

Dame Alice Owen's School



Year 7 Welcome Booklet





Welcome to Owens!

Dear New Owenian, Parents and Carers,

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the special community which is Dame Alice Owen's School. We are proud that you have chosen to join us and we hope you will soon feel part of our school, enjoy sharing in its traditions and in its hopes for the future. In this booklet you will find the answers to most of your questions about starting life with us.

In addition to this booklet, our comprehensive website is an invaluable source of up to date information including our school policies, rules and full details of our extra-curricular activities.

We know, from talking to parents of previous new students, that their children found it easy to settle into the school; we do lots to help! However if you have any queries prior to arrival, please do not hesitate to contact:

Mrs Lofthouse (Pastoral Director for Year 7)
lofthouses@damealiceowens.herts.sch.uk

Or Mrs Jackson (Pastoral Manager KS3)
Jacksons@damealiceowens.herts.sch.uk for help and advice.

We are looking forward to meeting you all and to working together to make sure your time with us is as successful and happy as it can be.

Hanna Nemko.

Mrs H Nemko
Headteacher



The OWENS Way

The primary aim of the school is to inspire, develop and support every student to be their best.

At Dame Alice Owen's School we are committed to achieving this aim through promoting "The OWEN'S Way".

This is what our Year 7 students have said about "The Owen's Way"

OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

"At Owen's, I think that there is a great range of clubs and activities. I have really enjoyed clubs such as cross country, badminton, netball and many more".

"The best thing I did was to join clubs; I've made so many new friends because of them".

WINDOW TO THE WORLD

"At DAOS there are so many different windows to the world. It's given me a new way to see art, religion, literature, food and so many more".

"I have discovered the harmful effects of fossil fuels and climate change and how we need to find a sustainable and renewable energy source".

EXCELLENCE IN EVERYTHING

"Being here makes you always put the extra effort into every lesson".

"I have noticed that everyone in school looks very smart....."

NEVER STOP LEARNING

"Since I've come to Owen's I feel like I've improved in all areas and become more interested in each subject".

"Music lessons are great and they understand if you don't play an instrument (such as me)".

"All the teachers are very friendly and help you improve and expand your knowledge".

SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

"I joined the friendship bracelet club and it was so much fun".

"I enjoy being a peer mentor to younger students and helping them"



Uniform

Please check the school uniform page on our [school website](#) for all information including Nearly New Uniform Service.

All items of uniform and games equipment must be clearly labelled with the student's name.

Please ensure that your child has sufficient shirts/blouses to last the week.

School Bags

Bags for carrying school books and personal property should be weather-proof, fairly lightweight and no bigger than 20" in length. Over-large bags create problems in crowded areas such as corridors and can be hazardous in teaching areas.

Our main suppliers are:

Smith's Schoolwear

25 Station Parade, Cockfosters Road,
Barnet, EN4 0DW
0203 818 3622
www.smithsschoolwear.co.uk

Smarty Schoolwear

63 High Street
Potters Bar, Herts, EN6 5AS
01707 263909
www.smartyschoolwear.co.uk



School expectations

For the guidance of parents and students

Our School Policies contain more detailed information for parents/carers and include the Attendance Policy and the Behaviour for Learning and Anti-bullying Policy. All of our policies can be found [here](#).

1. General Appearance, Conduct & Attendance

In accepting the offer of a place at this school, parents/carers agree to support the school requirements for their child. These include the wearing of correct school uniform, a smart and acceptable general appearance, including conventional haircuts and colours, orderly behaviour to and from school, and sensible and co-operative conduct at all times. Full attendance is expected and holidays must not to be taken during term time.

2. Access to the school

All students should enter the school site via the main gate (unless advised otherwise) and either remain in the main playground or go to their lockers before school starts at 08:45am. Staff are on duty from 8.25am each morning. Breakfasts are available from 8am in the sixth form dining room. Students carrying musical instruments should go directly to the Music Centre where these can be stored.

3. Attendance

The School term and holiday dates can be found [here](#). The Governors do **NOT** approve of holidays taken during a school term and permission for absence will not normally be given. More information regarding reporting absences is available in our [Parent FAQs](#).

