



Gainford CE Primary School
Pre-School Brochure
2021-2022

Welcome to Gainford CE Primary School Pre-School!

Aim of our School

To provide a safe, welcoming and happy Christian school, set within both the local and global community where academic potential is fulfilled and positive values are nurtured.

Our Ethos Statement

Recognising its historic foundation, Gainford C of E Primary School will preserve and develop the religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church at parish and diocesan level.

The school aims to serve its community by providing education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers all its pupils.

Gainford C of E Primary School welcomes all, and reveres and respects all members of the diverse community as individuals who are known and loved by God.

Gainford C of E Primary School is a small Church of England Primary School of some 75 pupils arranged into three classes. We also have a pre-school group that is taught alongside our Reception pupils in our EYFS unit. It is set in pleasant surroundings and full use is made of these in the education of our children.

Children attending the school come not only from the village of Gainford itself but also from the neighbouring villages of Winston and Ovington and from some other surrounding settlements too. For those children living outside the village of Gainford, transport is provided by the Local Authority in accordance with its policy.

At Gainford C of E Primary School we always look to develop the whole child and our dedicated team of staff will help your child to develop socially, emotionally and physically as well as academically. We sincerely hope your child will be happy here at Gainford C of E Primary School and we shall do all we can to help each one achieve his/her full potential.

We hope that you will find this brochure useful. If you have any further queries, comments or questions, we would like to hear from you. We value everyone's opinions and contributions, enabling us to make our school even better. Should you wish to know more about our school, please contact the School Office and someone will endeavor to get back to you as soon as possible. We will be delighted to tell you why we are so proud of what we do.

Mrs C. Riley (Head Teacher)

Mrs J. Young (Chair of Governors)



A Message of Welcome from the Bishop of Durham, Bishop Paul Butler

It has been my privilege over many years to visit schools in many different places. This has been across England but also in some of the very poorest countries in the world, like Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda. It does not matter where I see schools at work, I am always impressed by the dedication of teachers and the longing of parents to want the very best for their children. As a parent I know you want the very best for your child. The Church of England is engaged in schools because it too wants the very best for every child.

Every child matters because every child is special. Naturally they are special to you, their parent or carer, and to grandparents. They are also special to the school. This is particularly true for us in church schools because of what we believe about the value God places on every child.

Jesus' friends were arguing one day about who was the greatest in God's kingdom. Jesus took a small child, stood him or her amongst the group and told all the adults that unless they became like this child they could never enter God's kingdom. I often wonder just how very special that child felt that day. We want a sense of being loved, accepted and valued to be at the very heart of our schools, and of your child's education.

Education matters because it provides building blocks for life now and into the future. We seek to offer the very best education we can in every school. This is not simply about the important matters of reading, writing, numbers and the like. It is also about the values by which we behave, and the kind of people we want to be. We believe our church schools offer great all round education for every child.

I love being able to visit schools and meet children. They are always enthusiastic, welcoming and brilliant at asking tough questions. Their zeal for learning is inspiring.

So welcome to one of our wonderful church schools. I trust your child will find they grow and develop well throughout their time here.

+Paul

We are a Good School: OFSTED May 2019

Our school continues to be judged as **good** by OFSTED. We are deservedly proud of this important recognition of our achievements and improvements:

- The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school. You and your team, supported by governors, have made sure that the areas for improvement highlighted at the previous inspection have been actioned. You have also made sure that the strengths of the school have continued to develop.
- Pupils' behaviour and personal development continue to be very strong.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are a substantial factor in supporting them to make good progress across a range of subjects.
- Pupils continue to enjoy a wide array of enrichment and clubs which capture their interests and help them to develop healthy minds and lifestyles.
- Governors continue to serve the school well, providing a sharp challenge as well as maintaining a high level of support for leaders.
- Safeguarding is effective. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose

Comments from OFSTED (May 2019)

- The teaching of Jesus "to love your neighbour as yourself" is lived out and is seen in the excellent behaviour and caring, supportive relationships between all in the school community.
- Christian values are embedded in the daily life of the school, contributing to the good progress and attainment of every pupil. All are valued and nurtured as children of God and academic and personal achievements are equally celebrated.
- Outstanding teaching of Religious Education (RE) makes a significant contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development, (SMSC) their understanding of Christianity and social diversity.
- Excellent curricular opportunities for SMSC have allowed children to flourish and to develop as rounded, confident and articulate individuals.
- Established and highly effective links with the local church and community have ensured that Gainford School is at the heart of the community it serves making a positive contribution to village life.

Extracts from the Church (SIAMS) Inspection (September 2015)

Community Links

We have strong links with our local community and local church, St Mary's Church, Gainford. Our pupils take part in community events such as Gainford Village Art Exhibition, Gainford Horticultural show, Harvest Festival, and lots more events held within the community and at church throughout the year.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Teaching Staff

Mrs. C. Riley	Head Teacher
Mrs. J. Kidd	Deputy Head Teacher, Class Teacher Y5, Y6
Mr. D. Martin	Class Teacher Y2, Y3, Y4
Miss. M. Farley	Class Teacher Y1, Reception, Pre-School SENCO
Mrs. J. McLachlan	Class Teacher Music, French
Mrs R. Muir	PPA Cover, Forest Schools
Mrs. E. Gallagher	Teaching Assistant
Mrs. L. Maude	Teaching Assistant
Miss J. Collishaw	Teaching Assistant

Support Staff

Mrs. R. Wickens	Admin Officer
Mrs. M. Reed	Caretaker
Mrs. J. Mennell	Supervisory Assistant, Cleaner, Crossing Patrol
Mrs. S. McGuill	Cook
Mrs. K. Cook	Kitchen Assistant
Miss K. Hannant	Supervisory Assistant
Miss N. Holmes	Childcare Supervisor
Mrs. R. Stevens	Parent Support Advisor (PSA)

School Times and Term Dates

The school times are set by the Governing Body. The times of Pre-School are shown below.

