

Welcome to Hope Wood Academy



Parent/Carer Guide to
Secondary Department

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1) Welcome

We are thrilled to welcome your son/daughter into the academy. We hope this will be the start of a long partnership between your family and the academy. As you may be aware Hope Wood Academy is a generic special school with places for 209 pupils aged 2-19yrs. Our pupil population has a wide range of different needs. Our specialist staff and resources offer a range of excellent educational opportunities for pupils to ensure the very best possible outcomes for individuals.

2) Ascent Academies' Trust

Hope Wood Academy is part of Ascent Academies' Trust. The Multi Academy Trust chain was developed in 2012 by Barbara Priestman Academy and Portland Academy in Sunderland and was then joined by Springwell Dene Academy and Castlegreen Academy (now The New Bridge Academy), followed by Ashtrees Academy in Billingham.

The Trust provides a range of opportunities for joint working, shared training for staff, sharing staff expertise and knowledge of specialist areas within the Special Educational Needs sector, curriculum and pastoral networks, leadership networks, shared resources and facilities as well as many other benefits. Please visit www.ascenttrust.org for more information on the Trust.



3) Mission and Vision



Hope Wood Academy Mission Statement

To provide a welcoming, purposeful environment where learners can flourish because their rights, needs, and aspirations are met.

Vision for Hope Wood Academy

High levels of collaboration, communication, team work, trust and support are visible in the staff team.

Well-planned and organised teaching which leads to learners making very good progress.

Positive and regular communication with parents and carers enables a productive dialogue about how to best meet learners needs and aspirations.

A welcoming environment where staff, learners and visitors feel safe and secure; and learners are encouraged to be happy and healthy.

An engaging, motivating and well-resourced curriculum is matched to learner needs and aspirations.

Specialist training and the advice from Multi-disciplinary staff creates high quality provision

4) The School Day

The school day is as follows:

0850-0900	Pupils arrive into school either on transport or with parents/carers
0900-0940	Lesson 1 – focussed on Education, Health and Care Plan Outcomes
0940-1030	Lesson 2
1030-1045	Break
1045-1135	Lesson 3
1135-1230	Lesson 4
1230-1315	Secondary Lunch
1315-1330	Afternoon Registration and 'Circle' Time
1330-1420	Lesson 5
1420-1510	Lesson 6
1510	Pupils depart from school either on transport or with parents/carers

We ask that if parents/carers are bringing pupils into school they arrive promptly at 0850 and arrive no earlier than 1510 to take their son/daughter home.

All pupils are signed into the academy on a morning and out of the academy on an evening as part of our safeguarding procedures to keep all pupils safe.

Year 11 pupils do have the option to go off-site at lunchtimes in order to encourage independence before transition to Post 16 education or training. Parental permission is required for this.

5) School Transport

A significant proportion of pupils arrive into the academy on school transport, this is arranged through the local authority School Admissions and Transport Team and school is not responsible for this. If there are any queries and concerns regarding school transport, these should be directed to the School Admissions and Transport Team at County Hall in the first instance and school made aware of the issue.

<http://www.durham.gov.uk/schooltransport>

School Admissions and Transport Team
Children and Adults Services
County Hall
Durham

Telephone - 03000 264 444

6) School Meals

From September 2018 we will be introducing a new school meals service which will be led and operated by our own Ascent Academies Trust Chef Craig, Craig has successfully run the meal service at Barbara Priestman Academy for the past five years very successfully. The meal service provides an opportunity for all pupils to be involved in decision making about their meals, the kitchen will provide work experience opportunities for pupils within the academy. Craig is happy to meet with parents to discuss the range of options available through the meal service and also to look at how individual requirements and dietary needs can be met.

School meals can be purchased from school for £2.25 per day.

This is to be paid into the school office on a Monday morning by cash or cheque, cheques made payable to Hope Wood Academy. We are also introducing parent pay which is an online system allowing parents to pay for school meals. Monthly payments can also be arranged.

