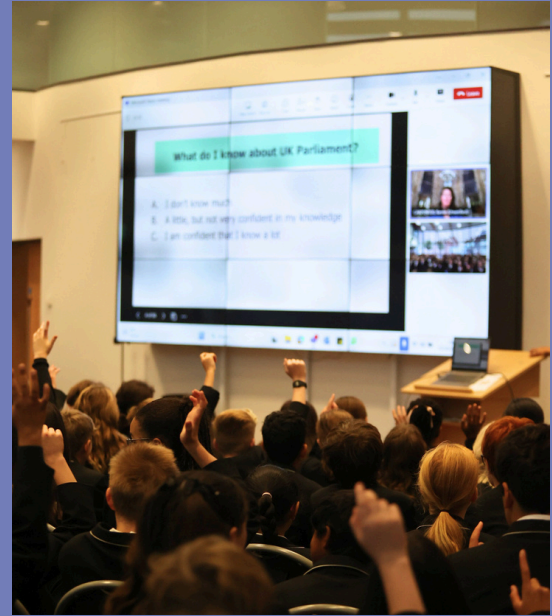




CROSFIELDS SCHOOL



YEAR 8 HANDBOOK 2025-26

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WELCOME

to Academic Year 2025-26

Mr Richard Ebbage

Deputy Head - Academic (Seniors)

 richardebbage@crosfields.com

I oversee the teaching and learning in the Seniors in which our mission is to deliver a curriculum which is broad balanced, and engaging. Our ethos is to 'teach to the top then scaffold up' meaning we have rigour and high expectations at the heart of what we do while also acknowledging support and guidance is required to get the best outcomes for all.



We provide pupils with a range of subjects complimented by our extensive enrichment programme. While learning and lessons are the reason we exist as a school, there are a wide variety of opportunities to take part in from sports teams, DofE, activities, and more and pupils will be encouraged to make the most of as many of these as possible while balancing their time.

Form Tutors, subject teachers, and Heads of Department will be the main points of contact, but you are of course free to contact me if there are any wider questions or discussions to be had.

Mr James Bown

Deputy Head Academic (Seniors)

I am delighted to be joining Crosfields in January and relish the opportunity to lead on the teaching and learning within the school – creating a curriculum which is broad, balanced and engenders academic curiosity. Our ethos is to 'teach to the top then scaffold up' meaning we place academic rigour and the highest expectations at the heart of what we do, while also providing individual support and guidance when required to facilitate the best outcomes for all.



We provide pupils with a range of subjects complimented by our extensive enrichment programme, designed to engage and inspire pupils beyond the curriculum. Whilst learning and teaching is at the heart of what we do as a school, there are a wide variety of opportunities for personal development, such as; sports teams, DofE, activities, and so much more that pupils are strongly encouraged to be involved in.

House tutors, subject teachers, and Heads of Department will be the main points of contact for you as parents, but please do not hesitate to contact me if there are any wider questions or discussions to be had.

Mr Daniel Stent

Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral and Safeguarding)

 danielstent@crofields.com

As Senior Deputy Head, I am proud to play a central role in ensuring that children at Crosfields feel safe, supported, and valued. I oversee the pastoral and safeguarding care at our school and my ambition is simple - to ensure that every child at Crosfields is happy, kind, confident and successful.

Pastoral care lies at the heart of an exceptional school. We believe that a strong sense of wellbeing is essential for learning, and we work closely with students, families, and staff to build trusting relationships and offer tailored support when it's needed most.

Our school values of kindness, growth, commitment, ambition and integrity underpin everything that we do. We expect these values to be modelled and lived by all members of the Crosfields community.

Later in this booklet we cover the breadth of our pastoral support delivered through our house system. These staff members will be the first point of contact for any pastoral matters, but should you wish to discuss anything with me then please do get in touch.



Ms Sally Dawson-Couper

Director of Studies

 sallydawsoncouper@crofields.com

In my role as Director of Studies, I am responsible for the oversight and coordination of the school's academic framework, encompassing the organisation of reports, parents' evenings, and the construction of the timetable. In collaboration with Mr Ebbage and the wider academic staff, I am committed to ensuring that you are regularly and comprehensively informed about your child's academic progress throughout their time at Crosfields.



