

# Southmoor Best Bites



Everything primary school  
pupils need to know about  
Southmoor Academy



# What is being at secondary school like?

Starting at secondary school is a big step. To make things easier, we've made this booklet to tell you about what you can expect, the things we do to help you and some of the fun stuff you'll get up to in your time here. Don't worry! It's going to be great!

## What's different?

### More Than One Teacher

In secondary school you have a different teacher for every lesson. You will also have a 'form tutor' who you will spend each morning with for tutor time and will help look after you during your time at Southmoor.

### Different Classrooms

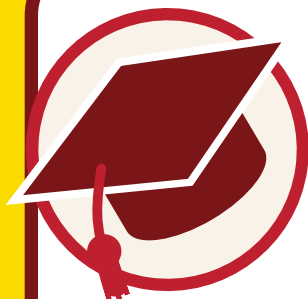
Instead of one teacher, teaching you all the subjects in one classroom, in secondary school you have a teacher for every subject, each with their own classroom. This means you move around the school to attend your different lessons.

### New Subjects!

Some subjects you might not have studied at Primary School. You'll learn a foreign language, act in Drama, learn how to cook or make things in Design Technology as well as learn more about some subjects you have already studied at primary school.

### What Else?

You'll find there are a lot more students, up to 1500 but don't worry, we'll make sure you don't feel lost whilst moving around the school every day, there will always be someone there to help you if you need it.



# What we do to help...



## Insight

You may have already taken part in our special 'Insight' program, where you discovered some of the more advanced topics of Key Stage 3 and beyond, as well as learning a bit more about the type of personality you matched to!

## Transition Days

You will also get a chance to experience what life is like at Southmoor during our transition days. You'll meet your peers and your year leader, try some of your new subjects and get to explore our school.



## Summer Schools

We also offer the chance for you to take part in our fantastic summer school. This is a great chance to make new friends, take part in some really fun activities and better familiarise yourself with Southmoor before you start in September.

## Our pupils tell you what it's like...

The best thing about secondary school is the opportunities! You get the chance to study brand new subjects.

Isabella Year 7

I really like Southmoor because I have made lots of new friends here.

Ali, Year 7

Life at Southmoor is fantastic, the teachers are really friendly and take care of us.

Oliver, Year 7

# Proud of being at Southmoor

We want you to be proud of being at Southmoor. That means looking smart in our school uniform every day, being on time for school and lessons, with everything you need to learn and setting a good example for your school in the community.



Plain white, collared shirt

School tie with badge

Black blazer with school badge

Black V-neck jumper, tank top or cardigan with or without school badge

Black trousers

School tartan skirts

Plain black tights should be worn or plain black, grey or white ankle socks

Black, polishable shoes



Trainers of any kind are not allowed!

## Our School Uniform

It is very important that you come to school in the correct school uniform every day. Take a look at what you need to be wearing above to make sure you are looking smart! You can find the full details of our school uniform on our school website or by using this QR code.



# Our PE Kit

Your school PE kit helps you look the part when doing sports activities in school and when representing us in competitions against other schools.

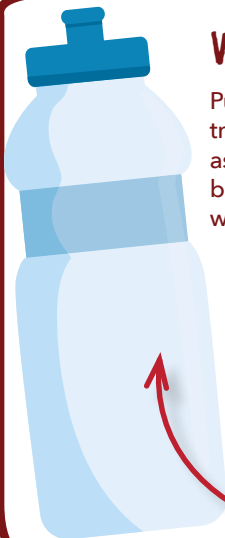


## Put Your Best Foot Forward with School Shoes

Smart shoes are a crucial part of our school uniform and must be worn at all times, except when doing PE or specific after-school club activities. Shoes should be black, polishable and durable enough to last!







## Water Bottles

Pupils are required to bring a transparent sports water bottle as part of their equipment (must be clear and not opaque and with no patterns or lettering).

This may only be filled with still water, but can be filled with juice from our new juice bar in the Restaurant at lunchtime, where tokens can be purchased. Water will be made available for refills free of charge.



## Mobile Phones

Mobile phones must be switched off and placed in the secure mobile phone pouch provided by the school when on school premises.

## Breaks & Lunchtimes

You get one 15 minute break in the morning and a 40 minute break at Lunchtime. These give you the chance to chill, have something to eat, catch-up with your friends or visit the toilets (you are not allowed to go to the toilet inside of lesson time). You can also attend a lunchtime club or activity.



## What to eat & where



### Breakfast

Toast is available for free every morning from the main restaurant.