We encourage healthy eating in school therefore we ask that the following are not brought into school in packed lunches.

- Fizzy drinks
- Bars of chocolate
- Sweets

7) Uniform

All students in the academy are expected to wear the academy uniform.

The uniform comprises:

Navy sweatshirt or Navy sweat cardigan

Navy hooded sweatshirt

Sky polo shirt

Navy zipped hooded sweatshirt

Dark grey/black trousers or skirt

Dark footwear

or

Blazer

Navy and light blue tie

Sky polo shirt or white shirt

Dark grey/black trousers or skirt

Dark footwear

Students should have navy shorts, a white T-shirt and trainers for PE.

Jewellery and/or excessive make-up should not be worn in academy

Outdoor wear including hats and coats should not be worn inside the academy.

Uniform can be ordered and collected from the school office.

8) Term Dates and Holidays 2018/2019

The Ascent Academies' Trust – Hope Wood Academy

RECOMMENDED SCHOOL TERM DATES 2018/19

SEPTEMBER						
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OCTOBER						
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NOVEMBER						
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DECEMBER						
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JANUARY						
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FEBRUARY						
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MARCH						
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APRIL						
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JUNE						
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JULY						
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AUGUST						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

	School holidays
	Bank holidays
	Training Days

Total Term Dates = 193

9) Attendance

At Hope Wood we believe that regular academy attendance is vital for all pupils in order to allow individuals to develop academically, socially and emotionally throughout their time at the academy and to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them. Regular academy attendance and educational attainment are inextricably linked. Regular attendance at the academy can also encourage positive and regular routines as well as a positive work ethic which our young people can then transfer into their adulthood. All academy staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually. We expect all of our pupils to aspire to 100% attendance and appreciate the full support of parents and carers in encouraging this. We recognise that some pupils attending Hope Wood Academy are more vulnerable and have greater needs than the majority of their mainstream counterparts. Therefore, there may be more absences from the academy due to medical reasons and health complications.

If your son/daughter is going to be absent from the academy we request that you ring the academy on the first morning of the absence and provide details of the reasons for the absence and the expected return date to the academy.

Absence can be authorised if:

- ✓ A pupil is absent with permission granted by the Head Teacher
- ✓ A pupil is ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause
- ✓ The absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong
- ✓ There is a family bereavement
- ✓ A pupil is attending an interview with a prospective employer, or in connection with an application for a place at a post-school provider, or for a place at another school
- ✓ A pupil is excluded
- ✓ A pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion

Unauthorised Absences

It is our responsibility as educators to do all we can to encourage and support regular and frequent academy attendance. Where the Academy does not consider the absence as reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given it will be recorded as 'unauthorised' absence. This type of absence could lead to the Academy using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

Absence is unauthorised if:

- ✓ parents/carers keep the pupil off the academy unnecessarily
- ✓ truancy occurs before or during the academy day
- ✓ absences have never been properly explained or the academy is dissatisfied with the explanation
- ✓ pupil arrives at the academy too late to get a mark
- ✓ shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- ✓ day trips and holidays are taken in term time which have not been agreed
- ✓ a pupil fails to return after the period of time agreed by the academy for a family holiday
- ✓ medical evidence is not provided where requested.

Examples of medical evidence could be: doctor's certificate; medical appointment slips; medical prescription. Whilst any pupil may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best resolved swiftly between the school, the parents/cares and the pupil.

Persistent Absence (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason has been missed. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any pupil's educational prospects and we need parental support and co-operation to work together to resolve this. We monitor all absence thoroughly through a weekly, monthly and half termly process. Any case that is seen to have reached the 'persistent absence' mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and members of academy staff are available to support families to ensure their son/daughter can attend the academy. Within the academy pastoral leaders, behaviour support manager, safeguarding lead, attendance officer and members of the senior leadership team all work with families to try to prevent persistent absenteeism. We work closely with colleagues from other agencies such as social care, health and the local authority to ensure that where a multi-agency approach is required, this is offered to families in order to support them.