Mr Alex Murray-Smith

Head of KS3

 alexmurraysmith@crosfields.com

I'm really looking forward to this new role of Head of Key Stage 3. I will be working alongside both the academic and pastoral teams, with the aim for Years 7-9 to be memorable, meaningful years where the pupils are given the necessary tools and experiences to flourish. There is a fantastic tutor team that I will be working closely with to ensure communication to both pupils and parents is timely, clear and concise. We love nothing more than seeing our Crosfields pupils leave at the end of the day with a smile on their face and with something positive they can feedback to their parents.



Mr Simon Dyson

Head of Tracking and Monitoring

 simondyson@crosfields.com

I have been at Crosfields for three years and I oversee the data from Nursery to Year 11. With every data drop and report in the Seniors, I look through the data and help provide interventions and support for pupils and share praise and success with those that are progressing well.

During the academic year, I help with the transition of our Year 6 pupils into Year 7. I lead and provide support to our pupils in Year 9 during their options process.

I also take a lead on communicating with pupils and parents around academic matters such as assessment information.



WELCOME TO KS3 - THE YEAR AHEAD

This is an opportunity for pupils and parents to hear from the Academic and Pastoral Team alongside meeting Form Tutors and Subject Teachers. Refreshments will be served in the Hatch.

Year 8 - Monday 22 September - 17:00 meeting in the Theatre. Followed by an opportunity to meet the teachers in their classrooms.



SCHOOL BEGINNING AND END OF DAY TIMINGS

Year Group	Year 8
Before 08:00	Flex arrival - Breakfast Club from 07:30
Beginning of Day	08:30
Drop off	08:20
Car park	Main
End of day	16:00
Pick up	16:05
Car park	Main
Notes	After school snack: 16:10 -16:30; Prep/Activity 16:30-17:30
After 16:30	Flex collection from prep from 17:00
Car park	Main



BREAKFAST CLUB

Our Breakfast Club runs daily from 07:30 to 08:10, with the last serving at 08:00. This is a supervised session in which pupils are offered a selection of hot and cold items should they want to eat. Pupils can attend Breakfast Club and not eat, to allow for early drop off. Senior pupils do not need to book in advance. Payment is via a biometric Kappture account that parents can credit via an online account.

To use the system, pupils are required to complete the biometric consent form. You can view the policy around our use of biometric data [here](#). Please complete the biometric form (included in the policy) and return to the School Office at office@crosfields.com. Parents will then be sent login details for Kappture.

Breakfast Club will commence on the first day of term.

PASTORAL CARE

Our community knows that they are part of a school that values academic success, but which also recognises that even the brightest pupil with impressive grades will struggle in the workplace if they cannot show empathy, work as a team, find time for themselves or discover the resilience to bounce back from failure. The advent of the digital age, social media and technological advances also add some modern pressures to an already tricky, teenage time. We, therefore, work with all our pupils to ensure they care greatly about their own physical and mental wellbeing.



One of the simplest pastoral tools is to make it easy for pupils to talk, to allow them to express how they are feeling, and for them to acknowledge when something is not quite right. We aim to be a 'talking school' where all pupils (and parents) can speak to someone if they are worried about their own situation or that of someone else. They know that by confiding in a member of staff, or one of their peers, there will be a caring and sensible response to support them. Not all problems can easily be fixed, and some may need specialist help from outside of the school. This is where we work closely with several external agencies and charities to ensure every member of the community can receive the right help, at the right time.



HOUSE SYSTEM

A crucial component of our Pastoral Care is our House System. We strongly believe that being part of a House enables a pupil to feel part of something, a sense of belonging. This in turn generates a safety net, giving pupils the confidence to try things outside of their comfort zone. The House Activity Programme runs throughout every term and provides pupils with the opportunity to represent their Houses in a wide range of activities. This will feature everything from Music to Dodgeball to Debating to a Bake-Off competition; there will be something for every pupil to get involved in. These House events will help build a pupil's character, developing 'soft skills' such as teamwork, leadership, winning, and losing, all experienced whilst having some fun in the process. Weekly 'House Meets' then give the opportunity for pupils to be recognised and celebrated for all their achievements.

All Senior pupils are allocated to one of four Houses: **Corylus**, **Ilex**, **Quercus** or **Salix**.



