



4. Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Further to the videos and information we have shared with you, below are some frequently asked questions. Please also do peruse our website, which has a whole host of information for you. In particular you may be interested in the following sections:

- [Welcome from the Principal](#)
- [Our Values and Vision](#)
- [Key Parental Information](#)
- [Our Curriculum](#)
- [Secondary Curriculum](#)
- [Reporting Pupil Progress](#)
- [Celebrating Success](#)
- [Pupil Voice and Leadership](#)
- [Clubs and Co-Curriculum](#)

General Information

Q. How many pupils are there in each year group at CFS?

We have between 120 and 150 pupils in each secondary year group, made up of 4 or 5 tutor groups of around 30 pupils in each.

Q. What is the shape of the CFS school day?

Pupils can arrive from 0745 and the canteen is open for breakfast from this time. Secondary registration is at 0820, with a 30 minute break at 1040 and a 40 minute break for lunch at 1300. There are 6 lessons per day of 55 minutes each and the compulsory day ends at 1530. From 1530 onwards, usually until 1630, we have a whole host of enrichment activities and academic interventions. Pupils can also remain in school to complete their homework in Supervised Study sessions.

Q. Are there any plans to add more playing fields, sporting equipment and car parking to the school site?

Yes! We are very excited to be working with Wates (one of the largest family-owned construction and development companies in the UK) to secure 4.5 acres of land surrounding the school on two sides. Legal proceedings are under way, although taking time of course. It is our intention to develop the land into playing fields/pitches, hard courts and increased car parking.

Transition

Q. What transition arrangements are in place for the Year 6 pupils joining CFS?

The Senior Leadership Team contact the pupils' primary schools to get lots of helpful information about each pupil before they arrive at CFS. We also visit each of the Primary Schools to meet the pupils.

All the new pupils come into school for a special Transition Day in July where they get to meet their House Leaders, Tutors and new friends. They get a thorough tour of the school building and also play some fun team building games.



Over the last four years we have offered a highly successful summer school which the majority of our new Year 7s joined and we are keen to be able to offer this every year.

There is a Team Building day during the first half term, which helps our new Year 7s bond as a year group, and is a huge amount of fun!

How to Apply

Q. How do I apply for a place at CFS?

For a Year 7 place joining the school in September (and not currently in our Year 6 CFS cohort), you need to apply through West Sussex County Council Admissions, on line, and we would be one of your three choices of school. If you select CFS as your first choice, you are more likely to be offered a place here. There is no supplementary form to complete.

Any further queries, please contact Karie Wright on admissions@chichesterfreeschool.org.uk

Q. With CFS being so popular and many of your Year 6 cohort moving up from the CFS Primary phase, is it really worth me applying with so few places on offer?

Absolutely! If you select CFS as your first choice, your child has a very high chance of being offered a place here. Locally, there are more places available than pupils, so it really is important that you put the school you want for your child on the form. We also do not have a catchment area, which means that our places are allocated predominantly on the choices on the application form. We are sometimes able to open to a fifth class, and this decision – led by West Sussex – is very dependent on the numbers that apply to CFS.

Put simply - our advice is to always put down the schools you want for your child, in your true order preference. The admissions process is complex and we recommend not trying to second guess what might be the best approach to get into a certain school – the best approach simply is to list your true preferences.

Uniform

Q. What is the School uniform?

We are immensely proud of our uniform at CFS. We have recently made some changes to ensure that our uniform is fully inclusive, affordable, and yet still extremely smart. The uniform celebrates both the School and each pupil's membership of their House. For full details of our uniform, please see our website:

<https://www.chichesterfreeschool.org.uk/about-us/school-shop-and-uniform/>

There are a few items that have to be bought from our local supplier – Game Set and Match. You can buy online, or visit their shop in Chichester. All other items can be bought from any local retailer/supermarket and we also have a second hand uniform shop.

House System

Q. How many Houses are there?

There are four houses, Aquila (green), Noctua (black), Pegasus (blue) and Phoenix (purple). Tutor groups are in Houses and there are lots of inter-house competitions that run throughout the year with points going towards the House Cup. Each House is led by a host of pupil leaders as our House Ambassadors and House Presidents. Pupils also earn individual House Points, as part of our praise system, and these go towards each pupil's individual totals as well as the overall House Cup.

Q. How are pupils assigned to a House when they join the School?

If a pupil already has siblings at CFS, we will usually assign them to the same House – to ensure no family disagreements on Sports Day! Our Head of Year 7 and Senior Leadership Team spend a long time working with all of the information we have received from Primary Schools to ensure a positive mix of pupils in each tutor group, and this will influence your child's House placement.

