

Parklands Summer School Report 2021

Summer School Basic Details

- 2 week programme offered to all incoming year 7 students.
- Week 1 took place 16th - 20th August 2021.
- Week 2 took place 23rd - 27th August 2021.
- 142 students in total attended across the two week programme. This was 63% of the year group, 13% above the targeted 50%.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the summer school programme was to aid the transition of our new year 7 intake. Alongside this we intended to look at any missed opportunities or educational needs as a result of the Covid19 pandemic. With these factors in mind the programme was designed to blend academic education in the core subjects with enrichment activities, as well as look at Parklands specific information in order to ensure the students were as prepared as possible to start with us in September. A final aim was to focus on student wellbeing and ensure that both parents and students felt informed and supported with the transition to secondary school.

The Programme

The summer school itself was open to all incoming year 7s. All students were sent the invite in their school welcome packs with all other new starter information such as form groups etc. It was also circulated via our social media platforms and the school website. As stated above 142 students in total attended the programme, which was 63% of the year group. A further 2 were signed up to attend but due to unforeseen circumstances had to pull out closer to the time.

Once numbers were confirmed a programme of events was put together and can be viewed below.

Week 1	Day timings and pick up/drop off points	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
Monday 16th August	9.00-3.15 School	Literacy activities	Drama Activities	Sports & Problem solving activities	Sports & Problem solving activities
Tuesday 17th August	9.00-3.15 School	STEM & Technology for Parklands Day			
		Pupil 1-1 review day			
Wednesday 18th August	9.00-3.15 School	Chill Factore Trip Day			
Thursday 19th August	9.00-3.15 School	Literacy activities	Getting to know you & Parklands	Sports & Problem solving activities	Sports & Problem solving activities
		Parent drop in day			
Friday	9.00-3.15	Escape Entertainment - Trip Day			

20th August	School	
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Week 2	Day Timings and pick up/drop off points	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
Monday 23rd August	9.00-3.15 School	Numeracy activities	Student Leadership Skills	Sports & Problem solving activities	Sports & Problem solving activities
Tuesday 24th August	9.00-3.15 School	Literacy activities	Technology for Parklands	Sports & Problem solving activities	Sports & Problem solving activities
		Pupil 1-1 review day			
Wednesday 25th August	9.00-3.15 School	Duke of Edinburgh Skills Day			
		Parent drop in day			
Thursday 26th August	9.00-3.15 School	Literacy activities	Sports & Problem solving activities	Preparing for Parklands	Drama Activities
Friday 27th August	9.00-4.00 School	Blackpool Pleasure Beach - Trip Day			

Careful consideration was given to all selected activities, keeping the aims and objectives of the summer school in mind at all times. We worked on a four session a day rotation with students remaining in the same group each week.

In terms of the academic education we incorporated literacy sessions, numeracy sessions and STEM sessions. These were all planned and delivered by subject specialists employed full time at Parklands. The sessions were designed to be engaging and fun to put the love of learning back into the classroom as opposed to being academically challenging. This was decided in discussion with our feeder primaries who felt that the period of distance learning had taken this from the core subjects.

In terms of enrichment and activities to provide cultural capital we offered a range of opportunities. Sessions included sports, games, teamwork and problem solving, drama, Duke of Edinburgh and student leadership. Again these were mostly delivered by Parklands employed subject specialists. We also brought on board our local School Sports Partnership to deliver some of the sporting activities. This was with transition in mind as many of the students attending will know the CSSP staff from their time at primary. The Duke of Edinburgh day was particularly effective as students studied camp skills, how to pitch a tent, map reading, outdoor cooking and first aid all in one day, which they thoroughly enjoyed. It was also great exposure to the qualification so hopefully many of the students will aspire to complete it in the future.

For enrichment and cultural capital we also organised three trip days. These trips had a number of aims in mind. Firstly to allow students the opportunity to try an activity they had not done before, secondly to attend a venue/activity that they had not been able to during the pandemic and finally to allow them to

socialise with their peers informally and therefore form more friendships. The trips therefore included bowling, golf, skiing taster lessons, snow parks and a theme park.

With regards to preparing the students for Parklands we had a number of sessions aimed around this. Through these sessions we looked at factors such as the school day, expectations, timing, equipment, rooming and finding your way around. We also looked at the technical aspects, which included thumbprints for our cashless system, school email login information and using the Google platforms that we operate through (Google drive and Google classroom).

