

Grays Convent
High School



Information Booklet

for New Parents

2023-2024

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Mission Statement

At Grays Convent we recognise the value of each individual as a gift from God to the world. We are a Catholic school founded by the La Sainte Union Sisters and our ethos is one of unity, prayer, worship, service and work. We strive to follow the example of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary by enabling learning to take place in a caring and accepting community. We are blessed by Jesus the Good Shepherd; try to follow him in everything that we do, and in doing so make the most of our God given talents. We are one with God.

Absence

At Grays Convent it has long been a tradition that parents and teachers work in partnership together for the good of the students, our expectations are therefore high regarding attendance and punctuality. We believe that regular school attendance and punctuality is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to society.

In the home school contract you will sign to agree that you will:

- Make sure that your daughter attends school regularly.
- Make sure that your daughter arrives at school before 8.25am, for the start of lessons at 8:30am.
- Contact the school by telephone on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend for any reason, followed by a written note on return.
- Arrange medical appointments and holidays outside school time where possible.

Please report all absences before 8:25am on the first day of your daughter's absence. You can telephone on **01375 376173** (The absence line is automated and available 24 hours a day) or e-mail smithc@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk stating your daughter's full name, year group and an explanation for her absence. Please update us every 2 days if your child is seriously unwell.

If you have not informed the school of an absence you will receive a SIMS InTouch message from our attendance officer. Please ensure that you reply to the SIMS InTouch message sent on each day of un-reported absence. This is our way of ensuring your daughter is safe and that her whereabouts are known. Absence from school is recognised as a safeguarding issue as it places children at risk and in some cases it can result in students being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour.

Illness is authorised at the discretion of the school. Where a student appears to be having an unacceptable level of absence due to medical reasons, the school will request that medical evidence (such as appointment cards or prescribed medication) be provided to cover all absences. Failure on the part of the parent to provide such medical evidence will result in absences being recorded as unauthorised and a School Attendance Support Team will be considered. A page of absence notes is in your daughter's planner to help you.

Useful Contact Numbers:

Absence Line: 01375 376173 Option 1

Attendance Officer: Mrs C Smith

Email: smithc@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk

Absence in term time

All requests for a students to be absent in term time will be considered on a case-by-case basis, but can only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances means there is a genuine reason for absence which has been supported by a note from the parent and evidence that absence is necessary. Examples of this might include:

- Hospital or Orthodontist appointment (evidence required).
- College/Connexions/Employment Interview (evidence required).
- Funeral (1 day only). Funerals abroad will be considered on a case by case basis but no more than 3 days will be authorised.
- Consultant appointments (evidence required). We do ask that you try to organise these in holiday times.
- Emergency Doctor or Dental appointments (evidence required). Routine appointments should be made outside of school hours where possible.
- Dual registration at another educational facility such as college.
- Approved educational off-site activities.
- Representation in sport or other areas.
- Public performances (licences must be obtained from the Local Authority).
- Religious observance.
- Legal or court proceedings.

All requests for an absence from school, for issues other than a medical/ dental appointment, must be made in writing to the Head teacher at least two weeks before the date requested and in considering the request the school will also look at various factors such as:

- The timing of the request
- Where a pupil's attendance rate is already below 95% or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking leave
- The student has a serious work deficit
- Other periods of leave which the pupil may have had, either during the current or previous academic year

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence is shown on reports and ultimately school references. Unauthorised absence of ten or more school sessions in a half term can lead to the authority issuing a penalty notice. The fine for unauthorised absence currently stands at £60 per parent per child.

Details of the procedures for attendance including authorised and unauthorised absence can be found in 'The Importance of Good Attendance & Absence' which is available on the school's website.

Attendance & Punctuality

Girls must be in school at 8:25am. We have a breakfast club that runs in the canteen from 8:00am. This is good in wet or cold weather, or for girls who get an early bus, as girls are not allowed into the school building until 8:25am, as they are unsupervised.

Girls enter the school at the start of school by the car park, by the canteen and mini bus garage. Staff are on duty every day to help your daughter and you, and to address any punctuality issues. Girls leave the school by all doors at the front of the school.

School starts at 8.25am and ends at 3.25pm and has 6 periods of 55 minutes.

8:25	Bell goes for entry to the school	
8:30-8:40	Registration & Prayer	
8:40-9:35	Period 1	
9:35-10:30	Period 2	
10:30-10:50	Break 20 mins	
10:50-11:45	Period 3	
11:45-12:40	Period 4	Lunch for Year 7
12:40-1:35	Period 5	Lunch for Years 8 & 10
1:35-2:30	Period 6	Lunch for Years 9 & 11
2:30-3:25	Period 7 (including PM Registration)	

3:20	End of School for Years 7-9	
3:25	End of School for Years 10-11	

Behaviour and Discipline

In order to help your daughter make the best possible progress and to ensure a safe and happy environment, the school expects every pupil to conduct themselves by the values set out in our Code of Conduct whilst at school or in school uniform out of school. We ask for your support in this and that you read the Code and discuss it with your daughter.

The Behaviour Policy Learning & Conduct was constructed upon the fundamental principle of building positive relationships and supporting students in meeting expectations. This policy, therefore, is underpinned by a firm belief in Restorative Approaches to support students' learning.

Our Behaviour Policy Learning & Conduct is built on the principles of:

- demonstrating respect for ourselves, each other and the whole school community
- focus on learning
- taking responsibility for our actions
- maintaining a safe and orderly environment that promotes learning
- promoting a sense of community
- celebrating and rewarding good behaviour for learning and success
- reflect our Catholic ethos by following Jesus' example of care, forgiveness and respect for all

Teachers and all persons acting on behalf of the Headteacher, have a statutory power to discipline students for misbehaving outside of the school premises. Students are expected to show every concern for the school's neighbours. Students must not stand around any of the school entrances at any time, nor cause annoyance to any neighbours or passers-by.

The school reserves the right, therefore, to discipline a student for misbehaviour when the student is:

- Taking part in any school related or organised activity
- Travelling to and from the school - this includes waiting for, boarding and travelling on buses and trains
- Wearing school uniform or can be identified as a student of the school
- When misbehaviour could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school
- When misbehaviour poses a threat to another student or member of the public
- When misbehaviour adversely affects the reputation of the school

Such poor behaviour is exceptionally rare at Grays Convent. We do however have a logging system for any good or poor behaviour in lessons which is monitored by form tutors and Heads of Year. Parents are notified by email of achievement and behaviour points via SIMS InTouch system the following working morning. This links to the Reward system.

