

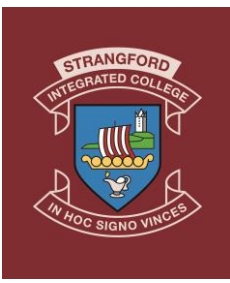


Strangford College

Parental Information Booklet

Year 8
2025-26





Dear Parent/Carer,

We are so excited about welcoming your Son or Daughter as they begin this new adventure as part of our family here at Strangford College. In the coming weeks, months and years there will be so many new experiences, friendships, skills and qualifications that they will gain and we are delighted to be part of their post-primary journey.

We understand that many of them will be feeling nervous, however we want to reassure you that we will do everything possible to ensure that they are happy, safe and working towards reaching their full potential. We have an experienced Year 8 pastoral team, who are all here to make the transition from primary school to post-primary education as smooth and problem free as possible.

During the first days in school, your Childs form tutor will explain everything they need to know and they will be there to ensure that no one is ever left feeling like they don't know what is going on.

We are looking forward to getting to know you all better and we can't wait to see what the future has in store for the class of 2030!!

Yours sincerely

Mrs McBurney & Mrs Gibson.

Heads of Year



Heads of Year 8

Mrs G Gibson

Mrs N McBurney

Form Tutors in Year 8

8TT – Ms Turnbull

8AM – Mr McCulla

8AF – Mr Ferdowsian

8EG – Miss Graham

8EDM – Mrs Diaz-Morris

Year 8 Pastoral Programme 2025/2026

Year 8 have a varied Pastoral Programme in place. We believe that Year 8 is an induction year and that it can take our students some time to fully settle into Post Primary school life.

We have a dedicated and experienced team of Year 8 Form Tutors who will be your child's first point of call if they need anything or have any questions. Your child will spend the first 15 minutes each day with their form class and form tutor either in assembly or in form class. During assemblies and form time, students will be spoken to about a range of things including bullying, being kind, coping with change, health and well-being, safeguarding, dealing with disappointment as well as much more.

Year 8 will all have one period of LLW on their timetable per week. For one third of these periods students will do Personal Development. The PD programme will deal with and look at issues around health & the whole person, managing emotions, feelings, managing change, growing up & puberty, self concept and harmful substances. This is taught in their form class and there is lots of opportunity for class discussion, group work and pair work.

We have two days set aside each year at the end of October for Year 8 activities. The year is split into two groups and they have two full days of fun.

Half the group go to Ganaway for team building and outdoor pursuits activities for a day. They do activities such as the climbing wall, archery, brain games, high ropes and the zip line. They are provided with a hot lunch and we always have a fantastic day.

The other half of the year stay at school and do workshops with "Made For More" This is an outside organisation who deal with all issues surrounding mental health and well-being. They are young and enthusiastic and they make every session educational but lively. These workshops are also age appropriate.

There will be a letter sent home prior to this happening.

Year 8 Monthly Focus

Month	Focus	Thinking Skills & Personal Capabilities
September	Induction and settling in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self management
October	Making friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with others
November	Beginning to use revision techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being creative
December	Managing exam stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing information
January	Building resilience after exam results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self management
February	Attendance and being in school as often possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self management
March	A healthy you "thinking about food intake"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self management
April	A healthy you :ready to exercise"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self management
May	Mental health and wellbeing ideas for you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being creative
June	Time management during exam sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking, problem solving and decision making

Example of Homework Schedules for Year 8

Department	Homework	Duration
Maths	Up to 5 MyMaths tasks per week Literacy learning homework End of unit worksheet (every couple of weeks)	10 mins each 5-10 mins 20 mins
English	20 mins reading per night One written homework per week.	60 – 90 mins per week
French	One homework per week. Learning vocab or written homework	20 – 30 mins
Geography	One varied homework per week depending on the topic being covered.	20 – 30 mins per homework
Science	Learning facts Researching for a topic Completion of tasks One homework per week	No time given as each homework will differ
Religious Studies	One per week ranging from finishing classwork, extension activities, quizzes or questions.	20 minutes max
History	Learning facts Researching for a topic One homework per week	20 – 30 mins per homework

The 4 Golden Rules for Revision

1. Plan it – Draw up a revision timetable and stick to it – No excuses give each subject a decent amount of time.
2. No noise – best to work in a quiet place and take regular breaks to refresh the mind.
3. Break it down – Summarise whole chapters into smaller sections or areas. Use Memory cards or mind maps to help you learn information.
4. Highlight – Use colours and symbols to highlight key vital points. Remember key words and phrases by making them stand out on the page.



