



Junior School

Handbook for Parents

2021-2022

Welcome

I am delighted to welcome you to Gayhurst Junior School, where we develop happy, confident and resilient children. Our curriculum is structured around the interests of the pupils and is both engaging and enriching, whilst encouraging all our children to challenge and extend their learning.

This handbook contains a summary of the day to day running of the school, to help you plan for a busy family week. Further information, including the school calendar can be found on the school website and My School Portal.

I hope that this handbook, together with the school website, My School Portal and the welcome meetings, provides you with the answers to any questions you may have about life at Gayhurst. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any further queries.

I am excited to be involved in the early stages of your child's education, as they begin their adventure at Gayhurst.

Kind regards,

Helen Williams
Assistant Head, Junior School

School Office

Telephone : 01753 882690
Email : enquiries@gayhurstschool.co.uk

Online

Website : gayhurstschool.co.uk
Facebook : /gayhurstschool
Twitter : @GayhurstSchool

GPA Welcome

Dear Parents

Welcome to Gayhurst School. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the current Chair of the Gayhurst Parents Association (GPA).

The GPA is an association consisting of volunteer parents of the School who act as class representatives for a particular class or school year.

The GPA acts not only to arrange fundraising events and activities which benefit the School and chosen charities, but also provides opportunities for social interactions between parents. It is also a valuable parent contact with the Headmaster and staff.

Due to Covid 19, we may be restricted in what we can do this year but the team is being as imaginative as possible to come up with some events that could work whilst abiding by the most current guidelines.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or your class rep if you have any questions, have any ideas for fundraising, or would like to get involved with the GPA.

Kind regards

Julia Gordon

GPA Chair for 2021/22 academic year

gpa@gayhurstschool.co.uk

Nursery

Starting Nursery is a major event in the lives of young children and at Gayhurst we aim to make the experience a happy one. Our Nursery is led by a fully qualified teacher who is assisted by two teaching assistants.

Our Nursery staff will work with parents to settle the children and make those parting moments as stress-free as possible.

Nursery Drop Off and Collection

Nursery children should arrive at the blue doors at the front of the school, between 8.25am and 8.45am, where they will be met by a member of the Nursery team. Your child may arrive from 8am. They will not be met by a member of the Nursery team at this time, but will be cared for until 8.25am by a member of the Junior School staff. If your child is booked in to Breakfast Club, they should be taken directly to the dining room at 7.30am.

Collection at the end of the morning session is at 1pm and the end of the afternoon session at 3pm. Both collections are from the blue doors at the front of school.

We have a Wind Down Time session if you would like your child to stay a little later. There are a selection of quiet activities and a snack is provided. Wind Down Time is held in the Junior School and parents are asked to book a place for their child online through My School Portal (MSP). If your child is staying for Wind Down Time, Nursery staff will take them to the Junior School where this is held. Collection is at 4.10pm or 5.15pm from the blue doors at the front of the school. Supper Club is available from 5.15pm until 6pm.

Ready for Nursery

It would be helpful if you could practise these skills with your child over the summer.

Self-Care - Using the toilet alone and be able to wash hands. Trying to wipe their nose.

Speaking - Being able to ask an adult for help if needed.

Dressing - Putting on and taking off their coat, shoes, jumper and apron by themselves.

Eating - Being able to feed themselves with a knife, fork and spoon, with a little help to cut up their food.

Independence - Being excited about being in Nursery with friends and without mummy or daddy.

Sharing - Starting to share toys with their friends and take turns.

The Nursery Day

The children will be involved in activities relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage every day. Activities vary from day to day and this gives the children as wide an experience as possible. All the activities we do in Nursery develop language. Below is an example list of activities we do in Nursery which will help to develop many skills.

To help with writing:

Bead threading, sewing, lacing, drawing, cutting, playdoh, pouring sand and water and construction toys.

To help with reading:

Jigsaw puzzles, stories and rhymes, picture books.