Through our programme we also considered the wellbeing of our students and their parents. In order to support this we had sessions based on making new friends, friendship groups in general and coping with changes. Teamed with this we ran a 1-1 programme where every single student got time to sit down with a member of staff to discuss their transition and ask any questions. Some students also had a second follow-up if the staff deemed it necessary. This information was recorded and shared with the house leaders in order to help support the pupils further on their start in September. For the parent support we also offered two parent drop-in sessions throughout the two weeks. These sessions allowed parents to come in and ask questions or discuss any concerns they may have had ahead of their child starting with us. On hand for these days we had various members of our pastoral team including our Senior Leader for House Standards, Support and Welfare, Designated Safeguarding Lead and our SENCO.

Alongside the sessions themselves we also ran positive praise incentives to help motivate students to do well but also prepare them for Parklands. Throughout the school year we always award students achievement points inline with our school character virtues. These are offered for resilience, hard work (self discipline) and helpfulness (kindness & empathy) to name just a few. We therefore ran this scheme throughout the summer school to get pupils used to the system. In order to encourage students to be fully engaged with the achievement points initiative we chose to have high profile, but educational prizes such as iPads and Kindles.

The final part of our programme involved equipping students with materials they need for a successful start to year 7. The following items were gifted to every pupil to ensure that, irrespective of background, they all had the basic materials they require: firstly each student was given a reusable water bottle. This is inline with the school single use plastic policy so they could bring it to school and always have access to water at one of our various water fountains. Secondly each student was provided with a pencil case filled with pens, pencils, a ruler and rubber. This allows them to meet the basic expectations of a morning standards check and equips them for their learning. Each student also received a Parklands printed drawstring bag ideal for bringing their PE kit in. This allows them to keep it separate from other school materials in their bag. Next we provided each student with a scientific calculator suitable to take them right through to their GCSEs and also allowed them to pick a reading book, from recommendations by our librarian, that helps promote the whole school reading initiative and give all students access to something to read at home.

Additional Support and Provision

In addition to the programme and resources outlined in the previous section there were a number of other factors that we considered and provided for the students to ensure the transition was successful. Firstly, as we had a large number of students identified as having at school support and/or EHCPs, as well as students who needed support with additional and other complex needs, we decided to provide support staff to their groups for the duration of the two week programme. This meant that those students were introduced to some of the Learning Support team as well as experiencing what support at Parklands may look like.

Alongside having the support staff assigned to groups we also had student leaders from years 10 and 11 who worked with each group during sessions and also at social times. As a school that operates a vertical form system, relationships across the year groups are very important. We also started utilising older year groups a few years ago after feedback from the new starters suggested that one of their biggest fears was meeting the older students.

In order to instil a sense of community within the year group we started and finished each day with a whole cohort assembly. These had various focuses. Sometimes they would be informational regarding trips and activities for the day ahead, other times they were celebrational and focused on achievement points or winning teams and their prizes. We felt these were well received and effective in ensuring the smooth running of the summer school, they also helped prepare students for the expectations of a normal school assembly.

In addition to the planned sessions we invested in a number of games and activities for the students to access in their social times and any gained time throughout the day. These included board games and stationary provisions for drawing and colouring. Students thoroughly enjoyed having access to this wide range of activities and benefitted from them in numerous ways. The activities actively encouraged them to socialise and bond with their peers who had similar interests, they also encouraged problem solving skills and tactical thinking as well as also getting them physically active and to spend time outdoors. It was during these activities that the students' personalities and interests really started to shine through and this allowed them to grow in confidence.

Catering

The decision was made during the planning stages of summer school to provide lunch for all students each day. The lunches were provided in partnership with a local business, The Bees Country Kitchen, who assisted us with the feeding of our FSM students and Key Worker children throughout the pandemic. The lunches were varied and substantial as well as meeting the needs of a healthy school lunch by incorporating salad and fruit and using sugar free juices.

On trip days students received a packed lunch from the same caterer or were provided with a meal at the venue. Extra snacks and water were also provided so that students had no requirement for additional funds on the trip days.

In terms of drinking water, as mentioned above in an earlier section, all students were provided with a refillable Parklands water bottle that they could use for the duration of the summer school as well as when commencing their education here in September.