Stepped Consequences Summary

Students, unfortunately, will not always behave in the way we may wish. We will implement the following actions which are two-fold:

- to set an agreed standard of positive behaviour
- to encourage students to reflect on their inappropriate behaviour and learn strategies to avoid such behaviour in the future

The chart below shows guidelines for staff in dealing with incidents. It is not prescriptive as each incident must be considered in context but it should aid with whole - school consistency.

Pro forma should be completed at each stage by relevant members of staff.

Appropriate language must be used at all times by any member of staff involved.

To make the system easy for everyone to understand, we have introduced a set of consequences called **C1, C2, C3, C4 and C5** as described below:

**If a parent wishes to discuss a given consequence, they may arrange a meeting with the Head of Pastoral Care, Vice Principal or Principal.

Disruption	Consequence	Guidelines consequences /actions
<p>Low level disruption: e.g. chatting, inattention, lack of work, low level arguing, misuse of equipment/environment, lack of respect, not following instructions, showing off, shouting out answers when not required.</p>	<p>C1 Verbal warning Dealt with by class teacher</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name written on whiteboard and verbal warning issued. The student may also be asked to move seat. • If behaviour improves, no further action will be required.
<p>Persistent Low level disruption: e.g. continuation of the above, answering back, refusing to follow instructions, failure to produce or complete homework.</p>	<p>C2 Break or lunch time detention Dealt with by class teacher and monitored by form tutors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name written a second time on whiteboard and recorded on SIMS. • If a pattern of C2s is evident, the form tutor will initiate a break, or lunch detention to discuss the issues. • A third incident in class will result in an immediate C3 after school detention. • If a subject teacher initiates a C3 for class behaviour, they must make a telephone call home by to discuss the cause for concern. • If the negative behaviour continues after issuing a C3, the class teacher may need to initiate an EXIT.
<p>Failing to adhere to the rules that are set in place to promote safety, good citizenship and effective learning in the College. e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeatedly not arriving on time • Repeatedly unequipped for class • Repeatedly dropping litter and/or not picking it up 	<p>C3 After school detention Monitored by Heads of Year</p>	<p>C3 is when a one hour after school detention. Any member of teaching staff can issue a C3. This may be for behaviour issues inside, or outside, class.</p> <p>Any member of staff issuing a C3 notifies the office and a record is kept. All after school detentions are taken in the Technology Room from 3.30 - 4.30pm, Monday to Thursday. They are taken in total silence, supervised by the Heads of Year and senior members of staff.</p> <p>1 Conduct point should be recorded on SIMS</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unacceptable attitude/behaviour • Persistent uniform infringements • Failing to report a serious incident, e.g. witnessing damage to school property. • Inappropriate use of a mobile phone. • Out of bounds (check map) <p style="text-align: center;">EXIT</p>	<p>The decision to initiate a class exit is made by the teacher, and supported by the Head of Dept/Form Tutor.</p>	<p>Parents will be phoned, or sent a text message, or email, to inform them that a C3 has been issued. We will assume that parents have received the message we send, even if left on a voicemail. We expect students to attend a C3 instead of any other activity, without negotiation. If a Student fails to attend a C3, their Head of Year will contact home to ascertain a reason for this. They Student will be given an opportunity to reschedule and re-sit the C3. A second failure to attend will result in a C4 internal suspension. Heads of Year will receive a weekly summary sheet for C3 after school detentions. Any more than 3, C3 after school detentions per month will result in a C4 internal suspension. Depending on the seriousness of the behaviour, if C3s have been applied and the student has not chosen to change their behaviour a C5 external suspension may be given.</p> <p>Students, who disrupt learning persistently, or significantly, will be removed from the classroom. The school office is contacted and the student is escorted to the Head of Year. The automatic consequence is that they will receive a C4 and will spend the following day in isolation. They will only return to lessons on the day of their Exit if they are deemed to be in the right frame of mind to follow all instructions without further disruption. Any student exited twice in one day, will not return to lessons on that day. In the event that a student who is not in the right frame of mind to learn and conduct themselves appropriately and whose presence in school may lead to disruption to learning or distress to themselves or fellow students, parent/guardians will be contacted to collect the student for pastoral support. Students may return to school as soon as they are able with no sanction being set.</p>
<p>Disruption</p> <p>This is a very serious consequence. It signifies that the student has made choices that are unacceptable within our community. The withdrawal day gives them a chance to reflect on the choices they have made. Students who misbehave during their time of internal withdrawal will receive a C5 fixed term exclusion, (suspension). The following may also result in a C4 consequence;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truancy • Being in the company of smokers, carries an immediate C4 consequence. This also applies to the use of e-cigarettes or vaping. 	<p>Stage</p> <p style="text-align: center;">C4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Internal suspension</p> <p>Dealt with by Head of Year Monitored by the Assistant Vice Principal/ Vice Principals</p>	<p>Guidelines consequences/actions</p> <p>A full day withdrawal from class, under strict supervision. Students will be required to work in silence and to complete the work that is set.</p> <p>This is a very serious sanction. The withdrawal day gives them a chance to reflect on the choices they have made. 2 conduct points will be recorded on SIMS.</p> <p>Students who misbehave during their time of internal withdrawal will receive a C5 fixed term exclusion (suspension).</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being in possession of smoking or vaping paraphernalia on school grounds. • Vandalism • Misbehaviour in the school toilets or other areas of the school grounds (depending on the level of misbehaviour, the sanction may be escalated to a C5 external suspension e.g. misuse of a mobile phone). 		
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<p>Serious incident from outset (stages 1-4 jumped) or escalation (may be at other stages but moves quickly to stage 5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious incident (somebody may be hurt), serious verbal or physical aggression, theft or damage to school property, drugs (which includes tobacco related substances and e-cigarettes), alcohol, or weapons involved with the likelihood that the behaviour will lead to exclusion from the college. • Persistent infringement of the college rules, where previous sanctions have been applied and the behaviour of the student has not changed. This behaviour is deemed to be unacceptable within the college community. • Smoking or Vaping on school grounds. 	<p style="text-align: center;">C5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Suspension Dealt with by Vice Principals / Principal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed Term Exclusion, followed by re-admission meeting with parents. • A restorative, meeting will be arranged between the student and a member staff or other students directly affected by the incident. • This may lead to permanent exclusion. The EA guidelines & College Policy will be followed. • As at all stages, it is essential that a written account of all actions is kept in the student's personal file in order that a full and impartial record may be kept. • A serious C5 incident may result in permanent exclusion from the College. Only the Board of Governors can issue a permanent exclusion.
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Positive Behaviour Chart