### Lunchtimes

Daily meal selection including a choice of hot meals, panninis, chicken, pasta and curry pots, cold sandwiches, baked potatoes, salad bar, cookies, tray bakes, yoghurts, desserts, fresh fruit plus much more!

You can also bring your own packed lunch to enjoy with your friends in the restaurant.

# What's it like in Year 7?

In Year 7 you will learn lots of new things and make new friends. Though it might be scary to be the youngest year group, we are here to make sure that you get the best start in your new school.



## Meet Mr Laing, Head of Year 7

My name is Mr Laing and I will be your Head of Year. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all of you to the beginning of your secondary school adventure here at Southmoor Academy. I will be working closely with you all for the next five years, supporting your learning and personal challenges.

Your form group is the class you will attend every morning for tutor time, named ASPIRE AM. This class will be made up of students from your year group, and will often be the same faces you will take your subject lessons with. In form, your tutor will take the register and deliver special short lessons on a range of topics. I will be the person to help you in school if you have any worries, problems, or questions. My role is to support you and your family in a variety of ways, so that you are ready to learn every day with excellent attendance, punctuality, and behaviour. Transitioning to a new school can be challenging, but we have a very supportive staff here at Southmoor Academy, who are always willing to help and offer advice.

As a pupil of Southmoor Academy, we expect you to be Ready to learn every day, be Respectful to staff, as well as other pupils, be Safe, as you move around the school, and Kind towards yourself and others. By following these four simple rules, I know your time here at Southmoor Academy will be enjoyable, exciting, and rewarding. As we move forward into this new school year together, I am expecting high standards of behaviour and enthusiasm for learning, and in return, I will foster a positive atmosphere within the year group, where all pupils feel valued and can reach their full potential. Lastly, I am looking forward to meeting each of you, helping you make those first steps into secondary education, and supporting you and your parents during these next important five years.

# Being at School every day

Being in school and on time to your lessons is very important. If you're not here learning, then how can you expect to do well? We make sure we reward good attendance and punctuality.



Our attendance system helps us to reward good attendance. With all sorts of good stuff like certificates, badges & cool trips.

ATTENDANCE TARGET

**97%**  
& ABOVE

That's being in school 180 days out of 185 days in a school year. You get 180 days not in school for holidays, shopping & appointments.

*Pssst! That's only three days off per year!*

Did you know?  
A two week holiday in term time means the highest attendance possible is **94.5%**

Which of these is a good reason to be off school?

- A) Genuine Illness
- B) Family Holiday
- C) A Doctor's Appointment
- D) To Play Video Games
- E) Catch up on Sleep

Answer at the bottom of the next page

# Get Involved!

School is not just about learning. You can get involved with our student council to represent your year group and help improve the school for your peers.

School council elections happen every year and those voted into office by their peers will get to act as ambassadors for the school; welcoming visitors, taking part in local school parliament and leading in school charity events, such as our Christmas tin appeal.



## Supporting You

We have many things in place at Southmoor to support you and your well being. Our fantastic Welcome Squad, made up of our current Year 7 pupils, will be on hand to offer support and guidance.



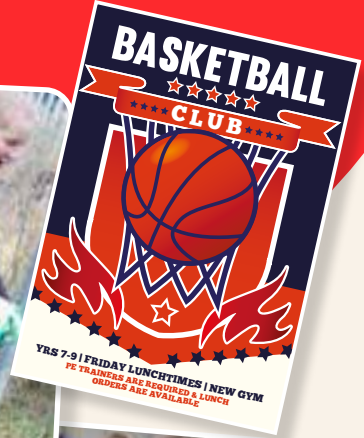
### What to do if you're worried or think you're being bullied...

Our school has very low levels of reported bullying. We understand this is a worry for students and parents and we take bullying very seriously. The most important thing is that if you think you are being bullied or hear or see bullying then **please tell us!**

**You can report any concerns or issues online, via the Report It button on our school website, as well as by speaking to any member of adult staff at school.**

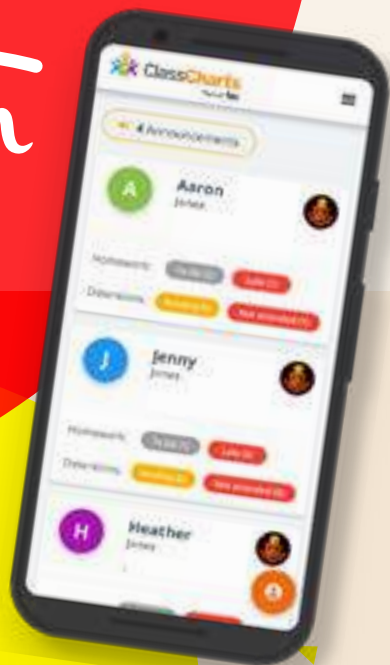
# Join a Club!