Students leaving or entering the school during the day (other than at the usual times) must report to reception before leaving the school premises or upon arriving at or returning to school.

Key Dates

Thursday 19 June 2025

6pm-8.30pm: Student-Parent
Information Evening

Thursday 10 July 2025

Secondary Transition Day for Year 7

Wednesday 3 September 2025

First day of Term for Year 7

Further information will be sent in due
course

Year 7 first day

Wednesday 3 September 2025

8.45am: Say goodbye to your parent/
carer at the front of the school. Staff and
students will be on hand to direct you to
the Edward Guinness Hall where you
will meet your Form Tutor.

Morning

A welcome from the Headteacher, Mrs
Nemko, in assembly.

Form Time and Break

Lunch

Afternoon

Orienteering around the school site.

Assembly

What kind of school do we want to be?

3.45pm Home



4. School Lunches

School lunches are prepared on the premises by Chartwells, who operate a cashless system. More information regarding this can be found [here](#). Alternatively, students may bring a packed lunch to school. Chewing gum is banned at all times and must not be brought onto the school premises. **In the interests of other children with nut allergies, please do not bring any food containing nuts into the school.**

5. Accident or Illness

We have a First Aid room that is staffed throughout the day by a First Aider. It must be emphasised that the medical facilities at the school are for use as emergency measures only, and that the First Aiders are not responsible for treating on-going medical conditions. If your child needs to take prescription medication during the day, please email medical@damealiceowens.herts.sch.uk

Illness at school: any student taken ill during lessons should request permission to report to the First Aid room. On no account should students telephone parents/carers requesting that they be collected from school because they are unwell. The First Aider will decide if a child should go home, in which case they will contact the parents/carers to arrange this. The school will not usually send children home unaccompanied or to an empty house.

Serious Accidents: the student will be taken to hospital by ambulance and the parents/carers contacted, either to accompany the child or to go straight to Accident and Emergency.

Minor Accidents: where an X-Ray, stitching or other comparatively minor treatment at hospital is thought necessary, parents/carers will be asked to take their child to Accident and Emergency, using their own transport (parents' consent is necessary for anaesthetics or other treatment). If transport is not available, other arrangements will have to be made by the parents/carers.

6. Contact Lenses

The school cannot be responsible for looking after contact lenses. If your child wears contact lenses, they must carry the appropriate solutions, the proper container for the lenses and a pair of prescription glasses, for use in case the lenses have to be removed for any reason.

7. Discipline & Sanctions

Sanctions are necessary for students who behave inappropriately and choose not to follow the School Code of Conduct. We believe that it is our responsibility to both sanction and support students so that they can make better behavioural choices in the future.

For further information please refer to the [Behaviour for Learning and Anti-bullying Policy](#).

Mobile phones

Mobile phones and headphones / air pods must not be seen or heard during the school day. They must be put away on the sound of the first bell and not taken out until the last bell at the end of the day.

If a mobile phone is seen or heard it will be confiscated and a sanction issued.

Mobile phones and head phones may be used to support learning but **ONLY** under the strict instruction and direction of a member of staff.

Smart watches can be worn but must be on silent and must not be used to send messages.

Notices to students will be posted on google classroom so always check this before school starts.



8. In Bounds - Out of Bounds

If the weather is fine, at break and lunchtime, the students may play on the main playground, the artificial pitch, the tennis courts (if not in use) and all other hard surface areas, except those at the front of the school or those from time to time excluded for safety or other reasons. Play Areas - students are restricted to playing ball games in the following areas: playground, tennis courts, artificial pitch.

If games practices are taking place on the tennis courts or on the artificial pitch, students in these areas must move away from any area required by staff, and must not, under any circumstances, go on to those areas without permission. In particular, if a ball enters a "practice/games area" students must wait for the ball to be returned.

Rules for the use of the tennis courts and artificial pitch (e.g. trainers only, no eating, no litter) must be obeyed at all times.

