



# GAINFORD C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

## NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2025

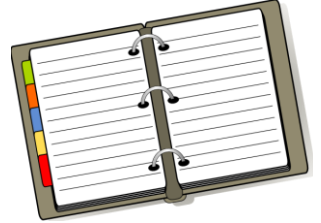
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*Together we love, learn and flourish*

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



- **Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> October** – Harvest Festival at 9.30am at St Mary's Church
- **Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> October** – Open the Book Collective Worship
- **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October** – Y5/Y6 Multi Skills @ Staindrop Academy (am)
- **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October** – NHS Height and Weight Screening (Rec & Y6)
- **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October** – FOGS Halloween Disco (3.30pm-5.00pm)
- **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October** – Y3/Y4 Tag Rugby Competition @ Staindrop Academy (am)
- **Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October** – Y6 Pupils / Deadline to apply for Secondary School Places
- **Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November** - Pupils return to school / Start of Autumn Term 2
- **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November** – Parents Evening
- **Monday 10<sup>th</sup>-Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November** – National Anti-Bullying Week
- **Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November** – Odd Socks Day
- **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November** – World Kindness Day
- **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November** – Children in Need
- **Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November** – KS2 Trip to Hardwick Park
- **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December** – Swale Class Nativity Performance @ 9.30am
- **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December** – Swale Class Nativity Performance @ 2.45pm
- **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December** – Whole School Pantomime visit
- **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December** – Christmas Jumper Day
- **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December** - Christingle Service @ 9.30am at St Marys Church, Gainford
- **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December** - School Christmas Dinner Day
- **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December** - Christmas Parties (pm)
- **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December** - Last day in school / Break up for Christmas
- **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January** – Pupils return to school / start of Spring Term 1



A big warm welcome to all our new families -we're so pleased to have you with us at Gainford C of E School! The term is now well underway, and it has been wonderful to see the children settling into their new classes and enjoying their learning. We've got lots of exciting things planned for the year ahead and we'll keep you updated through our eSchools app, newsletter, school website and Facebook page.

As always, if you've got any questions, please just ask, we're happy to help!

Thanks so much for all your continued support; it really does mean a lot! ♥

### HARVEST FESTIVAL

Our Harvest Festival is on **Tuesday 7th October** at **9:30am** at **St Mary's Church, Gainford**. Everyone is welcome!

As part of our celebration, we will be collecting food donations in support of our local food banks.

Your kindness and generosity are greatly appreciated - thank you!

We hope to see you there.



## PARENTS EVENING – AUTUMN TERM

Advanced notification of date

**Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November.**

Further information will be sent via our e-Schools app shortly.



## FLU IMMUNISATION

If your child missed having the flu vaccine in school, there is a catch up clinic in Bishop Auckland on

**Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> October.**

**To book onto a clinic please call  
0333 358 3397**

**Monday – Friday 9AM – 5PM**

## INDOOR SHOES / PLIMSOLLS

As part of our school uniform policy, we would like to politely remind all families that **every pupil needs a pair of plimsolls for their indoor shoes.**

**Please ensure that these are plimsolls only, not trainers, Crocs, or other types of footwear.**

Thank you to everyone who has already provided these. If you are experiencing any difficulties in purchasing plimsolls, please do let us know.

We're here to help.



## REMINDER COLD WEATHER PREPARATION

As the weather is getting colder, please can we ask that parents ensure children wear and/or bring a:

- **school jumper or cardigan**
- **warm, waterproof coat**
- **wellies or suitable footwear**
- **hat**



## PE DAYS

- **Swale Class** (EYFS, Y1 & Y2) Wednesday & Friday
- **Wear Class** (Y3 & Y4) Tuesday & Thursday
- **Tees Class** –(Y5 & Y6) Tuesday & Thursday



Also, for PE lessons, we kindly ask that children either wear trainers to school or have a pair of trainers and socks (especially if they usually wear tights) packed in their PE bags – thank you.

## WATERBOTTLES

Please send your child to school each day with a water bottle containing **water only**. These can be refilled across the day. Water is also provided on the lunch tables for all pupils (school meals and packed lunches).



## LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS

Just a reminder that the law states that a Head Teacher is unable to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

We ask that parents complete a leave of absence form which is available on our school website or from the school office.

Please be aware that unauthorised absences on your child's attendance records could result in you receiving a penalty notice from the local authority.

**5 days / 10 sessions unauthorised absence in a 10 week rolling period must now be referred for enforcement action.**

**Within a 3-year period:**

The first penalty notice is **£160** if paid within 28 days, reduced to **£80** if paid within 21 days.

A second penalty notice is **£160** to be paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice **cannot** be issued. **Legal action** may result (for example, prosecution).

**Fines are issued per parent / per child, not per family.**

Further information, including our **school holiday dates**, can be found on our website:

[https://www.gainfordcofeprimary.co.uk/web/school\\_holidays/](https://www.gainfordcofeprimary.co.uk/web/school_holidays/)

<https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/2208/Holidays-in-term-time>

## ATTENDANCE

**Our minimum target is 96%**

Well done to Swale & Tees Class who have achieved attendance levels above this target. Fantastic work!

