



GAYHURST PARENTS ASSOCIATION A PARENT'S GUIDE TO UNIFORM!

As Chair of the GPA, I have received and seen many questions about all things uniform. I therefore thought it would be helpful to prepare guide based on my own experience (I have a son and a daughter currently in Reception, who started at Gayhurst in Nursery) and tips I have gleaned from parents with children higher up the School. This guide is based on the uniform list for Reception/Year 1, but some of it will be relevant to other years too. Whilst this guide has been written with the School's blessing, it should not be taken as the final word – please refer to the School's official uniform list if there are any discrepancies or gaps.

Finally, this guide is mainly about the daily uniform worn by children – it does not cover the sports kit, which can be bought from Hawkinsport in Bourne End. They offer more of a one-stop-shop facility and as many of the items have a Gayhurst logo, it is not possible to find these items from other shops. If you are buying uniform over the Summer holidays, my top tip would be to book an appointment at Hawkinsport beforehand (the earlier in the holidays the better!) to avoid some of the last minute queues as the Autumn Term draws near. It also pays to think about uniform earlier on in the holidays as there are a number of items to buy and label – it's not something that can be done the weekend before School starts!

I hope this guide is helpful and saves you some time and effort when buying uniform for your child. If you have any questions, then ask your class rep in the first instance – they can always direct the question to a member of staff or raise it at the next Parents' Forum if they don't know the answer.

Kind regards

*Rozet Shah
GPA Chair 2017/18*

WHERE TO BUY THE UNIFORM

You will become very familiar with The School Shop in Beaconsfield (referred to as "The School Shop" in this guide), from where you can purchase all of the daily uniform as well as some sports items. This should be your starting point for buying uniform, unless your child is particularly tall, short or slim for their age.

However, don't forget about the GPA School Shop (the "GPA Shop") located at the School itself, from where you can buy good quality second-hand uniform and sports kit – a spare set of uniform comes in handy for when an item goes astray, doesn't fit due to a growth spurt or simply hasn't been washed in time! The GPA Shop opening times are set out in the School calendar and it is open on a couple of dates during the Summer holidays too. The GPA Shop sells swimming bags and hats (for all years), PE kit bags (for Year 3 onwards) as well as Gayhurst branded merchandise (the golf-style umbrellas are great!).



BOYS UNIFORM

Shirts

You can buy long and short sleeved shirts from The School Shop, but I found that the long sleeved shirts from Marks & Spencer had some little details which were great for my young son trying to get ready by himself – elasticated cuff buttons which expand as you put your hand through the cuff and a mock top button that actually closes using a little Velcro square – as well as non-iron material to lessen the ironing burden! I found the regular fit was fine for my son, but they also sell a slim fit and plus fit.

If you are buying short sleeve shirts, it is worth noting that it is acceptable for boys to wear them all year round and not just for the Summer Term.

Jumpers

The uniform jumper can only be bought from The School Shop. My only gripe is that as it's made from 100% acrylic it can feel a bit itchy initially until you have washed it a few times (my son didn't mind it so much when he was wearing long sleeved shirts under his jumper).

Trousers/shorts

You can buy trousers and shorts from The School Shop, but I found that the trousers from Marks & Spencer (and Next) came with added benefits such as adjustable waists and hems (great for growth spurts!), plus crease and stain resistant materials. Shorts can be worn usually until the end of September in the Autumn Term and the whole of the Summer Term.

Socks

The School Shop sells the official uniform socks, which are light grey ribbed socks with a blue stripe at the top. My own personal experience was that these socks didn't stand up very well to daily wear and frequent washing and therefore, like some other mums, I switched to buying multipacks of grey ribbed socks from other shops. The School has approved this deviation from the uniform guidelines, so you now have the option of which socks to buy. I haven't been able to find light grey ribbed socks and instead purchased charcoal/dark grey ribbed socks from Next (John Lewis also sells dark grey ribbed socks – Marks & Spencer has dark grey *plain* socks). Luckily, the socks aren't too visible with trousers.

If wearing shorts, the School requests that the official socks are worn instead of alternative socks – I have to admit that the official socks look very smart when paired with the school jumper, which has a matching blue stripe.

Shoes

I have been lucky to find all my needs met by Clarks (which offers a comprehensive shoe fitting service), but you can buy school shoes from any shop as long as they are plain black leather shoes and not trainers. Velcro fastening is definitely the way forward for younger children, rather than battling with laces every day (the children change into their trainers daily for playtimes and wellies for wet weather).



GIRLS UNIFORM

Shirts

My experience here was a little bit different to that for boys. Girls are required to wear a reefer collar shirt, however, the ones sold at The School Shop were too wide for my rather slim daughter (both in the body and in the arms). The only place I managed to find a suitable alternative (same colour and same reefer collar style) was at John Lewis.

Pinafores

The pinafore is worn by girls up to Year 3 – thereafter, girls wear a skirt – and can only be bought from The School Shop. It was a little wider than I would have liked for my daughter, but when you add a vest and shirt underneath, it's not too bad. As its pleated, it's difficult to alter the size, so probably best just to get a size that fits right in the length.

Summer dress

Again, this can only be bought from The School Shop. It can usually be worn until the end of September in the Autumn Term (weather dependent) and then for the whole of the Summer Term. I again found it was quite a wide fit in the body and arms, but I did manage to find a local tailor who could take in the size – or you can do it yourself if you are able to.

Cardigans

You can only buy the Gayhurst logo navy cardigan from The School Shop. The smallest size was still quite long in the sleeve for my daughter, but we just rolled the cuffs up.