Grass areas - students may play on most grass areas, (other than marked pitches and grids), the wooded areas and the area around the lake, if the weather is fine, between Easter and Autumn half-term only. The grass areas, benches etc at the front of the School are out of bounds at all times.

9. Movement through the School

Students must not run in any part of the school, including along corridors or up or down stairs. They should walk on the left. Bags and other equipment must not be carried in and dangerous or careless manner. Books should be collected from lockers at the beginning of the day, at morning break and at lunchtime for the rest of the day. Lockers may not be visited between lessons. Fire doors should be used only in an emergency.

10. School Buildings & Equipment

The buildings, furniture, equipment, books and other items should be carefully looked after at all times. Any instance of deliberate vandalism will be regarded as a very serious offence and parents/carers will be required to contribute towards the cost of repair or replacement. Windows (and curtains or blinds) are not to be opened or closed by students, at any time, unless requested by a teacher.

11. Litter

All students are asked to do their best to keep the school site looking attractive and tidy. Any student seen depositing litter casually (other than into the litter bins provided) on or near the school site will be sanctioned.

12. Personal Property

The Governors cannot accept responsibility for lost or damaged possessions, and parents/carers are advised to securely name and insure any items of value (mobile phones, watches, calculators, etc). Enquiries regarding lost property should be directed to Reception in the first instance.

13. Badges and other items

Badges and other items are not to be worn, unless awarded by the school.

Timings of the school day

The normal school day starts at 8.45am and ends at 3.45pm. All students are expected to be in their Form Room by 8.45am (registration). Assembly is on Thursdays for Year 7.

There are five 1 hour lessons per day. There is a morning break of 15 minutes and a one hour lunch break. Lesson times can be found [here](#).

Please note that school ends at 2.45pm on the Friday preceding the half-term holidays, and at 12.35pm on the last day of each term.

For term dates, please click [here](#).

As a Hertfordshire School, we will usually follow Hertfordshire term dates which may differ to London boroughs.



Pastoral Support

Our pastoral team are on hand to support you every step of the way at DAOS! The team have a wealth of experience in helping you with many different challenges and parents/carers, do also reach out if you need support with anything. Your Form Tutor should be the first point of contact and they will be able to direct you to the most appropriate person if they can not help with the issue. Mrs Lofthouse is the Pastoral Director for Year 7 and Mrs Jackson is the Pastoral Manager for Key Stage 3.



Mrs Lofthouse
Pastoral Director Year 7



Mrs Jackson
Pastoral Manager KS3

Safeguarding

Keeping young people safe comes before anything else and our safeguarding team work alongside the pastoral team to support students and families. Always contact us if you have any concerns.



THE DAOS SAFEGUARDING TEAM





Mrs Jays
Deputy
DSL



Mrs Blackburn
Designated
Safeguarding
Lead



Ms Ogufere
Deputy
DSL



YOU CAN ALSO REPORT BY:
USING THE **STUDENT CONCERNS BUTTON** ON THE STUDENT
LAUNCHPAD.
EMAILING CONCERNS@DAMEALICEOWENS.HERTS.SCH.UK.

Data Handling

Certain data will be held on the system to ensure accurate operation. This will include your child's name, form, account balance and meal entitlement. This data will be handled under the guidelines of the Data Protection Act 2018 and only used by parties directly involved in the processing of this system. Fingerprints are not stored by any of our systems.

More information can be found [here](#).

If you require any further information or have any queries relating to this system please contact the Finance Department by emailing

wisepay@damealiceowens.herts.sch.uk

School Meals– Cashless System

What is a Cashless System?

At the start of Year 7, each student has a biometric scan of their finger taken. This allows students to use their fingerprint to pay for food. No cash is held by the tills, therefore there is no need for a child to have to carry cash to purchase food or drink whilst in school.

How is money entered onto the child's catering account?

We use an on-line payment system called WisePay for all parental financial transactions to the school, for instance to top up student catering accounts, pay for trips, concert tickets etc. You will receive a separate letter from the finance team in the summer term with your username and password for WisePay, along with further instructions on how to use the system.

How can the cashless catering system be used to obtain a school meal?

