

FAQs for Open Week 2020/21

How many students will there be in the year group?

There used to be 223 students in each year group, but from September 2017 we started to admit 280 students due to the growing number of new houses in our Priority Admissions Area. From Sept 2021, there will be 280 students in each year group.

Who will look after my child?

From September 2020, we have started a Head of Year and Assistant Head of Year system for pastoral support. Therefore, there will be one Head of Year 7 and one Assistant Head of Year 7 looking after the pastoral and academic needs of your child. There will also be a form tutor who sees the form twice a day. For students on the Special Educational Needs register, there will also be a SENCO and a team of key workers and Learning Support Assistants.

How many form groups will there be?

There will be 10 form groups. In each form group there will be around 28 students. There are 5 Houses (Gainsborough, Shakespeare, Rutherford, Wellington and Nightingale). In each House, there are two form groups in each Year groups, for example, two Year 7 forms, two Year 8 forms all the way up to two Year 11 forms. The House system still operates for Interhouse competitions and Sports Day.

How many teaching groups will there be?

In the majority of non-practical, classroom-based subjects, there will be 10 teaching sets. Although the average size is 28 students, higher ability sets will have up to 31 or 32 students in to create spaces in lower ability classes in order for additional support to be given. In practical subjects, such as PE, DT or the Arts, more teaching groups will be timetabled to create smaller class sizes.

How will my child be assigned to a form group or House?

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will liaise with the Primary Schools and will then arrange students into form groups and Houses. We cannot guarantee your child will be placed with their friends.

Food and packed lunches

Food is available at break time and lunch time from three different food outlets on site. Students pay for the meal using a card that will have been allocated money from home using an online system called Parent Pay, and those who receive free school meals will have funds added automatically on a daily basis. Students are welcome to bring in packed lunches instead of using the school kitchens.

Is my child allowed to bring a phone to school?

We recognise that students bring phones to school to ensure safety on their journeys. However, once school starts at 8:40 until the day ends at 3:15, student's phones are not seen or heard the entire time. Phones are put into school bags. If a phone is seen or heard, it is confiscated for the remainder of the school day. This applies to all break and lunch times.

PE kit and uniform

Both the PE kit and the school uniform are clearly defined on the school website. Students should arrive each day in the correctly worn uniform. The school PE kit must be worn for all Physical Education lessons and school sports fixtures.

Homework

Homework will be set. We aim this is always meaningful, manageable and motivating. We do not issue a homework timetable but we do suggest that in Year 7, at least 30 minutes per evening should be spent completely homework. Warnings are given when work is not handed in or is late, and if this continues, after school detentions are issued.

Extra-Curricular Activities

The school requests that each student in Year 7 signs up for at least one club or activity. These can run after school, but can also be held at lunch time. There are many sports activities to join as well as music, drama and many other activities, ranging from vocabulary club to a games club. If we know of a reasonable request to start a club, we will do our best to facilitate this.

Are the students set from day 1 in all subjects?

Yes. We set students according to their KS2 SAT scores. However, we are flexible and will look to move students if they appear to be out of place when we begin to collect assessment information from their teachers. Although students are set, they are put into appropriate groups in different subjects. For example, a student could be in a top set for English but a bottom set in Maths, if that's what the KS2 results suggest from Year 6. Some subjects, such as Art, Music, Drama, and DT, are mixed ability; the rest are set according to KS2 data.

Will my child study languages?

Each student will have the opportunity to study one language from the start of Year 7. This could be either French or German. We will determine this language unless you have specific reasons for your child's preference. In Year 9, when GCSE courses start, students have the option to study French, German or Spanish.

Are there bullying issues at the school?

Every school from time to time has to deal with some form of disagreements between students. We have a very effective pastoral team in our school, and the staff are very capable of dealing with these issues. If your son or daughter tells you about any issue, please communicate it to us via the form tutor, the Assistant Head of Year or the Head of Year, depending on how serious the issue is. The early we know about the issue, the sooner we can deal with it. If we don't know about it, we are unable to support your child. Every member of staff is sufficiently trained to log any incidents or concerns, which are linked immediately to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

I have 5 choices. Should I put Stanway as my first choice?

If you want your child to start Year 7 at Stanway, it is strongly advisable that you put Stanway as your first preference, but check first which criteria you fall into in our admissions code. Places are allocated by Essex County Council who adhere strictly to the admissions criteria of each school or academy. Please ensure you know which criterion you fulfil.

I live HERE/my child goes to THIS SCHOOL – will they get in this year?

Refer to the admissions policy:

- 1 Child Looked After (CLA)
- 2 Sibling (current Yr7 to 10)
- 3 Live within the Priority Admission Area
- 4 Attend one of the following schools:
- 5 Children of Staff
- 6 All other applications (straight line distance from home to school)

We are unable to make any guarantees for which criterion we will reach when we are full at 280.

What do I do if I don't get offered a place?

You will hear on the 1st March whether you have a place. In that letter from the Local Authority, you will be notified of the school in which your child has been allocated a place. If you are unhappy with your allocation at that time, you have the right to appeal.

My child is taking the 11+ exam for the grammar school. What should I do on the application form?

If your child is taking the 11+ exam, you will need to put the grammar school as your first choice and Stanway as your second. If your child is unsuccessful for the grammar school, Stanway will automatically become your first choice.

In the past, the school has let more students in, so if I don't get a place, is there a chance I will get offered one later?

Nothing can be guaranteed, but this is now very unlikely now that Stanway has expanded to receive additional places. After 1st March, all unsuccessful applications will form a waiting list based on criteria and straight-line distance from your house to the school. This year the school will be unable to offer more places unless other students decide to go to other schools, in which case the school will follow the order of the waiting list. The school will not be allocated more than 280 students.

How is the curriculum delivered?

We have 5 lessons a day, all 60 minutes long and we follow a two-week timetable. At present, over a fortnightly cycle, students receive:

- 7 lessons of English, Maths and Science (each)
- 3 lessons of Geography and History
- 4 lessons of Physical Education
- 2 lessons of RE, Citizenship, Computing, Art, Music and Drama
- 3 lessons of Design & Technology
- 4 lessons of either French or German

At the end of Year 8, students choose their options and begin studying for their GCSE courses from the start of Year 9.

Do the students have access to lockers?

There are lockers in all form rooms, but padlocks need to be provided by students. There is a risk of damage or loss which is down to the individual families to take on when anything valuable is brought

into school. Cash does not need to be brought into school as we have a cashless catering system and all other payment can be made online

Is my child allowed to bring a phone to school?

We recognise that students bring phones to school to ensure safety on their journeys. However, once school starts at 8:40 until the day ends at 3:15, student's phones are not seen or heard the entire time. Phones are put into school bags. If a phone is seen or heard, it is confiscated for the remainder of the school day. This applies to all break and lunch times.