Funding

Based upon actual daily attendance figures we were able to access up to £62446.20 funding to plan and deliver our transitional summer school. We were really pleased to discover that we only utilised 75% of this available budget. We felt this was a plentiful amount to run a successful programme and also provide the students with resources to aid their transition.

Below is a breakdown of the areas we used the funding for and what percentage of the budget was used on each. The finer details of these areas have already been discussed earlier within this report.

Staffing costs involved in the daily running and delivery of the summer school made up 34%
Additional support and provision costs being 12%
Resources required for the programme being 11%
Catering costs being 6%

Enrichment in the form of trip days being 12%

Success

The summer school was considered to be a huge success by all involved including the staff, students and parents. We asked the students to complete a survey each week with their thoughts and opinions on the summer school. We also asked the parents to complete a survey too.

The findings of those surveys were overwhelmingly positive with lots of praise and thanks being documented by both the students and parents alike. I have included a few of these below for your reference.

Student week 1 - *I really enjoyed Summer School and am glad I went, I was nervous on the first day or two but am now more confident than before and have made friends. I hope they keep running Summer School as I think it is a great program.*

Student week 1 - *I love the fact that every student is allowed to do this, it really prepares us all for high school and means that our questions are answered and we are confident and excited for the big move, rather than being scared or nervous*

Student week 1 - *I thought it's the best way to get to know parklands and at first I was super nervous to go but now after the first week I'm so happy to go!*

Student week 2 - *Thank you to all staff for your time at summer school. I really enjoyed it. Looking forward starting school next week.*

Student week 2 - *Summer school has been the best, everyone being so kind and helpful to others it's the best thing to help to settle in before joining next week!*

Student week 2 - *I have really enjoyed it and I think I am more confident for starting high school rather than being really shy and nervous and confused*

Parent - *It was great experience for our son, he loved it. All staff and teachers went the extra mile for all pupils to feel comfortable and eased their transition.*

Parent - *Absolutely amazing experience - My child loved every second and started high school with an army of new friends which went some way to settling any worries before she started. Grateful to the school and all the staff involved. Thank you!*

Parent - *My child had a ball at summer school. Meeting staff and fellow incumbent Year 7's greatly increased my child's confidence for starting secondary school. There was a good balance between fun activities and preparation for academic learning. It has significantly helped my child hit the ground running when the new academic year started. Great too that it was free for families thus increasing the uptake and setting a level playing field for all new starters. My older child did the summer school 2019 when there were lots of building works, less staff involved and a significantly smaller budget. This year's summer school was more successful in helping the transition as it had more resources and new starters attending. Many thanks to all staff for giving up a chunk of their summer holidays to help my child have a great start at Parkland's.*

Parent - *I would like to thank Parklands and all of the summer school team. As a parent who suffers with anxiety, my eldest child starting secondary school filled me with worry, and caused a few sleepless nights.*

The summer school scheme helped my daughter to build her confidence, independence and reduce the fear of starting high school for not only herself but for me too! Each day she would leave with lots of stories to tell and full of new and exciting information to prepare her for those first few weeks of school. My daughter thoroughly enjoyed the summer school sessions and I would most definitely recommend attending to future pupils!

Parent - *When compared to other local schools the Parklands summer school felt far superior in terms of giving students amazing opportunities and making their introduction to high school as positive as possible.*

Parent - *My son was extremely nervous about his transition to high school and after the first day of summer school all his worries had gone and he has enjoyed every minute of the summer school and when term started. It gave him the confidence to make it a successful and stress free transition to high school*

Parent - *By far the summer school ran by Miss Marr and Miss Johnson is leaps and bounds above any transition projects ran by other schools in the area. A real credit to them and the hard work & commitment made by them and all the staff who took part in their spare time to make this possible.*

Conclusion

The Parklands summer school was a huge success on all accounts. As an initiative that we have over ten years' experience of providing, we have managed to focus on all the important aspects of transition whilst making it extremely enjoyable for the students participating. We also achieved attendance figures higher than those targeted and brought the whole programme together staying under our allocated budget.

It is worth recognising however, that the funding we did receive went a huge way towards making this summer school our most successful one to date. The funding helped us achieve the increased attendance, it helped us provide resources for delivery and also for the students and finally allowed us the opportunity to involve lots of staff.

It is our opinion that summer school projects are one of, if not the most valuable tools in aiding primary to secondary school transition, and with funding in place, and good organisation, they are extremely successful and well received by schools, parents and students alike.