The student simply chooses a meal or drink from our main restaurant, or from one of our catering pods positioned around the school, and places their finger over the reader attached to the till point. A display of the till will show the server the student's name, class and current balance held on the student's catering account. The selected food items will be entered into the system from an itemised keyboard and the amount spent and new balance will be reflected on WisePay by the end of the day.

If we pay for a set number of school meals, can it be spent in one day?

No. A daily limit of £5 is automatically set by the catering manager for all students. On request, this limit can be changed or removed. Please see [Sample Menu here](#)

What if the student does not hold a sufficient balance in their catering account to pay for a school meal?

No student is refused a school dinner because they do not have enough money in their account. The catering department will allow a student to borrow the amount required for one day. However, the parent will be expected to top up the account as soon as practicably possible and the cost of the meal will be taken as soon as there is credit on the account.

What about students entitled to a free school meal?

The system works the same for all students whether they pay or have a free school meal. All students have their own account and will use their finger to pay in exactly the same way. The free school meal entitlement will be manually entered onto the students catering balance weekly by the catering manager.

Will we be able to have any information on what meals are being purchased?

By logging onto your child's Wisepay account, you will be able to see an overview of the date, time, description and cost of each purchase. You will also be able to see the value of any top ups made and the current balance on the account.





Free School Meals: Helping Families, Helping Owen's

We know there are families in the school who are entitled to free school meals for their child each day but, for their own reasons, don't claim it. Importantly the entitlement also provides access to additional opportunities for your child as they move through secondary school and beyond. The school receives funding to support every child who may be disadvantaged for any reason. This helps support them with access to school trips, resources and music lessons. Therefore, we would like to encourage any family who thinks they might be entitled to free school meals to register.

Is it easy to set up?

It is very easy to register for free school meals. As we are a Hertfordshire school you need to apply through Hertfordshire County Council for free school meals, irrespective of which local authority you live in. Google 'free school meals Hertfordshire' and this will take you to the relevant page where you can register. It takes about 5 minutes and in most cases you will be told straight away if your child is entitled to free school meals.

Do I qualify for free school meals?

You may qualify if you receive any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (as long as you're not also entitled to working tax credit and you don't get more than £16,190 a year)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credits)
- Universal Credit (with annual earned income of no more than £7400 after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Is it confidential?

It's all very private and confidential. Only members of staff will be aware of who has a free school meal entitlement. Your child will be given the same catering account access as other students and will be able to have the same choice of food. Like all other parents and carers, you may restrict certain food items if you wish or add additional money onto your child's account by logging into your child's WisePay account.

School Funding

Applying for free school meals helps the school financially too. A large part of school funding is based on the number of free school meal families a school has. Therefore, it is really important to the school that families claim when they can. It means we get more funding per pupil to pay for additional teachers and support.

If you need any further information or help, please contact the Pastoral Office on 01707 622849 or by emailing jacksont@damealiceowens.herts.sch.uk



Top Tips for Year 7, from Year 7

Older students, teachers and all staff at DAOS are here to help you.

Never panic, there are people to help and every problem is manageable and has a solution if you think it through, or ask for help!

There will be lots of new school rules to get used to, but the most important one is to listen and ask politely for help if you do not understand. We are always ...

Ready , Respectful & Safe.

Use your homework diary/planner to write down what you have to do and any deadlines.

Organisation is really important. Get your bag ready the night **BEFORE!**

Try to do your homework when you get in after school. That way it is out of the way.

It's amazing how quickly you get to know your way around, then you will be wondering why you ever worried in the first place!

Always make an effort to participate in lessons. Have a go at answering questions. Even if you get it wrong.





Student FAQs

You can find Parent FAQs [here](#).

Where do I go on the first day?

To the top playground - school staff and students will be around to show you the way.

Do I need to wear school uniform on the first day?

Yes, you are expected to wear full school uniform at all times apart from occasional non-uniform days, and on the transition day.

When must we arrive at school?

The school day starts at 8.45am. You must be in your form room by this time. A bell will sound for you to move to your form room at 08:40.

Where do I hang up my coat?

