

Transition 2025 Pontio 2025

An introduction to Monmouth Comprehensive School for new students and their families.

Cyflwyniad i Ysgol Gyfun Trefynwy i fyfyrwyr newydd a'u teuluoedd.



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Please let us know if you require this document in another language or format (large print or electronic format).



The Year 7 Tutor Team 2025-26



Mr J Owen Head of Year







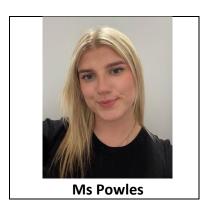












Form tutors see their form group every morning, for school registration.

Tutors will check that students are ready for the day ahead (e.g. correct uniform and equipment, which lessons they have). They also support students' general wellbeing and pastoral care.



Term Dates (Provisional)

TERM	BEGINS	Finish for Half- Term	Return from Half-Term	ENDS
Autumn	*Tuesday	Friday	Monday	Thursday
	02.09.25	24.10.25	03.11.25	18.12.25
Spring	Monday	Friday	Monday	Friday
	05.01.26	13.02.26	23.02.26	27.03.26
Summer	Monday 13.04.26			Friday 17.07.26

INSET Day: Monday 1st September

* Tuesday 2rd September: Start of Term for Y7 - Induction Day

Thursday 16th October: Y7 Parents and Form Tutor contact evening

INSET Day: Friday 19th December

INSET Day: Monday 2nd March (WJEC regional qualification training day)

Thursday 5th March: Y7 Parents and Subject Teachers evening

Monday 4th May: May Day Bank Holiday

INSET Day: Thursday 25th June

INSET Day: Friday 26th June

w/c Monday 6th July: end of year reports issued

Friday 17th July: last school day of the academic year

School Day Timings

The table below gives the *start* times of the sessions through our school day:

08.45	09.05	09.55	10.45	11.15	12.05	12.55	13.25	14.15	15.00
Form group:	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Morning Break	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lunch	Lesson 5	Lesson 6	End of day

Students may be taught for double periods, e.g. maths for lesson 1 & 2.

The school operates a 'two-week' timetable. It is constructed from 60 lessons spread over a fortnight. It will be key for students to know which 'type' of week they are following: either a Week A or Week B. When students start on Tuesday 2rd September 2025, that will be a **Week A**.



Our Year 7 Curriculum

The Curriculum for Wales has four Core Purposes. These are to produce young people who are: ambitious and capable; enterprising and creative; ethical and informed; healthy and confident.

Our Year 7 curriculum ensures that students are introduced to the rich variety of subjects on offer at secondary school, some of which they will have never encountered before. For us, students will always be taught in subjects. Subjects matter as they have an important body of knowledge, specific skills and belong to a rich tradition that is unique to them.

Art. We explore the topic 'Who am I?', developing fundamental art skills. Students enhance their drawing from observation, blending of paint, analytical research skills and ability to work in a range of styles.

Computing. Aiming to become digitally literate students who possess a variety of computing knowledge and skills. Topics: Digital Media; Logos & Branding; Computational Thinking; Programming; Spreadsheets.

Design Technology. Students learn subject specific skills and knowledge from three disciplines: Food, Product Design & Textiles. Topics: Food and Nutrition; Working Properties of Materials; Sustainability.

Drama. Students study semiotics - the ways we create meaning in theatre. We begin with Alice in Wonderland; go on to study voice and movement; then finish with Quentin Blake & Roald Dahl.

English. We journey through literature: from Chaucer and the development of the English language, to Shakespeare's sonnets and *Romeo and Juliet* on then on to Roald Dahl's *Boy*. Whilst undertaking this journey, we also ensure the effective coverage of vital English language and literacy skills and knowledge.

Geography. We study the importance of maps and the use of theme to interpret the world; look at the human and physical reasons for migration; explore global biomes and their features.

History. We begin our chronology of 'Who are the British?' – understanding the key turning points in our past. Topics include: who has settled in Wales; the Norman Conquest; castles; life in the Medieval period.

International Languages. Students learn French, German and Spanish, enabling students to explore the connections and differences between languages. We start by exploring 'Identity' as individuals.

Mathematics. We start the year focussing on key number skills in order to build a strong foundation. This is followed by geometry, algebra and statistics, allowing students to deepen their understanding.

Music. Students explore the three areas of performing, composing and listening. We begin began with The Elements of Music, developing singing skills, confidence when performing and keyboard skills.

