



Appledore Gardens  
Lindfield  
Haywards Heath  
West Sussex  
RH16 2AQ

tel: 01444 414001  
fax: 01444 417027  
email: [office@oathall.org](mailto:office@oathall.org)  
website: [www.oathall.org](http://www.oathall.org)

Headteacher: Mr E Rodriguez MA BSc (Hons)

May 2016

Dear Parent

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you as our newest members of the Oathall community. My name is Mr Mark Willer and I am Assistant Headteacher with the key responsibility for student welfare. Together with a team of tutors and Jane Newnham, Transition Coordinator, it is my role to ensure that students and parents are fully informed and feel welcomed into our school community. Enclosed with this letter you will find the following information:

- Admission form including parental consent form (please return completed forms as per instructions overleaf)
- 2016-2017 Term dates
- Privacy Notice
- Important information about IT systems including Insight – our online access for parents and students and other IT systems that we use in school.
- Cashless Catering and ParentPay (online payment system)
- Uniform policy
- Induction Day lunch arrangements

I am pleased to inform you that on joining in September 2016 your child will have the opportunity to learn two foreign languages; this will either be a combination of French and German or French and Spanish. The language groups are of mixed ability and not set. If you have a strong preference that your child learns either Spanish or German as their second language, can I please ask that you contact Mrs Sandford via email by Wednesday 15 June [lsandford@oathall.org](mailto:lsandford@oathall.org).

From September our usual method of communication with you will be by email or text message. It is therefore very important that you provide your current mobile phone number and email address on the admission form in this pack. Please also ensure you indicate on the admission form the priority for contacting parents when we need to get in touch with you quickly.

Oathall uses a parental website called INSIGHT which gives you online access to your child's grades, subject reports, homework and timetable as well as attendance information and parents' evening bookings. Please ensure that you answer the question in the admission form regarding whether you have access to broadband and a suitable computer for use with the school systems. Details of how to access this site will be provided in due course.

Science and Visual Arts College with a Rural Dimension

Please complete the admission form (blue) and return it to school **by 30 June 2016**. It is important that the form is completed **in full** and if you have any queries or require any assistance with it, please contact us. Either drop it into Reception or send by post to: **Mrs G van der Spiegel, Oathall Community College, Appledore Gardens, Lindfield, RH16 2AQ.**

I would like to highlight the key events planned to aid your child's transition to Oathall:

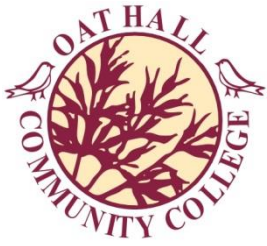
**Tuesday 5 July 8.35 am to 3 pm – Induction Day** On this day students will attend Oathall on a regular school day. They will attend five lessons, meet their future group tutor, eat lunch in the dining hall and attend a year group assembly. We ask that students attend in their primary school uniform. They should arrive at 8.35am and go straight to the hall. They should bring a pair of trainers and regular classroom equipment; pens, pencils etc. The school day will end at 3 pm when they will be dismissed from the hall.

**Thursday 7 July 6.45 pm to 7.45 pm – Y7 intake evening for parents**

On this evening there will be a presentation led by Mr Rodriguez, Headteacher, followed by an opportunity to meet your child's group tutor. The evening is principally for parents and will take place in the hall.

Yours sincerely

**Mr M K Willer**  
Assistant Headteacher



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May 2016

Dear Student

### **Induction day – complimentary main meal and dessert**

The catering team and I are really looking forward to meeting you on Induction Day on Tuesday 5 July.

On your induction day, we will be preparing you a hot meal and dessert which will be free for all new students. This will consist of a choice between lasagne or macaroni cheese followed by a dessert of chocolate sponge and chocolate sauce. This meal is provided free with our compliments.

If you do not want the free main meal and dessert you will be able to purchase from a selection of sandwiches, baguettes, hot pasta sauces and a selection of drinks. We recommend that you bring no more than £3 which will easily cover the cost these items.

Yours sincerely,

**Sue Denyer**  
Catering Manager

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Science and Visual Arts College with a Rural Dimension



## Cashless Catering

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Oathall operates a cashless system for buying school meals and refreshments. Cashless catering systems are used in many schools and the system is perceived to have a number of benefits.