All students are provided with a locker in which to keep their coat, books and other items.

Where do I keep my PE kit?

Bring your PE kit only on the day that it is required. During the day, keep it in your locker until it is needed. All PE kit should be taken home every day after being used. Do remember to label all kit, and have it washed regularly.

What clubs can I join?

Please [click](#) to see the extra-curricular activities currently on offer.

May I leave my books at school if I do not need them for homework?

Yes, you may leave them in your locker.

May I bring chewing gum to school?

No. Chewing gum is not allowed on the school premises at all. Students seen chewing gum or dropping litter will be sanctioned.

If I ever need to arrive late or leave during the day, what should I do?

If you arrive at school after 8.50am you must report to the School Reception to sign in. If you need to leave early your parent/carer needs to provide written notice in advance to:

attendance@damealiceowens.herts.sch.uk.

Can I have my ears pierced?

You are allowed one plain stud in each ear. If you are getting your ears pierced for the first time, this **MUST be done at the start of the 6 week holiday to allow time to heal**. Earrings **MUST** be removed for practical lessons. Nose studs and other piercings are not allowed.

How much homework will I have to do?

On the first day, your Form Tutor will tell you what your homework timetable will be. Each homework should take you approximately 20 minutes, and you will usually have two or three pieces of homework per night.



When can I get something to eat and what is the choice?

Breakfast 8.00-8.40am - there is a variety of hot and cold food available from the sixth form canteen.

Break 11.15-11.30am - again there is a variety of hot and cold food available.

Lunchtime 12.35-1.35pm - meals are hot and tasty and a good choice of healthy options are available, including cold lunches and salads. We also have two takeaway pods, one outside PE and one in the main playground, that offer hot and cold 'grab and go' meals and snacks.

What is the system for going to lunch?

In the first week a special system is put in place which helps you to get used to the lunchtime routine and gives you priority over other students in the school. Following this there is a school lunch rota which must be followed.

Am I allowed to bring my mobile phone into school?

Mobile phones are not a requirement of the school.

If parents provide a phone, they are permitted in school, however they are banned from use during the school day. They can only be used in class or the building under direction of the teacher.

If I am worried about anything, what should I do?

The first person to speak to is your Form Tutor. If you cannot find them, speak to any other member of staff or your Form Prefect. You could also speak to someone in the Pastoral Office; you will be shown where this is on your first day.

What should I do if I forget something?

In such a big school, it is not possible for Reception staff to deliver forgotten items to students. If you do forget something (e.g. packed lunch, PE kit etc) always check with the Receptionist to see if perhaps someone has been able to bring it to school for you.

Lost and found is located by Mrs Blackburn's office.

What should I do if I miss my bus after school?