P.E. students have the opportunity to explore a range of activities that include; Football, Netball, Rugby, Hockey, Swimming, Creative (Gymnastics / Dance), Athletics and Striking (Rounders, Longball, Cricket).

RVE. We study three topics through the year. A spotlight on key RVE themes in the first term, a systematic study of a world faith in the second; finally, an ethical investigation into human rights and responsibilities.

Science. We study a range of Biology, Chemistry and Physics topics: atoms, energy, waves, materials, cells and reproduction, ecosystems. Throughout these topics, students also develop core laboratory skills.

Welsh. We seek to develop confident use of the Present, Past and Perfect tenses in Welsh, both in oral and written work. Topics covered: Identity, Holidays/ Wales and the World, School and Studying Welsh.



Homework: Developing Independent Learning

One change in moving to secondary school is typically in homework. It is a challenge for students' organisation – and also for parents as they look to support their child. There may be a variety of homework to manage, prioritise and complete across several subjects, each with its own requirements and deadlines.

Homework at Monmouth Comprehensive School aims to be authentic, realistic and purposeful. All students are encouraged to discuss their work at home. Working outside lesson time gives you the opportunity to develop as independent learners.

Homework is often set via *Google Classroom*, but can sometimes be set on paper or other means. Access to a laptop or other device is required to use *Google Classroom*.



Parents' reflections are that homework is best done when clear work patterns are set up, and the following points have proved helpful for many families:

- Start work when students return home from school, after a break. It is better than doing it later.
- Television, phone calls, the internet and other activities are best set aside and done later.
- Where possible, complete work on the day that it is set when the details are better remembered.
- Congratulate completion and success often.

Hwb & Google Classroom

Hwb is the Welsh Government IT learning platform and provides every learner and member of school staff with education materials to complement their learning. It has many free apps, virtual classrooms, and a bank of materials for use in the classroom or online with pupils. It can also be used to share schools' work and join up with other schools on projects. Hwb was designed and built in Wales and is world-class.

As it is a web-based system, it is accessed through a computer or tablet. Your child can visit hwb.gov.wales and click on resources to browse things of interest. We will provide a username and password in September to allow you to log into Hwb.

Through Hwb, teachers can set up virtual classrooms through **Google Classroom** to set questions, homework and provide materials.

A YouTube guide on how to access your Hwb account.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=48&v=N4jDiU2s-r0&feature=emb_title_-







Organisation



As students progress through their education, they tend to move from the broader, 'big picture' learning, into more specific, subject-based learning, and then onwards to their first lifelong qualifications.

As they join secondary school, students are maturing and entering a more formal stage of their education. They will benefit from being encouraged to become more independent, resilient and organised.

With a wider range of different subjects and teachers, in addition to a two-week timetable, it can feel like a much busier approach to learning. Developing a well-organised approach is a key ingredient to success.

Things to consider could be:

Dedicated space at home for school materials and homework This reduces the stress of students having their school materials scattered in different places and provides a focused area for work.

Timetable

This is a vital document – what lessons to go to, in which room and when. Ensure your child knows where this is. It's a great idea to have a copy at home to refer to. We recommend that students keep their school planner in their blazer pocket, into which they can stick their timetable.

Pack school bag the evening before

Use the timetable to check that the correct equipment and materials are packed ready for the next day. This can be done together in the first few weeks.

Morning Routine

As they get ready for school in the morning, an established routine and predictability can support their morning preparations: finding their school uniform; sorting PE kit; having breakfast; travelling to school arrangements etc.

Food

Packed lunch or school food? Morning snacks? Ensure your child knows the options and what to do. There is a wider offer of food at secondary school. (MCS uses the cashless *ParentPay* system).

Once school starts, try developing independent organisation: post-it notes listing what's needed each day; boxes to store books and worksheets; an evening habit of preparing uniform and bag for the next day.



SIMS Parent App

The SIMS Parent App is an on-demand app, which can either be downloaded to an Android or Apple phone, or accessed via a website. There is no charge for accessing the Parent App. This App, produced by Capita Plc., links with our own School Information Management System (SIMS): our key school database.

- School term, INSET dates and contact details available at the click of a button
- Access to electronically update your contact details, for up-to-date emergency information
- Important push messages from school, including event reminders and newsletters
- Information about your child's attendance, assessment and school clubs

How do I download the SIMS Parent App?

The SIMS Parent app can be downloaded for free from the Apple Store (iOS) or the Play Store (Android).

