



Friday 10th September 2021

Dear Parent/Carer and Student,

I am writing to current year 6 students to invite students and their parent/carer to attend a year 6 tour in September. We appreciate that the transition from primary school to secondary school can be a daunting experience for both students and their parents/carers. Therefore, we encourage students to take full advantage of this opportunity to look around the school to support the transition process. We feel that seeing the school in action is the best way to understand the school's ethos and values. Therefore, whilst we have decided due to Covid19, not to host an open evening this year, perspective students along with their parent/carer are very welcome visit Aylesford School during the school day to understand the opportunities we provide our students.

School Tours

If you would like to come and have a look at Aylesford School on a normal school day, we are offering students and **one parent/carer** the opportunity to have a tour of the school with myself or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. There will be tour dates available week commencing Monday 27th September 2021; tours will run in small groups of five students per group and one parent/carer must attend with their child. To ensure everyone's safety, both student and parent must wear a mask when they enter the school, will need to have their temperature checked and will be asked to use hand sanitizer upon their entrance into school. The tour groups will be restricted to viewing only parts of the school. Unfortunately, you will not be able to enter any classrooms to ensure our own students' safety. To **book a tour** please click the following link: <https://forms.gle/gGPDrpqmhxgxEywm6>.

Year 6 Character Development

At Aylesford we aim to develop students academically but we also strive to make students well rounded individuals. We do this by encouraging the progression of their character. This is done by recognising and rewarding our ten character strengths that were chosen by students, parents/carers and our school governors: respect, self-discipline, courage, open-mindedness, motivation, resilience, confidence, integrity, compassion and curiosity. At Aylesford, we use the development of those character strengths to shape our reward system. Therefore, all students are issued with a character card by their mentor and when character strengths have been demonstrated this is recorded. Students are then invited to enjoy reward events such as graduation ceremonies, pizza and film afternoons and reward trips.

The Vision for Aylesford School

The vision for Aylesford School is to provide 'an education that builds character' - high quality Academic and Character Education which develops confident young people who are successful learners and contribute positively to society. This is underpinned by our strap line 'Courage, Confidence, Character'. This was reflected from our most recent Ofsted report that judged us good in every area:

"Leaders have high expectations of pupils. They are ambitious for pupils to develop strong character strengths and reach their academic potential. This has improved pupils' attitudes and raised their aspirations" (Ofsted 2020)

"Aylesford School has a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Overall, pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and well supported by staff" (Ofsted 2020)

"The relationships between staff and pupils are strong" (Ofsted 2020)

"Leaders have created a calm and orderly environment around the school" (Ofsted 2020)

Miss T Kelvie, NPQH
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Schools of
CHARACTER



RESPECT SELF-DISCIPLINE **COURAGE**
OPEN-MINDEDNESS **MOTIVATION**
RESILIENCE CONFIDENCE **INTEGRITY**
COMPASSION **CURIOSITY**

“The school promotes tolerance and diversity. Pupils’ physical and mental health are well supported by staff. Pupils, staff, parents and carers acknowledge that behaviour has improved hugely” (Ofsted 2020)

I firmly believe that every student, regardless of background or ability can achieve whatever they want with hard work and determination. I am passionate about ensuring that students reach their potential at Aylesford School and believe that if they develop good character strengths they will be successful at whatever they try. At Aylesford School, my staff and I have developed a ‘Can Do’ attitude and are prepared to do whatever it takes to maintain high standards and continually improve progress and attainment. Our behaviour policy centres on developing and praising character strengths demonstrated by students both in lessons and around the school. We recognise that strong positive relationships are key, as is celebration of success.

‘Good’ and ‘Outstanding’ Teaching and Learning are at the forefront of everything that we do and we are fortunate to have a high calibre of teachers working at Aylesford School with nationally recognised specialist leaders in education in English and Maths and an award winning PE teacher.

Our teachers will stretch and challenge students, provide support when needed and be a source of inspiration.