Swale	Wear	Tees
99%	94%	96.7%

Current Whole School Attendance is **96.75%** 😊



## HEADTEACHER GOLD AWARDS

**Week 1 – Excellent Effort**

*Frankie, Harrison & Marley*

**Week 2 – Outstanding Behaviour**

*Esme, Bonnie & Thea*

**Week 3 – Showing great teamwork**

*Bea, Angus & Sophie*

**Week 4 – Being respectful**

*Eleanor, Jessica & Freddie*



**Keep Up the Good Work!**

**Halloween  
Coffee  
Morning**

18th October 11am Onwards

**WINSTON  
VILLAGE HALL,  
FRONT STREET,  
WINSTON,  
DARLINGTON,  
DL23RJ**

Raffle

Pumpkin Decorating  
Biscuit Decorating

Pick n Mix



Raising money for:





## **FRIENDS OF GAINFORD SCHOOL (FOGS)– URGENT NEW MEMBERS NEEDED!**

The Friends of Gainford School (FOGS) work incredibly hard to raise funds that benefit all our pupils. Thanks to their dedication, we've been able to provide opportunities such as Accelerated Reader, transport for school trips, and even our stage for performances. However, the same small group of parents has kindly led the committee for many years, and this will be their final year. **To keep FOGS running, we urgently need new parents and carers to get involved ASAP. Without FOGS, we won't be able to fund many of the "extras" that make our children's time at Gainford so special.**

Please consider joining and helping to make a real difference for our children. We know everyone is busy, but even a small contribution of your time can make a difference. If you're interested or would like to know more, please contact the school office - we'd love to have you on board!



### **RECEPTION CLASS PLACES 2026**

If you have a child who turns five between 1 September 2025 and 31 August 2026 you can now apply for a school place.

Visit [www.durham.gov.uk/primaryschoolplaces](https://www.durham.gov.uk/primaryschoolplaces) where you can access a useful guide to help with your application. Online applications are encouraged but paper application forms are available on request from Durham County Council. Applications close at midnight on 15 January 2026. For more information, please contact School Places and Admissions Team on 03000 265896.

### **SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES (Y6 PUPILS ONLY)**

Parents can make their application for Secondary School online by visiting <https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/2192/Apply-now-for-a-secondary-school-place-deadline-31-October-2025>

The closing date for Secondary School applications is the **31st October 2025**. If parents do not wish to apply online they can complete a paper application form, and these are available on request from the School Admissions Team. A letter from Durham County Council has been sent home previously.

### **PARKING**

This is just a friendly reminder to please take care when dropping off and collecting pupils at school. We would greatly appreciate your cooperation in ensuring that residents' drives and gateways are not blocked under any circumstances. While we understand that the roads around our school are public highways, we would really appreciate it if you were mindful when parking and show respect for our residents.

Also, we encourage you to turn off engines when stationary, as vehicle exhaust emissions contribute to air pollution, affecting our children and community. If you need a place to park, the area around the village green is a great option.

Thank you for your understanding and support!

### **EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS**

Please can you let the office know if you have recently updated any of your contact details **especially mobile phone numbers and email addresses** as it is essential that we have two contact numbers per child - thank you.



### **PRE-LOVED UNIFORM NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE!**

A quick reminder that The Friends of Gainford School (FOGS) have set up a pre-loved uniform website, making it easier than ever to order school uniform at fantastic prices!

Most items are in excellent condition, with very little wear, and are priced at just 50p or £1. It's a great way to save money, reduce waste, and support our school community.

The ordering process is completely discreet; simply order online, and your child will receive their items to bring home the very same day.

All proceeds go directly to **FOGS**, helping to fund exciting events, trips, and opportunities for our pupils.

Why not take a look (simply click on the weblink below)

<https://uniformerly.co.uk/listing-category/gainford-cofe-primary-school-dl2-3dr/>



uniformerly



## **Are there children with neurodiverse needs in your family?**



We're running **FREE** drop-in sessions to offer help and advice



You don't need to have a diagnosis to attend



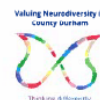
Get information on health, wellbeing, education and care and more



Come along and chat to professionals, charities and local groups and meet other families too.



Sessions run across the county, find your nearest at [www.durhamsendiass.info/dropinsessions](http://www.durhamsendiass.info/dropinsessions) or scan the QR code



### **SAFEGUARDING**

At Gainford C of E Primary School, we are passionate about and committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and we expect all staff and visitors to share this commitment. Any concerns about children are passed through the members of staff who are trained as Designated Child Protection Leads. In our school, these are myself (Mrs Whitaker) and Miss Smith. We also have two link Safeguarding Academy Councillors - Mr Deakin and Mrs Hawlor.