Please arrive promptly at the start of the school day and at the end of the day to collect your child.

Day Begins	Lunchtime	Day Ends
8:55am	11:55am – 12:25pm	3:25pm

Term dates for the academic year 2021/2022 are as follows:

Holiday	Closing Date	Date Re-open for Teaching Purposes
Summer 2021	Tuesday 20 July 2021	Thursday 2 September 2021
Autumn Half Term 2021	Friday 22 October 2021	Tuesday 2 November 2021
Christmas 2021	Friday 17 December 2021	Wednesday 5 January 2022
Spring Half Term 2022	Friday 18 February 2022	Monday 28 February 2022
Easter 2022	Friday 8 April 2022	Monday 25 April 2022
May Day 2022	Thursday 28 April 2022	Tuesday 3 May 2022
Summer Half Term 2022	Thursday 26 May 2022	Monday 6 June 2022
Summer 2022	Thursday 21 July 2022	Tuesday 6 September 2022

Teacher Training Days 2021-2022 in Term Time

Wednesday 1st September 2021

Monday 1st November 2021

Tuesday 4th January 2022

Friday 27th May 2022

Monday 20th June 2022

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the stage of education for children from birth right up to the end of the reception year. It is based on the recognition that children learn best through play and active learning.

This is a very important stage as it helps your child to get ready for school, as well as preparing them for their future learning and successes. From when your child is born, up until the age of 5, their early years' experiences should be happy, active, exciting, fun, and should support their development, care and learning needs.

The EYFS Framework exists to support all professionals working in the EYFS to help your child and was developed with several Early Years experts and parents. In 2020 the framework was revised to make it clearer and easier to use, with more focus on the things that matter most. This revised framework has a greater emphasis on the importance of your role in helping your child to develop.

Within our Foundation Stage, there is a Pre-School, Reception and Year 1 class. This allows us the flexibility to offer an individual induction programme for those children who find it challenging to settle into the demands and routines of school life. Children normally start Reception the academic year after their 4th birthday.

We provide a secure, warm stimulating and friendly environment for your child's learning. The Foundation Stage at Gainford Primary School is for children 3 - 5 years old. We have 12 places for Pre School children, and they will play and learn alongside our Reception and Year 1 children within Class Swale.

We are very fortunate to have a lovely learning environment comprising of two indoor classrooms and a fantastic outdoor area including a mud kitchen, allotment, climbing equipment and a large open space. Pre-school children will have opportunities to work together, and with older children in this setting which give experiences of learning in different situations. Class Swale is a family-style environment to ensure we are 'Learning Together on Life's Journey.'

Beginning of the Session

At the start of the school day staff will be on the Infant yard and we ask that parents and carers leave the children at the gate after they have been handed over to a member of staff.

You are free at this time to talk to any member of staff on the gate, to share any concerns or matters that you feel we should know about. If you need a longer discussion, please ask to make an appointment. Staffs' priority is to ensure the safety and well-being of all children and so therefore they may not be able to discuss things with you at length at the gate.

It is important that we all try to encourage our children to be as independent as possible and staff will support them to be so.

Please note that each child has their own individual peg to keep their belongings on. All staff will do their best to ensure all coats and belongings are kept safe on pegs, but as you can appreciate, to ensure everything is present is a difficult task. Unfortunately, we cannot accept liability for any items of clothing that are lost or misplaced. Please help us by clearly naming all your child's belongings in an obvious place that can be seen by ourselves and your child. Please try and use a permanent marker or name labels. If you are purchasing school uniform, your child's name can be embroidered onto their school sweatshirt at the point of ordering.

End of the Session

At the end of the school day staff will bring the children out onto the yard and they will be handed over to the adult who has come to collect them via the school gate.

Children should always be collected by a responsible person over the age of 16 who is known to staff and to the child. The staff must always know who is expected to collect your child.

If it is necessary for any other adult to collect your child, please let staff know in advance where possible. You are always able to contact the school office to inform us of any changes. We have a duty of care to keep all children safe, therefore children may not be collected by any other adult without the knowledge and permission of the parent/carer. Please try to avoid any awkwardness by letting us know in plenty of time about any changes.

It is important to collect your children on time. Searching the sea of faces for someone who is collecting you and finding no one there can be really upsetting when you are only 3 or 4 years old.

If you are collecting a child at lunchtime (i.e., they are only attending mornings), please collect your child from the main school entrance.

Staff

Miss Farley leads the Foundation Stage and is supported by our fabulous Teaching Assistant Mrs Gallagher. Within Class Swale we avoid staffing labels and ensure children know that any staff or teaching students within the class should be viewed and respected as their teacher.

As children begin their pre-school journey, they may spend more time with one member of staff to ensure they are settled and begin to form a bond with staff. However, both Miss Farley and Mrs Gallagher will work with all children within the class and across the age groups.

We are keen to learn about your child and any needs they may have. You are able to inform us of these through pre-school packs and via Tapestry. We aim to build a rapport with you as parents and ensure information is exchanged. This can be done in a number of ways including parents' evening, phone calls, and Tapestry. Although Miss Farley and Mrs Gallagher will both be available for parents to speak to at the beginning and end of the day we ask that enquiries at the beginning of the day are short as we need to support the children in accessing the classroom.

There may be times when other members of staff support in our classroom.

House Keeping

Toileting

Although we realise that occasionally children have 'accidents' when they are engrossed in activities, we do expect children of pre-school age to be independently using the toilet, flushing it and washing their own hands. This will become second nature to them as they freely use our toilets. We do have a small supply of spare clothes just in case, **but please ensure they are wearing clothes they can manage themselves.**

Snack Time

Due to the timings of our learning and free play opportunities we use snack time as a chance for all children to sit together, chat and enjoy some milk and fruit. As all children are together we strongly encourage you to sign-up to the milk scheme to ensure your child doesn't feel as though they are missing out.