There are many different clubs you can join every week that run over lunchtimes, after school and during enrichment periods. From computer coding to gardening, sport and fitness, to drama and music, we've got something for everyone!



# Rewards & Recognition

We want you to do well at school, and we want to reward you for good work, excellent behaviour and a positive attitude. For that reason, we award our pupils points every time they do something good via our 'ClassCharts' app. These points allow you to earn rewards and tell your parents about all the great things you are doing in school.



## Attitude 2 Learning

Show your good or outstanding attitude to learning in school & earn your certificate. Based on your behaviour every term, you will receive either a 'Good' or 'Outstanding' award certificate!

## Headteacher's Awards

If you do something that's especially fantastic, one of your teachers could nominate you for a **Head Teacher's Award** or a **Sports Person of the Week Award**. These prestigious awards are hand-picked and presented every week by our Headteacher. You'll receive a special certificate and a very fancy pen set or a T-Shirt to show off to your friends!



## Awards Events

Every year group has regular assemblies to celebrate the achievements of pupils. You could even receive a very special award!

## Plenty of Ways to be Rewarded!

You could also receive a ticket for a free ice cream for excellent work, attitude or manners around school. You could also receive rewards for excellent attendance as part of our Easter Eggtravaganza and Attendance Advent events.



## Reward Trips & Visits

If you have both excellent behavior and attendance, you will be invited to join us on a range of trips and visits, including our annual trip to Disneyland Paris as part of our '**Disney 100**', from Year 8 onwards. It doesn't stop there though, at the end of the school year, there is a great chance to enjoy a well-earned day of fun as part of our annual '**Sports & Activities Day**',

# Lessons & Learning
















We want to make your learning fun. If you're learning and having fun, you are more likely to remember what it is that you've been taught. We want you to come to school because you love it!



## Fun in the Classroom!

You'll get to have lessons in Science labs, where you'll use Bunsen burners and conduct experiments, you'll get to perform in our Drama studio with lights and sound equipment and you'll also be able to use specialist machinery in Design Technology. Check out your full curriculum breakdown below to see how many lessons you'll receive in each subject.

## Year 7 Curriculum 2026 / 2027

Subject	Lessons per week	Subject	Lessons per week
 English	4.5	 Geography	2.5
 Mathematics	4	 History	2.5
 Science	3	 Computer Science	1
 Art	1	 PE	2
 Music	1	 RE	1
 Drama	1	 Technology	1
 French	2.5	 Aspire	1
		 Achieve	1



**Homework:** homework is set and managed through ClassCharts. You'll get your own account to log on to access your homework.



**Assessments:** We'll assess your progress in each subject, to check how you are doing, test your knowledge and give you support where you might need it.



**Feedback:** Progress and Attitude 2 Learning reports will be issued at points throughout the academic year, and full written reports issued once a year. Parents' evenings for Year 7 pupils will take place in November and in the Summer term.

## Our Curriculum Intent

The curriculum we've built for you is intended to help you 'Know More, Do More and Go Further.' Everything you do and learn at Southmoor falls within these three core values. This is our 'plan' for how we will help make the most of your time in school.



## Interesting School Trips

Throughout the year you will get the chance to go on school trips to all sorts of interesting places, to help enhance your subject knowledge.

# Pride in your Work

We want you to create some fantastic pieces of work whilst at Southmoor and we have some things in place to help with that!

## Be PROUD of your work

<b>P</b>	<b>en</b>	Write in <b>pen</b> - blue or black ink!
<b>R</b>	<b>uler</b>	Use a <b>ruler</b> to draw all straight lines & <b>rule</b> off your work when you have finished.
<b>O</b>	<b>ops!</b>	Draw a neat line through mistakes with a ruler.
<b>U</b>	<b>nderline</b>	<b>Underline</b> the <b>title</b> and <b>date</b> .
<b>D</b>	<b>raw</b>	<b>Draw</b> in <b>pencil</b> .