Illness during the Academy Day

Should a pupil become unwell during a lesson, trained staff will assess the illness and make a decision (through the Head Teacher or leadership team) about whether parents/cares need to be informed and whether a pupil will be sent home or collected by parents/carers.

Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable, however as an academy we understand there may be many reasons for this. We aim to work with families to ensure they receive the appropriate level of support in order to get their son/daughter into the academy on time at the start of the day.

If a pupil misses the start of the day, they do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils can also disrupt lessons, this can be embarrassing for the pupil and can also encourage absence.

Registers are marked by 9.30am and a pupil will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time. At 9.30am, the registers are closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if a pupil arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows they are on site, but this may not count as a present mark and it may mean they have an unauthorised absence.

Appointments

Parents should attempt to arrange appointments for their child outside school time whenever possible. When the appointment is local, the pupil will be expected to attend school before and/or after the appointment. If you have any questions or queries regarding attendance please speak to Carolyn Bird, Deputy Head of Academy.

10) Home-School Communication

We have an open door policy in the academy, supported by safeguarding procedures, and welcome a two-way dialogue with parents and carers about all aspects of the academy and encourage parents and carers to become part of the Hope Wood community.

We keep in touch with parents and carers through:

- Academic planners
- home-school diaries
- the school newsletter
- letters home
- texts to parents
- website
- emails
- face to face communication
- Facebook page
- Celebration of learning events
- Parents teacher association

Home-school communication works most effectively when it is two-way therefore we encourage all parents and carers to communicate with the academy on a regular basis.

We request that parents/carers inform the academy if there are any changes to home circumstances or any change of numbers/addresses etc.

A parents' coffee group meets regularly, the coffee mornings providing an opportunity for parents to meet with other like-minded parents and carers and also to give them a voice in school.

11) Secondary Curriculum

Secondary pupils follow a traditional secondary timetable covering all national curriculum subjects.

Some classes in Secondary transition around the building for different lessons throughout the day, visiting teachers who specialise in different subjects. Some classes are what we call 'static' classes and they follow more of a primary model to the curriculum with one teacher for most subjects.

Secondary classes have a tutor who they are with every morning for registration and the first lesson of each day, and also a learning support assistant who is the consistent member of staff with the class throughout the day. We find this model works well as pupils feel they have a familiar face and support in all lessons and staff are able to provide effective home school communication as they are with the pupils in every lesson.

From Year 9 onwards, pupils have the choice to select options in three vocational areas and engage in vocational subject choices.

More information about the Secondary curriculum and individual subjects can be found on our website

<http://www.hopewood.org.uk/curriculum/secondary-curriculum-overview/>

12) Electronic Items in School

If your son/daughter wishes to bring an electronic item to school, they are required to hand it in to reception on arrival at school and pick it back up as they leave at the end of the day. Pupils will not have access to these devices during the academy day as we believe devices interrupt learning. The academy cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage to electronic items brought into the academy.

13) Internet Safety

As an academy we recognise our pupils may be socially vulnerable, particularly in relation to accessing the internet and social media. We teach internet and personal safety as part of our personal, social and health curriculum, however we ask parents/carers to aid us in this by monitoring your son/daughter's internet and social media usage at home ensuring he/she is not exposed to anything which may prove harmful to him/her.

You may find the following resources useful:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

<http://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers>

<http://www.ncpc.org/resources/files/pdf/internet-safety/chcyber.pdf>

http://www.parentsprotect.co.uk/files/learning_disabilities_autism_internet_safety_parent_guide.pdf

If you have any concerns about your son/daughter's internet or social media use, please contact a member of staff in the safeguarding team immediately who will be able to provide support.