Open the Play Store or Apple Store on your device. Using the Search facility, enter **SIMS Parent**.

Select **SIMS Parent** by Capita Plc from the search results.

Tap **INSTALL** to download the app.

Once the app has downloaded successfully, tap **Open** to register and start using the app. Please allow any notifications, if prompted to do so.



What do I need to register for the SIMS Parent App?

After the start of the new school year, MCS will send parents a unique registration email. This will be needed in order to register for use of the SIMS Parent App. The email will contain a registration link and an invitation code. This email will be sent from Capita SIMS (noreply@sims.co.uk). If you cannot find this email, please check your junk mail and ensure it has not been marked as spam/junk.

In order to complete the registration, you will also require:

- The date of birth of one of your children who attends the School.
- Either a Microsoft (including Office 365), Google, Facebook, Twitter or SIMS ID account. You can use an existing account (e.g. a Hotmail account) or create a new one online they are free and easy to set up and you can use any valid email address and password.



Ready to Learn: School Equipment and Uniform

Our school website provides information on all of the required, recommended and optional items of school equipment and uniform.

This can be found under the 'Parents' drop-down menu on our website (Monmouth Comprehensive School - School Uniform and Equipment) or via the QR code here.

Please take the time to carefully review the Uniform Policy and its requirements so that your child's start with us can be a confident and well-prepared one.













Uniform Notes:

All students are required to wear MCS uniform smartly and with pride; whilst in school, when travelling to and from school and when in the local community. Ensuring students attend school dressed smartly in school uniform is the foundation for high standards in other aspects of school life, including a positive work ethic and conduct in and around school.

Our intention is to ensure that students look smart, but not at undue expense for families. We have ensured as a school that the cost of our uniform is both affordable and of good quality. All items, apart from the school tie, can either be purchased from our supplier, Monkhouse, or other retailers such as supermarkets. (Generic items from other retailers must be an exact style & colour match to MCS uniform). We are confident that items such as the branded blazer represent excellent value compared to generic alternatives that are available.

The MCS Friends Association also provide good quality second hand uniform to buy from The Magic Cottage Charity shop next to Shire Hall.

Mobile Phones

We recommend that you do not provide your child with a smartphone, and also recommend that your child does not have access to social media. See more details here.

Students *are* permitted to bring mobile phones to school if necessary to do so. A simple phone is completely adequate - <u>a range of such phones are available</u>. Phones *must be switched off and in a bag or locker at all times* on the school site. The use of phones throughout the school day is <u>not</u> permitted. If phones are seen or heard then they will be confiscated until the end of the school day.





Equipment summary:

The equipment list is separated into essential and recommended items. As with clothing, please label with NAME and FORM.

A school bag, large enough to carry exercise books, will also be essential.

Compulsory / Essential Items:

Black or blue pens		Green pen	
HB Pencil		Eraser	THE STATE OF THE S
Pencil case		Scientific calculator *	
Highlighter	© STABITIO BOSS	Ruler	

Recommended Items:

Protractor	200 m (1) 100 m	Colouring pencils	Total
Pencil sharpener	1	Reading book	
Pair of compasses	Reply .	Solid glue stick	

Ready to Learn Room:

Occasionally, students may attend school without the classroom equipment they need or without the full uniform requirements. In order to ensure students are supported to continue their learning, we operate a 'Ready to Learn' room. Students may be directed here by form tutors when equipment or uniform needs to be borrowed for the day. Students are required to leave a personal item, such as a phone, keys, etc., as a deposit. The item is locked away and exchanged at the end of the school day.



Student Lockers: Valuables & Storage

We do not encourage the bringing of valuables to school and any items brought, are at students' risk. Lockers are available for students to use to store their materials, equipment and other kit. Lockers are available in three sizes – Small, Medium and Large.

- Larger lockers are located on the ground floor with smaller lockers located on floors 1 and 2.
- Most lockers are secured via a padlock provided by the individual.
- A number of lockers in the PE area are secured using a key and a £1 deposit. These lockers must be emptied at the end of every day and are used by the community in the evenings.
- You can select the most appropriate location and size of locker. We recommend that Year 7 choose a locker near their form room base.
- *Top Tip*: ensure you bring a padlock on the first day (Tues 2nd Sept) so that you have the widest choice of lockers.



A padlock with a shackle diameter of 6.3mm (1/4") is required to secure a locker.

A padlock of different size is unlikely to fit or secure the locker effectively.