✓	Correct Good idea Good use of language
sp	Incorrect spelling / circle or underline where the error took place. Write the correct spelling with sp x3 in the margin for the student to correct in green pen OR indicate pupil should use a dictionary
p	Punctuation error. Underline where the error has taken place
//	A new paragraph is needed
?	Expression unclear
e.g.?	Provide an example / the point needs developing further
CL	Capital letter error: circle the omission

## Smart Students...

 The Listening App

Remember  
**'S.L.A.N.T.'**

-   Sit up.
-   Look at the person who is talking.
-   Ask questions but don't interrupt.
-   Nod.
-   Track the speaker with your eyes.

## Be PROUD

To help make your work consistent, we ask students to be PROUD of it! These simple guidelines will help you present beautifully neat work in every lesson! All of our teachers also mark your work in the same way across every subject to help make feedback easier to understand.

## Smart Students

To help you complete your work to the best standard, every class room has our 'Smart Students' posters with advice designed to help you apply the best literacy standards to everything you do.



# Expectations

Behaviour is very important at Southmoor. You need to make sure you are keeping up a good standard not just in class but between lessons and at break and lunchtimes too. Our 'Ready, Respectful, Safe & Kind' posters are on the door to every classroom to remind you what is expected of you whilst you are in school.




## Own Your Actions- No Excuses

### Ready

- Wear full uniform
- Be punctual
- Bring all required equipment
- Bring your homework on time, every time



### Respectful

- To all adults
- To all students
- To the school environment
- Follow all reasonable instructions from staff



### Safe

- At all times, in all areas
- Accept that only you are responsible for your actions



### Kind

- To others and yourself



### Know Your Emotions

BLUE ZONE	GREEN ZONE	YELLOW ZONE	RED ZONE
 Lonely, Sad, Pointed	 Calm, Relaxed, Focused, Content, Happy	 Silly, Excited, Worried, Scared, Frustrated	 Enraged, Angry, Hysterical, Terrified, Inconsolable



### HOW DO WE KEEP YOU SAFE IN SCHOOL?

All of the adults around you think that your health, safety and welfare are very important; we respect our pupils and help to protect their rights.

We teach our pupils how to recognise risks in different situations, and how to protect themselves and stay safe.

### HOW WILL WE TRY TO PROTECT YOU?

We try to provide a safe, respectful environment for pupils to learn in.

We want to help to ensure that pupils remain safe, at home, in the community, as well as at school.

We think it is important for you to know where to get help if you are worried, even an unhappy adult, something or someone.

### NEED TO TALK?

These members of staff are our staff specialists in child protection & safeguarding: Mrs G. Thompson, Mrs Harris, Mrs R. Dunbar, Mr S. Wardham, Mr Long, Mr C. Zaitoun & Mrs H. White.



**DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD**

**Mrs Thompson**  
Assistant Headteacher  
Safeguarding & Safeguarding

**DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS**

 Mrs Harris Assistant Headteacher Safeguarding & Safeguarding	 Mrs Dunbar Assistant Headteacher Safeguarding & Safeguarding	 Mr Wardham Assistant Headteacher Safeguarding & Safeguarding
 Mr Long Assistant Headteacher Safeguarding & Safeguarding	 Mr Zaitoun Assistant Headteacher Safeguarding & Safeguarding	 Mrs White Assistant Headteacher Safeguarding & Safeguarding



Southmoor Academy  
SOUTHMOOR, DURHAM



# Staying Safe

At Southmoor Academy we have a strong culture of safeguarding that runs throughout every level of our staff. Safeguarding is the action that is taken to protect you from harm. It means: protecting you from abuse, preventing harm to your health or development and making sure you grow up with safe and effective care.

All of our staff are safeguarding trained to help you but we also have posters around school to remind you what to do if you need help.

# Your Questions Answered

## What time should I arrive at school?

**Pupils must be on the school yard no later than 8.25am.** You can enter via the pupil entrance on Ryhope Road or the gate on Queen Alexandra Road. If arriving late after this time, pupils must report to the Pupil Reception. Pupils who are late will be issued with a detention.

## What if I am ill?

The correct place for you to be on a school day is at school. If you are not in school, then you must have a valid reason, e.g. illness. If you are well enough to go out (except to the doctor's), you are well enough to come to school. Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of any absence, using the Class Charts app or by telephoning. When you return to school you must, always bring a letter from your parent/carer giving the reason for your absence and covering the dates when you were off.

## What if I need to go to the doctor, dentist, or have an appointment?

You **must** make an appointment after school. Only emergency appointments should be made in school time. If you must leave school during the day for any reason, you must bring an official appointment card/letter from your parent/carer before the date. Show your Form Tutor the appointment card/letter and then take it to the Attendance Manager during morning registration or after school and you will be given a pass-out. If you return to school later in the same day, you must report to the Main School Reception, where you will sign in before going to your usual lesson.