Mrs Whitaker



Miss Smith



Mr Deakin



Mrs Hawlor

We have robust policies in place to ensure the well-being of our children. These policies underpin our practice and values shared by every single member of staff in our school. Copies are available from the school office or via our website <https://www.gainfordcofeprimary.co.uk/web/safeguarding/> & [https://www.gainfordcofeprimary.co.uk/web/school\\_policies/](https://www.gainfordcofeprimary.co.uk/web/school_policies/)

**Please note that if you are ever worried or concerned about a child's safety, please do not hesitate to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Leads straight away.**

## Term Dates 2025-2026

Holiday	Closing date	Date re-opens
<b>Autumn half-term 2025</b>	Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> October 2025	Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November 2025
<b>Christmas 2025</b>	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> December 2025	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
<b>Spring half-term 2026</b>	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> February 2026	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2026
<b>Easter 2026</b>	Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2026	Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
<b>May Day 2026</b>	Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2026	Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> May 2026
<b>Summer half-term 2026</b>	Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2026	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2026
<b>Summer 2026</b>	Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2026	TBC

### Teacher Training Days 2025-2026

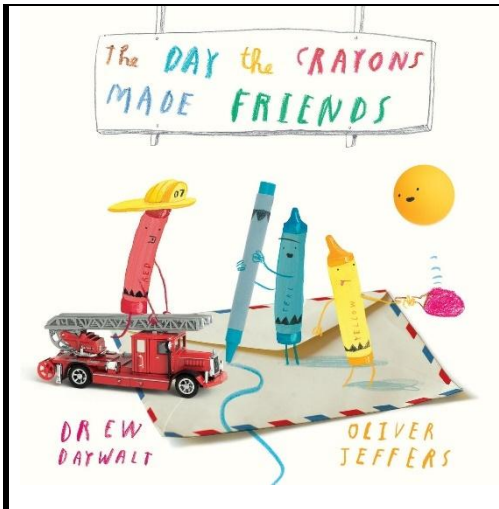
- ~~Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025~~
- ~~Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025~~
- Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2026
- Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2026



**Many thanks for your continued support.**

Mrs. K. Whitaker & The Gainford Team x

# Recommended Reads



## **The Day the Crayons Made Friends by Drew Daywalt (author), Oliver Jeffers (illustrator)**

Duncan's crayons just can't seem to stay put!

After convincing one group of crayons to go back to work after they wanted to quit and rescuing another group who got lost in the most inconvenient places, Duncan's crayons have disappeared once more.

But this time they've gone into his room to make friends. From Red Crayon, who fulfils his dream of driving a fire engine, to Blue Crayon, who meets a fashion doll desperately in need of a head, to fan favourite Esteban, who is off to tame a teddy bear (or as he would call it, a wild beast), each crayon has an exciting story to share about the new objects they've met and the new adventures they've had.

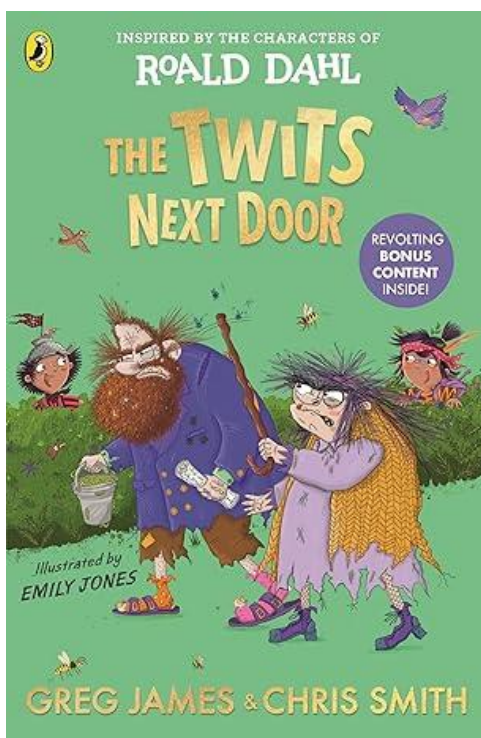


## **The Wild Robot on the Island by Peter Brown (author)**

Roz is not where she's supposed to be.

Roz the robot wasn't designed to live in the wilderness. But when she washes up on an island, she must learn from the animal inhabitants and adapt to her new, natural surroundings, and before long, the island begins to feel like home.

Filled with Peter Brown's stunning artwork, this moving picture book is the perfect gift for readers new to The Wild Robot or for longtime fans of the series that sparked a global phenomenon.



## **The Twits Next Door by Greg James (author), Chris Smith (author), Emily Jones (illustrator)**

A wickedly funny and prank-filled adventure starring one of Roald Dahl's most hilarious and popular creations, The Twits.

This brand-new and deliciously revolting story is brilliantly written by internationally bestselling authors and children's literacy advocates Greg James and Chris Smith and illustrated by Emily Jones.

Mr and Mrs Twit are just about as nasty and revolting as two people can get. The only thing that brings the two of them pleasure is playing pranks on one another.

But, when a new family called the Lovelies move in next door, with their lively 10-year-old twins, they teach The Twits to stop being so mean and horrible and they all live happily ever after . . .

Ha! Not really. The Twits HATE the Lovelies.

But how far will The Twits go to rid themselves of their horribly nice new neighbours? And what happens when these new neighbours, who are armed with utter loveliness, start to fight back?