- A faster, more efficient canteen service with queuing times reduced
- Parents can pay over the Internet for their children's meals, therefore cutting out the need for children to carry cash and the potential for loss
- Students entitled to free school meals will have their daily entitlement limit automatically applied to their account appearing in the same way as if their parents credited the money. This entitlement remains completely confidential thus banishing the stigma attached to free school meals.

### Canteen accounts

When a student starts at Oathall we will set them up with a canteen account. Each account is unique to the student. When paying for food and drink we have two ways of linking the student to their account. They can either be linked using biometric technology or by their unique account code.

### Biometrics

Our cashless catering system is controlled by the latest biometric finger recognition technology. This makes use of biometric scanning, which means that the person places their thumb/finger onto a scanning device at the till which will identify them and their account will be debited for the items that they have purchased. This is a very secure and efficient system.

To obtain a unique biometric template a subset of unique features of the fingerprint are extracted from a scanned image. This template, a binary number, is checked against the template generated each time a student places their finger on the scanner. **Full fingerprint images are not stored** and it is extremely unlikely that a usable fingerprint image could be generated (reverse engineered) from the template. The biometric data will only be used for catering purchases and not for any other systems (such as registration or library services).

### Biometric alternatives

We understand that not everyone feels confident about using biometric technology. Also, occasionally a student's fingerprint will not scan correctly and they cannot be registered biometrically. In these instances we give the student a laminated card with their unique account details on it. They show this at the till to access their account. This is not a payment card and is merely used to identify the account holder. We encourage parents to allow their child to register biometrically as we do find that children with cards frequently lose them or damage them. Getting a replacement card can inconvenience them.

### Free school meals

Students entitled to free school meals will have their daily meal entitlement value credited to their account. They can also place their own additional money into their account. The free

school meal allowance is always used in full prior to removing any extra funds from the 'Own Purse' account.

### **Adding money to your child's account**

There are three ways to add money to your child's account. You can pay over the internet using **ParentPay** (our preferred method). Or you can pay by Paypoint card or by adding a cash top-up at the top-up till before school starts or at morning break.

**During the summer holidays you will be sent a user name and password to set up a ParentPay account.** You can use this account to pay for school meals and for other things such as trips or events. To help with administration and efficiency at the tills this is our preferred method of loading your child's account with funds.

We appreciate that not everyone wants to use the internet for payment. We operate a dedicated till point at the canteen window servery which can be used to top-up accounts with cash before school starts and at morning break (but not at lunchtime). Students will not be able to buy food or drink with cash. They must have a canteen account and purchases will only be possible if a student has sufficient funds in their school meals account.

If you want to pay using a Paypoint card please contact reception and ask for a paypoint card to be ordered for your child.

### **The first day at Oathall**

We will set up your son or daughter's account on their first day at Oathall. On the first day we provide a **complimentary meal** so that you can be sure your child has something to eat whilst the account is activated. After the first day, if you want your child to use the canteen you need to ensure they have funds on their account.

### **Information & FAQ's**

There is a lot of information to take in about this system and you may have questions that you would like to ask. A member of staff will be available at the New Y7 Intake evening on 7 July to answer any questions.

Also attached is a FAQ's sheet.

Thank you for your support and cooperation.

Mrs J Godbolt  
Business Manager

*If you have any concerns about biometric fingerprint recognition and data protection the Information Commissioners Office provides advice and guidance at the following web address. [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk) .*

#### **Key Dates:**

**30 June 2016**

The deadline for returning your signed admission form in order that we can set up your child's school meals account before they join us on **6 September**.

**7 July 2016 – Y7 Transition evening for parents.**



## **Frequently asked questions about cashless catering and biometrics.**

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### **How will cashless catering work?**

In the canteen, students will select the items to purchase as normal. When they take the items to the till, the operator will key them in and the total will appear on the till display. The student's finger then needs to be placed on the scanner to identify the customer. A photograph of the student shows on the till allowing the till operator to confirm the account holder (especially important for those students with cards). The transaction is then complete and the account balance will be adjusted.

### **What is biometrics?**

Biometrics is a method of capturing unique data or characteristics for an individual. This data is linked to the individual and used as a means of recognition. Biometric data is used for things like passport identification and access control. At Oathall biometric information will be used for identifying students catering accounts. This is known as cashless catering. We do not use the catering biometrics for any other purpose and it is not linked to any other computer systems other than the system we use for catering purchases. For security purposes only two people in the college have access to this data.

