



**Being Ready for Year 7**  
with Simon Balle All-through School

**Creating  
tomorrow's  
citizens  
today**



**Simon Balle**  
All-through School



## Supporting Your Child to Thrive as They Begin Their Secondary Journey

**Welcome to Simon Balle All-Through School.** We are thrilled to welcome your family into our secondary community as your child embarks on this exciting new chapter in Year 7. This guide is designed to help you support your child in feeling confident, independent, and ready to thrive in their new environment—living our core values of **Responsibility, Respect, Wisdom, Kindness, Hope, Honesty, Courage, Resilience, Patience, Forgiveness, Compassion, and Trust.**



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# Responsibility: Building Independence and Organisation

A successful start begins with consistent routines and growing independence.

**Daily Equipment:** Support your child in packing their bag each evening—books, calculator, stationery, PE kit. Never underestimate the power of a simple checklist!

**Timetable Confidence:** Many year 7 students benefit from a printed timetable at home. Learning this timetable fosters self-reliance—key to success in Year 7.

**Homework Habits:** Encourage a set time and distraction-free space for homework. Support your child in using Arbor to track assignments and due dates.

**Top Tip:** Engage regularly. Research is clear that students whose parents regularly engage with school achieve consistently and significantly stronger academic and personal outcomes. How will you prioritise your child's education?





# Respect & Kindness: Building Belonging and Relationships

Feeling a sense of belonging helps students flourish.

**Friendships & Inclusion:** Every child is different! Some will settle very quickly, for others it will take longer—encourage patience, forgiveness and compassion as your child navigates a new social environment.

**Getting Involved:** With our huge range of clubs and enrichment opportunities, there's something for everyone—participation builds confidence and connection.

**Home-School Partnership:** Research consistently demonstrates that the effect of strong parental engagement over a student's school career is equivalent to adding two or three years to that student's education

**Top Tip:** Attend key events—parents' evenings, concerts, sporting events and welcome evenings. Strong home-school links strengthen student wellbeing and performance.



# Resilience & Courage: Cultivating Positive Learning Attitudes

Year 7 is a fresh opportunity to develop curiosity, confidence, and a love of learning.

**Growth Mindset:** We teach that effort leads to success—students who understand this will make greater academic progress.

**Behaviour Expectations:** Reinforce the importance of our behaviour code. Clear expectations support and establish a strong culture for learning for everyone. Active Participation: Asking questions, taking academic risks, and trying new subjects help your child find what excites them.

**Celebrate Progress:** We reward resilience and engagement at Simon Balle, not just high grades.

**Top Tip:** Remind your child that every mistake is a step towards improvement.





# Wisdom: Prioritising Health and Balance

Emotional and physical wellbeing form the foundation for achievement.

**Sleep & Routine:** Students aged 11–14 need 8–10 hours of sleep. Poor sleep can reduce memory and attention by up to 40%.

**Healthy Habits:** Healthy food is absolutely essential for success at school. Check what your child is eating at school to ensure they are making healthy choices.

**Emotional Support:** Talk regularly. Students with open parent communication report significantly lower levels of school-related stress.

**Digital Wellbeing:** Insist on screen-free time at least an hour before bed to support sleep.

**Top Tip:** Shared routines and regular conversations show your child they are supported, valued, and safe.



# The Power of Reading

Reading is a cornerstone of academic success and personal growth. Most students will now be 'reading to learn' rather learning to read' and the amount that students read is a very powerful predictor of future academic success. Reading 20 minutes a day exposes a student to 1.8 million words a year - dramatically improving vocabulary, empathy, and achievement.

**Daily Reading:** It is well established that children who read books daily have stronger academic outcomes. How can you build this reading into your child's daily routine now that they are becoming increasingly independent?

**Reading for Pleasure:** Reading for pleasure is more important for children's cognitive development than their parents' level of education and is a greater predictor of future success than socio-economic background. It supports empathy, creativity, and vocabulary development—skills essential for thriving in school and beyond.

**Top- tip:** Sustain your child's daily reading habit. Build the time into your routine and discuss with them why it is important. Encourage your child to visit the library and get involved with the wide variety of events.



# Digital Wellbeing:

Supporting your child's digital wellbeing is essential as they begin secondary school, where online communication and device use can rapidly increase for some students at an age when they are emotionally immature and especially vulnerable.

Establishing healthy habits early helps protect their sleep, focus, and emotional resilience—factors that are directly linked to academic success and mental health. Open conversations about online safety and screen time also build trust, encouraging children to come to you when challenges arise. Many teenagers report being frightened by the landscape they encounter online. You need to help your child navigate this landscape.



**Set screen time boundaries:** Establish clear rules for device use—especially before bedtime—to support focus, sleep, and balance.

**Model mindful habits:** Show healthy digital behaviour by limiting your own screen use and prioritising face-to-face interaction.

**Talk about online safety:** Discuss privacy settings, responsible sharing, and how to handle online bullying or inappropriate content.

**Stay engaged:** Know what platforms and apps your child uses—regular check-ins show interest and build trust without being intrusive. Respect the age limits of apps. They are there for a reason.

**Create tech-free zones:** Keep bedrooms and dinner tables screen-free to encourage rest, family connection, and quality time.



# Summer Checklist: Ready for Year 7!

Support your child's independence, confidence and wellbeing over the summer by completing the summer checklist below. Choose at least two activities for each of the six week break. Each activity supports your child's confidence, organisation, and wellbeing - ready to thrive in Year 7!

## Responsibility and organisation

- Pack a mock school bag using a timetable
- Set up a homework/study space at home
- Plan your week using a simple calendar or planner

## Respect, kindness and belonging

- Say "hello" to someone new each week
- Choose a school value to focus on for a week (e.g. kindness)
- Meet up with a future classmate

## Resilience, courage and growth mindset

- Try learning something totally new
- Make a "can't yet" list and try a new skill each week
- Create a school question jar and talk about your thoughts





### Wisdom, wellbeing and balance

- Practise the school journey (walk, bus or bike)
- Have screen-free evenings 2–3 times a week
- Try a one-week early bedtime challenge

### Reading and communication

- Set a summer reading challenge
- Write or draw a story about your first day at secondary school
- Ask and answer five fun questions with a family member each evening

### Digital wellbeing

- Create a family tech agreement together
- Learn online safety tips through a scavenger hunt or quiz
- Take a 3–7 day break from phones or gaming

**Top tip:** Choose 2–3 activities to focus on each week. Celebrate progress and talk about what you’ve learned together.

**Why it matters:** Each activity supports your child’s confidence, organisation, and wellbeing—ready to thrive in Year 7!





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