It is also important to us that students enjoy school and we are always looking for opportunities to promote this. There will be opportunities to participate in sporting activities, performing arts, charity events and cultural visits, which will help to nurture talents and hopefully provide a love of school.

Parents/carers and student’s opinions matter and these are the results of our current year 7 parental survey:

	% Strongly Agree/Agree
Aylesford school year 7 parent survey February 2020	
My child feels safe at this school	96
My child is making good progress at the school	98
This schools meets my child's particular needs	96
This school ensures my child is well looked after	96
My child is taught well at this school	98
This school helps my child to develop skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics	98
My child is challenged in their learning	98
This school helps me to support my child's learning	96
I would recommend this school to another parent	94
My child was well supported throughout the transition from year 6 to 7	96
The Parents' Evening was helpful as I know how to support my child	97

I believe that ensuring the smooth transition from primary school to secondary school is so important that if students make us their choice of secondary school, I will personally come and visit them at their primary school and we can talk about what they are looking forward to, what their aspirations and interests are and discuss any concerns. Academic success and happiness at school are of paramount importance.

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Transition Events at Aylesford School

At Aylesford we pride ourselves in being able to offer vast amounts of opportunities to support the transition process. This year we invited all students into school during the summer holidays where students were able to embark on both academic and character enrichment activities to enable them to transition successfully into secondary school life. This was hugely successful; please see the feedback from our current year 7 parents below:

My daughter said that Summer school was brilliant, she went from being scared, to couldn't wait to get there. The teachers she met were kind and patient and it's given her so much more confidence to start in September. Thank you for giving her knowledge to help her fight with anxiety.

My daughter has really enjoyed summer school and is now very excited to start the school she's made some friends and enjoyed seeing what's on offer for her at the school she has gone from a girl who hates school and maths to a girl who can't wait for school and is really looking forward to maths so thank you all so much for the warm welcome to the school

Considering the current climate I am so proud of Aylesford for allowing the children to take part in a week's worth of team and confidence building activities. My son really enjoyed the week after a nervous start and is excited to join the school in the next few weeks. May I also mention that the staff I came into contact with were also very lovely so thank you again.

Knowing he would a singleton we had prepared our son as much as we could to be confident and expect good things about secondary school. However, the transition days have been invaluable in aiding him in his confidence and insight about managing this new start. Thank you so much

Unfortunately, this year due to COVID 19 and the current guidelines in place we have had to reduce the amount of transition opportunities that we would normally offer during the school year to avoid risking the safety of students and staff in our school and our feeder primary schools. However, rest assured that we aim to provide a fully comprehensive overview of our school through the tours we are offering that will allow you to meet with the Head Teacher, members of the Senior Leadership Team, school staff and most importantly our students. It is important to see the school in action on a day-to-day basis but we appreciate that you may have further questions so we will be offering face-to-face appointments with the Head Teacher Miss Kelvie after the Open Week; to enquire about these, please email Sophie.berry@aylesford.kent.sch.uk. We will also be offering virtual transition events, which can be accessed, through our Facebook page and school website. We encourage all families to check those platforms regularly to ensure that you are up to date with transition information.

Open Evening

This year we will not be hosting an Open Evening as this is usually a hugely popular event that attracts vast amounts of the public and includes our whole staffing body as well as our students. Therefore, we have decided that we will virtually deliver the Head Teacher speech as well as a number of events to provide parents and students with the information they need to decide on their secondary school. This can be found through our school website and Facebook page so please ensure that you regularly check both platforms. There will also be an opportunity to join a Zoom meeting with our Head Teacher and various members of staff where you will be able to ask questions and gain more information about the school. Although you may find the cancelling of this event disappointing, we firmly believe that there is no better way to understand the qualities of a school than seeing it in action and feel our tours will be a better way to show the outstanding provision that we offer.

We really look forward to welcoming you into our school for a tour and will ensure that we do all we can virtually to ensure the smooth transition for students to Aylesford School.

Yours sincerely,



Miss T Kelvie
Head Teacher

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