### **How will Biometric technology work at Oathall?**

The cashless catering system at Oathall will be controlled by the latest biometric finger recognition technology. This makes use of biometric scanning, which means that the person places their thumb/finger onto a scanning device at the till which will identify them and their account will be debited for the items that they have purchased. This is a very secure and efficient system. When looking at data about account holders the only information that the college can see is the student admission number that the scan is linked to – this number is the unique admission number used by the college to identify the student. We do not see any of the fingerprint scanning data.

### **How will Oathall get the Biometric data about my child?**

Each user will be registered by scanning and storing a unique biometric template. This template uses a subset of unique features of the fingerprint that is obtained from a scanned image of your child's fingerprint. This is stored as a binary number (not as an image of the fingerprint).

### **How is the students' data entered into the system?**

The student's name is confirmed from our existing schools information management system (known as SIMS) and then s/he places their thumb/finger onto a small electronic pad – two successful scans are required to register.

### **What happens when my child gets to the till to pay?**

Every time the user places their finger on the scanner to pay for items the till system checks their scan against the stored template. Their account will then be debited for the items they have purchased. A photograph of the student shows on the till allowing the till operator to confirm the account holder (especially important for those students with cards).

### **Do you store the fingerprints of individuals?**

Full fingerprint images are not stored and it is extremely unlikely that a usable fingerprint image could be generated (reverse engineered) from the template. The biometric data will only be used for catering purchases and not for any other systems (such as registration or library services).

### **Are there any health risks?**

No, it is not a laser.

**Can my child still buy food or drink using cash?**

No, your child will only be able to buy food or drink if they have money in their school meals account or if they qualify for free school meals. When they get to the till to pay they scan their finger or show their card and the cost of their purchases will be deducted from their account.

**What happens if my child doesn't have enough money in their account?**

If the account balance is low the till operator will inform the student that the account needs to be topped up. If the daily spend limit is exceeded, the till operator will inform your child and they will be required to put some of the purchases back.

**What happens if I forget to add money to their account?**

We do not allow students credit. Parents are responsible for making sure their child has either a packed lunch or funds in their account. If a child clearly needs a meal and does not have any money or forgets a packed lunch we do have a system to allow them to eat a basic meal. This is not routinely offered and parents will be expected to reimburse the cost.

**What if I don't have time to top-up my child's account online?**

You can top-up your child's account at any time day or night on ParentPay but if you do not get a chance to do this then you can top-up by cash at a dedicated till point in the canteen. This can be done between 8.15 – 8.30am and at morning break.

**How long does it take for a top-up on ParentPay to reach a child's account?**

The cashless system regularly communicates with ParentPay to check account balances. In theory it should take only minutes but as we cannot control the internet speeds and links between your computer, your bank and the links between the college and ParentPay we recommend that you allow at least 3 hours for your account to be updated.

**What happens when the student leaves the College?**

All the information about the individual is deleted. Data may also be deleted at the individual's request.

**Are we able to have a refund?**

Money in the account is automatically rolled over even at the end of term. However, should you require a refund e.g. when your child leaves school then one can be arranged.

**Can I see my child's balance?**

By logging into ParentPay, you can check your child's balance online.

**Can I check what my child has purchased?**

Yes. If you have a ParentPay account, you can see what your child ordered and paid for at break and at lunch. This information is updated overnight.

**I am still concerned; I do not want my child's biometric reading taken.**

We can offer a card for students with parents who do not wish the biometric reading to be taken. The initial card will be free of charge after which there will be a cost to replace lost cards.

*If you have any concerns about biometric fingerprint recognition and data protection the Information Commissioners Office provides advice and guidance at the following web address. [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).*



## Information for students starting at Oathall

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We know that starting at a new school is an exciting time and that there is much new information to absorb. We want to support you from the outset and appreciate that you may feel both excited and nervous about joining Oathall. Between getting your place at Oathall and starting in September there will be many questions that you would like to ask. We hope that this document will help answer some of those questions.