The Resource Centre

WHAT DOES THE RESOURCE CENTRE CONTAIN?

Books, newspapers, magazines, periodicals, laptops, careers information and much more. You will learn how to use the Resource Centre to help you with your projects, homework and for you own enjoyment.

WILL I BE ABLE TO FIND WHAT I WANT?

You will visit the Resource Centre during your first few weeks at Monmouth Comprehensive. You will be shown how to find the resources and information you might need. The Resource Centre staff and the Library Prefects will always be available to help you.

WILL I BE ABLE TO USE THE LAPTOPS?

Of course. Just ask the Resource Centre staff to help you access the trolley and to sign out a laptop.

CAN I TAKE OUT BOOKS?

Yes. You are allowed to take out up to 2 books at a time for 2 weeks. You can also renew books if you have not finished them by their return date.



COME AND VISIT US!





Parent-Teacher Evenings & Summary Reports

For Year 7, there are three main contact points focused on student progression during the year. These are scheduled one for each of the three school terms.

Our Parent-Teacher contact evenings are run electronically via a webbased system: School Cloud.

More information can be found through the MCS website:

Monmouth Comprehensive School - School Cloud and Parents' Evenings



Term 1: Parent-Tutor contact evening (Thursday 16th October)

This is a Parent-Tutor contact evening held with your child's new form tutor. This brief meeting is focused on the transition to secondary school and provides an early contact to discuss how things have gone directly with the form tutor. It is focused on wellbeing and settling into the new routines of secondary education.

Term 2: Parents' Evening (Thursday 5th March)

In the Spring Term, parents & students have the opportunity to discuss their progress with the full range of subject teachers. This longer evening provides 5-minute appointment slots with all of your child's teachers and is focused on discussing the learning and progress in each.

Term 3: Annual Summary Report

Towards the end of the Summer Term, we will provide a summary report for the year. Students carry out a broad range of different assessments across their subjects and these inform the outcomes contained in this report. The assessments seek to determine how well students perform, based on their learning throughout the Year 7 curriculum of each subject.

Assessment & Progression

Students joining MCS will experience Wales's new curriculum framework: Curriculum for Wales. This framework has learner progression as its central focus.

Our approach values the main purpose of assessment – in order to support the progress that students make in their learning. The day-to-day, in-class assessment of students' learning, and the teacher's response to these assessments, is vast majority of assessment that occurs at MCS.

In the Curriculum for Wales Framework, students' progression in learning is defined across five principles:

- Increasing their effectiveness as an independent student
- Increasing their breadth and depth of knowledge
- Increasing their sophistication and application of skills
- Increasing their awareness of the different subject disciplines
- Increasing their connections between their learning



Support for students

All students throughout their time at school will face challenges that may require additional support. At a comprehensive school, the level of support will vary for each individual student and their learning and wellbeing needs. Wellbeing at school is developed through high quality learning experiences, supported by clear routines and expectations. We strive to build resilience in our students so they are adaptable to change, are able to assess the impact of their actions, explore their needs and the needs of others, and find solutions.

Students are encouraged to talk with their Form Tutor if they feel unhappy or anxious, as well as using the support of their peer group. In addition, we have dedicated Pastoral Support Officers and other wellbeing support workers. Of course, students' Head of Year is responsible for their progress throughout school.

Being Unwell at School

A team of first aiders as well as the Health and Wellbeing Support Team is on site throughout the school day to provide First Aid. Staff will contact parents when a child feels particularly unwell. We are not able to diagnose and cannot be used as an alternative to a doctor's appointment.

It is useful for us to know about allergies, medical conditions and any medication taken regularly.

Following MCC guidance, we are not permitted to dispense Paracetamol to students.

Please remember if you need medication to be dispensed by the Health and Wellbeing Centre, you must have:

- Medication prescribed by a doctor, in the prescribed box with the label attached and intact.
- Completed and returned to the Health and Wellbeing Centre, the Administration of Prescribed Medication Form available from the Health and Wellbeing Centre.

When providing long-term medication, parents are responsible for noting the expiry date and replenishing supplies when necessary with the School.

If your child is unwell and unable to attend school, you must contact the School as soon as possible. The Absentee Line number is 01600 775284. This is a 24-hour answerphone: a message can be left at any time.

If your child is not present in registration or session 1 you will receive a text message. Please respond to this text message with the reason for absence.

If you are aware of any future days of absence for appointments or continued illness, please inform us as soon as possible.