Milk



Milk is provided free of charge until your child is 5 years of age however you must sign up to the scheme via the Cool Milk website <https://www.coolmilk.com/parents/>. Once your child is 5 years old, you have the choice to purchase milk at a subsidised price. Where children are unable to drink milk, water will be offered as an alternative.

All children are encouraged to drink some milk every day due to the obvious health benefits. Alternatively, water is available. Children should not bring juice into school.

Fruit

We are part of the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme where children in Pre-School, Reception and KS1 are entitled to receive a free piece of fruit or vegetable each day.

Healthy living

We feel it's important to promote a healthy lifestyle from the start, encouraging children to be aware of healthy practices. We provide opportunities for developing healthy bodies and minds. Children are offered milk or water at snack time and such things as fruit, cheese, crackers and the occasional birthday cake. We sometimes bake biscuits and cakes thereby demonstrating that we can all eat any foods in moderation. We also promote the drinking of water throughout the day so encourage children to bring a water bottle which can be kept in your child's trough.

School Meals and Lunch Arrangements

At Gainford CE Primary School we promote and encourage healthy eating. During your child's time here, they will have many opportunities to try a wide variety of foods and textures. We also like to include the children in the preparation and the choice of their snack.

School Meals



Taylor Shaw, Durham County Council's approved catering contractor, provides our school meals. This means that pupils who opt to stay for school lunch, have a variety of healthy, nutritionally balanced foods. Children are provided with a school meal with either a hot or cold dessert. All pupils are offered chilled drinking water as part of their lunch.

The cost of a school meal for Pre-School children will be £2.42 from October 2021.

School lunches must be ordered and paid for in advance using ParentPay our online payment system. The cut off time for ordering lunches is 8:30am on the day the lunch is required. Any lunches not taken due to absence will be credited back to the parent account.

The school requires 2 weeks' notice to change from school meals to packed lunch or vice versa.

Pre-School children may stay for a school lunch or alternatively they can bring their own packed lunch.

Packed Lunches

Children may bring a healthy packed lunch. To ensure consistency and to keep packed lunches in line with food standards for school meals, packed lunches should not contain the following:

- Fizzy / sugary drinks in cartons, bottles or cans
- Chocolate-coated products / sweets / confectionary
- Cereal bars, fruit bars
- Chocolate spread as a filling for sandwiches
- Chewing gum
- Sugared / toffee and salted popcorn

Admissions

The main entry for children to start Pre-School is the term after they are 3 years old. If places are available, younger children will be admitted in the term of their 3rd birthday but this will not normally be free entitlement. Please refer to our Pre-School Admissions policy.

Names can be placed on the pre-school waiting list in the September after a child's first birthday and priority will be given to children by date of birth.

We contact parents the term before children are due to start to offer a place and arrange inductions.

In the September following a child's 4th birthday they will move on to Primary School, however, a place at our Pre-School doesn't automatically mean a place is available in the school, as the criteria for admission is not the same. The deadline for Primary application is usually mid January in the year your child will start school. This link will take you to Durham County Council's Primary Admission page where you can find out further information. <https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/2191/Primary-school-places>

Times and Charges for Sessions

Morning Session	8:55am – 11:55am	3 hours
Lunch Session	11:55am – 12:25pm	½ hour
Afternoon Session	12:25pm – 3:25pm	3 hours

We offer 15 hours of Free Entitlement taken from Monday to Friday, from 8:55am until 3:25pm.

Your child is able to attend more than 15 hours per week. If you are entitled to 30 hours free childcare, you will only be charged for the additional ½ hour per day your child is having lunch - £2.25 per day. If you are not entitled to 30 hours free childcare, you will be charged for any additional hours over your 15 hours free entitlement at a rate of £4.50 per hour.

Charges are applied to your ParentPay account on a weekly basis. A weekly payment would be appreciated.

Attendance

Staff would appreciate it if you could ring school on 01325 730274 and let us know if your child is unwell and therefore not coming in. Many childhood illnesses are spread by contact and by sharing germs amongst children playing together. Children do not play or learn effectively if they are unwell. Being sick or having a tummy upset at pre-school can seriously distress children, and if they do have sickness/diarrhoea, they must not return for 48 hours after the last bout to prevent it from spreading. If they return to pre-school when they are well, they will be much less likely to pick up another infection.

Changes in Circumstances

Please inform us of any change of address or telephone numbers, or if there is any change of family circumstance that may affect your child. It is very important that we keep our records up to date. It is a legal requirement that we have 2 contact telephone numbers in case of an emergency.

It is parent's responsibility to keep contact details up to date. In some instances, there may be a data breach (under GDPR regulations) if we have the wrong contact details, because we have not been informed. Under these circumstances we cannot be held responsible for any data breach.

It is also important for you to let us know if any kind of personal or family trauma arises, as we would want to give your child extra support/attention in such circumstances.

For everyday wear and tear your child needs suitable clothing which could possibly get dirty or stained. We do have aprons but unfortunately, paint, glue, shaving foam, soil, etc. tend to get everywhere! Clothes which enable children to be independent when going to the toilet are a necessity to prevent accidents, and Velcro shoes are ideal. They need wellingtons and warm coats, hats, scarves, and gloves for colder weather, with indoor footwear to change into.

School sweatshirts and cardigans are very hard wearing and can be purchased. Order forms for school uniform items can be obtained from the school office and orders sent direct to the supplier. The telephone number for Elizabeth's Embroidery is 01642 674973 fax 01642 6411005, website www.elizabethsembroidery.com. Items can be ordered online using the password GF20. Deliveries are made to school and sent home with your child.