Bicycles

Our school council have ensured we have a bike shed. Girls are welcome to cycle or scooter to school; all we ask is that you ensure your daughter has a bicycle lock. The bicycle sheds are in the playground and the playground gates are locked during the day. Electric scooters are not permitted.

Bullying

At Grays Convent we are committed to ensuring that our pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. We believe this is a basic human right.

Bullying is unusual but we deal with it very quickly.

We teach girls the difference between bullying and having a fall out with their friends. It is worth mentioning that sometimes girls break up with friends. There can be arguments and name calling. Although upsetting, this is normal and passes after a few days. This is not bullying. If the name calling continues over time and escalates into a more serious situation it will be treated as bullying and will be dealt with accordingly. We have a Pastoral Manager, form tutors and Head of Year who will support girls and groups of friends who have had fallen out.

Bullying is:

- deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

Bullying can be:

- physical - (hitting, punching, kicking, theft, threatening or intimidating behaviour, demanding money)
- verbal and non-verbal abuse - (name calling, insulting or derogatory comments including racist remarks, staring, abusive gestures and sounds)
- indirect - (spreading false rumours, malicious gossip, deliberately excluding someone from social groups and encouraging others to do the same)
- cyber bullying – sending unwelcome text messages that are threatening or cause discomfort; picture/video clips bullying via mobile phone cameras, ‘happy slapping’; sending silent calls or abusive messages via mobile phones; sending threatening or abusive messages via E-mail; menacing or upsetting
- responses in a web-based chat room or social media; using defamatory blogs; personal websites and online personal polling sites.

At Grays Convent we will always challenge within and outside of school:

- racial harassment and racist bullying
- bullying because of a pupil's religious, cultural or social background
- bullying because of a pupil's gender or sexual orientation, including the use of homophobic language and bullying of transgender pupils
- bullying of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities
- bullying because of pupil's appearance or abilities
- bullying because of pregnancy or maternity leave

During tutor time, year assemblies and whole school assemblies positive relationships are reinforced, and the anti-bullying message is reflected throughout the taught curriculum. Grays Convent marks Anti-Bullying Week each year with special assemblies and other events which are coordinated and led in partnership with our trained Student Anti-Bullying Ambassadors.

Pupils are expected to:

- report all incidents of bullying
- report suspected incidents that victims might be afraid to report
- provide positive support for each other and seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe, and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a teacher of their choice
- having their statements recorded
- continuous support from Form Tutor, Head of Year, Assistant Headteacher, Chaplain, Counsellor or Pastoral Manager
- restoring self-esteem and confidence

At Grays Convent we believe it is also important to help any pupil who has shown bullying behaviour by:

- discussing their involvement in incidents
- establishing the wrong doing and the need to change
- informing parents/carers to help change their child's attitude
- practical support such as Anger Management to teach strategies for dealing with aggressive or intimidating behaviour

Parents can help by:

- supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures
- encouraging their children to be positive members of the School Community and the wider world
- informing the school of any concerns that their child might be experiencing bullying or is involved in some other way
- helping to foster positive relationships and an anti-bullying culture outside of school

Clubs and Activities

A full schedule of clubs and activities can be found on the Grays Convent High School website at:

<http://www.graysconvent.school/extra-curricular>

<http://www.graysconvent.school/sporting-clubs>

This is also sent out in the weekly newsletter. Information will also be displayed on form and year group notice boards.

Communications with us

Moving from Primary to Secondary school is a big step for you and your daughter. If you have any concerns about your daughter's progress or well-being, please contact her Form Tutor in the first instance. All Year 7 Form Tutors are experienced members of staff and will have dealt with many of the issues you may face over their years with Year 7. We welcome contact with you, and have an Information Evening early on in the first term where we answer 'frequently asked questions' and address any issues that you have.

You can contact us by email or telephone 01375 376173.

The Head of Year 7's email is: wellsk@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk

Pastoral Support Manager Mrs Bishop's is: bishop@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk

We also have an administrative email: admin@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk

We have a 24 hour call return policy but we will endeavour to return any phone calls as soon as possible; please bear in mind that form tutors and the Head of Year do teach so they may not be able to respond to you immediately.

If you have anything you would like to discuss, in person, with a member of staff, we ask you please to make an appointment. This is particularly necessary if you wish to meet a member of teaching staff. As you can appreciate, during the school day teachers are in class and it is rarely possible for them to meet with you if you arrive, in school, without first making a prior arrangement.

However if you have an urgent issue, such as one involving child protection or a genuine emergency then, of course we will endeavour to locate the best member of staff to meet with you and do everything we can to resolve any situation.

Visitors to the school must always report to the school reception, where they will be asked to sign in. This is an essential Health & Safety and security requirement. We will also make you aware of our safeguarding procedures. We have a locked door card-entry system and the school is very secure. When the door is open at the end of the day for the girls to leave, we ask you not to enter for everyone's safety.

We aim to provide a safe and pleasant environment for pupils, visitors and staff. Therefore threatening, abusive, aggressive or violent behaviour is not acceptable. If you wish to make a complaint, please ring to speak to the Headteacher, or please refer to the Complaints Policy on the website. We take your concerns very seriously and will go out of our way to resolve them for you.

Please ensure that you keep us informed of any changes to your phone numbers, email address, postal address, work contacts etc. so that we can contact you in case of emergencies or if your daughter is ill.

Communications to you

You will find a lot of information about the school, including important school policies on our website **www.graysconvent.school**. If the school is closed because of extreme weather conditions for example, or if we want to remind you of any important issues, we will post them on our website.

We also have a Twitter account, and ask you to join us as we regularly post important messages on there; especially notes of celebration! Our Twitter address is @GraysConvent.

We give you a year group calendar at the beginning of the year and also post this on the website, so that you are aware of important events.

Every week the Headteacher will email you the weekly newsletter. This is a great way of keeping in touch with what is going on, and we also remind you of important events each week. This is also on our website.

We use a messaging system called 'SIMS InTouch' and we will text or email you through this.

In addition pupils have a planner through which we can communicate with each other.

Complaints

We hope that you will be happy with all aspects of school life at Grays Convent however; if you do have a concern or a complaint we will deal with it as a matter of urgency.