Student Council

The voice of our students is very important to us. All students have the opportunity to represent themselves and others through Year Councils and the School Council. At Year and School Council meetings, students discuss a wide variety of school-based topics, support the School Development Plan, and lead on their own agenda for school improvement. Council members can also be involved with: the interview process for all new members of staff; showing visitors around our school; acting as ambassadors for the School at events; election of students to the Eco and Food council; participation in school decisions such as catering contracts.

All Year, School and Joint Schools Council representatives are elected through a democratic process.



Attending School

Excellent attendance at school has a significantly positive impact not only on academic outcomes, but also on social and emotional wellbeing. The routine and rigour of school, and the habits developed through high levels of attendance, serve young people well for the rest of their lives.

There is a clear correlation between attendance and attainment, and therefore young people's life chances. Our target for each student's attendance is 96% or above.

Impact of attendance over an academic year:

90% attendance – you will have missed 19 days from school over the year. This is nearly four weeks: 114 missed lessons.

80% attendance – you will have missed 38 days from school over the year. This is nearly eight weeks: 228 missed lessons.

To report unavoidable absences, the Attendance telephone line is available 24 hours: 01600 775284.

Contacting the School

The school office is open between 8.15am and 4.15pm Monday to Thursday and 8.15am and 3.45pm on Friday during Term Time. Our phone number is **01600 775177**.

During the day, 8.45am – 3.00pm, teaching staff may not be available to take phone calls. Messages may be left via school reception via phone or email, monmouth.comprehensive@monmouth.schoolsedu.org.uk

Please note that you will receive a response to general enquiries within 3 working days.

Form tutors are often the best point of contact for queries regarding a student's progress in school.

A list of form tutor contact emails is also available on the school website. (Look for 'School Staff' under the 'Our School' tab).

School Website

General Information about the day to day organisation of the School can be found on our website: Monmouth Comprehensive School - Home

Also, if for any reason the School is to close in an emergency, the website will hold all the details. This will be prominently displayed on the front page and will be updated daily. The telephone system is also updated regularly in the event of closure.





Parent Pay and Dining Arrangements

All our school trips and activities are advertised on ParentPay. On line consent/ emergency contact number/medical information/dietary requirements are required from you on payment for all services allocated to your child. It is essential that the email address you use for ParentPay is current as all information and alerts for services will be communicated to the Primary Payer via ParentPay email. ParentPay at www.parentpay.com

Please direct all payment queries to the Finance Department on 01600 775171, email jennifer.jenkins@monmouth.schoolsedu.org.uk

To help parents budget for trips/activities/lunch money you can pay into your Parent account at any time an amount of your choice to use at a later date against a payment for items assigned to your child on ParentPay.

Your username and password for ParentPay at MCS will be sent via email.

Existing users (account at Primary School) — Please login now to your Primary school account and use the information on the email to 'Add a child' on your existing account before we break for the Summer Holiday. (Both the Primary and Secondary Account will show on your Home screen). You are allowed up to 6 users on your account.

New users - Please login now and activate your account before we break for the Summer Holiday.

The **school restaurant** is open from 7.45am to 4.30pm daily. The School uses a biometric 'cashless' system for students to purchase food. The biometric system involves scanning the image of a student's finger which produces a unique I.D. stored on a secure server. Students then access their accounts by placing their finger on a scanner at the till-point. The Protection of Freedom's Act 2012 requires us to gain your consent to use biometric recognition systems in School; already provided by return of Data Collection Form (linked in the email advising of New Entrants' Evening).

Your child's finger scan will be linked to their lunch account – the School operates a 'cashless' payment system; accounts can be topped up using ParentPay, from when your child starts in school: ParentPay at www.parentpay.com.

School Essential Grant / Free School Meals

If you think you are entitled to Free School Meals / School Essential Grant please access Monmouthshire County Council website https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/home/counciltaxandbenefits/fsm/ to check your eligibility and complete an online application. If you were eligible this year 24/25, you need to re-apply for 25/26. Applications for the academic year 25/26 open on 1st July 2025, please do not apply before this date.





Travel to School via Bus

Many of our students travel on buses, some setting out early in the morning to cover considerable distances.

Families should consider emergency plans in the event of unforeseen difficulties with bus transport. Students should know exactly where to go and what to do if the bus fails to arrive in the morning. If the School has to close early, it is advisable for students to know where they should go to meet parents. In the event of a bus being unable to reach the drop-off point, having a rendezvous, a shelter or home of another student prevents anxiety and promotes the safety of students. If a bus breaks down, students must stay with the bus while the driver makes appropriate arrangements.