### Our team

We have a dedicated team of staff working to ensure a smooth and successful transition from your current school to Oathall. You can contact any of them at their email address:

- For enquiries about transition arrangements please contact Mrs Jane Newnham, Transition Coordinator [jnewnham@oathall.org](mailto:jnewnham@oathall.org).
- For enquiries/discussion about children with medical conditions please contact Mrs Polly McDonald (Student Support Assistant/Welfare Assistant) [pmcdonald@oathall.org](mailto:pmcdonald@oathall.org).
- For all other enquiries, please contact [office@oathall.org](mailto:office@oathall.org). Your message will be directed to a member of Oathall staff who is in the best position to help you.

### Our website

If you do have any questions then the best place to look is on the college website. We have worked hard to include everything you will need to know. The website has information about school policies, uniform, useful documents, subject information and other useful information about attending Oathall. A full staff list can also be located on our website. If you do not have access to the website then please contact the school for information.

### Answers to some of the questions frequently asked by students:

#### What is a tutor group?

When you join Oathall you will be put into a tutor group. This is the group that you will be attached to during your time at Oathall. You will register with your tutor group twice a day, in the morning and after lunch. Each tutor group has a tutor – this will be the teacher that has day-to-day responsibility for you at Oathall and is the first person to see if you need support. You will meet and spend time with your group tutor on Induction Day on Tuesday 5 July. Parents will meet your group tutor during the Intake Evening on Thursday 7 July.

#### What happens if I get lost?

Oathall is a big site and has a lot of buildings but we will make sure you know how to find your way around quickly. On your Induction Day and on your first day at Oathall you will get a guided tour of the buildings. You will also be given a map of the site to help you find your way around. If you are not able to find the correct classroom ask a teacher or fellow student for directions. We will all be happy to help you.

### **How much homework will I get each week?**

Regular homework is set for all students in all subject areas in order to develop independent learning skills. The amount of homework set will vary but as a general rule in year 7 you should get about one hour a week per subject.

### **What happens if I am ill and cannot come to school?**

It is vital that we know if you cannot come to school for any reason. You need to ask your parent to phone before school starts at 8.45am on the first day of absence and tell us why you are going to be absent. A message can be left on the child absence voice mail.

### **What happens if I am ill during the day at school?**

If you get taken ill during the school day you will be sent to student support. The Student Support Assistant will assess you and decide if you need to go home.

### **Do I need to bring any special equipment with me on my first day?**

Students need to be prepared for lessons at all times. In your first week we expect students to be equipped with pens, pencils and rulers held in a suitable pencil case. On the first day you will be given a timetable and student handbook. During the following fortnight you will be told by your subject teachers if you need any specialist equipment such as calculators and you will be given exercise books. From then onwards you need to make sure you have everything you need for lessons that day. This will include:

- Pens and pencils with other essential items in a suitable case
- Your timetable and student handbook
- Exercise books, files or text books
- PE Kit (check if indoor or outdoor lesson)
- DT food ingredients if required

We recommend students check their timetables the night before to ensure they are prepared for the next day.

### **Where can I get something to eat?**

Students are expected to remain in the college during break and lunch times. Students may bring their own food to eat or they may eat in the canteen. To buy food in the canteen students must have a registered canteen account. You will be registered with an account on your first day. As long as you have money in your account you can buy food or drink from the canteen. Separate information about the canteen and how this works is included in your information pack.



## Oathall Term Dates – 2016/17

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### **Autumn term 2016**

Monday 5 September	INSET day school closed to students
Tuesday 6 September	Term starts for years 7, 10 and 11
Wednesday 7 September	Term starts for years 8 & 9 (all years back)
Thursday 22 September	Open Day. School finishes early.
Friday 23 September	INSET day school closed to students
24 October – 28 October	Half term break
19 December – 2 January	Christmas break

### **Spring term 2017**

Tuesday 3 January	INSET day school closed to students
Wednesday 4 January	Term starts
20 February – 24 February	Half term break
Monday 27 February	INSET day school closed to students.
10 April – 21 April	Easter break

### **Summer term 2017**

Monday 24 April	INSET day school closed to students
Tuesday 25 April	Term starts
Monday 1 May	May Day bank holiday
29 May – 2 June	Half term break
25 July	Last day of term
26 July – 2 September*	Summer break

*\*This date is currently provisional.*



## ICT Provision at Oathall

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### **Secure online access to student information for parent and students.**

At Oathall we provide parents and students with secure online access to a range of student specific information using a product called 'Insight'. Insight can be accessed via the Oathall website home page and provides parents with online access to a range of student specific information. This will include;

- Student details
- Details of homework
- A student's timetable and names of subject teachers
- A record of positive and negative behaviours
- An attendance summary
- Assessment grades and termly reports
- Parental contact details with a facility to update them
- An online system for booking meetings at parent evenings

When your child starts at Oathall you will be sent an email or text message (if we do not have your email address) containing a username and password. Once you have these details you can log into **Insight** and change your password.