Our Complaints Policy is available on the website and sets out the procedure adopted by the Governing Body to deal with any complaints related to the school.

We would hope that with good communication between the school and parents any concerns that are raised can be handled without the need for formal procedures.

Free School Meals

We would like to bring to your attention the benefits available, to your daughter and, to you, as a parent, of ensuring that every child who is eligible for Free School Meals is registered and recorded. We have links to application forms on our school website. If you are receiving Income Support e.g. Job Seekers Allowance, your daughter may be able to claim a free meal at lunchtime.

Am I entitled? If you are receiving certain benefits, your child may be entitled to a free, nutritious school meal.

Did you know... Free School Meals entitlement is now linked to Pupil Premium Funding. Students transferring from primary to secondary school may need to re-apply in year 7 for their entitlement to continue.

For every child registered, Grays Convent gets £985 per year.

With this money we could arrange, amongst other things, additional support and intervention for students in the school. If you are registered for Free School Meals you could also receive other benefits including that the school may support you with costs of school trips.

Applications can be made online by visiting:

<https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/school-meals/free-school-meals>. Simply login to our My Account services, select 'Education and childcare', 'Free school meals' and then 'Apply online'. A family can create an account if you don't already have one. All you will need is a valid personal email address.

If you do not have access to the internet at home you can either visit a local library or Thurrock Council area offices. Alternatively we may be able to help assist you with this.

Successful applicants can receive a daily allowance which is immediately available to the student. Evidence of current benefit entitlement and household income is required, and will be verified at least annually.

It is important that young women have a healthy lunch in the middle of the school day.

Help and Support

Moving to secondary school and becoming a teenager are important changes for your daughter. Many pupils enjoy the new challenges and opportunities; however, sometimes pupils can need a little extra help. They may need support to cope with the new demands of secondary school or they may be worried about an illness in the family or personal issues. Whatever the reason, we want to help them.

If your daughter has any concerns she can speak to her Tutor, Head of Year, Pastoral Manager or the Chaplain. She may prefer to speak to an adult who is outside the school system and, in this case, we have a counsellor who provides a professional, confidential service on a weekly basis. If you think your daughter needs any support then please contact her Tutor or Head of Year.

Our Pastoral Support Manager is Mrs Bishop (email: bishop@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk) whose role is to be a first point of contact with you for any issue.

Mrs Bishop works closely with the school Heads of Year supporting all aspects of a student's pastoral care, achievement and development. Mrs Bishop will liaise closely with parents and staff to ensure the best possible support for students at Grays Convent.

Holidays in Term Time

Term-time holiday will not be authorised.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence is shown on reports and ultimately school references. Unauthorised absence of ten or more school sessions in a half term can lead to the authority issuing a penalty notice. The fine for unauthorised absence is £60 if paid within 21 calendar days (after the date of issue), rising to £120 if paid after 21 calendar days but within 28 calendar days.

Details of the procedures for attendance including authorised and unauthorised absence can be found in 'The Importance of Good Attendance & Absence' which is available on the school's website.

Home-School Agreement

Grays Convent School's agreement, which was drawn up after consultation with parents, staff and governors, is attached.

The Home School Agreement explains the aims and values of your daughter's school and outlines the responsibilities of the school, its parents and its pupils. The agreement will therefore help you to work closely with us. Your support and encouragement are very important if your daughter is to make the most of her education. We ask you to sign this because you agree with what we are asking of you.

Homework and Homework Club

We are a 'Homework' school. We think homework is very important:

- to encourage pupils to develop independent study skills
- to allow practice of skills acquired in the classroom
- to enable classwork to concentrate on activities which require a teacher's input

Every pupil is expected to undertake homework. A homework timetable is issued to every pupil at the start of the Autumn Term and is put on the website. Homework increases from 3 subjects per night in Year 7 taking approximately 1½ hours to complete to approximately 2-2½ hours per night in Year 11.

Pupils are given a planner to record homework. We ask for parents' support in monitoring homework, including checking and signing the planner every week. Staff will use a mixture of homework to be completed in books/worksheets and on Google Classroom, our online learning platform.

All girls will be given a login to Google Classrooms.

We run a staffed Homework club on Monday - Friday from 3.30pm - 4.30pm, which all girls are welcome to attend. If your daughter is falling behind with homework, we will invite her to attend on a contract. In addition to homework we have Extended Learning Projects that run across each half term.

ICT E-Safety Policy

We are a CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) school. The CEOP button is on our website front page.

Pupils are taught about online safety in RSHE, computing lessons and Rise Above Days. These rules are also in their planner.

We take pupils online safety very seriously, both in and out of school. Pupils must observe the following rules regarding the use of ICT in the school.

E-safety for students			
Do:	Report any obscene, harmful or upsetting material to a member of staff immediately Know how to use the CEOP report button on our school website	Don't:	Use social networking sites, email, chat rooms, forums or blogs etc. to post inappropriate or insulting comments/images about fellow students, their parents, staff members or the school itself
Do:	Use school ICT equipment solely for educational purposes	Don't:	Use Social Media on school computers/tablets
Do:	Only use school e-mail accounts for communication with staff	Don't:	Disclose personal information in emails or on social media sites
Do:	Ask the Network Manager to download software	Don't:	Download music or other files unless they have a specific educational purpose such as use in GCSE Music lessons <u>and</u> the teacher gives you permission
Do:	Respect and acknowledge copyright	Don't	Disconnect any wires or equipment
Data Protection & Use of Digital Images			
Do:	Understand that any ICT usage may be monitored by the Network Manager	Don't:	Leave computers etc. logged in and unattended
Do:	Be aware that parents/carers may take photographs at school events where the school deems this to be appropriate. However, they must ensure that any images or videos taken involving children other than their own are for personal use and will not be published on the internet including social networking sites	Don't:	Let others know your passwords
Do:	Think about what you post about yourself on social networking sites. Future employers may look back at your posts	Don't:	Provide personal information to anyone

Social Networking, Instant Messaging and Chat Rooms

- Pupils must not use social networking sites, chat rooms, forums or blogs to post inappropriate or derogatory comments about other pupils, members of staff or the school as these sites are accessible by members of the public. **Any instances where this occurs as a result of comments posted while out of school may result in disciplinary action. In the first instance this will be referred back to parents for action.**
- Pupils will only have access to discussion forums such as those found on the educational websites and the Grays Convent School and Google Classrooms.
- External moderated chat rooms, discussion forums and newsgroups will be used only for educational purposes as directed by a teacher or member of staff.