Students living outside the catchment area make their own transport arrangements. Some parents in the Forest of Dean have organised their own contracts with different companies such as Willetts, etc.

Students in **some** areas of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire **may** be able to claim free travel if their closest school is Monmouth Comprehensive School. Parents need to apply to their local authorities.

Students living within Monmouthshire. Free home to school transport is generally restricted to pupils up to the age of 16 years who attend their catchment or nearest school and live more than 2 miles from the catchment school for Primary and more than 3 miles for Secondary.

An online application form is available on <u>My Monmouthshire</u>. If you haven't already registered for My Monmouthshire you will need to do this before completing the application form.

By registering and completing the form online you can track the progress of your application and receive updates as it is processed. Once registered, the application form will be available under the *Schools and Learning* area of My Monmouthshire.

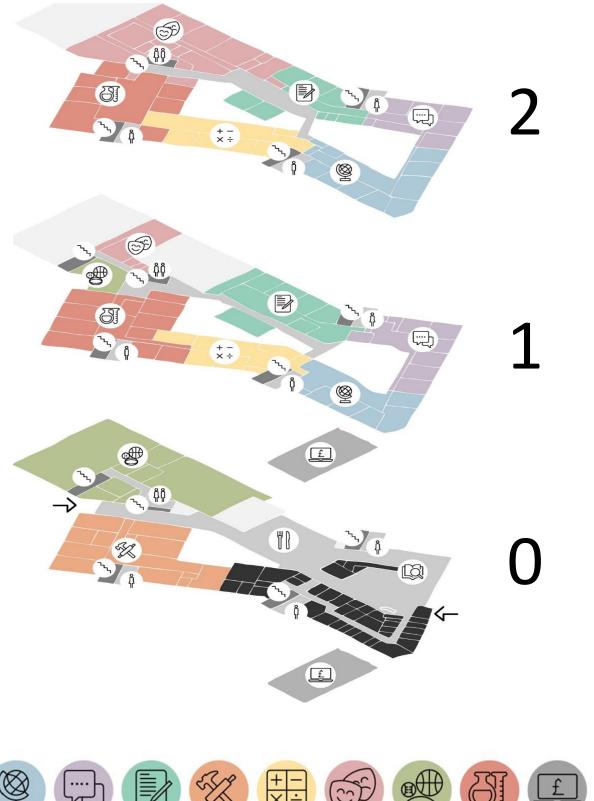
If you've already registered using the My Monmouthshire app, currently available on Apple, Android and Windows devices, then you can use the same email and password to log-in.

For enquiries from Monmouthshire residents relating to the assessment or eligibility of transport, please contact the Passenger Transport Unit on 01633 644777 or e-mail passengertransportunit@monmouthshire.gov.uk

For other enquiries, please contact the School on 01600 775177.



School Map





Monmouth Comprehensive Friends Association



Hello and a very warm welcome to MCS Friends Association!

The MCS Friends Committee is currently a small group of parents, grandparents and staff (with a number of helpers who jump in and help when they can). We are a friendly group with children in different year groups. Our meetings are often a welcome opportunity for parents and carers to chat informally and find out more about school life.

We also aim to support our school community through fundraising (selling tickets for social events and facilitating second hand clothing sales) to provide extras that the school budget does not cover.

Please watch our video for more info:



We recognise that the transition from primary to secondary school can be huge for both children and parents. The Friends provide support to families and an opportunity to participate in school life, making a difference to all students' lives whilst recognising our children's new independence.

As a parent you automatically become a member of MCS Friends Association.

No experience necessary, just a willingness to support the School.

For more information or to join our **helper list** please get in touch, using monocompfriends@gmail.com.

To opt out of the MCS Friends mailing list; please let the Friends know and we'll remove your email address.

Finally, if you would like to be more involved, please start supporting us now:

Use Easyfundraising when you shop online: It takes seconds to install the donation reminder and costs you nothing. <u>Click here</u> or use the QR code as follows:



Three more easy ways to support us:

- 1. Buy tickets on Parentpay for events and raffles
 - 2. Donate/ purchase second hand uniform
- 3. **Bring** your ideas and enthusiasm to our meetings

Thank you!

Abbe Opher - Chair MCS Friends

Find us on the School's website in the 'Parents' section.