Please ensure EVERY item of clothing has a name in, including footwear. We discourage the wearing of any kind of jewellery in pre-school as accidents can easily happen.

In summer children need sunhats to wear with names in and sun cream should be applied before coming to pre-school.

Lost Property

Any lost property is placed in the lost property box in the foyer. You are welcome to look in here for any items of clothing that may have gone missing.

Water Bottles

Please ensure that you provide your child with a water bottle which will be sent home for washing daily.

Drinking water can help to keep your child's brain hydrated and healthy, enabling them to concentrate more in lessons...

Drink more, think more!

The Early Years Curriculum

Within our EYFS provision we focus our teaching and learning experiences around the three prime areas of:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language.

and the specific areas of literacy and mathematics, whilst still providing a rich environment to allow children to demonstrate and embed their skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of learning.

There are 4 other specific areas in addition to the 3 prime areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

It is the aim of the Foundation Stage to provide children with a language rich quality provision, which fosters their curiosity and independence as learners and provides a wide range of activities, to allow all children to learn and achieve in a safe environment, where they feel happy and valued.

We aim to enable all children to leave the Foundation Stage as independent learners with a firm foundation in all areas of learning from which they can build future successes and learning upon.

Personal, Social & Emotional Development

We believe that children who learn to respect one another and the things around them will grow up as confident, independent, curious, and enthusiastic individuals.

Children are happy when they feel good about themselves, they show an interest in learning and are motivated. They show sensitivity to the needs and views of others. To help children develop in this area, we provide them with; a caring environment with staff as good role models, encouraged to work, play, cooperate, help one another, be friendly and polite and function in a group beyond the family. We share our feelings, stories that promote respect, empathy, and self-control. We celebrate the Christian religion through school and class Collective Worship, birthdays, Christmas & Easter. We value other cultures, try food from other countries and listen to music, stories and celebrate festivals from many cultures.

Communication, Language and Literacy

Children should be supported to become competent in communicating, speaking, and listening. In our pre-school children are encouraged to talk about their experiences, express themselves clearly and confidently and ask questions. Developing good communication skills at an early age can have a positive effect on future educational success. It's difficult to emphasise how important it is for you to talk to your child and to actively listen to what he/she has to say.

You are your child's best teacher of language.

Children should be provided with opportunities for listening to stories, looking at books alone or with a friend, as this will help develop skills necessary for the eventual process of reading. Books play an important part in language development as children begin to understand that print carries meaning, and they begin to recognise their name and some letter symbols. We have lots of writing and labels around pre-school to read!

Many activities lead directly into writing, and it is a process which can't be hurried. Children need to use mark making materials of every description – pencils, pens, crayons, chalk, paintbrushes, and other tools perhaps in the sand, soil, dough, shaving foam and clay. They need to feel confident about making marks before they can be expected to produce letter symbols such as their name.

In pre-school they 'write' for all kinds of reasons, for example:

*appointments/plans in role play *shopping lists

*filling in forms * captions for pictures *letters and cards *

You can help by 'pretending' you know what they have written – ask your child to read it to you. Children need to go through these stages before they are able to control a pencil well enough to 'write' a letter or number (so even if it looks like scribble, it is part of a process).

In our pre-school we also contribute to the provision for CLL by carrying out adult led activities of Phonological Awareness. This focuses on good listening, sound discrimination, rhythm & rhyme, music and singing and oral blending of sounds in words. Children are encouraged to continue these activities during free play.

It's important for parents to understand that we will not only support learning and development but build the important foundations necessary for children to read and write once they move into Primary School.

Problem solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

There is so much more to maths than counting and numbers! Rote counting means nothing unless children can understand that $1 = 1$ object, $2 = 2$ objects, and so on. Lots of activities in pre-school provide mathematical and scientific experiences. Playing with blocks, threading beads, jigsaws, construction sets, etc. will provide opportunities for comparing, sorting, matching, ordering, pattern making, sequencing, and counting. Mathematics is happening all the time in young children's lives, for example, when shopping, in the car, at home, in the café. Make it fun for them.

Children will be encouraged to measure, estimate and classify. They will learn to use mathematical language, solve practical problems, show curiosity and investigate objects and materials. In pre-school many activities are what we call 'cross-curricular' which means they cover many areas. Investigating sand and water provides early experiences of capacity and volume, and activities such as cooking and growing things build mathematical and scientific opportunities into children's play.

Sand play may be related to: pre-maths skills – weighing, matching shapes, volume. Science – discovering properties of dry sand, what it feels like, how it pours. Language development – learning new words and ideas related to sand and equipment, talking about sand. As children progress some will begin to show an interest in numbers, they will be able to count reliably, recognise some number symbols and begin to write them. By singing number rhymes and playing counting games it's fun, fun, fun and counting seems much easier!

Creative Development

Children love to dress up, pretend and playing out real life situations helps them to understand the world around them. In our pre-school we have a 'life area' which can be transformed into a hospital, a salon, a building site, a garage, a travel agent and more! Children will find ways to communicate by using colour, sound, texture, movement, and shape. We offer opportunities for them to use their senses. They paint, write, draw, make collage pictures and models from reclaimed materials. They create something which is unique to them.

Representing and communicating ideas and feelings in a variety of ways through such things as language, paint, music, and dance is important for creative expression. Children love listening to different music and sounds, making sounds, singing rhymes and songs, and exploring how they can move their bodies. We also have what we call 'small world' activities which children use to make pretend situations – cars, wild and farm animals, Playmobil, train tracks, pirate ships, etc. to name but a few!

Physical Development

To gain confidence and develop physically, children need to climb, balance, run, jump, crawl, ride, throw, catch and kick. At Gainford School we have our own safe enclosed area where children can use the bikes and scooters and play with small equipment such as balls, cars and garage, dolls, bricks and models such as plastic animals. We have our own climbing apparatus and lots of things to investigate. We have a selection of boxes and planks for children to explore building and balance. We have use of the school hall for P.E., gymnastics, and dance.