Use of ICT

The school has Internet access on all its networked computers. This means that all pupils and staff have access to the Internet and are able to communicate with the outside world through their own e-mail address.

These services are provided by Thurrock Council who also offer a filtered Internet service. The service they give makes it extremely difficult for Internet users to access undesirable material and we have the means to monitor all websites visited and e-mails sent.

Use of the Internet and e-mail is an exciting opportunity to enhance teaching and learning. Provided pupils are aware of the rules, there need be no cause for concern regarding access to undesirable material. Before your daughter is allowed to use the Internet in school we require a signature from a parent/carer and your daughter agreeing to abide by the attached Code of Conduct.

We are aware that pupils use the Internet at home for completing work set by the school and for leisure activities. The use of facilities such as WhatsApp and Instagram can be useful methods of communication but can cause problems. Problem areas may be personal safety; writing inappropriate remarks in conversations may result in friendship problems in school. The minimum age requirement of most social media platforms is 13.

We know that you, as parent/carers, supervise your daughters' Internet use at home, but if you would like any more information on this matter, the Police Liaison Officer is available at Grays Police Station, telephone number 101.

Lateness

Within the partnership spirit it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that their daughter student attends school each day and arrives on time. We have staff on duty at the front of the school every day to support you.

- All students must be in school by the first bell at 8.25am so that they are ready for registration at 8:30am. Arrival after this time will result in a late mark against their attendance record and an automatic break time detention.
- You will receive a SIMS InTouch message informing you if your daughter was late.
- Any student arriving after 8:30am will be recorded as absent (unauthorised) unless prior authorisation for absence has been given or details and evidence of a medical appointment has been received. Students arriving late should enter through the main entrance.
- Students who arrive persistently late to school or to lessons will be subject to sanctions including loss of social time, after school detentions or a punctuality contract.
- If you have not contacted the school to inform us of an absence, it is imperative that you respond quickly to any Keep Kids Safe messages as this is the school's way of ensuring your daughter is safe and that her whereabouts are known.
- In compliance with the Education Act 436A (Chapter 2 Part 6) the school will, after making appropriate checks, report all Children Missing from Education to the Local Authority, School Attendance Support Team, who has a duty to investigate the whereabouts of such children and negotiate their prompt return to suitable education. We will also make home visits when necessary.
- A copy of a student's up to date attendance report, as well as the Attendance Procedures leaflet, is always included in letters sent to parents regarding attendance and punctuality.

Leadership Roles in the School

At Grays Convent High School we believe that students should be given a wide range of opportunities to develop and practise leadership skills in preparation for life beyond school. It would be impossible to list all the opportunities students have to take on leadership roles at the school so this is just a flavour of what is currently on offer.

Many Student Leadership activities will focus on improving the quality of learning and teaching in the classroom, supporting the school's aim to be a place where everyone enjoys learning and is creative – trying new things, finding solutions and embracing their responsibilities.

The aims of our Student Leadership programme are:

- To empower students to work in partnership with staff towards shared goals.
- To enable creativity to flourish as the school community benefits from the wealth of experiences, ideas, skills and sense of fun that students bring.
- To provide opportunities for students to develop leadership skills through a variety of inspiring, challenging and valued projects which impact positively on learning, teaching and well-being for both students and staff in the school.
- To prepare students for the next stage in their education and for achieving personal and professional excellence in life after formal education.

Our Student Leadership programme provides;

- Formal and informal learning opportunities to develop individuals as leaders.
- Processes and structures for student representation and the incorporation of students' views into decision making in the life of the school.

For more information on our Student Leadership programme please visit the school website.

Liturgy

Daily act of Worship

As a Catholic School, all Form Tutors conduct an act of worship with their form groups at the beginning of the day.

*“Let us remember we are blessed by
Jesus the Good Shepherd; try to
follow him in everything that we do,
and in doing so make the most of our
God given talents. Amen”*

Form Prayer Resources

Every form group has prayer resources

- A Good News Bible
- 'A Catholic Prayer Book'
- 'Our Form Prayer Book': Provided by the Chaplain for all regular Form prayer times (usually via PowerPoint. Also, students' own prayers should be kept in this book.

Daily & Weekly Assemblies

Year Group assemblies take place weekly and are led by a member of SLT or a Head of Key Stage on alternate weeks.

Celebrations of the Eucharist

The most important liturgy is the celebration of Mass, which is central to the life and ethos of our school. Voluntary Mass takes place in year groups on a regular basis and is open to all. In addition:

- Mass is celebrated on Holy Days of Obligation when they occur on a weekday in term time,
- Easter Mass is celebrated,
- We have a welcome Mass for our Year 7 pupils and their parents.
- A Leavers' Mass is held in June, prepared by the Year 11's for themselves and their parents. Remembering also, any members of staff who may be leaving.
- We have an end of year Mass

In addition we have many other opportunities to celebrate our faith across the school including prayer groups and becoming a liturgy representative. We expect all pupils in the school to show respect and contribute to acts of worship, liturgy and social action in the school and parents to Parents to support the school in its Christian ethos.

Lockers

Lockers are available for pupils, to hire, for their duration at Grays Convent. A deposit of £5 is required which will be reimbursed when the key is returned. However, if the key is not returned the deposit will be retained in order to replace the key.

Your daughter must clear her locker regularly.

Lunch and Breaktime Food

We continue to offer a wide range of healthy food and drinks both before school, at break and lunchtime in our canteen. Our three-weekly menu cycle is included in the newsletter and on our website. We aim to keep prices low and affordable to all students. Our canteen staff are extremely accommodating and will make every effort to provide for food allergies and welcome any contact that you feel is necessary. All of our food is labelled according to strict food and hygiene regulations.

We ask that you do not send girls into school with fizzy drinks and energy drinks are not permitted and will be confiscated, for their own health, and that of others. This also includes nut products as we have many girls with nut allergies.

Girls who bring their own lunch can eat at picnic benches in the playground or in the canteen. On wet days girls eat their lunch in the canteen or in classrooms where we have a 'wet-break' rota. We do encourage girls to be outside at lunchtime.

Girls are not allowed out of school at break or lunchtime.

Medical

We want to give your daughter the best possible care if she has any medical needs.