Meet the House Team

Each pupil has a Head of House who will lead on the pastoral care of their House. They oversee the work of the Form Tutors and coordinate the day-to-day running of the House. They also help to organise House activities and encourage pupils to engage with the extracurricular life of the school.

Mrs Charlotte Reid
Head of Corylus House


 charlottereid@crosfields.com

I am Head of Corylus House. I have taught Science at Crosfields since 2013 and I have enjoyed being part of the growth and expansion to Year 11. As a pastoral lead, I enjoy getting to know the pupils and being part of the camaraderie that our House system offers; seeing pupils have fun and put themselves out of their comfort zone is a real highlight.

For me, being a Head of House is about being there for the pupils in the House, noticing their individual needs and helping them on their journey. I love to see how far they have come.



Mr Ian Anderson
Head of Ilex House

 iananderson@crosfields.com

I am Head of Ilex House. I have been at Crosfields since 2020 and, alongside my pastoral role, I teach English in the Seniors. The opportunity to be part of the pastoral system is hugely important to me, ensuring that our pupils' mental health and wellbeing is supported alongside their academic and co-curricular endeavours which is vital in producing the well-rounded individuals that will be able to achieve success as they grow. I have enjoyed the camaraderie of the House system, with friendships being built across year groups as all of Ilex unites to support each other. Away from school I enjoy cooking, travel and football.





Dr Clodhna Kennedy
Head of Quercus House

 cliodhnakennedy@crosfields.com

I am Head of Quercus House as well as a Science Teacher (Seniors). Every member of the Quercus house feeling safe to get involved in all house activities, is something I feel passionate about. We have a real sense of support where all year groups come together, especially at our house competitions. Outside of school, I spend my time competing on the road racing circuit and triathlon for GB.



Mr Alex Murray-Smith
Head of Salix House

 alexmurraysmith@crosfields.com

I am Head of Salix House as well as a Science Teacher. I pride Salix on being a House in which all pupils feel encouraged to participate towards making school a more enjoyable and safe space. We have hosted several different House competitions this year (some new) with my personal favourites being the House Music competition and the Chess competition. When not in the classroom or pastoral hub, you can often find me on my activity, up a climbing wall or playing sports – rugby being my favourite.



Form Tutors

The Form Tutor is responsible for the supervision, guidance and care of the pupils in their form and they meet every morning for registration at 08:30. Form Tutors should be the first point of contact between the school and parents. If the Form Tutor cannot help, they will advise parents on who best to contact. Parents should keep their child's Form Tutor informed of any significant issues, especially those outside of school so that we are aware of the whole picture and therefore able to offer the right guidance and support.



PEER SUPPORT

In addition to their Form Tutor and Head of House, pupils will be supported by their peers; older children will act as mentors and role models to the younger years and numerous positions of responsibility such as School prefect, House Captains, Peer Mentors and House Ambassadors, ensure there is plenty of peer support and inspiration available. Pupils will be encouraged to put themselves forward for the many leadership opportunities available in each House and around the School.



MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

At times when pupils may need extra emotional support, beyond the normal pastoral care offered by teachers, they may wish to talk to the Mental Health Practitioner who is available for individual sessions and group work. This service is free of charge and referrals can be made by pupils, parents or teachers. Pupils are also supported by the Emotional and Learning Support staff, including Woody, our therapy dog.



GENERAL INFORMATION

Belongings

It is vital that all belongings are named so that lost property may be returned promptly. Pupils are encouraged to be responsible for their property and may need to first check carefully around the school when an article is mislaid. We discourage pupils from bringing in expensive items because these can be easily lost or broken.

Bags

We recommend Senior pupils use Crosfields branded equipment where possible. Any non Crosfields branded bags must be plain coloured, without large logos and embellishments. Day bags must be of a ruck sack style for pupils in Years 7 to 9. Handbags and over the shoulder style bags are not considered ideal for school life, however pupils in Year 10 and 11 may choose this style of bag should they prefer.

Lockers

Every pupil will be provided with a secure locker for their laptop, books and personal items. A second locker is provided for their sports kit. Padlocks should be purchased by parents as part of the uniform list. The ideal padlock is a combination lock, 40mm with a standard shackle, although padlocks with keys are also suitable. Parents should be privy to any codes, in case access is required or a code has been forgotten.