By using a wide range of small equipment such as building blocks, peg boards, lacing cards, threading beads, scissors, etc., the children will increase their fine manipulative skills and develop better hand eye coordination. Playdough is always a popular way to develop fine motor skills and we provide a variety of resources to make it fun.

Knowledge and Understanding

Children are given the opportunity to find out about the world in which they live, exploring creatures, plants and objects in their natural environment. They will investigate how things work, exploring such things as magnets, mirrors, colour, and natural objects. Through their play they experience sand, water, soil, gravel, bark, etc. which provides an ideal environment for learning. Children are encouraged to discuss their past and talk about significant things in their lives and the lives of their families. They are given opportunities to meet people who help us in the community. We look at changes during the weather and seasons, when cooking or freezing and we learn about new life through animals and plants.

Children are introduced to all forms of Information Technology, and they have access to computers, iPad and programs designed to enhance and support their learning. Children are monitored as to their use of the computer to enable all children to share and to learn basic skills such as online safety.

Your child's Progress

Your child's progress in all areas of learning is monitored during their time in pre-school through staff observations during free play and planned activities. All children have a Tapestry journal which can be accessed by parents online. You will be given log in details for Tapestry when your child starts in Pre-School. Tapestry is a great way to see what your child has been up to during the day and is also an effective way to get you, as parents, involved with your child's learning. It's easy to use and we have created some videos of the key features. You are able to like and comment on observations which we strongly encourage as it enables us to see which parents are engaging with their children's learning.

Parents can discuss their child's progress at any time but will also be invited into school for an informal chat during parents' evenings. We also encourage children to bring in special items (non-breakables), photographs, post-cards for Show and Tell. This activity not only promotes language and thinking skills; it is a lovely way for your child to form bonds between home and school.

Your child's Tapestry journal will be added to across pre-school, reception and into Year 1.

Forest School

What is Forest School?

Forest school sessions are an exciting opportunity for your child to experience nature and learn from being outdoors. During Forest School sessions the children learn from first-hand experience and develop skills such as perseverance, independence and responsibility. These are all skills that will help them to achieve more when they are back in the classroom.

Why are forest school sessions good for my child?

It will help your child to develop skills such as:

- Communication
- Perseverance
- Resilience
- Independence
- Inquisitiveness
- Social Skills

Children will also be able to practice and use their literacy and numeracy skills, as well as their speaking and listening skills, which are all very important.

Every woodland session is designed specifically to meet the needs of the group, so will provide your child with an individually tailored program to help them develop and enhance their early years' curriculum.

Who runs forest school sessions?

Mrs Muir leads the sessions for Swale Class.

Where do forest school sessions take place?

The children use a site within the school grounds or the school field. The children walk to this area for their sessions.

When do children have forest school sessions?

Swale Class children have one forest school session every week. Prior to your child's forest school sessions beginning details of your child's session will be sent home in a letter.

What is a forest school session like?

A forest school session lasts around 1-1½ hours. During this time the children will usually have time to play some games, sit together around the fire circle and discuss what they are going to do. Then they will be introduced to the activities for that week. The leader will give any safety talks and the children will choose their activity. The children will have a snack whilst in the woodland and the session will end with another discussion all together about what they have enjoyed and what they would like to do in their next session.

There are lots of different games and activities, which we can do in Forest School sessions which will support your child in their learning. We will, at some point safely cook over an open fire, use tools, make dens, leave trails, go on scavenger hunts, make environmental art and have lots wonderful experiences.

What should children wear?

School is able to provide waterproof trousers, a waterproof jacket for every child however you will need to provide your own wellington boots. We ask parents to provide children with spare socks, hats, gloves, scarves and to ensure that arms and legs are covered and warm. In warm, dry weather children should wear a hat. They should wear a top with long sleeves, comfortable trousers or joggers and sturdy boots or trainers with a good grip which can get muddy.

Class Swale children should have a spare set of clothes in school, just in case they get wet or dirty.

Parents are asked to apply sun cream and on exceptionally sunny days provide children with sun cream. If you do not wish staff to support your child to apply their sun cream, please let a member of staff know.

How do we keep children safe?

The forest school staff are all first aid trained. The site will have been carefully assessed before sessions begin, and the children given detailed explanations for all the activities.

Part of the forest school sessions involves teaching children about risks and how to evaluate them. Because of this the children will be taught about how to safely add wood to a fire, cook and make drinks using a fire, climb trees and use tools. These activities will be introduced as the children in the group are ready for them and will be carefully supervised by an adult. By allowing children to take these measured risks, we help to prepare them for making choices when they are older and teach them to be actively responsible for themselves, their choices and actions.

What if it is raining?

‘There is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing’

Forest school sessions will be able to go ahead in almost all weathers, as the children will be provided with clothes that will keep them warm and dry. If there are high winds, thunderstorms or very bad weather then the staff will run an indoor session in school.

Educational Visits

Educational visits provide fantastic learning opportunities which they may not experience within school. Sometimes it is necessary to ask for monetary contributions from parents and carers, to enable pupils to go on visits or trips, or to have a visiting speaker in school. Letters from school requesting a contribution will always be sent home in plenty of time to give parents and carers as much notice as possible. As the visits can sometimes be costly, understandably we may have to cancel a visit or workshop if the contributions received in school do not cover the cost of the visit or workshop.

Please see our website for a copy of our Charging and Remissions Policy, which is reviewed and agreed by governors on an annual basis.

Pastoral Care

The pastoral care of pupils in school is one of the most important roles for school staff. Teachers and staff in school aim to build a secure working relationship with each child. The pastoral work is led by the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher who have access to various support services, to help and support vulnerable pupils.