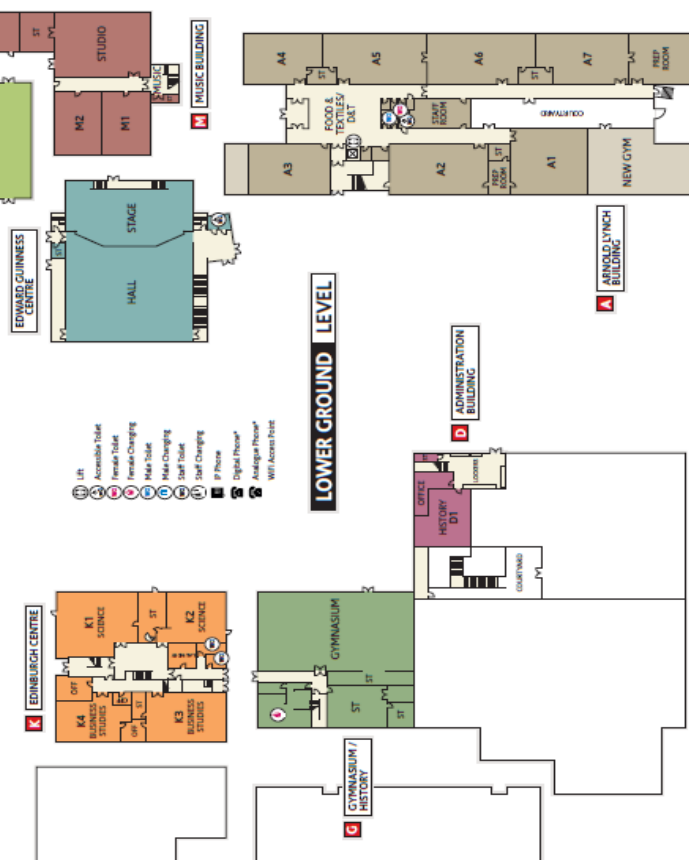
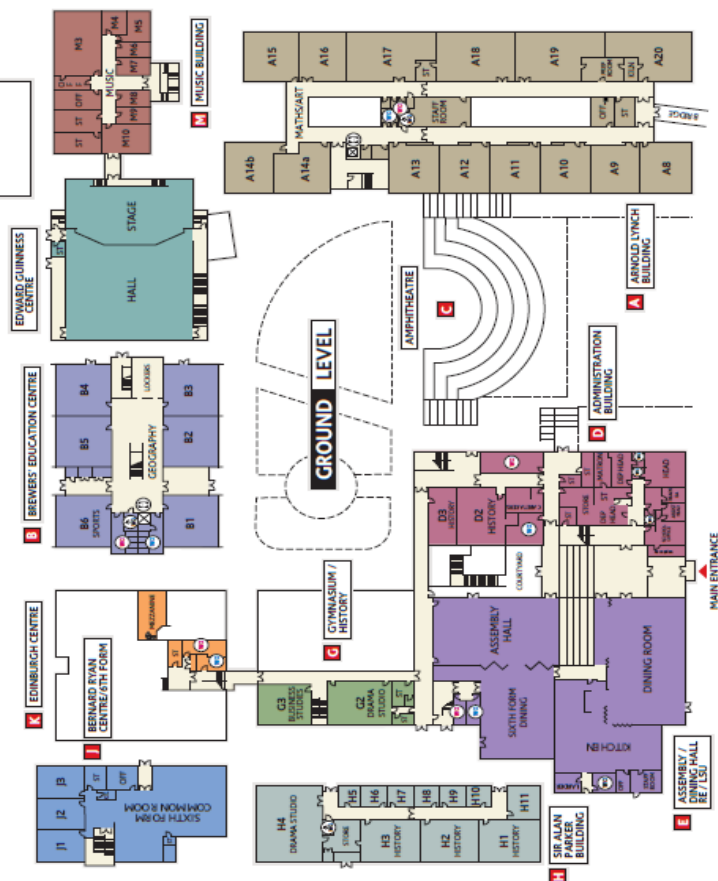
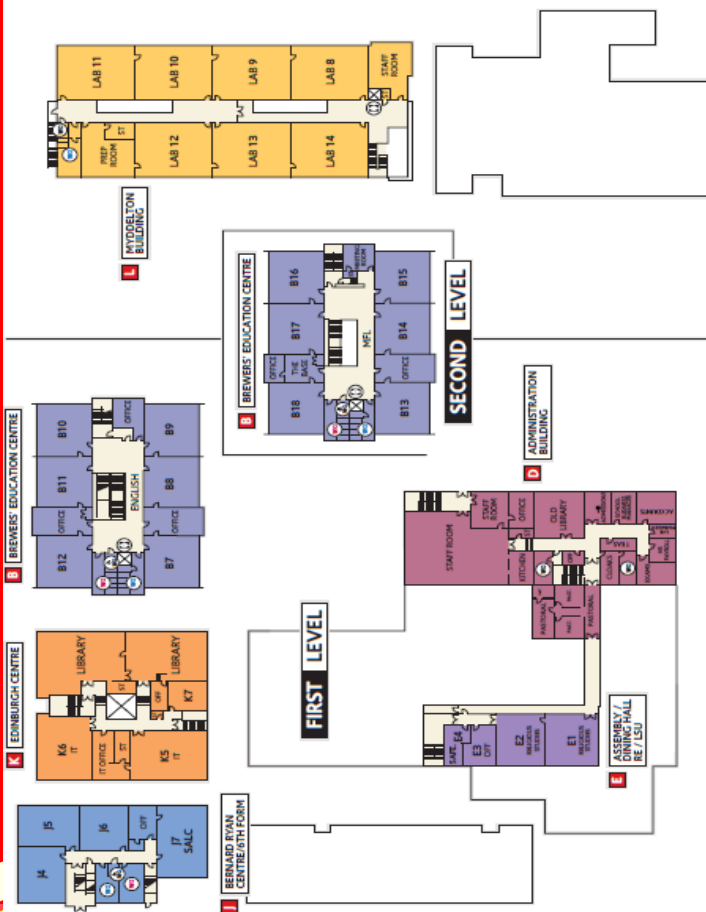
Speak to the staff on duty to help you so that you don't miss the bus. It's a good idea to make an emergency plan with your parents/carers if you need to make alternative arrangements for home travel.