If your daughter is too ill to remain at school, parent/carers will be contacted by a member of school staff. **As the use of mobile phones is not permitted in school pupils should not be phoning/texting parents asking to be collected from school.** They must inform a member of staff so that we are aware that they are unwell and can take care of them. **Please do not arrive to collect your daughter unless a member of the school staff has contacted you.**

For medical appointments, your daughter should have brought in written information about the appointment. Your daughter will sign out at the correct time at the General Office.

Pupils are not allowed to bring medication into school unless it is accompanied by a letter from the parent/carer and completion of the Parental Agreement for School to Administer Medication (which is enclosed with this pack and copies can be obtained from Reception). The medication must be given to Mrs Smith (First Aider & Attendance Officer) and will be stored in the medical room. This applies to both prescription and non-prescription drugs.

Medical information is collected on your daughter through the information you provide for us. She will have a care plan and general information is held on the staffroom noticeboard so that all staff are aware. All staff are made aware of unusual or serious illnesses and we have first aiders across the school.

Mobile phones, Electronic Devices and Cameras

Whilst the school accepts that mobile phones and other equipment are now a part of everyday life, we discourage children from bringing them into school as they can be a distraction. If, however, it is absolutely necessary for any child to bring a mobile phone to school it must be switched off at all times throughout the school day and kept in their bag or blazer.

If a phone etc. is in use during the school day, i.e. is visible or audible to a teacher, it will be confiscated and kept at school until a parent/carer can come to school to collect it. The pupil will also be given behaviour points. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Pupils and parents should be aware that if a pupil persistently breaks the above rules, her mobile will be confiscated and retained in school for a longer period. The school will not accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage to any mobile phone or other device.

We do not allow the use of mobile phones at break time or lunchtime, or in lessons as a calculator.

Information on the use of ICT is very clear, explained to girls and is in the planner and this document.

Parking in College Avenue

We would politely ask parents that if you drive your daughters to school in the morning, please drop her in Bradleigh Avenue, and allow your daughter to walk the short distance to the school entrance for the safety of everyone. There are waiting/dropping off bays just in Bradleigh Avenue.

We would draw your attention to the matter of car parking and dropping your daughters in College Avenue in the mornings and evenings. The Police have advised of the following issues that could result in sanctions; these include:

Zig-Zag markings:

1. Issued a fixed penalty notice for £55.00 for failing to comply with a traffic sign or
2. Reported direct for summons.

Blocked driveways:

A Police Constable in uniform has the statutory power (section 99 Road Traffic Act 1984) to remove a vehicle if it is causing an obstruction, preventing a landowner from using their land.

General obstructions:

1. Issued a fixed penalty notice for unnecessary or wilful obstruction.
2. Issued a Traffic Offence Report for 'Leave a motor vehicle in a position causing danger to other road users' (which would include pedestrians).
3. Reported direct for summons for either offence.

Use of Photographs and Digital Images

Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained for using and taking photographs/videos/digital images of students for a variety of different reasons such as:

- On the school website or blog or newsletter
- On the school's social media pages
- In the school prospectus and other printed promotional material, e.g. newspapers
- In display material that may be used around the school
- In display material that may be used off site
- In any material that is submitted to an exam board for assessment
- Through any external publication, e.g. School Year Book
- Recorded or transmitted on a video or via webcam in an educational conference.

This will be agreed annually as part of the documents we ask you to return on entry to the school.

We will remind students of safe and responsible behaviours when creating, using and storing digital images, video and sound and of the risks of inappropriate use of digital images, video and sound in their online activities both at school and at home.

Students and staff will only use school equipment to create digital images, video and sound. In exceptional circumstances personal equipment may be used with permission from the Headteacher provided that any media is transferred solely to a school device and deleted from any personal devices.

In particular:

- Digital images, video and sound will not be taken without the permission of participants.
- Images and video will be of appropriate activities and participants will be in appropriate dress.
- Full names of participants will not be used either within the resource itself, within the file name or in accompanying text online.
- Such resources will not be published online without the permission of the staff and students involved.
- If students are involved, relevant parental permission will also be sought before resources are published online.

Parents may take photographs at school events where the school deems this to be appropriate. However, they must ensure that any images or videos taken involving children other than their own are for personal use and will not be published on the internet including social networking sites.

When searching for images, video or sound clips, students will be taught about copyright and acknowledging ownership. Members of staff are encouraged to use creative common images on materials produced for students unless prior agreement has been given by the author or copyright holder.

Any images, videos or sound clips of students must be stored on the school network and never transferred to personally-owned equipment. The school will store images of students that have left the school for up to 5 years following their departure for use in school activities and promotional resources.

Students and staff are not permitted to use personal portable media for storage of any images, videos or sound clips of students.

The school data manager has the responsibility of deleting the images when they are no longer required, or when a student has left the school and after 5 years for those images used for promotional purposes.

Privacy Notices and General Data Protection

Grays Convent High School, are the Data Controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act. We collect information from you, and may receive information about you from your previous school. We hold this personal data and use it to:

- support teaching and learning;
- monitor and report on your daughter's progress;
- provide appropriate pastoral care, and
- assess how well your daughter is doing.

This information includes your contact details, national curriculum assessment results, attendance information, characteristics such as ethnic group, special educational needs and any relevant medical information.

We will not give information about you to anyone outside the school without your consent unless the law and our rules permit it. We are required by law to pass some of your information to the Local Authority (LA), and the Department for Education (DfE).

If you wish to see a copy of the information we hold and share about you then please contact the Headteacher.

You can find further information on data protection and on how we use data on our school website <https://www.graysconvent.school/gdpr>

If you require more information about how the LA and/or DfE store and use this data please go to the following websites:

- www.thurrock.gov.uk/privacy
- <http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/foi/>
- www.gov.uk/guidance/data-protection-how-we-collect-and-share-research-data

If you do not have access to the internet please contact the Headteacher who will be able to provide a hard copy.