To help understand mathematics:

Brick building, sand and water play, construction toys and games, sorting games, matching games, number games, number rhymes, counting and sequencing.

To help develop fine and gross motor control:

Cutting and sticking, painting, modelling and using dough, playing with indoor and outdoor toys.

To help develop awareness of the world around them:

Dressing up, playing in the home corner, role play, music, looking at the world of living things.

The children will also have two Music lessons each week, PE, and Library. They are very much integrated into the life of the Junior School and visit the Junior School playground for some playtimes with Reception children. They will also join assemblies when they are ready.

Reception

Our Gayhurst Nursery children are divided into three classes as they move into Reception, where they are joined by a similar number of children from different nurseries. Each Reception class has a teacher and a full-time teaching assistant.

Reception Drop Off and Collection

Reception children should arrive at the blue doors at the front of the school, between 8.25am and 8.45am, where they will be met by a member of the Reception team. Your child may arrive from 8am. They will not be met by a member of the Reception team at this time but will be cared for until 8.25am by a member of the Junior School staff. If your child is booked in to Breakfast Club they should be taken directly to the dining room at 7.30am.

Collection at the end of the day is at 3:10pm from the blue doors at the front of school.

We have a Wind Down Time session, if you need your child to stay a little later. There are a selection of quiet activities and a snack is provided. This is held in the Junior School and parents are asked to book a place for their child online through My School Portal (MSP). If your child is staying for Wind Down Time, Reception staff will take them to the room where this is held. Collection is at 4.10pm or 5.15pm from the blue doors at the front of the school. Supper Club is available from 5.15pm until 6pm.

Before Starting School

If your child is joining us in Reception, it would be very helpful if they are able to carry out most of the following basic tasks:

- Be able to dress and undress themselves
- Be able to put their shoes on the correct feet (we recommend Velcro-fastening shoes and trainers)

- Take themselves to the toilet and attend to their own needs
- Be able to wash their hands thoroughly
- Use a knife and fork correctly
- Be able to blow their nose

Young children have ‘accidents’ occasionally, so it would be useful if each child has a spare pair of socks and pants in their school bag.

We hope that all the children will be confident members of their new school. You may be able to make arrangements with other parents for your child to meet up with one or two other children, during the summer holidays.

It may also be useful, though not essential, if your child could write their own name using a capital letter followed by lower case letters, before the start of term.

We do not feel it is necessary for you to prepare your child in any other way. Children enter Gayhurst with a wide range of skills and their stages of development vary.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Planning in the Nursery and Reception follows the Foundation Stage Curriculum. There are seven areas of learning made up of three prime areas and four specific areas as follows:

Prime

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical development
- Communication and Language

Specific

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

We use Tapestry to collect evidence of each child’s development and as parents you will be given access to your child’s unique online learning record. The Foundation Stage is well named and is the foundation on which future learning is built. The Nursery is the first year of the Foundation Stage and children continue to follow this curriculum in Reception.

Key Person (Nursery and Reception)

In the Early Years Foundation stage, it is a specific legal requirement that each child is assigned a key person. In Nursery and Reception, the teacher naturally leads the way with teaching and learning and is responsible for delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. The key person will be your class teacher and will give the children reassurance to feel safe and cared for. The teacher will be the person you, as parents, will speak to if your child has pastoral concerns.

Forms

The names of the forms at Gayhurst relate to year groups (Nursery children are not allocated a Form). All ages are taken from 1st September, with Reception being for children aged 4+, Year 1 being for children aged 5+ etc. All forms are identified by the initial of the teacher, so for example, RW is a Reception class taught by Mrs Whitaker and 2K is a Year 2 class taught by Mrs Kelly.

All forms in the Junior School are of mixed ability and the average age in each of the year group forms is more or less the same. We usually mix the children at the end of the Reception year and also at the end of Year 2. This is done after a lot of consultation between the teachers, with the children's abilities, personalities, as well as friendships taken into consideration.