Mobile Phones

We recommend that only pupils who travel to and from school independently are allowed to have their mobile phones in school. Any pupil needing to bring a phone into school should keep it secured in their locker, in their bags, or on their person. There is a simple rule that phones should not be seen or heard during school hours. The school will not collect them in or be responsible for any damage or loss. Any pupil wishing to contact parents by phone can do so via the School Office. Parents should not call or contact their children via their mobile phone during the school day. Parents wishing to contact pupil in exceptional circumstances can do so via the school switchboard on 0118 987 1810 where messages will be passed on to the relevant staff.

We believe this policy improves our pupils' face-to-face interaction, helping them to forge stronger personal relationships and improve their communication skills.

Hair

All pupils should have hairstyles that are tidy and with hair that does not fall over the eyes. Very short haircuts (including closely shaven and skin fades), patterns, writing and undercuts are not permitted. Hair should also be clean and natural in colour; no highlights are allowed. Long hair should be tied back for Games and PE lessons as well as where health and safety requires it, for example when operating machinery in DT. Hair bands/clips should be in school colours (blue, black or white). There may be exceptions to the above for religious/cultural reasons and this will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Jewellery

Pupils are permitted to wear stud earrings, one in each ear lobe. These will need to be removed for PE, Games and other co-curricular activities. Any pupil getting their ears pierced, should do so over the holidays, leaving enough time for the holes to heal before school term starts. Other items of jewellery such as rings, necklaces, bracelets and wristbands are not permitted for any pupil in Years 7 - 9. From Year 10, pupils may wear a single chain necklace. These will need to be removed for PE, Games and other co-curricular activities. There may be exceptions for religious/cultural reasons. A simple rule of thumb is that no jewellery is to be worn whilst wearing Games/PE kit.

Makeup

Pupils in Years 7 and 8 are not permitted to wear makeup. From Year 9, pupils may wear makeup which is discreet and of natural colour. Makeup should not be noticeable. Make up remover is kept in the Heads of House office for when needed.

Skirts

Skirts should be of an appropriate length for the school environment. To avoid the element of doubt, an appropriate length is considered to be no more than 2 inches above the knee.

Coats

Coats (dark in colour, minimal logos/branding) are fine to be worn as an additional layer if it is very cold, but not as an alternative to our uniform. Coats should be worn over blazers or over a tracksuit top if in Games kit. Coats are to be stored in lockers at the start of the day and during lessons. A simple rule of thumb is that coats should only be worn at breaks and should not be worn inside buildings.



CURRICULUM

The approach to academics in the Seniors is to offer a broad, balanced, and enriching curriculum for as long as possible. To this end, pupils will study the Arts, Humanities, PE, Design Technology, and Computing alongside the core of English, Maths, Science, and Languages (French and Spanish) through Years 7 to 9.

In Year 9, pupils will be guided through the GCSE options process where they will choose the subjects to focus on in Years 10 and 11. As well as the core of Maths, English (Language and Literature), and Combined Science, pupils will choose four optional subjects from French, Spanish, Art, Drama, Music, Design Technology, History, Geography, Religious Studies, Computing, ICT, PE, Psychology, Business, and Economics. Studying separate sciences (trilogy) would also need to be taken as an option if this is the preferred route.

We continue to stress the concepts of effort, rigour, and resilience in the pupil's learning. Our teachers will aim to 'teach to the top and scaffold up' meaning that pupils who need it will be stretched and challenged while, at the same time, all pupils are supported to access the content and make progress that is appropriate to them. Our pupils will be encouraged to be independent thinkers who have critical, enquiring minds. Our aim is to provide a challenging academic curriculum which inspires and engages all pupils. The goal is for pupils to leave Crosfields ready for the challenges which await them.



CAREERS INFORMATION

As pupils move through the Senior years, considering their next steps is going to be increasingly important. In Years 7 and 8, pupils will explore career options and other future aspirations in the 'Dreams and Goals' section of the Jigsaw PSHE curriculum and this has previously been supported by workday trips.

Into Year 9, this will continue as well as pupils then completing careers profiling through with Morrisby 'Start'. In Year 10 pupils complete the more in-depth 'Morrisby Profile' which uses psychometrics to recommend future career or education paths. They will then meet with the Head of Careers to discuss the outcomes before a post-16 information evening during which pupils can explore what is on offer at local state and independent 6th Forms or what apprenticeships may be available. For reference, college applications are often made in November of Year 11. The world is at the feet of our pupils, and we will help them to realise it!