Here at Strangford College, we believe in positive discipline. We explain the rules and what is expected of our students when they arrive and throughout their time here. Students are all very familiar with our behaviour for learning policy and how this may impact them if their behaviour is not what we would expect.

We are a staff who love to give praise and recognition to our students when they are deserving. Form teachers, subject teachers and other members of staff can award achievement points through SIMS for a variety of reasons such as:

Academic achievement

Excellent effort

Outstanding work

Extra-curricular

Contribution to school values

These achievement points are collated and celebrated in our Rewards Assemblies which are held at the end of each term. Students can win prizes and are recognised by their peers and staff.

At the end of September each year we have the annual Strangford College Prize Night. This is held in the college hall and includes speeches from our Chair of the Board of Governors, our Principal, Head Girl, Head Boy and special guest speaker. There are many prizes awarded on the night for successes such as Sporting achievements inside and outside of school, academic success throughout each subject area for Junior school students as well as for GCSE results, AS results, A2 results. There are also awards for Integration, Resilience and other Special awards given. Parents receive a letter if their child has won a prize so they can attend the prestigious evening and be rewarded for their hard work.

We believe that all students should be praised and rewarded for their efforts and achievements and we love to hear about anything our pupils achieve outside of school also



Department Curriculum Provision

Year 8 Curriculum Information

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Subject Leader</u>	<u>Overview</u>
RE	Mr Kirk	<p>In RE the students will begin by looking at the Egyptians and Moses. They will study the origins of the ancient Egyptian cultures and religion. The students will develop an understanding of the conditions and backdrop of Egypt prior to the slavery of the Jews. The students will then study the story of Moses and his life culminating in the exodus story.</p> <p>In Term 2, the students will look at the topic of 'Palestine and the time of Jesus.' In this unit the students will discover what the geography, climate, terrain etc. of Palestine is like and what the homes, jobs and day to day routine of Jews and Jesus was when he was younger. This will be followed by a study of Jesus' life, based upon the Gospel of Matthew. Students will study some of the miracle stories of Jesus and analyse the importance of these for Christians in the past and present.</p> <p>To complete the year, students will look at the bible and complete a study about the origins of the bible and some facts about the bible. The summer exams will be based upon all the topics studied in year 8.</p>
Art & Design	Mrs Beattie	<p>In Art students will learn about the formal elements of tone, line, colour and texture through the themes of Still Life and The Seashore. They will develop artistic skills using pencil, paint, printmaking, collage and clay.</p> <p>A homework will be given once a fortnight and should be signed by a parent or guardian.</p>
Maths	Mr Bellinger	<p>A programme of study designed by the 'Mathematics Mastery' company (www.mathematicsmastery.org) is being introduced in Year 8. This focuses on establishing depth of understanding rather than breadth of content. Classwork will include a mixture of mini-whiteboard work, whole-class and group discussion, as well as more traditional book work to reinforce concepts once</p>