If you require further information please refer to the relevant contact details below:

Headteacher
Grays Convent High School
College Avenue
Grays
Essex RM17 5UX

OR

Lauri Almond
Information Governance Officer
Essex County Council
County Hall
Chelmsford CM1 1QH
Email: IGS@essex.gov.uk
Phone Number: 03330322970

Privacy Notices

Please be advised that not all of the data that we collect from you is shared with everyone listed on the notices. We only share data required for that particular function and only the minimum required. <https://www.graysconvent.school/privacy-notices>

Policies

The following School policies can be found on the Grays Convent High School website at <http://www.graysconvent.school/policies> :

- Accessibility Plan
- Admissions Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Behaviour Policy Learning & Conduct
- Behaviour Systems
- Bereavement Policy
- Careers Education, Advice and Guidance Policy (CEIAG)
- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Collective Worship Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Data Protection Policy

- Drugs Education Policy
- Equality and Diversity for Pupils
- Equality Policy and Equality Objectives 2022-2026
- Exams - Archiving Policy
- Exams - Assessment Examinations Policy
- Exams - Complaints and Appeals Procedure
- Exams - Contingency Plans
- Exams - Disability Policy
- Exams – Internal Appeals Procedure
- Exams - Emergency Evacuation Policy
- Exams - Exams Archiving Policy
- Exams - Non Examination Assessment Policy
- Exams - Word Processor Statement
- Fire Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy Summer
- Freedom of Information Publication Policy
- Hazardous Substance Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- General Data protection and Privacy notices <https://www.graysconvent.school/gdpr>
- Grays Convent High School Risk Assessment and Contingency Plan September 2021
- ICT E-Safety and Acceptable Use Policy for students and staff
- Internal Appeals Procedure
- Low Level Concerns Policy
- Medical Conditions Policy
- Online Home Learning Protocol
- Online Safety Policy
- Privacy Notice – Photos and Digital Images
- Provider Access Policy
- Relationships and Sex Health Education Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Overview in Subjects
 - RSHE across the school October 2022-2023
 - RSE in Catholic Schools
 - RSHE Planning
- Remote Learning Policy
- RSHE/Catholic Ethos for Visitors
- Schools Financial Benchmarking Service
- School Uniform Policy
- SEND Policy
- Surveillance Management Procedure
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Travel Plan
- Whistleblowing Policy

Progress Checks

We keep you up-to-date on your daughter's progress through progress checks 3 times every year. Progress checks record your daughter's progress towards her targets and also her effort and conduct. You have one formal opportunity to speak with teachers each year but you are asked to contact your daughter's subject teacher in the first instance if there is any issue with progress.

We monitor your daughter's performance and progress towards targets and will put in place intervention such as one to one, small group, after school and many other types of intervention if she is not making expected progress.

Rewards

"We aim to reward students for doing the right thing"

How do students gain Achievement Points? For example:

- Attending school! 1 full week of attendance = 1 point
- Working hard academically: teachers will award Achievement points for work which shows improvement or which reflects effort
- Improved work/effort = 1 point
- Good work/homework = 2 points
- Excellent work/homework = 5 points
- Outstanding work/homework = 10 points
- Participating in school life: Achievement points are awarded for assemblies, for events such as Open Evening, for supporting Year 6 activity and challenge days
- Representing the school: play sport for a school team, participate in the Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge for example
- Assuming student leadership roles: Head Girl, Form Captain

Where can students see their Achievement Points?

Parents will receive email alerts via SIMS InTouch the morning after they are awarded.

However they can ask their form tutor during intervention to check their points!

How does the House System work?

There are 4 Houses: Deborah, Lydia, Esther, Mary.

Every pupil is assigned to a House, every point they receive helps their House total.

House Competitions are run by Departments and points are awarded to individual pupils and to forms, for example Sports Day; a whole school event organised by the PE Department and for which individual participants are awarded points. These points are also linked to students' Houses.

At the end of the year there is a winning House. Updated information will be displayed on the House Board in the Foyer.

What happens when a student reaches a certain level of Achievement Points?

There are four levels of rewards each with its own threshold:

- Assistant Head Teacher Award (Bronze): students must reach 200 achievement points, they will be given a commendation in assembly, bronze star and 2 day "Jump the Queue" pass for break and lunch
- Deputy Head Teacher Award (Silver): students must reach 400 achievement points, they will be given a commendation, silver star and 5 day "Jump the Queue" pass for break and lunch
- Head Teacher Award (Gold): students must reach 600 achievement points, they will be given a commendation in assembly, gold star and 5 day "Jump the Queue" pass for break and lunch and rewards trip
- Governor's Award (Platinum): students must reach 800 points, there will be a commendation in assembly, platinum star and a 10 day "Jump the Queue" pass for break and lunch and rewards trip
- Double Platinum: students must reach 900 points, there will be a commendation letter and a 1 month "Jump the Queue" pass for break and lunch and rewards trip

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT SOMEONE HURTING YOU IN SCHOOL OR AT HOME

A Flow Chart for Student Information



You are worried about your own well-being or the well-being of a friend



TELL YOUR FORM TUTOR

She / he will listen to your concerns and pass the information on to the Head of Year/ Key Stage



The Head of Year/ Key Stage will look at the concerns and will work with you to help you to resolve this



