

Homeroom Guide for Copperfield Parents



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Homeroom

What is it all about?





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What is the purpose of homeroom?

The school day is long and busy. Teachers are around students all the time but if not careful, we can miss the chance to sit down, get to know them, and try to understand what motivates, concerns, and helps them to thrive as humans.

Homeroom is a dedicated time during the school day for this. 15-20 minutes each morning for students to check-in with pastoral tutors, catch up and play with fellow students of all ages, and slow down before the day picks up a relentless pace.

We spoke during assembly in May 2021 about the importance of ‘taking a moment’ to collect our thoughts before diving into action. At its essence, this is what homeroom should be about. A collective ‘moment’ that all students and staff take before the day becomes driven by movement, action, and learning.

This guide is for you, the parents, who work so hard on preparing your children for school. This is for you to understand what happens once you leave them in our care after 08.15 in the morning.

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Arrival at school

Copperfield is a high-energy environment. Making structure out of and managing this energy is crucial. The start of each day is an excellent opportunity to set the tone for the day, a tone that ought to be calm, energising, and positive.

Homeroom tutors are especially responsible for defining and conveying this tone, since they will be the first members of staff that parents and students see in the morning. Each has their own style, but what is important that they are present for the students. That might mean a handshake, a high five, or simply a kind smile and some gentle eye contact. What is important is that the students feel a sense of safety and that politeness and kindness are traits that hold great value at Copperfield.



Regular routine:

- Staff meeting from 07.50 until 08.05
- At 0810, staff greet students as they arrive at school outside restaurant.
- Between 08.10 and 08.15, gather according to homeroom groups outside restaurant. Students are registered.
- Arrival after 08.15 will be considered late. Details on lateness below.
- Move over to homeroom or Thing at 08.15.

Weekly schedule:

On Monday and Friday, Thing will replace homeroom. Thing is a form of assembly that originated in medieval Scandinavian communities, where disputes would be settled and discussed in a democratic and calm manner. [Read more.](#)

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday is for regular homeroom. Wednesday is a day for school wide journalling.

Day	Activity
Monday	Thing, led by Headteacher
Tuesday	Regular homeroom
Wednesday	Regular homeroom with journalling
Thursday	Regular homeroom
Friday	Thing, led by homeroom group

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What does an excellent homeroom look like?

There is no perfect homeroom. Our teachers are encouraged to tailor their homeroom to the mix of personalities within each. Here are outlined the principles of homeroom to help you understand more. You may have interesting and original ideas yourself for how this time should be spent. Share them with Leo via email!

- **More structure for more autonomy**

A clear idea of what teachers plan to do, communicated in simple terms to the students at the beginning of each morning, will allow them to be engaged and creative.

- **All students are involved**

In a healthy homeroom, all students are engaged in the activities. This does not mean that all students must do the same thing. If one student would like to journal, and another is interested in discussing homework with their homeroom teacher, then both should be encouraged.

- **Teachers are as physically and emotionally present as possible**

This time is likely to be the best opportunity for students to ask the questions they may not feel comfortable to ask in class. Observation is key - taking that extra ‘moment’ to ask whether a student is okay, making eye contact, and being physically present to ensure that opportunities for opening up or simple practical support are not missed.

- **Variety of offerings and topics**

All of our students are still exploring their interests and themselves. Our job as teachers is to help them identify what they like and provide opportunities to practice it. Perhaps a student enjoys filmmaking, or is interested in the engineering of telecabins. Here is where teachers can be transformational, providing encouragement and practical support to help them explore their passions.

This means offering a variety of activities and discussion topics in homeroom, as well as *across* homerooms, to encourage curiosity in what others are doing and to promote the sharing of ideas and information across homerooms.



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Ideas

At the start of each school week, a choice of resources – games, discussion topics, mental health talks or articles – will be provided to homeroom teachers. This choice will be based on discussions with teachers on the previous Friday. Below are some ways in which your child will be spending their time during homeroom.