## What about attendance?

You only get one chance at education. If you are often absent, you'll miss important work, your grades may suffer and you may start to lose touch with your friends. Current education regulations make it clear that Headteachers need not grant leave of absence for holidays. We do not authorise family holidays during term time.

## What if I need to take medicines at school?

Only under specific circumstances can the school supervise the storage and taking of medicines. Your parent/carer will need to make an appointment with Mrs Gaff to agree a process. In general, the school can only accept prescription medicines which must be delivered to school in the original marked packaging by your parent/carer. A separate prescription must be obtained to be kept in school. The school will only accept non-prescription medication under specific circumstances. Non-prescription medication must be treated in exactly the same way as prescription medication. Please do not ask for paracetamol or other tablets at school: we are not allowed to give you any medicines. For full details of the medication process, see the school website.

## How do I pay for lunch?

The school operates a cashless biometrics system to pay for school lunches, using fingerprint recognition. Parents/Carers must manage top-ups to their child's lunch account using the web-based 'ParentPay' platform. Unique log in details will be issued to all parents in September. Lunches cost **£2.93**. Pupils who are in receipt of free school meals have their accounts topped up automatically on a daily basis. Pupils are also welcome to bring their own packed lunch.

## Am I allowed to use a mobile phone or other electronic device in school?

While the Academy accepts that mobile phones and other electronic devices are now a part of everyday life, we would discourage pupils from bringing them into school. If however, it is necessary for a child to bring a mobile phone to school, e.g. for safety reasons when travelling to or from school, it must be switched off at all times throughout the school day and placed in the secure mobile phone pouch provided by the school. The Academy will not accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage to any mobile phone or electronic device on school property. Other devices such as wireless headphones should not be brought to school.

## What if I get a detention?

Behaviour at Southmoor is good, where only a minority of pupils are issued with detentions. If however, you are issued with a detention, the member of staff setting this will tell you where and when this will take place.

## Where do I go on the first day of term (Monday 7th September 2026)?

**Pupils must report to school by 8.25am**, where they can use the pupil pathways on Ryhope or Queen Alexandra Road. We will have plenty of staff on hand to direct the pupils to the main yard, where they will line up in their tutor groups. School will end at 3.30pm on this day, where again pupils can leave via the pathways to Ryhope or Queen Alexandra Road.



### School Blog

Our school blog is a weekly newsletter straight from the school that gives you all the latest on what's been happening each week.

You can sign up to our blog on our school website at the QR code below.



## Keep in Touch!

Here are the best ways to keep in touch and up-to-date with everything that's going on at Southmoor!

### Social Media

You can follow us on one of our official social media accounts.



@Southmoor Academy



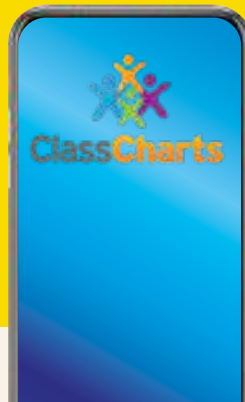
@SouthmoorAc



@Southmoor Academy

### ClassCharts

The school messages pupils and parents mainly through our ClassCharts App. You will be given login details for the app in your first week at Southmoor.



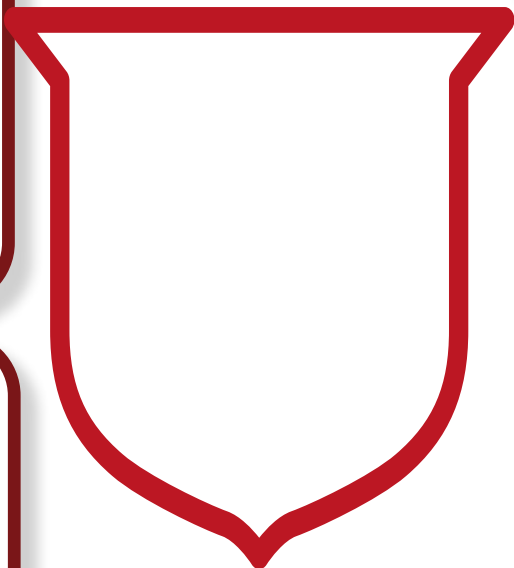
# Best Bites Quiz?

Have you read through all of Southmoor Best Bites? Then why don't you test your new knowledge about Southmoor Academy by trying the activities below.

How many words can you find to do with transition?



## Make your own school badge



Which of these do you need everyday at school? Circle them!