14) Homework

At Hope Wood, we view homework as being a supported or independent task undertaken outside of curriculum time which reinforces, extends or enriches current learning.




The purpose of homework at Hope Wood is to provide opportunities for parents/carers to be involved in their child's learning. It enables children to practise and consolidate skills and aims to broaden the context of learning and provide enrichment and extension. Finally, it aims to enable children to take responsibility for their own learning, to become independent learners and to develop perseverance.

We expect all teachers to set homework that is the appropriate level for each child on a regular basis. However, if parents and carers choose not to complete homework we will not demand that children complete this at home. Some tasks will take the form of games that can be played in the car or whilst shopping that children may not even recognise as 'homework', whilst other aspects of homework can be completed in homework club. We understand that sometimes mixing home and school can cause anxieties and stress for some young people and therefore we will not insist all homework is completed. We feel that homework activity is something that parents and carers can choose to engage with where they feel it is conducive to their child's progress and well-being. We will not reprimand children who do not complete homework, but will take the time to praise those who do.

For any questions or queries relating to homework please contact Vickie Gorton, Deputy Head Academic.


15) The Safeguarding Team

Within the academy we have a number of staff who provide specialist support to our families and young people. Our safeguarding team is led by Samantha Little who is our Designated Safeguarding Lead in the academy. She monitors all aspects of safeguarding within the academy, including ensuring all of our staff are fully trained and up to date on all aspects of safeguarding. Samantha and her team liaise closely with colleagues from other agencies to ensure all families in the academy receive the full support they require.






Hello, my name is Sam and welcome to Hope Wood Academy.
I am the Safeguarding Lead
and responsible for keeping pupils safe.


If you have any Safeguarding concerns about a child,
then please report them to me.



If I am not available, then please speak to one of the
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.



Sally Walton Carolyn Bird Anne Marshall
Behaviour Support Deputy Head Post 16 Lead
Manager of Academy



If you have any concerns
about the conduct of a
member of staff,
please speak to
Adele Pearson,
Head of Academy.

**Safeguarding is everyone's business.
Focus on the voice of the child.**

16) Multi-disciplinary Team Involvement within the Academy

As an academy we work with a wide range of colleagues from other agencies in order to best support our young people and their families. Colleagues regularly involved in the academy include:

- ✓ Social care colleagues – social workers and family workers
- ✓ Colleagues from CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- ✓ Paediatricians
- ✓ Consultants from local hospitals
- ✓ Colleagues from the Looked After Children in Education team
- ✓ Speech and Language Therapists
- ✓ Educational Psychologist
- ✓ Occupational Therapists
- ✓ Physiotherapists
- ✓ Therapists providing a range of therapy services

We ask that as colleagues become involved with your son/daughter, you alert the academy to their details so we are able to invite them into the academy to work with your son/daughter and share relevant information.

17)The Annual Review Process (EHCPs)

As you will be aware, in order to attend the academy your son/daughter must have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The EHCP is reviewed on an annual basis and parental involvement in the review process is vital in order for the review to be effective.

Parents will receive an invitation to the review several weeks prior to the review taking place. We ask that you complete the reply slip and any requested information for the review so we can ensure the relevant professionals are invited to the review.

If you are unable to make the review appointment, please do let the academy know as soon as possible so an alternative time and date can be arranged.

Amanda Duffy is our EHCP coordinator who can answer any questions you may have about the review process.

Parents/carers may wish to involve Durham SEND IASS in the review as an independent support. Details about the service can be found below.

<http://www.durhamsendiass.info/Pages/default.aspx>

Durham SEND Information Advice and Support Service:

- is a free, impartial local service.
- provides confidential information, advice and support.
- works directly with parents and carers of children and young people with SEND.
- works directly with young people with SEND.
- works in partnership with parents/carers, young people, educational settings the local authority and other agencies
- supports parents/carers and young people to inform and influence local policy and practice.
- enables parents/carers and young people to make informed choices and decisions with confidence.
- has a role in making sure that parents' and young people's views are heard and understood and that these views inform local policy and practice.
- is able to put parents/carers and young people in touch with other local and national organisations.