MAGIC AWARDS

MAGIC awards are given out at the end of each week in assembly. MAGIC stands for Manners, Academic, Grit & Resilience, Independence and Confidence. In the Junior School we focus on one of these qualities each week. The focus is introduced to the children in our Monday morning assembly and awards given on Friday to those who have displayed our focus quality.

Houses

At the end of the Reception year, the children are allocated Houses. If your child has an older sibling in the school they will be in the same House. The Houses are named **Campbell**, **Gibbs**, **Stafford**, **Taylor** and **Sims** after previous Headmasters or Senior Masters. Children earn MAGIC points not only for themselves, but for their Houses. A child can be awarded a MAGIC point for Manners, Academic achievement, Grit (Resilience), Independence and Confidence. At the end of each term a cup is awarded in final assembly to the House with the most House points.

Year 1 and 2 Drop Off and Collection

Year 1 and 2 children should arrive at the blue doors at the front of the school, from 8.20am. Your child may arrive from 8am. They will not go to their classroom at this time, but will be cared for until 8.20am by a member of the Junior School staff. From 8.20am children may go to their classroom independently, or join one of our walking buses if they prefer. Registration is at 8.45am. If your child is booked in to Breakfast Club, they should be taken directly to the dining room at 7.30am.

Collection at the end of the day is at 3:20pm for Year 1 and 3:30pm for Year 2, from the blue doors at the front of school.

We have a Wind Down Time session if you would like your child to stay a little later. There are a selection of quiet activities and a snack is provided. This is held in the Junior School and parents are asked to book a place for their child online through My School Portal (MSP). If your child is staying for Wind Down Time, their teacher will take them to the room where this is held. Collection is at 4.10pm or 5.15pm from the blue doors at the front of the school. Supper Club is available from 5.15pm until 6pm.

If you are going to be away from home for a few days, or if someone different is collecting your child, please supply the school with names and full contact details of the person who will be in loco parentis. This can be through a contact form on My School Portal.

Parking

If possible, please **do not** park on the school grounds. Please use the drop off and pick up areas outside the blue doors. In busy periods we ask that you turn left when leaving the school site.

Breakfast Club and Supper Club

There is a charge for these facilities, which will be added to the school bill at the end of term and they should be booked in advance on My School Portal. Please contact the school office if a last-minute booking needs to be made, as there are often spaces available.

Children in Nursery - Year 2 may attend Breakfast Club (7.30am) and Supper Club (5.15pm). For Breakfast Club they must be dropped off at the back of the school and taken directly to the dining hall, where they will have supervised breakfast. Collection after Supper is from the dining room by 6pm. There is a buzzer next to the large blue gates for access. Late collection is charged at £1 per minute.

Booking for Breakfast/Supper is on My School Portal (MSP)

Wind Down Time

We have a Wind Down Time session for parents who wish their children to stay a little later. There are a selection of quiet activities and a snack is provided. This is held in the Junior School and parents are asked to book a place for their child online through My School Portal (MSP). If your child is staying for Wind Down Time, Junior School staff will take them to the room where this is held. Collection is at 4.10pm or 5.15pm, from the blue doors at the front of the school. All children should be collected by 5.30pm. Wind Down Time can be booked online through MSP.

After School Activities

There are a number of After School Activities available for the children, from Reception to Year 2. A form with all the necessary information is available on My School Portal, before the end of the term, so that children may sign up for their chosen activity. We recommend no more than two activities for each child. There is a charge made for some of these activities.

Homework and Supporting Learning at Home

Nursery

- Daily reading to your child, including sharing their weekly library book.
- Preparation for 'Show and Tell'.
- ELDRIC the Penguin weekend adventures.
- Optional activities communicated via 'Next week in Nursery'.
- Optional phonics activities linked to the sound of the week - Autumn term
- Optional number and handwriting activities- Spring and Summer terms

Reception

- Preparation for 'Show and Tell'.
- Listening to your child read daily, school reading book and Bug Club.
- Daily reading to your child, including sharing their weekly library book.
- A literacy task is sent home every Friday, including letter sounds/formation and word building.
- A maths task is sent home every Friday
- ELDRIC the Penguin weekend adventures.