Socks/tights

The School Shop sells the required plain navy knee-high socks and plain navy tights, but you can get cheaper alternatives and larger multipacks at other shops. Plain white ankle socks are to be worn with the Summer dress.

Shoes

Girls can wear plain or patent black leather shoes. Personally, I think the non-patent versions stand up better to daily playground knocks. Clarks came to my rescue again as they have a few styles which are made with plain black leather or which have only a small amount of black patent detailing, but you can buy school shoes from any shop. Velcro fastening is also recommended over buckles or laces (the children change into their trainers daily for playtimes and wellies for wet weather).

Hair accessories

The School Shop sells hair bands and scrunchies made from the same material as the pinafore and the Summer dress. If required, it is also fine for girls to wear plain navy hair clips and hair bobbles (you can buy a multipack from The School Shop). As hair accessories have a tendency to disappear into a black hole(!), it might be worth buying a larger multipack from places like Amazon – but please remember to choose low-profile, simple, navy blue hair accessories as the School would like to avoid a wide range of styles and colours worn by girls.



OTHER ITEMS

Blazer

A blazer is to be worn by both boys and girls from Year 1 onwards and can be bought new from The School Shop. It is probably the most expensive single item of uniform you will need to buy, so it's unlikely that you will buy more than one for your child, but if you need a spare then remember that the GPA Shop sells second-hand blazers too.

As it is a unisex blazer, it can be passed down to younger siblings of either gender.

Whilst a blazer is not compulsory for Reception children, many parents have said that it is useful having it as an extra layer in the Autumn Term before it is cold enough to wear the School coat.

School coat

The School Shop sells the plain navy unisex coat to be worn by all children. Whilst it might seem unnecessary to buy the coat when shopping during the Summer, I would advise buying it along with your other uniform items. It can then be labelled at the same time as your other purchases and be ready to go in case of a cold day. The coat comes up quite big, but remember it does have to be worn on top of the various layers of uniform. On the positive side, it is very warm, waterproof and has reflector panels for winter nights.

As it is a unisex coat, it can be passed down to younger siblings of either gender.

Paint smock

The School Shop sells this in size 5-6 years onwards. However, if you need a smaller size for your child, you can buy the same paint smock from John Lewis in size 3-4 years.

Wellington boots

These can be any colour or design for Nursery, Reception and Year 1, so it's a good idea to pick something that your child can recognise easily.

Wellies will be kept at School during the term, returned to you only at the end of every half term/end of term (or unless they are very muddy and need a rinse!) – bear this in mind as you might need a second pair of wellies at home for use at weekends.

Trainers

Ideally these should be white, or predominantly white, in colour. However, like other parents, it seems to be harder and harder to find trainers that meet these criteria especially as the children get older/feet grow past a certain size. It is also difficult to keep them looking clean (they get sent home to be washed at the end of each half term/end of term and sometimes for events like the Nativity play). At a recent Parents' Forum meeting, it was confirmed that plain black, plain navy or other dark colour is acceptable.



Winter hat/gloves/scarf

You can buy these items from The School Shop, but it is also fine to purchase plain navy items (i.e. no logos, no embroidery etc.) from other shops. Items made from fleece material wash easier and dry quicker than woollen ones!

Swimming towel

This can be any colour or design – again, pick something that your child can recognise easily. You can also buy a navy blue towel from The School Shop which can be personalised with your child's name. The personalisation takes around a week so factor that in when buying it.

LABELLING

What do you need to label? The simplest answer to this question is everything and anything! Lost property has a greater chance of being reunited with its owner if it is labelled clearly.

It is not just clothing that needs to be labelled, but lunch boxes (Nursery), snack boxes (all other years), shoes, trainers, wellies, book bags, kit bags, swimming bags/goggles/caps etc. For non-PE kit clothing (see below) and other items like food containers, I have successfully used sticker labels from Ooh La Label – they can be placed on the wash label for clothes and onto other surfaces directly. Be careful not to touch the actual sticker too much when taking it off the backing sheet as it can affect the eventual bond. The good thing is that they can be removed easily too – which isn't always the case for the iron-on or sewn on name labels (plus these can't be used on non-clothing items such as wellies – you can try permanent marker or tippex?).

For PE kit items and other outer clothing items where the labels should be visible so that children can read their name easily (jogging bottoms, hooded top, waterproof jacket and waterproof trousers), it's best to use large font/1-inch ID tag woven labels. The labels can be ordered from Hawkinsport, The School Shop or online at places like Woven Labels UK Limited in multiples of 10 and take a week or so to be delivered. You can also use iron-on labels.

Whilst there are a few local sewing services which are used to Gayhurst labelling, you need to book them early to be sure to have your items ready for the start of Autumn Term (another reason to buy uniform at the start of the Summer holidays...).

For anyone not used to Gayhurst labelling or if you plan to sew on labels yourself, then please refer to the labelling document which shows where the labels should be located on various items of uniform/PE kit. A copy of this document should be in your induction packs or can be found online in the Parent Portal section of the Gayhurst website.

The labelling document also asks that you sew on 8cm cotton loops to both the hooded top and jogging bottoms, but I found that in practice it was also required on the waterproof jacket, waterproof trousers, the paint smock and the winter coat. The loops are fiddly to do but necessary for your child to be able to hang all their uniform/kit onto their peg(s). I bought a long length of woven cotton tape from Amazon, cut it to the size needed and then sewed on



the loops as one my last jobs before the Autumn Term started. Some parents have used ribbon and even the large font/ID tag labels to form the loop instead. Another top tip: if you can find someone to sew the loops on at the same time as the name labels, then so much the better!

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