The local offer:

The local offer is a directory of information and services for families of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) including services that may help you or your child as they progress from birth to the age of 25.

<http://www.countydurhamfamilies.info/kb5/durham/fsd/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=0>

Another useful service is the Children and Young People's Network. Families can sign up to be part of the network and receive a number of benefits

As a member of the Children and Young People's Network, you and your child/children will receive:

- Email or text alerts covering the latest news and developments, including a quarterly newsletter which features up-to-date information about services, short break activities, events and general information.
- Entry into the exclusive Children and Young People's Network Membership Card scheme which offers discounts to organisations across County Durham and the North East.
- Organisations joining the scheme are updated monthly, please keep checking for new discounts.
- CYPN membership discount

You can find the network through Facebook, twitter and the following website;

<http://www.durham.gov.uk/cypn>

Many of our parents and carers also engage with Durham County Carers Support, the charity aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Carers caring for someone in County Durham.

Durham County Carers Support is a registered Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee. We are a voluntary organisation that provides free high quality services and support to unpaid Carers over the age of 18 who support someone living in the County Durham area.

We pride ourselves on helping those who help others by offering a range of services from: Carer support; training for Carers; helping to give Carers some extra time to look after their own wellbeing; and to take a break.

<http://www.dccarers.org/>

18) Behaviour Management in the Academy

At Hope Wood Academy, we believe that every member of the academy community has a responsibility for behaviour. Every member of staff should be seen to follow procedures confidently and consistently. All staff and students have an entitlement to achieve their maximum potential in a safe and secure environment where effective teaching and learning can take place. It is our belief that good behaviour needs to be taught, should be expected, and be consistently encouraged.

What is Positive Behaviour Management?

Positive behaviour management is seen as a method to support students' development by the promotion of the appropriate behaviours displayed. The main method of achieving this is through the use of Assertive Discipline which encourages praise and re-direction through students making appropriate choices. The staff who work with the students create appropriate role models for the students to follow. Adults in the Academy do not control the behaviour of our students, they help students and provide structures for students to make the right behavioural choices. Behaviour is the responsibility of each child and they should be encouraged to see the way they behave as a choice. No-one makes students behave in a specific way, they choose the behaviour. This sometimes takes a long time to teach as often students are keen to blame others for how they behaved. In extreme circumstances adults need to take over control of a child's behaviour and we use a Team Teach approach to provide physical intervention. This is used to protect a child from harm and from carrying out actions that they would regret when calm.

Promoting Positive Behaviour Management

It is really important that all members of the Academy community know the Academy rules and consistently apply them. Students will need to be taught the rules regularly and will need ongoing reminders and revisiting. Students will also need to be shown how to carry out simple daily routines (lining up, entering and leaving classrooms, walking through the building etc.) as well as special routines (how to leave the building if the fire alarm sounds, how to behave during Christmas dinner) and finally contextual aspects of lessons (visits, using D&T equipment, in the pool, on the trampoline, in a reading session etc.). We cannot assume that children will know what to do in these events and they will need specific teaching and routine practice. Supportive feedback then reinforces positive behaviours. Teachers may also wish to develop classroom rules. These should be kept simple and shared at the start of the lesson. For example, 'we are doing a mental maths test and the expectation is that we all work quietly and independently'.

Academy Rules

It is expected that students will:

- ✓ Follow directions at the first time of asking
- ✓ Speak politely – do not swear, name-call or say rude and hurtful things.
- ✓ Not take, or damage other people's things.
- ✓ Be in the right place at the right time and stay in boundaries.
- ✓ Keep hands and feet and other body parts and objects to yourself.