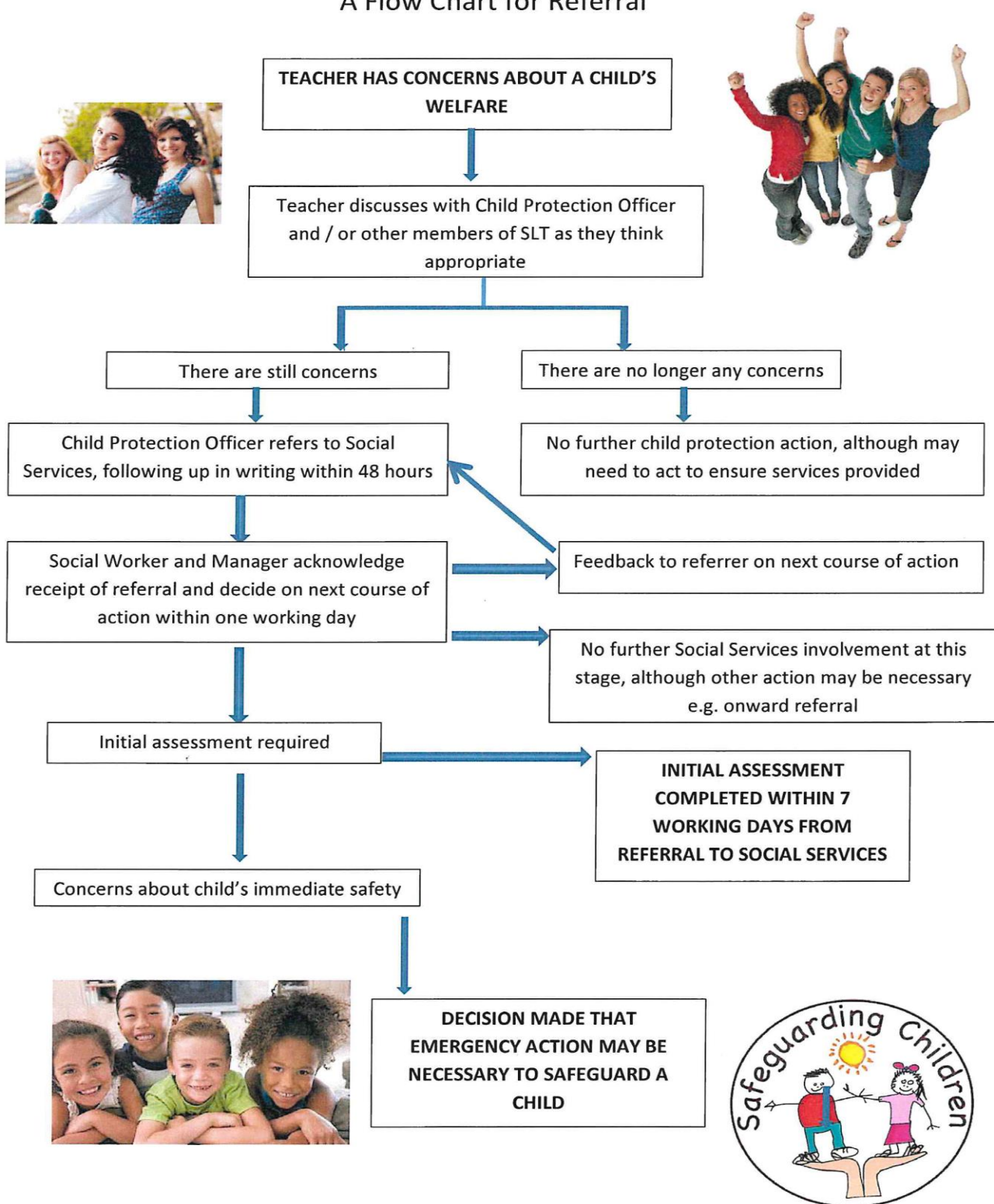
Where it is needed, the Head of School will share information with the Child Protection Officer (Mrs Collis)

MRS COLLIS WILL SPEAK TO YOU AND WORK WITH YOU TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE

WHAT TO DO

If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused

A Flow Chart for Referral



Keeping Children Safe At Grays Convent

Our school is committed to keeping pupils safe - in fact it is our number one priority and the responsibility of all.

It is unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and all staff are trained to safeguard the welfare of all children.

Our Child Protection Team



Mrs K Wells
Head Of Yr 7
Deputy DSL



Mrs Dawn Collis
Deputy Headteacher
Designated Safeguarding



Mrs E Bishop
Pastoral Manager

Our Governor with the responsibility for child protection is
Mrs Laurie Eve.

If you have any concerns about a pupils safety or welfare, please
contact Mrs D Collis, Mrs K Wells Or Mrs E Bishop

Our child protection team may be contacted by any pupil during
the school day.

Special Educational Needs

Our Special Needs Co-ordinator, Miss Keogh, is responsible for overseeing provision for any pupil requiring support with their learning. keoghm@graysconvent.thurrock.sch.uk

We seek to implement the SEN Code of Practice in its commitment to meeting the need of all pupils. The school offer is available on <https://www.graysconvent.school/sen-school-offer>

Student Planners

Each student is given a pupil planner at the start of the academic year. This will help your daughter to plan and record her homework. It is also useful for evaluating her progress towards targets and to celebrate achievements.

Members of staff may write comments to you in the homework diary section. Please do also write your own comments to teachers.

There are also pages that explain “What to do if”, helping pupils to deal with everyday problems in school, the school Code of Conduct and pages near the back for you to record any reason for lateness etc. Tutors sign the planner weekly and will see your comments.

We ask that you also sign your daughter’s planner weekly so that you know what her homework has been and the deadlines set, you can see any comments from staff and you can praise her for her achievements.

Term Dates

Autumn Term:	Wednesday 6 September 2023 – Wednesday 20 December 2023 Monday 4 & Tuesday 5 September 2023 – CPD Days Friday 20 October 2023 – PM Day <i>Half Term 23 October – 27 October</i>	73 days
Spring Term:	Thursday 4 January 2024 – Thursday 28 March 2024 <i>Half Term 19 February - 23 February</i>	56 days
Summer Term:	Monday 15 April 2024 – Friday 19 July 2024 Monday 22 & Tuesday 23 July – Non-Pupil Days (Disaggregated) <i>Half Term 27 May – 31 May, and May Bank Holiday - 6 May</i>	66 days
		<u>195 days</u>

Thurrock School Term and Holiday Dates for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools Academic Year 2023-2024

September 2023							October 2023							November 2023							December 2023								
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S		
				1	2	3						1			1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3			
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24		
25	26	27	28	29	30	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30							25	26	27	28	29	30	31
						30	31																						
January 2024							February 2024							March 2024							April 2024								
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28		
29	30	31	26	27	28	29							25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30								
May 2024							June 2024							July 2024							August 2024								
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S		
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4			
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25		
27	28	29	30	31	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31							26	27	28	29	30	31			

School Days School Holidays Bank Holidays Weekends CPD Days Disaggregated Days

In addition, schools allocate five non-pupil days out of the school days indicated, or the equivalent in disaggregated twilight sessions.

Please note:

The above dates may vary for individual schools, especially Foundation, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies.

You are strongly advised to check with your child's school before making any holiday or other commitments.

Transport

There is no direct home/school transport arranged by the school. For any questions regarding transport please contact Thurrock Council directly (Awards and Benefits) 01375 652511 or for more information go to www.thurrock.gov.uk where additional information can be located.

Tutor Time

The Form Tutor is the first and most important contact for the student in Grays Convent High School.

Pupils will meet with their form tutor every day for registration in the morning. In addition to this the Form Tutor will meet with their form for 1 period each week during assembly and PSHEC.

All letters covering absence should be sent to the Attendance Officer in the General Office.

The Tutor closely monitors the use of the students' planner, checking and signing it weekly.