EQUIPMENT

In order to access the curriculum, pupils are required to have the following equipment: pens, pencils, colouring pencils, ruler, rubber, pencil sharpener, protractor, compass, scientific calculator (Casio fx-85GT CW **or** fx-83GT CW), reading book, glue stick, a laptop/device and headphones.



FORMS AND SETS

Pupils will be placed in a mixed-ability teaching set in which they will be taught for most subjects. There will be streamed teaching sets for Maths, English, and Languages. There are always opportunities for movement between streamed sets, based on class performance and internal assessments. A single lesson lasts 30 minutes but the majority of the subjects have 'double' lessons lasting an hour.



AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Long Stay (16:15- 18:00)

We offer a later pick up time to help parents. If your child is not signed up for an activity through our co-curricular programme, they will go into Prep where they are supervised in the library or in a classroom. This provides a supervised environment where pupils can complete Prep or some reading. Pupils can inform their Form Tutor in the morning at registration to be added to the list or alternatively if your plans change during the day, please inform the School Office on 0118 9871810 so our lists can be updated, and your child informed of the change of plans. This is free of charge for all Senior pupils.



The GCSEs we offer, including exam boards and specifications, may be found on our website [here](#).



SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS AND EXAMS

All subjects are tested throughout the year in a variety of ways. Our assessment programme includes online testing that requires no preparation, as well as in-class written tests. Many departments also have small assessments throughout the year to assess the pupils on a specific topic and provide the pupils with regular exam practice. These are then supported by an 'assessment window' in the Autumn and Spring terms and End of Year Assessments in the Summer Term. Timetables and content to cover will be provided for each of these.

Key Dates

Autumn Term Assessment Window

- w/c 1 and 8 September – Year 7, 9 and 10: CEM Assessments, Year 8: CAT4 Assessments, Y7 GL Assessments.
- 10 – 14 November – Year 7 to 9

Spring Term Assessment Window

- 22 – 25 February – Year 7 to 9

Summer Term Assessment Window

- 1 – 4 June - Year 7 to 9 – End of Year Assessments, including GL Assessments (Revision week – w/c 19 May)

Reports

Year 8		
Autumn 1	w/c 13 Oct	Interim grades
Autumn 2	w/c 8 Dec	End of term grades
Spring 1	w/c 9 Feb	Interim grades
Spring 2	w/c 23 Mar	End of term grades
Summer 1	w/c 18 May	Interim grades
Summer 2	w/c 29 June	Full written report

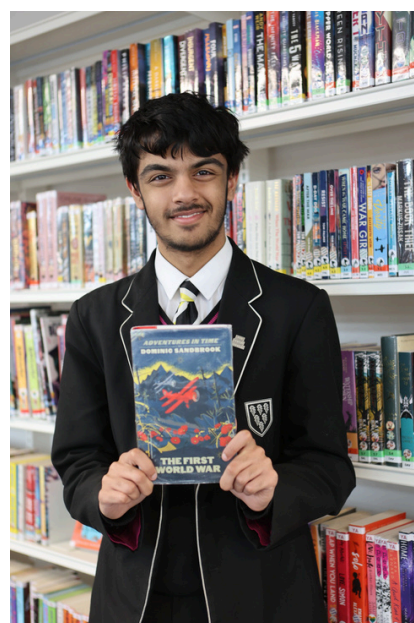


LIBRARY

The Senior Library offers a modern space for our Years 7 to 11 pupils where they can study, do research and read books during their break times and scheduled lessons. The library houses a growing stock of non-fiction books, which is tailored to the school curriculum, well-being and life skills, and a broad range of fiction books accommodating pupils' reading interests and Accelerated Reading levels.

Pupil's voice is at the core of the Library, with a yearly Library survey and pupil requests considered as part of stock choices. E-resources such as eBooks, audio books and academic databases will soon be available, as an online library platform will be released by the start of the next academic year.

The library is staffed between 10:00 and 18:00. The Librarian offers pupils support with research, runs a weekly book club and oversees the Prep Club after school, alongside organising events and promoting reading for pleasure.