Year 1

- Preparation for 'Show and Tell'.
- Daily reading, including school reading book, library book and Bug Club.
- Spelling: words to learn will be sent home weekly.
- A maths or literacy task will be assigned weekly; this may be electronically based.
- Occasional topic work may be set; the class teacher will communicate this via email

Year 2

- Daily reading, including school reading book, library book and Bug Club.
- Spelling: words to learn will be sent home weekly.
- Maths: a task will be assigned weekly; this may be electronically based.
- Occasional topic work may be set; the class teacher will communicate this via email

Absence from School

If your child is absent from school owing to illness please telephone the school office by 8.45am. On your child's return we ask that you complete the form on MSP (My School Portal). The school is bound by regulations concerning school registers and all absences have to be recorded. The Health Protection Agency guidelines recommend that a child remains at home for 48 hours after sickness or diarrhoea. **Please see additional guidance regarding self-isolation and COVID-19 rules for this in the Gayhurst Return to School Parent Handbook.**

Should you wish to apply for leave of absence for your child, a request should be made to the Head via My School Portal.

If you, as parents, are going to be away from home, please let the form teacher know who will be collecting your child and inform us of contact numbers in case of emergency.

Discipline

Discipline is maintained in The Junior School by a system of reward and praise for good work and behaviour. Junior School MAGIC Awards are presented each week for those children who have excelled in Manners, Academic, Grit and Resilience, Independence or Confidence. Stickers and Stars are awarded throughout the week, as and when they are merited.

‘Circle Time’ and the ‘Golden Rules’

At Gayhurst we are keen to promote self-esteem and encourage positive behaviour. We incorporate ‘Circle Time’ into the curriculum. This provides the children with an opportunity to experience positive relationships with other children in their form. The games and activities during the sessions are devised in order to create a sense of community within the class and to establish a safe boundary within which other activities can take place. The six ‘Golden Rules’ are the means by which the values of ‘Circle Time’ are extended into every area of school life.

From Reception upwards the concept of ‘Golden Time’ is introduced. This is a special time set aside for activities chosen by the children and is a reward for their having observed the ‘Golden Rules’ and it acts as a major incentive.

Junior School Rules (Golden Rules)

1. Do be gentle
2. Do be kind
3. Do be honest
4. Do work hard
5. Do look after property
6. Do listen to people

Home-School Liaison

Each child has a bag which travels back and forwards to school each day. Letters to parents are sent out via My School Post. Letters are also available on My School Portal Parent. There are a variety of contact points. In the first instance please contact your child’s Form Teacher via My School Portal or their school email, any urgent queries should be made via the School Office by telephone on 01753 882690 or via email enquiries@gayhurstschool.co.uk, they will direct your enquiry accordingly. You may also contact Mrs Williams by email, hwilliams@gayhurstschool.co.uk.

Calendar

The school calendar is online and updated regularly. This gives information on events which Parents may wish to attend. You will, of course, receive letters inviting you to specific events. You are also most welcome to attend Senior School events whether your child is involved or not.

Reports and Monitoring Progress

Throughout the year there will be both written reports and Parents' Evenings, which will give you the opportunity to understand how your child is progressing at school.

If you would like to discuss progress at any other time, please arrange a convenient time with your child's form teacher or contact the Assistant Head, Junior School. Parents' Evenings may be in person or online.

Learning support

There are often children who require a little extra help with learning. If your child experiences difficulties their teacher will discuss this with you and arrange for extra help to be given if necessary. Depending on the needs of the child, additional intervention may be organised by our Head of Learning Support.

Music

Children are taught class music throughout their time at Gayhurst. In Year 2, starting at the beginning of the autumn term, children are given the opportunity to have individual music lessons. The Director of Music makes the arrangements for these lessons and he will send a letter to parents outlining the details.

