



**ASTREA ACADEMY WOODFIELDS**  
Weston Road, Balby, Doncaster, DN4 8ND  
**01302 312140**  
**Principal: Mrs. Victoria Southall**



August 2026

Dear Parent / Carer,

Firstly, I am hugely looking forward to returning to Woodfields in my new role as Interim Principal. It is both a privilege and a pleasure to lead the next stage of improvement that this academy, your child and the wider community deserve.

This academic year we will have a relentless focus on

- raising academic outcomes, so that no child is limited in their future;
- improving attendance and behaviour, so that no time is wasted and every child can learn;
- ensuring that every teacher is an expert at teaching, so that every child can achieve top grades regardless of their starting points;
- acknowledging and rewarding the hard work of scholars, so that every child is motivated to achieve their fullest potential;
- developing a stronger community, so that scholars will become kind individuals who make positive contributions to society;
- introducing a broader careers and extra-curricular offer, so that every child has experiences beyond the classroom.

We believe in the extraordinary potential of your child and will continue to have highest expectations of your child both academically and in terms of their conduct. We believe that if your child attends school and works hard they will live a great life full of opportunity and choice.

### **Start Dates and Times**

| <b>Year Group</b> | <b>Location</b>           | <b>Start Date and Time</b>                           |
|-------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Year 7            | Front Gate – Weston Road  | Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September – 7.45am onwards |
| Year 8            | Front Gate – Weston Road  | Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> September – 7.45am onwards    |
| Year 9            | Front Gate – Weston Road  | Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> September – 7.45am onwards    |
| Year 10           | Side Gate – Farnley Road* | Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> September – 7.45am onwards    |
| Year 11           | Side Gate – Farnley Road* | Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> September – 7.45am onwards    |

\*Our Farnley Road Side Gate will close at 8.24am each morning.

We are opening our front gate at the slightly earlier time of 7.45am during the first week to support families with the transition back to school. From Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September the front gate will open at 8am as normal.

The official school day starts on the playground at 8.25am. All scholars must be present at this time to avoid a late mark. Please support your child by ensuring they arrive at Woodfields with plenty of time to hand in their mobile phone (if they choose to bring it to school) and go to the toilet. Please anticipate that travel by bus or car might take slightly longer than expected in the first couple of weeks and help your child plan accordingly.

### **2026 Exam Results**

This summer our year 11 leavers have achieved our best-ever exam results. We are incredibly proud of their achievements and were delighted to celebrate with them on results day. Scholars were excited to tell us about (and we were excited to hear about) their next steps, and I am sure that many will keep in touch with the academy to share their future successes.

I am also going to bring to your attention the link between attendance and exam success. Whether you agree or disagree that exams are important, it is undeniable that strong academic success provides more opportunities for your child in life. If your child attends school regularly your child will achieve significantly better exams results and this is one of the reasons that strong attendance is incredibly important.

This table highlights the link between attendance and grades for the last three year 11 cohorts.

|      | Overall Average Grade | Attendance Above 95% | Attendance 90 – 95% | Attendance Below 90% |
|------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 2026 | 3.9                   | 4.6                  | 4.0                 | 3.3                  |
| 2025 | 3.7                   | 4.5                  | 4.4                 | 1.9                  |
| 2024 | 3.3                   | 4.4                  | 3.6                 | 1.3                  |

In 2026 scholars with attendance less than 90% achieved an average grade of 3.3. Scholars with attendance above 95% achieved an average grade of 4.6 which is more than a grade higher in every subject.

### **Attendance**

It can be difficult to know if your child is too ill to attend school. NHS guidance is clear that it's fine to send them in with a minor cough or common cold, provided they don't have a temperature. As a general rule if your child is too ill to do something that they have been looking forward to, for example, attend a birthday party, or go to a football match, then they are likely to be too ill to attend school. If they would still go to and enjoy these things, then they should be attending school. If your child does not attend school regularly in year 7, 8, or 9 it can become more difficult for your child to attend regularly in year 10 and year 11 as the impact of lost learning becomes a bigger barrier. We know that parents and carers often worry about their child's mental health. Rather than keeping your child off school, let us know about your concerns. We can then work together on supporting your child.