The Form Tutor monitors academic progress as well as standards of uniform, punctuality and behaviour and encourages the pupil by praising good behaviour, progress, work and involvement in extra-curricular activities.

Pupils will participate in daily reflections and prayers during morning registration led by the Form Tutor.

Uniform

As a school we maintain high standards of school uniform and we are very proud of it. We can only do this with the support of the parents and carers of our pupils. We ask you to ensure that your daughter is in full school uniform every day.

School uniform can be purchased from Nikki's Schoolwear www.uniformsbynikki.com and Uniformwise www.uniformwise.co.uk

Basic Uniform:

- Dark navy-blue pleated skirt worn below the knee or navy-blue school uniform/formal suit style trousers (with black socks)
- Striped navy and white rever neck blouse
- Navy pullover with 'V' neck
- Navy school blazer with badge
- Plain navy blue or black coat (plain - no logos or distinctive markings, etc.)
- Navy blue or black scarf and gloves in winter
- Plain black opaque tights with skirts or black socks with trousers
- White ankle-length socks (Summer term and the first half of Autumn only)
- Navy blue or white scarf or hijab (no adornments or jewellery), if required – white in the Summer.

- Shoes must be black low-heeled and of a sensible design. They should not be “fashion shoes” or have any coloured decorations or look like trainers. Wedge, stiletto or kitten type heels are not suitable. Neither boots nor canvas shoes are permitted, unless medical evidence is provided.

Basic PE Uniform:

Parents should have their PE kit embroidered with their name if they wish, this service is free. This service is available at our outfitters, Uniforms by Niki & Uniformwise. This avoids lost kit for those who take part in after school sports or events.

Compulsory PE Kit for Years 7-11:

- Navy shorts (plain) or navy leggings with school logo (Uniforms by Niki/Uniformwise)
- Navy and white polo shirt (Uniforms by Niki/Uniformwise)
- White football socks (plain)
- Supportive sports trainers (not plimsolls/Vans or Converse etc.)
- Hairband

Optional PE Uniform:

- Gumshield when required- for contact sport.
- Shin pads when required- for contact sport.
- Navy tracksuit bottoms (Uniforms by Niki/Uniformwise)
- Studded football boots (blades not allowed) for Year 7 - 9
- Red Hoodie with school logo (Uniforms by Niki/Uniformwise)
- Waterproof Jacket and Trousers (Uniforms by Niki/Uniformwise)

PE Kit can be purchased from Uniforms by Niki and Uniformwise. Pupils wear P.E kit several times a week at both key stages, and wear uniform into school on the days that they have P.E. This should be borne in mind when purchasing uniform, especially the number of shirts purchased.

Compulsory Branded items of school uniform:

- Blue and white rever shirt (as pupils wear their PE uniform to school when they have PE only 2 shirts need be purchased)
- Navy shorts (plain) or navy leggings with school logo (Uniforms by Niki/Uniformwise)
- Navy and white polo shirt (Uniforms by Niki/Uniformwise)

Optional Branded items of school uniform:

- Navy tracksuit bottoms (Uniforms by Niki/Uniformwise);
- Studded football boots (blades not allowed) for Year 7 – 9;
- Red Hoodie with school logo (Uniforms by Niki/Uniformwise);
- Waterproof Jacket and Trousers (Uniforms by Niki/Uniformwise).

Generic items of school uniform that are acceptable:

- School skirts or trousers that comply with the above requirements (see length, formality and pleats);
- Navy pullover with ‘V’ neck;
- Navy blazers can be purchased from any uniform provider (including Uniforms by Niki’s and Uniformwise where the badge is attached) and school badges can be provided by the school at a small cost;
- White football socks (plain);
- Supportive sports trainers (not plimsolls/Vans or Converse etc.);

- Shin pads;
- Gumshield;
- Hairbands;
- Plain navy blue or black coat (plain - no logos or distinctive markings, etc.);
- Any school bag;
- Navy blue or black scarf and gloves in winter;
- Plain black opaque tights with skirts or black socks with trousers;
- White ankle-length socks (Autumn half term & Summer term only);
- Navy blue scarf or hijab (no adornments or jewellery), if required.

Other Uniform Requirements

- ✓ The only jewellery allowed at school is a watch and one pair of small plain silver studs for those with pierced ears; only one pair in the conventional place in the lobe of the ear.
- ✓ Watches may be worn at the owner's risk. All watches of any type must be removed during examination periods and all jewellery is removed during P.E lessons.
- ✓ The school makes adaptations to its' school uniform jewellery requirements for religious reasons for example wearing the mandatory 5 Sikh sacred symbols for practicing Sikhs. This does not include the wearing of crosses or crucifixes.
- ✓ No other jewellery may be worn to school. This includes: nose studs, conch piercings and tongue or other piercings, bracelets, rings or necklaces. This includes the wearing of crosses or crucifixes that are visible.
- ✓ No jewellery may be worn during P.E lessons for health & safety reasons, excepting Sikh religious symbols or a Hijab.
- ✓ Hair must always should be a natural colour, for example not purple, as it is not a natural hair colour. Hair beads are not permitted for health and safety reasons. Sleep bonnets are not permitted in school.
- ✓ Make up, including fake tan, nail varnish, false nails or eyelashes and eyebrows are not acceptable in school.
- ✓ Coats are not expected to be worn inside the school; students can purchase a locker for the duration of their time in school to keep it in, or need to buy a bag that is sizeable enough to put it in.
- ✓ Students may take part in school productions or sporting events that require specific branded or different clothing. Consideration of cost will be adhered to on all occasions.
- ✓ In cold weather students may wish to wear a vest type top under their clothing- this should not be visible.
- ✓ P.E tops should not be tied back with hair bands and at no point should parts of the body such as stomachs be visible when wearing P.E clothing.

Essential Equipment

Pupils should have with them at all times:

- The Good News Bible
- An English pocket dictionary
- A French dictionary
- A wallet folder for homework worksheets/an exercise book for rough work in class
- An old shirt for Art
- A pencil case containing blue/black/red/green pens, pencil, rubber, ruler, pencil sharpener, colouring pencils, scissors and a glue stick
- A maths set with protractor and pair of compasses
- A Scientific Calculator – Casio fx-83ES
- 1GB Memory Stick
- A strong school bag (we recommend the rucksack type with two shoulder straps)