LAMDA

Children in Year 1 upwards can participate in these lessons, either in groups, pairs or individually. Ms Moon will send a letter with details of these sessions.

Games and P.E.

Games and P.E. are an important part of our school's curriculum and we offer a wide range of activities in Games and P.E. lessons. The children are encouraged to work together and develop their level of fitness.

In P.E. the main emphasis is on developing co-ordination skills and balance, and on encouraging all children, regardless of ability, to enjoy physical activity. All the children from Reception to Year 2 have swimming lessons at an external facility. **Please note during Covid 19 swimming will not take place.**

School Uniform / Equipment

The school uniform/equipment list is available on the school website. There is a different list for each year group and there are also alterations and additions for each term. It is important that all items of clothing and equipment are clearly and correctly named. The lists for each Year group are also available on the school website.

Money

No money should be brought to school except in special circumstances.

Toys

Please do not allow children to bring toys to school unless they are specifically asked to do so.

Gayhurst Parents' Association (GPA)

The Gayhurst Parents' Association co-ordinates and organises a number of social events which take place during the school year. Some events are purely for the parents, while others, such as the School Fayre (usually held in the autumn term) and the Fun Day in the summer term, include the children. Some of the events raise money, donating to local or national charities, or indeed providing extra things for the school. This work is very much appreciated and the GPA always welcomes new parents.

Each form has a 'form representative' and these parents usually liaise with other parents in the form regarding social events.

WhatsApp Groups

Full information regarding School is provided in several forms, via email, text message and MSP. These communications are the sources that the school conveys information to parents and as such, should be the only reference points for parents. Any further clarification should be sought from the school. It is understood that communication on social media sites such as WhatsApp can become hostile and we would urge parents to consider all users of any group and the impact that any abusive comments may have. The school values partnership with parents and would hope that any concerns are dealt with in appropriate and respectful fashion.

Food

We offer a hot lunch every day at school for all our children, including Nursery. Salad, bread and fresh fruit are also available. Special diets are catered for and we ask that you let the school know in advance if your child has an allergy or any special food requirements by completing the relevant section on the **Medical Form**.

We like to encourage good table manners at school and parental reinforcement is always appreciated.

The children may bring a snack to eat at the beginning of morning break. Fruit is the healthy option. We ask that no food containing nuts is sent in as we have children in school with nut allergies. The school provides the Nursery children with a morning snack.

Medicines

We will **only** administer medicines prescribed by a doctor during school hours. The exception to this rule is for hay fever medication, which must be sent to school in the original packaging. All medication should be given to the form teacher, with clear instructions on dosage filled in on our Medication Form or by letter. If your child is unwell, they are much better off at home. Not only because they may infect others if they are at school, but also because they will not do their best if they are not fit. If your child has been unwell during the night or has a high temperature, do not bring them in to school the following day. The Health Protection Agency guidelines recommend that a child remains at home for **48 hours after sickness or diarrhoea**.

You will have already received a medical form. It is important that this is returned to the school office so that children who have long-term medical conditions, such as asthma, diabetes and allergies can be monitored and the correct medication administered.

School Office

The school office is open from 8.15am until 5.15pm daily. It is located at the right-hand side of the school. There are signs to direct visitors and an entry phone system.

An answer phone service operates outside school hours and messages regarding absences may be left.

Policies

School policies are available on the Gayhurst School website.

Website

Gayhurst website www.gayhurstschool.co.uk contains a wealth of material about the school and is updated regularly.

Uniform Labelling

All uniform should be clearly labelled, with name tapes sewn inside each piece of clothing.

Concerns

Your child may possibly experience certain difficulties during their time at Gayhurst. If this occurs, a member of staff will contact you to discuss the situation.

If either you or your child has any concerns or worries at any time, please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher. Mr Davies and Mrs Williams are also happy to discuss any issue with you.

We are excited to welcome you to Gayhurst and look forward to working together during your child's formative years in education.