Subject Groupings

Q. How big are CFS class sizes?

The year group is split into four or five classes, and most lessons are taught in these groups to provide some consistency for pupils. However, DT, Food Tech and PE are in classes of 24 and, as pupils move up the School, English and Maths classes are kept to 24 pupils on average, with Science classes moving to 24 or less in Year 9.

At GCSE, all subjects benefit from small class sizes, with an average size of 20 and ranging from 15 to 27.

Q. Do you set for Maths, English and Science?

Whilst we take a cohort by cohort approach to groupings, allowing us to adapt to the needs of each year groups, our typical model is as follows:

- From Year 8 upwards, Maths is either set throughout the year group, or we have Sets 1, 2 and 3 for Higher pupils, with the two foundation groups being mixed to ensure all pupils are pushed and motivated.
- English is taught in mixed ability in Key Stage 3, and set for GCSE.
- Science is set from Year 9 upwards.
- Where a GCSE option is popular ability groupings are sometimes used in GCSE for other subjects including giving pupils the flexibility of studying for either a GCSE or BTEC in PE and Business Studies.
- Our highest ability pupils also access booster groups during GCSE to study qualifications such as Further Maths and Statistics.

The Curriculum and GCSEs

Q. When do pupils make their GCSE selections?

In the spring of Year 9, pupils choose their GCSE subjects and these are then confirmed towards the end of that summer term.

Q. Which GCSEs do pupils have to take – how much choice do they get?

All pupils will study Maths, English, Science, and at least one Humanities or Language subject. We have different pathways for different pupils altering the amount of choice that pupils get, depending on their ability, potential and personal aspirations. Regardless of pathways, all pupils get two or three other open choices from a wide choice of subjects. The Head of Year and tutor team will support pupils in making their choices during Year 9.

Q. Which language do pupils study?

From the start of Year 7, pupils study both French and Spanish ensuring they have experienced both languages before making a choice of one for Year 8. By focusing on one language from Year 8, our pupils have a greater amount of curriculum time to master this language and become confident in it. Opportunities for studying both languages after Year 7 are provided through our intervention and extended day programme. We also regularly support pupils to take qualifications in a range of other languages that they are competent in, such as Mandarin, German and Portuguese.

Homework

Q. How much homework is set each week?

In Year 7, on average each subject will set 1 homework per week, some subjects 1 per fortnight. At least week will be given for each homework task; some subjects will set a long term project across a half term. Pupils have the option to stay after school to complete their homework with the support of a teacher, in Supervised Study which runs from 1530 to 1630 every day except Friday. Homework will increase as pupils move up through the School, with a focus on independent learning, revision and preparation for exams in Year 10 and 11. Homework is set via Class Charts, an online platform which parents also have access to in order to support with the homework completion.

Enrichment Activities

Q. What after clubs do you offer?

There are a wide variety of clubs to take part in each term, both at lunchtime and after school, ranging from football, netball, table tennis, Tai Chi, Dungeons and Dragons, Coding, performing arts productions, choir and much much more. We also run our very own Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Award Scheme.

Q. Is the extended day compulsory?

No, pupils can stay every day till 1630 if they wish, alternatively they can leave at 1530 every day too, or a mixture. However, at CFS we strongly believe that it is important that all pupils take part in at least one extra-curricular activity and we therefore encourage pupils to do at least one club a week. However, if pupils engage in an enrichment activity outside of school then this does of course count, and we actively celebrate out of school achievements too.



Travel

Q. What buses pass CFS?

The 51 and 600 buses stop right outside the school and operate on a regular basis.

Pupils coming from the Witterings area travel into Chichester on their local bus route and then connect with a bus travelling along Hunston Route on the 51 or 600 bus route. Of course, pupils could opt to walk the 20 minutes from the bus station/railway station to the school site via the protected footpaths and footbridge.

Q. Can I cycle to School?

Absolutely yes, but all pupils must wear a helmet please and have bike lights in the darker months. There are bike shelters where bikes can be locked up during the day.

Q. Are parents required to car share?

The parking facilities on site are limited, as is common in most Secondary schools. Therefore, we do encourage all parents to only come on site with at least two CFS children in the car. We also encourage all secondary pupils to use public transport or be dropped off north of the A27 and then to walk into school over the footbridge or cycle in from home. Many of our pupils do engage with this and enjoy the level of independence that this encourages.