



Hello Year 6!

We are Charlie and Abbie, and we are Head Boy and Girl at Cardiff High. We just wanted to quickly write to you today about some of the things that really helped us settle into a new life at high school and transition from year 6 to year 7. We are currently in a strange period of time where everything is very uncertain, and sometimes this can feel scary if you all are jumping into a new beginning, so we wanted to share with you some of the best memories and experiences we had during our 7 years at your new school.

Charlie

When I first came to high school I was very excited but also super nervous. Everyone was so much bigger than me, and it was so weird going from being the oldest in the school to being the youngest. I found out very quickly that many of the older students, especially the sixth formers, were really helpful in showing me where to go and helping me settle into the school. The Prefect team will do their best to make sure you are having the best possible time here. One of my favourite things about joining high school was the new independence and responsibility. Though this might seem daunting at first, it's also a great feeling to be treated like a grown up in a learning environment. The lessons may seem a lot harder at first, and you may be asked challenging questions and forced to understand concepts that may initially seem strange and alien to you. The teachers know this and will want you to feel as comfortable as possible. So if you ever don't understand anything, or you think the lesson is going too fast, never be afraid to ask a teacher for help. Sometimes the work will seem like a lot, so always try to make sure you're paying attention in class and keeping on top of your homework. This can really help to relieve stress in the future. Take it from me, there's nothing worse than a teacher asking for an essay and you reach into your empty bag only to arrive at the alarming realisation that it has yet to be completed.

The other great thing about high school is the variety of different clubs and activities. There is so much going on, literally something for everybody. I loved playing and learning the drums at primary school, so I jumped at the opportunity to join as many music groups as I could. Not only are clubs a great way to pursue what really interests you; they are also a fantastic opportunity to make new friends, maybe from different primary schools, who share your interests. If you're worried about meeting new friends, or maybe just looking to try something new, I'd recommend joining as

many clubs and after school groups as possible. Between cross country on Tuesdays, wind band on Wednesday and junior choir, Year 7 Charlie was always busy. These groups are a major part of what made year 7 so much fun for me and a fantastic way of getting integrated into school life. We are lucky in Cardiff High to have some fantastic facilities. Between the ATP at the front and the enormous field at the back, break and lunch times are a really sweet release from the classrooms. However, for some of you, especially if you don't know anyone at all at this new school, it can sometimes be difficult to get involved. Don't worry, everybody feels the same. So, if you see someone playing a game and you think you want to join in, never be afraid to ask. Thirty seconds of fear can lead to hours of fun. We also have a fantastic library, a huge canteen and two state of the art performance spaces.

Year 7 was a bit different for me, as halfway through I left to move to Canada. When I came back two years later, I settled back in as if I had never left. This is a true testament to how strong the bonds you form in Year 7 can be, and how this school is so welcoming to anyone new. Having to join the school twice has made me realise how many opportunities there are here and how easy it is to get involved. I re-joined all the clubs I was in when I was in Year 7, and even tried something new. Even as a sixth former I felt nervous auditioning for the school show and applying to be Head Boy. But then I remembered how brave I had been in Year 7, and how that bravery had led to so many great experiences, important memories and introduced me to new people I am proud to call friends for life. So whilst it may seem scary at first, Cardiff High is also a wonderful place to start your high school journey. Remember to throw yourself into as many activities as you can and never, ever be afraid to ask for help. I hope you all have a brilliant time here.

Abbie

The thought of starting at big school in year 6 terrified me initially. The School grounds seemed huge, the idea of leaving my year 6 teachers made me so sad and the prospect of the large amount of homework was awfully daunting. However, as soon as I arrived and I saw the smiley face on my new form teacher, I knew that I was going to be well looked throughout my time there and it was safe to say that I definitely was right. At the start we were given staggered lunch times and break times to make the canteen experience easier which personally i found incredibly helpful. If ever I was lost with my new time table there would **always** be a friendly face there to tell me where to go and if I was late because I'd lost my way, my teachers were incredibly understanding.



One tip I would always advise new pupils is to just ask anyone nearby if you can't find your class, you are never alone at Cardiff High there will always be someone there to help you. My fears of not being able to keep up with the work also went very quickly erased as every teacher I had always understood if I was struggling with homework or classwork and would give me a helping hand if I needed it. What I really want you to take away from this letter is that you will always be able to talk to someone if you aren't settling in as well as you hoped, that may be your form teacher, head of year, subject teachers - they will always listen.

Once the introductory period was over, I was blown away by the amount of extra-curricular activities going on at the school. There is something there for everyone from sports teams to music clubs, the school productions or film club; everyone has a chance to shine no matter who you are or what background you have. In my early years I threw myself into any sports I could starting with the tennis team and then cross country and netball. We were encouraged to try anything and anything in the PE department especially when the iconic sports days came around which were without a doubt a highlight of each year. As I got older I became really interested in the arts and performing. I auditioned for my first show which was Miss Saigon when I was in year 10 and the drama and music departments were encouraging, passionate, and completely non-judgemental and it is safe to say that the each Cardiff High production I have been in has been the best times of my entire life so far. I have found a love of performing that I will carry on in the future and I made friendships through the show that I know I will have for life. I would always recommend throwing yourself into any amazing opportunity that the school provides because you never know what friend you will make or what new passion you will find.

You are not alone if you feel scared, anxious or nervous about making friends and leaving primary because I can almost guarantee most other people feel the same way- I know I definitely did. The school will try their absolute hardest to make sure everyone is settling in as well as they can and if anyone slips under the radar, the pastoral team will make sure that they are doing what they can to make you feel loved and accepted. Each department I know and genuinely believe cares about their pupils and I feel so lucky to have had the education I had and the opportunities to have fun, make friends and most importantly make memories that will last me a lifetime. High school can be hard, but there is so much love, acceptance and diversity flowing through the heart of the school that you will be able to find a place there no matter who you are. Spread kindness to others around, go in with an open mind and throw yourself into anything and everything you can. I feel proud to have represented this school as Head Girl this year and to have been able to write this letter to you all. I really hope you have a wonderful time at Cardiff High, full of amazing memories, opportunities and chances to learn and grow more as the amazing human beings you are.

This period now may seem very daunting, especially with everything that's going on. But remember that we are all in this together, not only Year 6 but also the older years, the teachers and the rest of the school staff. We can't tell you what the future

holds, but we can tell you that Cardiff High was a fantastic place to start our journey to where we are now. We both treasure the memories and friends we made in Year 7 and we want you to have that same experience. So just remember, don't be afraid to try new things, whether it's a new instrument, a new sport or something entirely different. You are all in this together, so always make sure everyone is included and you introduce yourself to as many people as possible. If you are stuck, lost, worried or nervous, never be afraid to ask a teacher or older student for help. And most importantly, have as much fun as you possibly can.

We hope you have the best time possible when you join the Cardiff High family. Until then stay safe.

From Charlie Saville and Abbie Payton



Abbie and Charlie in this year's production of Sweeney Todd