If students choose to behave in accordance with the rules they will be given supportive feedback. This will be done through:

- ✓ Verbal praise (explicit)
- ✓ Triangulated praise
- ✓ Certificates / stickers
- ✓ Merits
- ✓ Positive phone calls home
- ✓ Tangible rewards e.g. pencils, rubbers etc.

Some students may not respond to the Assertive Discipline system of behaviour management. This may be due to a number of factors e.g. emotional/behavioural issues, social communication difficulties, challenging behaviour/strong patterns of learned behaviours etc.

Some children with severe learning disabilities typically display behaviour which may put themselves or others at risk, or which may prevent them from fully accessing learning. These behaviours may include aggression, self-injury, stereotyped behaviours or disruptive and destructive behaviours. These behaviours are not under the control of the individual concerned and are largely due to their lack of ability to communicate.

As an academy we adopt the Team Teach approach to physical intervention. Physical intervention is used as a last resort approach if a young person is at risk of harming themselves or others. All staff in the academy are trained in the use of team teach and regularly receive update training. Whenever the team teach approach is used the incident is fully recorded and a debrief takes place afterwards to discuss and learn from best practice approaches.

As an academy we wish to engage parents/carers in all aspects of behaviour management and will communicate with parents/cares, sharing occasions of positive behaviour and also occasions where behaviour is not always desirable.

19) Parental Involvement in the Academy

As an academy we want parents/carers to become as involved as possible in the academy and your son/daughter's learning. We provide a range of opportunities for parents/carers to get involved in the academy including:

- ✓ Half-termly celebration of learning events
- ✓ Special events throughout the year – Mother's Day, Father's Day, Easter, Christmas, Diwali,
- ✓ Weekly parents' coffee morning
- ✓ Family learning sessions
- ✓ Opportunities for parents to volunteer in the academy
- ✓ Formal parent evenings
- ✓ Parental engagement training sessions which can help parents engage their child in learning at home
- ✓ Regularly seeking parent feedback
- ✓ Engaging parents/carers in the annual review process
- ✓ Engaging parents in discussion/consultation around academy improvement and changes to the academy
- ✓ 'Friends of Hope Wood Academy'

If you have any suggestions of other ways in which you would like to get more involved in the academy, please speak to Carolyn Bird, Deputy Head of Academy.

20) Learning Outside the Classroom

As an academy, we believe learning outside the classroom provides a range of opportunities for young people to engage in experiential learning.

We offer a range of curriculum linked trips and residential visits throughout the year which you will be informed of in writing prior to the visit taking place.

The benefits of learning outside the classroom include;

- ✓ Learning outside the classroom supports the development of healthy and active lifestyles by offering children opportunities for physical activity, freedom and movement, and promoting a sense of well-being.
- ✓ Learning outside the classroom gives children contact with the natural world and offers them experiences that are unique to outdoors, such as direct contact with the weather and the seasons.
- ✓ Playing and learning outside also helps children to understand and respect nature, the environment and the interdependence of humans, animals, plants, and lifecycles.
- ✓ Outdoor play also supports children's problem-solving skills and nurtures their creativity, as well as providing rich opportunities for their developing imagination, inventiveness and resourcefulness.
- ✓ Children need an outdoor environment that can provide them with space, both upwards and outwards, and places to explore, experiment, discover, be active and healthy, and to develop their physical capabilities.
- ✓ The outdoor environment offers space and therefore is particularly important to those children who learn best through active movement. Very young children learn predominantly through their sensory and physical experiences which support brain development and the creation of neural networks.
- ✓ Learning that flows seamlessly between indoors and outdoors makes the most efficient use of resources and builds on interests and enthusiasms.
- ✓ Anyone who takes children outside regularly sees the enjoyment, and sense of wonder and excitement that is generated when children actively engage with their environment.



21) Any Other Questions?

If there is any aspect regarding your son/daughter's education at Hope Wood which you feel has not been covered in this guide or that you would like more information about, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

We hope you enjoy being part of the Hope Wood Academy Community.