SPORT AT CROSFIELDS

When Crosfields' pupils reach Year 8, they continue to experience opportunities to play weekly fixtures against other schools. In Year 8, external matches for the major games happen on Wednesday afternoons. The major sports we play fixtures in are Football (boys and girls), Hockey (boys and girls), Rugby (boys), Netball (girls), and Cricket (boys and girls).

Parents are very welcome to come and watch these matches, both home and away games. Please ensure you look at SOCS for all the fixture details and the dates will also be on the school calendar. However, now pupils are getting older we do appreciate they are starting to establish which sports they do and don't like. Therefore, we allow them the opportunity to opt out of a sport and do the multisport program instead, as we want pupils to have a love of physical exercise. However, they must participate in three of the five sports as we still believe representing the school in competitive fixtures is important. The multisport program will involve various activities such as basketball, badminton, swimming, and forest school. Pupils will be asked in September for their option during each 'sporting season'. Below is a table of the major sports and when they are played.

	Boys	Girls	Co-ed
September – November	Football	Hockey	Multisport
November – February	Rugby	Netball	Multisport
February – April	Hockey	Football	Multisport
Summer Term	Cricket or Tennis	Cricket or Tennis	Cricket or Tennis



The aim, wherever possible, is to provide a fully inclusive match day program, in which all pupils participate. However, due to the number of teams available at other schools, this is not always possible, and when required, squad rotation does occur to enable participation. The higher-ability teams are chosen on merit and pupils earn selection for higher teams through progress, effort, and performance.

Swimming fixtures are also continued in Year 8 and occur on Monday afternoons with various swimming squads running before school. There are also limited external competitive opportunities in cross-country, basketball, badminton, tennis, and athletics.

Each week Year 8 pupils will have an hours PE lesson, a 90-minute Games lesson, and a games afternoon where we play fixtures.



Our school uniforms are supplied by Stevensons. You can find the specific uniform you need using their new search feature. You can also set up an account by creating a profile and adding your child's information.

We also have a school shop on site, which is open each week during term time. The shop coordinator can be contacted by telephoning the main school office. The on site school shop stocks second-hand items and is open each Wednesday during term time between 15:30 and 16:30. However, if you are looking for a specific item and cannot attend during this time, please email shop@crossfields.com and one of the dedicated team will have a look for you.

For all items purchased through the school shop, the proceeds go directly to the bursary fund and we ask for donations for any selected items.

In order to maximise teaching time on specific days, pupils arrive and/or leave school in Crossfields' PE/Games kit. Please click [here](#) for more details.

Items marked with an asterisk are branded and must be purchased either from Stevensons or our school shop. All other items may be purchased unbranded.

- New parents should purchase all listed uniform items.
- All new pupils must purchase the full range of kit.
- Current parents need not buy new garments immediately; however, as children grow out of clothes, replacements should match the new uniform list.

Please note:

- The house tie is provided by the school.
- We have introduced a new sportswear - PE and kit. As pupils outgrow their current items, parents may choose to replace them with items from the school shop or purchase items from the updated kit.

Summer and Winter Uniform

*The items with an asterisk are branded and must be purchased from our nominated partner, Stevensons or the school shop. Other items may be purchased unbranded.



*School blazer



**V neck jumper or slipover



Plain black school shoes, flat, closed toe



*Skirt



Short sleeved white blouse french collar



Short sleeved white shirt



Straight leg black trousers



Charcoal ankle socks worn with trousers



Black knee high socks or plain black tights (worn in the second half Autumn and Spring terms)



Turn over socks worn with skirts (must be white)

Sportswear - PE and kit



*PE skort or plain black shorts



*Games/PE shorts



*Games top



*PE top (boys only)



White sport socks



*Sport socks



Trainers with non-marking sole



Hat or plain black (no sports logos)



*Midlayer



*PE track top



*PE track pants

Optional items for Games



Base layer or plain black



Performance leggings or plain black



*Cricket trousers (worn in the Summer Term for those choosing Cricket)

Swimming Kit



Plain white swim cap
(boys and girls)



Swimming goggles
(optional but recommended)



Plain black girls swimming costume
or Crosfields branded swim suit



Plain black boys jammers or
Crosfields branded jammers

Additional Items



Base layer
or
plain black



Performance leggings
or plain black



Any
towel



Shin pads
(for Football and Hockey
season if pupils choose
to play these sports)



Mouth guards
(for the Hockey and Rugby season if
pupils choose to play these sports)

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