Playtime supervision is undertaken by teachers working to a rota, whilst at lunchtime, the children are supervised by Supervisory Assistants especially employed for the purpose. Playground Buddies are children from the top class who are trained to help other children to resolve problems at break times.

Pre-school 'rules'

Pre-School follow the same behaviour policy as the rest of school. Children are encouraged to earn their star each morning and each afternoon. Within school if children 'lose' two stars during the week their parents/carers receive a letter home highlighting the reason for this. Within pre-school we will speak to children about poor choices and occasionally may sit stop them from partaking in a fun activity. Most incidents within pre-school are minor and forgotten about once dealt with. Parents will only be contacted if unacceptable behaviour is persistent and causing disruption to others.

Special Education Needs

Miss Farley is our SENCO.

Our aim is to ensure that all pupils identified as having special educational needs receive an education which is appropriate to meet their individual needs.

Children's progress is monitored by the staff with the use of ongoing assessments. These provide guidelines to progress, as well as diagnostic information, which pinpoint areas to develop, where additional support may be required. Support from teachers and or teaching assistants is given to pupils wherever possible, but there may also be occasions when groups of pupils or individual pupils receive further support, in addition to their normal lessons. This additional support is known as intervention.

Pupils requiring additional support may undertake smaller group work that will focus on their educational need. The impact of the intervention can then be measured by ongoing assessments, to see if pupils have made progress and are 'back on track', in line with their expected progress.

Specific Educational Needs

Some pupils may also need a 'short note'.

A 'short note' outlines targets which pupils must try and work towards, to achieve across the course of each term. The targets on the short note are shared and agreed with staff, pupils, and parents. Parents and carers will be invited into school to discuss this and then will be requested to sign the document- one will be kept on file at school and one will be given to parents. Where possible we try to keep general parent's evenings separate to discussions about SEN as we prefer to discuss 'the whole child' within parents evenings. Any immediate concerns can be shared whenever they arise- please just catch a member of staff who will either speak to you at that point or make an appointment for you.

For a very small proportion of pupils our school may need to involve other specialists to support a higher level of special educational need. In such circumstances, there is always consultation with parents and carers who are involved in any assessment process. Further information can be obtained by contacting the Head Teacher/SENCO at school.

Able and Talented Pupils

In any school there will always be pupils that achieve significantly above the national age-related expectations. These pupils are known as 'able and talented'. Pupils can be identified as able and talented in any school curriculum subject. As a school we endeavour to provide a wide range of learning opportunities and experiences working with other schools and providers, whereby children can develop their innate talents and abilities.

Medical Matters

At Gainford CE Primary School, we are very privileged to have many our staff qualified in first aid at work and those who work with children under 5 years old qualified in paediatric first aid.

Parents will always be informed straight away, via a telephone call from the Office in the case of a head injury or knocks to the genital area (particularly with boys) no matter how minor they may appear. In serious cases, the first aid member of staff on duty will inform the Head Teacher if the pupil needs urgent medical support outside of school, or if they need to go home, as their injury prevents them from staying at school. In these circumstances the school office staff will always inform parents and carers, using the contact numbers stored in the school database. **However, parents/carers can only be informed if contact details are up to date. It is your responsibility as a parent/carer to inform us straight away of any changes in contact details.**

Medical Conditions

We do have some pupils in school who have medical conditions that require special consideration. Where this is the case, all staff will be aware of who these pupils are. If your child does develop a medical condition that needs constant medication, then it is important that we update your child's school records, so that appropriate arrangements can be made. This can be done by contacting the school office. It is extremely important that parents and carers inform the school office of any changes to emergency contact numbers.

Where a child has an on-going medical condition, which is or is likely to be long-term, an IHP (Individual Healthcare Plan) will need to be devised. It is everyone's responsibility to share information as soon as possible.

Asthma

Staff need to know if your child has asthma. If an inhaler is used, we need to keep one in class, labelled with your child's name. You will be given an asthma pack to complete, and you will be contacted to ensure that an up to date asthma care plan is in place. It should be reviewed regularly. It is your responsibility as a parent that all medications are available within school and have not passed their use by expiry date.

Please keep your child at home if they are ill. This is particularly important in the case of infectious conditions, until your doctor says that they can return to school.

Sickness & Diarrhoea

In the case of 'tummy upsets; **it is vital that children stay at home for at least 48 hours after the last incident of sickness and diarrhoea to prevent it spreading to others.**

Headlice

Please check your child's hair regularly and if you find any signs of headlice consult your GP or Health Visitor. Treat the whole family and inform the school. If you take a louse to the pharmacy on a piece of sticky tape you will be able to access treatment lotions free of charge. Please also inform the school if your child has head lice- this information is kept confidential but allows us to alert other parents to limit the spread. **Childhood Infectious Diseases**

There are lots of common infectious diseases which your children will invariably have at some time. Please let us know as soon as you suspect an infection, or have a diagnosis, so that we can alert other parents or staff if necessary. This is particularly important in the case of chickenpox or German measles. We can also advise you about the minimum exclusion periods.

Earache

Ear, nose, and throat infections are very common in young children, but ear infections should not be treated lightly. Ears can so easily be damaged permanently if infections are not treated. They are also very painful, and children need to be at home.

Conjunctivitis

This is an eye infection which is extremely contagious. **Please keep your child at home until they have been treated and symptoms have cleared up.**

Medicines in School

If your child needs medication, then it is important that **you contact the school office in person**, as medical forms will need to be signed and procedures put into place with one of our staff who have completed the administration of medicines course. Pupils are not allowed to bring medicines into school without parents and carers notifying the office first. Medicines must be handed over to a member of staff. If a child needs medication, parents, and carers can also come into school and administer it to their child.

Our medical policy is under constant review. We also have several emergency inhalers and some adrenaline auto-injector pens in school as we recognise that asthma and anaphylaxis can be a life-threatening condition which commonly affects a number of children. School also have a defibrillator in school with numerous staff trained its use.