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Subject Leader</u>	<u>Overview</u>
		established. Homeworks may include learning, thinking or research tasks as well as a regular End of the Week homework from a termly booklet.
Modern Languages	Ms Allen	In French classes your child will learn basic communications skills and be able to practice speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in the target language. In the first term your child will learn basic greetings, colours, numbers 1-31, months and other classroom vocabulary. They will have a vocabulary support booklet to help them learn the words they need to know for each individual unit. Students also get a white workbook for HW and core vocabulary.
Geography	Mrs J Greenaway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is Geography? - The Geography of NI - The changing world of work - Map skills - Geology - The Geography of food - Ecosystems
History	Mrs Knewman	Students will be introduced to History in their first unit, 'What is History?' This will be followed by a study of the Norman invasion of England focusing on the Battle of Hastings. Students will also find out about why the Normans came to Ireland and what it was like to live in the Middle Ages. Students will round the year off by studying the Spanish Armada. All students will be given an exercise book and a homework booklet. However, all homework is to be completed in their history exercise book. Students may choose to have a folder to keep these books safe. We would ask that all homeworks are signed by a guardian.
English	Mr McCartney	<p>In English students will develop their Communication skills in Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing. This will involve engaging in various individual and group tasks in response to fiction and non-fiction stimuli which will be assessed through CCEA's levels of progression. These will include the whole school Tracker Tasks.</p> <p>Students will have a weekly spelling test and fortnightly focused lesson on grammar and language skills.</p> <p>Year 8 students have a weekly library lesson in which they follow the Accelerated Reader programme to develop individual reading progress.</p> <p>Students have a discrete literacy lesson which addresses literacy requirements across the curriculum with reference to various other subjects.</p>
HE	Mrs Morrison	Students will study the basics of healthy eating, home and family and food preparation. Practical cookery and the development of cooking skills is a large part of what yr8 will learn. They will be issued with a yellow HE folder which they need to bring to all lessons. Lessons will involve both theory and practical food cookery – the teacher will provide instructions as to what students need to bring (details are also listed on the first page of the

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Subject Leader</u>	<u>Overview</u>
		white recipe booklet). Please inform the HE teacher of any food allergies that may impact on their ability to handle ingredients. If a student is absent they should call in to the HE department to check if they are cooking in the next timetabled lesson.
Music	Mr Beare	Over the year students will develop skills in different areas, such as performance, composition, musical theory and analysis. They will be introduced to a wide range of styles and genres. Students will have the opportunity to play instruments, such as the Keyboard, as well as Singing. Group work and paired work are a priority in this practical subject.
ICT	Mr Ferdowsian	Year 8 ICT is a largely practical course where students will become familiar with using the computer. Students will also be introduced to some theory about hardware and software. This will be taught in the classroom throughout practical lessons and through some dedicated theory lessons. Google classroom will also be setup and used for homework tasks
Science	Miss Morrison	In Science students will study topics relating to Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Developing practical skills is also an important part of the year 8 Curriculum. Students will be issued with booklets for each topic. These each contain a variety of activities to be completed in class and as homework. Booklets must be brought to every Science lesson. Students will be issued with homework each week.
T & D	Mrs Currid	Year 8 T&D is a largely practical course where students will become familiar with using hand tools and some machinery in the workshop. Students will also be introduced to some theory about health & safety, materials and processes. This will be taught in the classroom throughout practical lessons and through some dedicated theory lessons. Google classroom will also be setup and used for homework tasks
PE	Mrs Gibson	The purpose of Physical Education is to provide a broad and balanced programme of physical activity which will develop body dexterity, confidence in motor tasks and enjoyment in body movement. In Year 8 students will develop their skills and application of skills in the following activities: <u>Girls:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gymnastics • Netball • Dance • Hockey • Badminton • Athletics • Tennis • Rounders • Cross-country <u>Boys :</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rugby