### **Reporting Absences**

We understand that occasionally you may need to report your child's absence. We appreciate this communication and ask that you continue to report absences via [office@astreawoodfields.org](mailto:office@astreawoodfields.org) or by calling **01302 312140**

### **Free Breakfast**

From Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2026, any scholar that arrives to school between 7.45am and 8.05am will be able to have a **free** breakfast in the dining room and should use the Farnley Road entrance. Breakfast items include toast, bagels and fruit.

### **Changes to Free School Meals**

From 1st September 2026, all families receiving Universal Credit will be eligible for Free School Meals. You can check your eligibility on the [City of Doncaster Website](#).

### **MyChildAtSchool App (MCAS)**

From 1st September 2026 we will be using MCAS as our single parent platform for reporting to and communicating with parents. We will no longer use ClassCharts and information regarding merits, demerits and detentions will return to MCAS. If you have not already done so, please download the MCAS App ready for September. [MCASParentLogin](#)

Mr Clifford, Vice Principal, will send further 'how to' guidance, and will run a number of parent/carer drop-in sessions in the first half term to support families to use MCAS.

### **Extra-Curricular**

This year our staff will be running a significantly increased extra-curricular offer. This is something that we are really excited about. There will be lunch time and after school clubs available to all year groups covering a wide range of activities such as sport, drama productions, ensembles, poetry, painting, chess, and computer games. Please encourage your child to sign up to at least one club this half term. Mr McClune, Assistant Principal, will share more information shortly.

### **Lunch Times**

As you may already be aware, lunchtime will look and feel a little bit different this academic year as we will no longer be providing a family dining experience to year 7 and 8. Instead all year groups will have access to the dining room during a single lunch break. All scholars will be able to bring a packed lunch to eat in the dining room if they would like.

Year 7 will continue to have a slightly earlier lunch, ensuring that the year group has the opportunity to sit together and build a sense of belonging.

Year 11 will continue to have the opportunity to access homework support and targeted revision during lunchtime alongside the wider extra-curricular opportunities.

If you would like your child to purchase food at either breaktime or lunchtime, please upload dinner money via MCAS. Alternatively, your child can continue to top up their balance using the machines in school.

### **Uniform and Equipment**

School uniform is an important part of our school identity, as it shows that we are all part of the same warm, welcoming, and friendly community. Scholars represent Woodfields whenever they are in their uniform, or PE kit.

Please note that our Blazer, Tie, School Bag and PE Top are branded items of uniform for all scholars and must be purchased from our supplier. Other compulsory items such as a white shirt and grey trousers can be purchased from our supplier, or any other supplier of uniform. We recommend purchasing items that will survive daily wear and tear. Please get in contact if you are struggling with either finding or affording uniform.

Shoes must be traditional plain black leather (or similar synthetic) shoes. Shoes must have flat sole, be ankle height or lower and must not feature logos or metal details. Boots and trainer style shoes are not permitted. Please contact us if you are unsure in advance of your child attending the academy.

Unnatural hair colours, nail extensions and nail varnish, false eyelashes, jewelry and piercings (other than a single pair of simple studs) are not permitted.

We will provide all scholars with an academy lanyard and equipment pack in the first week of school. These items are compulsory item of equipment and must be taken care of. We do charge a replacement fee for lost or intentionally damaged items of equipment. We offer access to an equipment store which is available to all scholars from 8am – 8.20am each morning if they need to replace any items.

Our full uniform guidance is available on the website: [Uniform 26/27](#)

### **Phone Free School**

In June 2026 it became a statutory requirement for all schools in England to implement a policy whereby pupils do not have access to their mobile phone throughout the school day including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime. We have proudly been doing this since September 2025.

Phones will continue to be collected in the morning, stored securely, and returned at the end of the school day. This ensures that children can learn without distraction during lessons, and - critically - be children during social times.

If you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact the academy [office@astreawoodfields.org](mailto:office@astreawoodfields.org)

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Victoria Southall  
Interim Principal

### **Important Dates HT1**

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September: Y7 and Y11 photographs  
Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September: Y7 English, Maths and Reading Baseline Assessments  
Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September: Y5 and 6 Open Evening  
Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September: Provisional Y7 Instrument Ceremony  
Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September: Y8 – 11 Awards Evening  
Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October: Careers Fayre & Y11 Post 16 Information Evening  
Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October: Y7 Settling in Evening  
Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October: Flu Vaccines  
Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October: Quiz Week  
Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October: Reward Activities  
Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October: INSET day