Health & Safety

Accident Book

Should an adult or a child have an accident which requires more than the most basic treatment then an accident form is completed online.

Accidents - minor

All minor injuries are dealt with by a qualified first aider. Parents are informed of any injuries when they collect their child.

Accidents – major

If a child has a major accident, then qualified first aiders in school will assess and react to the situation. In the event of a serious accident, parents and carers will always be informed via contact numbers held in the school office. It is extremely important that telephone numbers are up to date. If you do need to update your telephone numbers or addresses, then please inform the school office immediately.

Emergency Fire Procedures

Emergency fire evacuation drills are undertaken every term at different times of the day. The fire alarm, when activated, is a loud two-tone siren. Pupils, staff, and visitors assemble in the main school yard as far away from the school building as is possible. Where needed some children have personal evacuation plans in place.

Car Parking

Your child's safety is paramount to us, so please help us by ensuring that vehicles are never brought onto school grounds without prior permission from the Head Teacher.

Parents and carers are asked to park along by the village green as there is limited car parking space outside of the school gates.

We take parking very seriously and monitor cars parked inappropriately outside school as cars blocking the entrance can affect deliveries and emergency vehicles getting into school. You also need to be aware of other children and families, particularly at school times. Please help us keep your children safe and enter by the pedestrian gate.

There is a disabled car parking bay which should only be used by those visitors who are disabled.

PLEASE park with consideration.

Our car park gates are locked between 8:45am and 9:15am and 2:45pm and 3:30pm to ensure the safety of our children and families. The church gates are also closed at the start and end of the day so that our children have a safe journey to school and home. They are not opened for anyone under any circumstances.

Smoking

Durham County Council operates a no-smoking policy throughout the school site. Please refrain from smoking near the school gates even if you are not in the school grounds. We ask that this also applies to e-cigarettes.

Dogs On Site

Durham County Council operates a no dog policy throughout the school site. Only guide dogs or hearing dogs will be allowed on site. Dogs are not allowed, even if they are carried by their owners.

Health and Safety

Every term a health and safety walk of the whole school site is undertaken. Recommendations are made and the governors are consulted to implement any changes. Every day the large playtime equipment and entire EYFS indoor and outdoor area is checked with regard to pupil and staff health and safety. The school field is also checked before use.



ParentPay Online Payments

ParentPay is a secure online payment system that Gainford CE Primary School uses to collect dinner money, school trip, breakfast club and after school childcare payments. Many parents have activated their accounts and enjoyed the benefits of making secure payments to the school and receiving school newsletters and other information by email.

ParentPay is our preferred method of making payments to school. Due to COVID 19, we are unable to accept cash.

What are the benefits to parents and pupils?

- ParentPay is easy-to-use and will offer you the freedom to make online payments whenever and wherever you like, 24/7
- The technology used is of the highest internet security available, ensuring that your money will reach school safely – offering you peace of mind
- Payments can be made by credit/debit card or also through PayPoint
- Full payment histories and statements are available to you securely online, at any time
- Your children will not have to worry about losing money at school
- Parents can choose to be alerted when their balances are low via email and/or SMS text

What are the benefits to our school?

- The more parents that use ParentPay, the greater the benefit is to our school.
- You can help us reduce workloads for all staff, creating more time to lend to educational support and the smooth running of the school.
- Using ParentPay also ensures that all financial transactions are safe and secure - helping us to remove costs associated with us having to manage cash securely on the school premises.

We are a cashless school. This means that when your child starts Reception you will be encouraged to register for ParentPay. Those who are not able to register and who would like to continue to pay for school services with cash will be given alternative methods to pay which will involve not sending cash to school. If you are experiencing difficulty registering, please ask at the school office where staff will be happy to help.

Making a payment is straightforward and ParentPay holds an electronic record of your payments to view at a later date; no card details are stored in any part of the system. Once you've activated your account you can make online payments straight away.

Debt Management Policy

As from September 2020, Gainford CE Primary School has adopted a clear NO DEBT policy relating to school meal services, extended services (Breakfast Club/After School Childcare) and any pre-school additional charges.

The school meals, breakfast club and after school childcare services are no different to any other business and meals/sessions must be paid for. Parents/carers should be able to relate to the situation that they cannot take their child to a restaurant or fast-food outlet and expect a meal without paying; the same applies at school. If debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them.

This means that money which should be spent on the children's education is used to pay for debts incurred. Every parent will agree that this is unacceptable, and we request that all parents/carers and staff give this policy their full support.

The Free School Meal (FSM) system is available for parents who are in receipt of certain state benefits. If a parent thinks they may qualify for FSM entitlement, they should contact the school office for further details. This allowance is a statutory right, and it is important that parents use it if they qualify. Their child will then have a right to a free school meal each day.

In addition, all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are eligible to receive Universal Infant Free School Meals and therefore have a right to receive a free school meal each day.

It is very time consuming for the office staff to continually chase for dinner money – by letter, phone call, text or in person. It is also highly embarrassing for all concerned and occasionally it can have an avoidable negative effect on our relationships with staff and families.

The Governing Body of Gainford CE Primary School believe that a 'zero-tolerance' approach is the fairest system. We understand that it may seem a very hard stance as there has been a culture of debt tolerance. However, going forward, we are sure that all parents/carers and staff will support the school and ensure all the school budget is spent for the benefit of all our pupils.

Payment for Breakfast Club/After School Childcare

Parents/carers must pay **in advance** for breakfast club and after school childcare sessions via credit or debit card on their ParentPay account or request a PayPoint barcode for cash payments.

If Payment Has Not Been Made -If a child attends breakfast club or after school childcare sessions which have not been paid for, the parent/carer will be contacted to remind them that they have not paid for the sessions and that their child will be unable to continue to attend until the sessions that week are paid for.