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Subject Leader</u>	<u>Overview</u>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gymnastics • Football • Athletics • Badminton • Tennis • Rounders • Hurling/Gaelic Football • Cross-country
Citizenship	Mrs Newman	<p>Students will have the opportunity to explore two themes, diversity and inclusion and human rights and social responsibility. This includes: factors affecting identity, diversity inside and outside school and the challenges and opportunities of diversity. Within human rights and social responsibility, we explore key human rights documents and our responsibility towards others.</p>
Employability	Mr Coffey	<p>Students have the opportunity to assess the skills and qualities that they have developed throughout their lives so far, identify targets for self-improvement and engage in planning ahead with regards to future career pathways. There will also be an emphasis on development of enterprising skills that employers will be searching for as well as discovering how technology is affecting the world of work.</p>
Personal Development	Mrs Gibson	<p>Personal Development is based on the three key concepts of self-awareness, personal health and relationships. In Year 8 the themes of health and the whole person, feelings and emotions, self-concept and managing change such as the transition from primary to secondary school will be covered. Each student will also discuss coping with the changes at puberty, personal hygiene and the qualities of good friendships.</p>

Year 8 Recommended Reads

	Title	Author	Genre	Star Rating
1	October, October	Katya Balen	Adventure	4
2	When the Sky Falls	Phil Earle	WW2/Historical	4
3	When Life Gives You Mangoes	Karen Getten	Friendship	4
4	Holes	Louis Sachar	Mystery/Adventure	4
5	The Valley of Lost Secrets	Lesley Parr	War/History/Mystery	4
6	A Girl Called Joy	Jenny Valentine	Friendship	4
7	A Glasshouse of Stars	Shirley Marr	Fantasy	4
8	Bone Music	David Almond	Adventure	4
9	How I Saved the World	Polly Ho Yen	Sci Fi	4
10	I am Minotaur	Anthony McGowan	Adolescence	4
11	When the World was Ours	Liz Kessler	WW2/History/Holocaust	4
12	The Bone Sparrow	Zana Fraillon	Friendship/Emigration	4
13	When Hilter Stole Pink Rabbit	Judith Kerr	WW2/Historical	4
14	High Rise Mystery	Sharna Jackson	Adventure/Detective	4
15	Amari and the Night Brother	B.B. Alston	Fantasy	4
16	My Swordhand is Singing	Marcus Sedgwick	Vampire/Historical	4
17	Trash	Andy Mulligan	Magical/Families	4
18	A Pocketful of Stars	Aisha Bushby	Mystery/Crime	4
19	Fir	Sharon Gosling	Horror/Supernatural	4
20	The Life and Times of Lonny Quicke	Kirsty Applebaum	Adventure/SciFi	4
21	The Space we're in	Katya Balen	Families/ASD	4
22	The Good Thieves	Katherine Rundell	Adventure/Historical/Crime	4
23	A House without Walls	Elizabeth Laird	Families/Refugees/Syria	4
24	The Boy in Striped Pyjamas	John Boyne	WW2/Friendship	4
25	Wonder	R.J. Palacio	Families/School	4
26	The Private Blog of Joe Cowley	Ben Davis	Humour	4
27	Shadow Girl	Sally Nicholls	Time Travel/Fostering	4
28	The Shark Caller	Zillah Bethel	Families/Ghost	4
29	The Summer We Turned Green	William Sutcliffe	Humour/Environment	4
30	Voyage of the Sparrowhawk	Natasha Farrant	Adventure/Historical	4

Internet Safety

Acceptable use of ICT

- ✓ *Acceptable Use Student Form: this will enable your child to use the computer system and devices responsibly.*
- ✓ *They cannot go on the computer system until this is returned.*
- ✓ *Any irresponsible use of the school system or the Ipads will result in your child being sanctioned following our Behaviour for Learning Policy.*

IPADS

- ✓ *Students are given an iPad which is to be used sensibly and responsibly.*
- ✓ *This is for school work, homework and research for projects etc.*
- ✓ *It is up to each individual to ensure that their iPad is charged for each day in school and to look after it all times.*
- ✓ *If there is any damage to the iPad, it is the responsibility of the individual to pay for repair or replacement.*

Sims Parent App

- ✓ *Sign and agree to the SIMS Parent App acceptable use policy and the Parental Access request form*
- ✓ *Download SIMS Parent App from Google Play or the Apple Store*
- ✓ *Sign in with the unique code provided by the school using a third party account such as Google, Facebook, Twitter or Microsoft account*