Games

Board games, mind games, problem-solving games - all of these are heartily encouraged. They are wonderful tools to build collaborative and intellectual skills. Teachers are encouraged to use these but not at the expense of meaningful discussion and pastoral and administrative support.



Administrative support

Personal organisation is one of the most immediately useful skills that a teacher can help students to master. Students can lose hours of learning due to forgetfulness and poor preparation. Homeroom provides an opportunity to go over the plan for the day, and aid students in organisation of their personal items and learning materials.

Opportunities for reflection

Part of ‘taking a moment’ means dedicating time for students to think about the ways in which they are growing at school, whether they are at peace with the direction they are heading and the person they are choosing to be, and whether they are living and acting in ways that are healthy for themselves and the community.

As part of this, Wednesday will be a dedicated ‘journalling day’, where all students are expected to use journals to reflect on the past days or weeks. They are encouraged to use their journals however they feel comfortable.

Pastoral care

This is the ultimate purpose of homeroom. ‘Pastoral support’ cannot be contained in one short directive or idea – Copperfield teachers are pastoral leaders from the moment the children arrive to when they leave.

At its essence, pastoral care is the provision a school makes to ensure the physical and emotional welfare of students. By definition, this is a continuous practice that must be continually adapted and improved. We will make mistakes, but we will make them trying always to do our best for the *students*.

Practical questions:

- **What time do I drop my children off?**

Drop-off is at 08.10, when students will be greeted by their homeroom teacher outside the restaurant. At 08.15, they will head inside with their homeroom tutor. Arrival after 08.15 will be considered late.

- **What if I am late? What if my child is not there by 08.35?**

Occasional lateness is natural and will be dealt with case-by-case. 'Continual' ought to be defined as more than once a week on a regular basis. This is not absolute – a student might always be late only on a Monday, for instance. If homeroom tutors begin to identify patterns that suggest issues either at home or with a student's personal administration, they will raise this with Leo.

If a student is late, for example arriving at 08.24, then this detail will be recorded. If a student does not turn up by the start of lessons (08.35), then teachers will inform Itziar. There is an absence form next to Itziar's desk. Our absence procedures will then be activated, with the parents being contacted.

- **Are students allowed to switch homeroom?**

This is where we lay down a firm boundary. Teachers should be clear with students that homeroom groups remain as they were at the beginning of the term. The purpose of homeroom is both to make students feel comfortable but also to challenge them with new students outside of their age group or immediate friendship circle.

- **What is school policy regarding iPads, laptops and phones?**

Student phones should be collected on arrival. Itziar will come at 08.10 to outside the restaurant to collect phones. Laptops and iPads, required for lessons, must be not used during homerooms.

- **How does Thing work?**

Thing is a form of assembly that originated in medieval Scandinavian communities, where disputes would be settled and discussed in a democratic and calm manner. [Read more.](#)

It takes place in the chapel, and starts as soon as possible after 08.15. On Mondays, Hugh will lead Thing, and teachers will have an opportunity to make announcements relevant to the day or week. Students and teachers are encouraged to participate as much as possible.

On Fridays, one homeroom group and tutor will lead Thing. The homeroom will have Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday to prepare for their Thing. The structure and topic is up to the homeroom and their teacher - it might be discussion-based, presentation-based, or even theatrical. Creativity is encouraged and celebrated.

- **What resources are used for homeroom?**

Every Sunday evening, Leo will send an email to homeroom tutors with relevant resources for the chosen 'theme' that week. A choice of resources – games, discussion topics, mental health talks or articles – will be provided to homeroom teachers.

Leo will have discussions with homeroom teachers each Friday to identify themes and patterns that arose from the week. With that input, a theme will emerge for the following week, and the resources will centre around that theme, allowing space for tutors to be creative with how they delve into it.

**If you have any questions,
please email Leo
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