In order to communicate with you more efficiently and to ensure the information we hold about your child is up to date, we use a system called Operoo to:

- send you texts
- send you emails
- send you forms for completion
- allow you to ensure any medical information we hold about your child is up to date

Texts

A text message is more immediate than an email and there may be times when you need to be informed of a last-minute change to plans, or perhaps to let you know that the trip your child is on has been delayed and will arrive back at school later than planned. Texts cost us money, so we will try to keep these to a minimum.

Emails

We will use Operoo to send emails to you. This gives added security, ensuring that your email addresses remain safe. In addition, should you change your email address, you only need to update your Operoo account and our emails to you will go to the updated address.

You are able to reply to emails sent to you through Operoo, but if you wish to email the school on another matter you will still have to use the general school email address gainford@durhamlearning.net.

Forms

Operoo allows us to send you forms for completion. You can do this on any device, a mobile phone, tablet or PC. The system will allow us to send you reminders if you have not completed the form by the deadline. There is a Form Library which you can access to complete ad hoc forms such as consent to administer medication to your child.

The benefits are:

- Reduces printing and paper costs
- No more looking in your child's school bag for important forms
- Reduced admin staff time chasing up/re-printing forms
- We have an audit trail of when the form was completed, by whom and any preferences/consents you have given

- You don't have to rely on your child handing back the form
- We don't have to physically store your responses, and they are easier to archive.

Your Child's Information

From time to time we will ask you to check the medical information we hold for your child and any emergency contacts. This will ensure that home addresses and contact details are kept up to date. You may, of course, still inform us verbally of any changes to address or contact numbers.

Having medical records up to date will help us to ensure the correct support is in place whilst your child is in school. In addition, when your child is going on an educational visit, we will ask you to check and, if necessary, update your child's medical record. The group leader for the visit will be able to access your child's medical record and emergency contact information in the event of an accident or incident whilst on the visit.

Parental Involvement

We aim to build a bridge between home and school and to build on the foundations which you have already laid at home.

You as parents and carers are the most important people in your children's lives and always will be. To achieve success, we need to work together- learning today for a successful tomorrow.

As mentioned earlier your child is continually being observed and monitored, so all staff are aware of key interests and developments that they make in their areas of learning. From the beginning of Preschool staff contribute to your child's 'Learning Journey' via Tapestry, which is an online document that will be built up over the year and tells your child's story while they have been in Preschool, Reception and into Year 1. The journal will contain key moments in your child's development and learning.

You will have access to your child's Tapestry learning journal, from the moment they begin their transition period. You will be able to contribute to it by adding experiences from home and holidays. It is important to share the journal with your child to ensure they have a sense of achievement. By using Tapestry, we will be able to send you notifications throughout the day if your child has had a wow moment and keep you updated with what they have been experiencing.

Fundraising



You, your family and friends can support Friends of Gainford School (FOGS) whenever you shop online by registering with Easy Fundraising.

Every time you shop online via easyfundraising at one of the 3,300 retailers including John Lewis, Aviva, Sainsbury's and Booking.com, a donation will be made to Friends of Gainford School, and it won't cost you a penny extra.

It's really simple to get started.

- Go to https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/friends-of-gainford-school/?utm_campaign=raise-more&utm_content=cpl
- Sign up for free
- Get shopping – your donations will be collected by easyfundraising and automatically sent to Friends of Gainford School (FOGS). It couldn't be easier!

There are no catches or hidden charges, and we will be really grateful for your donations.

Governance of the School

The Governing Body of Gainford CE Primary School, consists of parents, members of the local community, school staff and representatives from the Local Authority. The full Governing Body meets at least once per term, although all governors are members of at least one sub-committee.

The Current Governing Body

Mrs Chris Riley	Head Teacher
Mrs Jill Young	Chair, Co-opted Governor
Mr Steve White	Vice –Chair, Parent Governor
Mrs Jo Kidd	Teacher Governor
Ms K Salisbury	Co-opted Governor
Mrs Nicola Trow	Co-opted Governor
Vacancy	Co-opted Governor
Reverend Eileen Harrop	Foundation Governor
Mrs Nancy Hull	Foundation Governor
Mr Barry Divers	Parent Governor

When vacancies do occur, all parents and carers are informed by letter. For more information about how our Governing Body works, then please make an appointment with the Head Teacher at school.

Equal Opportunities

Gainford CE Primary School always operates within an equal opportunities' framework.

We aim to:

- create an environment in which each individual feels valued, irrespective of ethnic origin, language, gender, ability, or age.
- ensure equal access to all areas of the curriculum for all the children in our care.
- promote the belief that all can and should achieve to their highest potential in all areas of the taught and “hidden” curriculum.
- provide materials to promote learning that are appropriate and reflect diversity.

Complaints

Complaints Procedure

The school has adopted Durham County Council's complaints procedure. Details can be obtained from the main school office. Information regarding our formal complaints procedure can also be found on our school website.

We would hope that by working together any issues that may arise can be fully resolved. Please talk to us if you have any concerns or worries

Safeguarding

Child Protection

Mrs. Riley, as our Head Teacher is the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer. Mr Martin is also a Level 3 trained child protection designated member of staff.

All our staff who come into regular contact with children are trained in child protection (Level 1). Mrs. Wickens our admin officer manages our Single Central Record and staff exercise the utmost vigilance in terms of child protection and visitors into school.

Safeguarding Statement

At Gainford CE Primary School we will provide a healthy and safe working environment. We will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment for each member of the school community.

At Gainford CE Primary School we will not tolerate any instance of physical aggression, verbal abuse, or other form of harassment to persons or property, including homophobic and racist language.

Any threatening behaviour, which may cause distress, demoralisation, fear and/or injury to any member of our community including staff, is not acceptable under any circumstances.