each morning to provide a consistent support network and to deliver personal development everyday. Each group has a dedicated academic mentor providing leadership, guidance, and support to all students.

Older students within each house are encouraged to take on responsibility for mentoring younger members of the house, as part of their personal development.

Older students act as buddies to new students when they start, ensuring there is a friendly and familiar face to help your child find their way around, help them know where to be and when, and answer any questions they may have about life at Retford Oaks.

## Form tutors

Each student is given a form tutor within their tutor group who they report to on a daily basis and can talk to if they have any questions or concerns. After their first few weeks at the academy, the form tutor will give parents an update on their son or daughter's progress, either by a phone call, email or at a parents' evening.

## Parent app

During the first few weeks at the academy, students and parents will be given a unique login for our parent app. This gives access to attendance, progress, behaviour and reward information, and also indicates where homework has been set and when it is due in.

All students will have compulsory homework set, but they should also look for opportunities to deepen and extend their learning by completing additional optional tasks. Details of these opportunities will be given by staff and will be visible on the parent app.

## Lunch and catering services

Our canteen offers hot meals and desserts, including jacket potatoes and soups, as well as hot and cold snacks such as paninis and sandwiches.

Once your child joins us, we operate a cashless catering system which uses biometric data from student fingerprints to pay for meals. Parents can add funds electronically to their child's account via our secure system. We aim to create these accounts in their first week and operate a cash system until this is in place.

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We aim to ensure that transition is as smooth as possible.





### Extracurricular activities

In addition to PE, music and drama being offered as part of our curriculum, students can meet new friends who share common interests by joining one of our clubs. Our clubs cover wide interests across sports, dance, chess, music and drama, to name but a few.

### Learning Resource Centre

Outside of lessons and for quiet time, research or recreational reading, students can use the Learning Resource Centre in their own time - accessing its stock of 10,000 books and journals, and a large number of computers. The centre is staffed throughout the day.

### Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Many of our students choose to participate in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. This gives them a chance to experience new activities, make new friendships and develop as individuals. Through a mixture of activities - physical, skills, volunteering and expeditions - students work towards Bronze, Silver and Gold awards, supported by academy staff and mentors.

### Personal belongings

Students are advised to clearly label their property.

## Parent checklist

- Check which house and tutor group my child is in (you will be notified by the end of June)
- Label all belongings
- In the first week of starting, give my child cash or a packed lunch

### Mobile phones

Students are allowed to bring mobile phones to the academy however these are to remain turned off during the academy day and are not allowed to be used on site.

If a student feels unwell, or needs to contact a parent for any reason, they must speak to the student services who will make contact on their behalf.

Failure to adhere to the academy's rules regarding mobile phones may lead to them being confiscated for the rest of the day or even longer if deemed necessary. In such cases parents will be contacted. The academy cannot accept any responsibility for mobile phones, or similar electronic devices, which are brought into the academy by students.

# Communications with parents

## Keeping you updated

At Retford Oaks, we aim to ensure parents are fully engaged with life at the academy and pride ourselves on the strong relationships we have with parents. As well as being invited to parents' evenings, you will receive regular updates and progress reports about your son or daughter, alongside invitations to attend a range of events as part of the Retford Oaks community.

### Email

We are trying to reduce our impact on the environment by cutting down on the use of paper wherever possible. One major area where we can achieve this is by using parental emails as a means of communication, rather than letters. We ask parents to supply us with an email address and we use this for day-to-day contact. Important documents will still be issued by letter.

### Text messages

Sometimes we will need to contact parents or carers quickly, for example if the academy is to close early. To do this, we will use text messages and/or email. To ensure that we communicate effectively, please remember to update us of changes to contact numbers and emails.

### Parent app

Communication with parents and carers is a very important part of our partnership with you.

To help make this as easy as possible we use a free mobile app as our main communication tool. This provides secure online access to view a selection of your child's data online.

The system allows you to view attendance, behavioural and assessment information we currently hold and will enable you to inform us of any changes to your contact details.

In the coming weeks you will be sent further details about this tool, including individual login details.

### Progress evenings

Progress evenings for all year groups are held throughout the year. Parents and carers will receive notification of the time and date.



### SCOPAY

SCOPAY is a cashless system for paying for trips and events. You will be sent a letter at the end of September with an online link code to create an account. You will also be sent a user guide.

### Web and social media

The academy website has a dedicated 'parents' section to enable you to access essential information. We also post regular updates on our social media channels, including Facebook and X.

 /RetfordOaksAcademy

 @RetfordOaks

## Parent checklist

- Provide contact details to the academy including an email address and a mobile phone number
- Login to the parent app and set a new password
- 'Like' and follow the academy on social media

# Personal data and consents

**Please read this important information about the data we need to collect about your child as part of their enrolment and continuing academic life at Retford Oaks Academy. All data we hold complies with UK privacy laws and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).**

## Student information and consent sheet

You will receive via post a pack with transition forms that need to be completed. If you have any queries regarding the forms, please email:

**transition@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk**

If your son or daughter is using a name other than their legal name then please make this clear on the data collection sheet. Only legal names will appear on official correspondence. If a name has been changed we shall require a copy of the deed poll and/or birth certificate.

## Trips and educational visits

Your child will have many exciting opportunities to take part in off-site visits and trips throughout their time at Retford Oaks. For each trip we will issue parents and carers with a consent form. Parents and carers also have the responsibility to notify trip leaders of any relevant information or medical issues affecting their child's participation.

## Biometric data recording and storage

The academy currently uses a lunch payment system which contains recorded biometric data (in the form of encoded fingerprint images) to identify students.

The data in this system is securely held within the academy for the time that students are enrolled. Data is deleted when students leave us. Please ensure you sign your consent form for biometric data recording and storage on the data collection sheet.

Where students request us not to use their biometric data, this will take precedence over the wishes of parents or carers, as outlined in the relevant legislation. In these circumstances we will inform you that a change of preference has taken place. If you do not wish us to use biometric data, a swipe card can be issued.

## Medical information

The medical information form will need to be completed in full. Please note it is your responsibility to ensure that medical information is up to date at all times.

## Photography of students

We may wish to take photographs and videos of students for a variety of reasons ranging from archive records to marketing and press coverage of achievements. In order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation, we are required to seek the permission of parents and carers before recording such images.

Below is a list of the types of images which we may wish to take of your child during his/her time at the academy. Please read the list carefully then complete the section regarding photo consent on the data collection sheet.

- Individual/group photographs of children working in an academy setting for display in the academy where the child's first name and year group will be displayed.
- General photographs of children working in classrooms or around the academy for our archives (which could be published at some point in the future as a record of an era).
- Photographs of academy events and achievements (e.g. educational visits, sports day, dance and drama etc.) for academy publications, social media, and the website. The full name of the student will not be used, only first name and year group.

## Forms to complete

You will receive the following forms by post:

- registration form
- medical information
- consent for biometric data recording
- consent for photography

- Press articles and photographs for news stories on achievements, awards, involvement in sports and student successes may be used for external promotion and issued to the media. The full name of the student will not be used when issuing the press release. Should the media request full names of students, parental consent will be sought.
- Photo portraits by professional photographers to be offered for sale to parents and carers.

All photographs and images of children will be taken, used and stored in accordance with the academy's photography and videography policy, which requires staff to exercise professional judgement regarding the suitability of images and their use. You may withdraw your consent at any time. Archive copies of images may be retained for future reference.