Access to Insight is via the Oathall website homepage.

### **Student access to Insight**

Students can also log in to their own Insight account using their own username and password. Using Insight they will be able to view their timetable and homework information.

**Please note that the parent account and student account of Insight are different. It is important that parents use their own parent Insight account otherwise you will not be able access all of the information about your child and parent evening booking feature.**

### **Student ICT Provision**

When a new student starts at Oathall they will be issued with a user name and password. This can be used to access Insight and:

#### **A student email account.**

All students are provided with a unique @oathall.org email address which they can use for college matters. Staff and students may use email to communicate about homework and other work related matters with each other, provided this is done in a polite and reasonable manner and with the teacher's prior agreement. Students must not email staff during the school holidays. It is essential that students adhere to the expectations set out in the acceptable use policy, they should also be aware that emails are monitored.

**A Google Drive account**

Google Drive comes with an online set of free applications (docs, sheets, slides and more) with cloud storage which means there are no compatibility issues and students can access their work from anywhere with an internet connection. This can also be used to transfer files between home and school, it is also useful for collaborative group projects. All students have access to their own Google Drive when they log into the school website. Teachers can also use Google Drive to send documents to their class. If you have not used Google Drive features before just type Google Drive into an internet search and you will be taken to their explanation pages.

**Realsmart**

Realsmart is a collection of online learning tools that are accessed from the “My Learning Portfolio” link on the homepage. These tools support a wide range of activities from creating collaborative mind maps to building websites. These applications can be accessed via the website by logging in at the top of the home screen.



## **Privacy Notice - Data Protection Act 1998**

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We Oathall Community College are a data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act. We collect information from you and may receive information about you from your previous school and the Learning Records Service. We hold this personal data and use it to:

- Support your teaching and learning;
- Monitor and report on your progress;
- Provide appropriate pastoral care, and
- Assess how well your school is doing.

This information includes your contact details, national curriculum assessment results, attendance information and personal characteristics such as your ethnic group, any special educational needs and relevant medical information. If you are enrolling for post 14 qualifications we will be provided with your unique learner number (ULN) by the Learning Records Service and may also obtain from them details of any learning or qualifications you have undertaken.

### **In addition for Secondary and Middle deemed Secondary Schools**

Once you are aged 13 or over, we are required by law to pass on certain information to providers of youth support services in your area. This is the local authority support service for young people aged 13 to 19 in England. We must provide both your and your parent's/s' name(s) and address, and any further information relevant to the support services' role. However, if you are over 16, you (or your parent(s)) can ask that no information beyond names, address and your date of birth be passed to the support service. This right transfers to you on your 16th birthday. Please inform Gail van der Spiegel if you wish to opt-out of this arrangement. For more information about young peoples' services, please go to the Directgov Young People page at [www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople/index.htm) or the LA website shown below.

***We will not give information about you to anyone outside the school without your consent unless the law and our rules allow us to.***

We are required by law to pass some information about you to the Local Authority and the Department for Education (DfE)

If you want to see a copy of the information about you that we hold and/or share, please contact Gail van der Spiegel.

If you require more information about how the Local Authority (LA) and/or DfE store and use your information, then please go to the following websites:

[https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/learning/west\\_sussex\\_grid\\_for\\_learning/management\\_info\\_services/performance\\_team/guidance\\_notes\\_and\\_information/privacy\\_notice.aspx](https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/learning/west_sussex_grid_for_learning/management_info_services/performance_team/guidance_notes_and_information/privacy_notice.aspx)

and

<http://www.education.gov.uk/researchandstatistics/datatdatam/b00212337/datause>

If you are unable to access these websites we can send you a copy of this information. Please contact the LA or DfE as follows:

- Sue Bryan  
Learning  
West Sussex County Council  
County Hall  
Chichester  
West Sussex PO10 1RF
  
- Public Communications Unit  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT  
Website: [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)  
email: <http://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus>  
Telephone: 0370 000 2288