What should I do if I get lost?

On the first day of school there is an orientation session to help you find your way around. However, if you do get lost ask a member of staff or older student for directions. There will be staff around in the first weeks to help you.

What should I do if I feel unwell at school?

In the first instance you should let your teacher know and then go to the First Aid room. The First Aider will decide if you need to go home and will contact your parents/carers if necessary. You must not make your own arrangements to leave school. If the First Aider is not present you should go to Reception who will help you in her absence.





The OSA (Owen's School Association) welcomes you to Dame Alice Owen's School. As a charitable organisation composed of parents and carers, we raise funds for various school projects and buys essential books and equipment. The OSA are proud to have donated £50,000 to the school in 2024. These funds support the high standards achieved by the school. This contribution is attributed to the work of the OSA and many other parents who take part, help at events, and contribute their time and efforts to various fundraising activities. We have set an ambitious goal for 2025 and believe that ongoing support will be important in achieving this aim. All parents and carers automatically become members of the OSA when their children join the school. We rely on the support of new parents to help us support the school.

How Can You Get Involved?

OSA Committee - All Committee members are current parents of children at the School and would love to welcome new parents. Our meetings take place on the 1st Monday of the month during term time. To find out more, please contact one of our Co-Chairs via email: **Mbalu Koroma or Patricia Doyle** at chair@theOSA.org.uk

We run several events throughout the year and look forward to meeting you at an event. Even if you are unable to help, you just need to join in. None of our events are exclusive, so bring your friends and extended family. Events are listed in the school calendar and include Quiz Night and the Summer Festival.

Refreshments - The school runs around 40 performances/productions each academic year. We provide refreshments and require volunteers to run the bar. Please email refreshments@theosa.org.uk if you would like to be a member of this group.

Match Funding is a way of maximising funds raised. Match funding is a corporate arrangement where companies pledge to donate a sum relating to the amount their employee donates to or raises for an organisation. Please email matchfunding@theosa.org and we can guide you through the process.

200 Club – This is a successful lottery style 'club 200', and the draw takes place monthly with prizes of £50.00 and £25.00, with an additional draw in December. Annual membership is £24 per year, and there is no limit to the number of numbers each person can hold. Contact Alan Williams at 200club@theosa.org.uk for further information.

Book Covers - In line with the school's aim to protect exercise books, clear PVC Book Covers printed with the Dame Alice Owen's crest can be ordered online from the OSA. We will notify you by email when the link is available. You can contact: uniform@theosa.org.uk

Nearly New Uniform – The OSA runs a nearly new uniform shop selling decent quality uniform.

Contact: uniform@theosa.org.uk

EasyFundraising costs nothing. On the 'Easyfundraising' website, select Owen's School Association as your charity. When making online purchases, go to your chosen shop via the Easyfundraising link. For ease, visit: www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/owensschoolassociation



THE SUNDAY TIMES
SCHOOLS
GUIDE
2021

SOUTHEAST
STATE
SECONDARY
SCHOOL
OF THE DECADE

THE SUNDAY TIMES
SCHOOLS GUIDE
2025

COMPREHENSIVE
SCHOOL OF THE YEAR
SOUTH EAST

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