



PARENTS' HANDBOOK 2024 – 2025



GROW | RESPECT | SUCCEED

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WELCOME

As Executive Head Teacher of the federated Gorse Ride Schools, I would like to welcome you and your child to Gorse Ride Schools.

We hope this handbook provides you with lots of useful information that you need as your child starts school with us but do not hesitate to contact the school office should this not answer one of your questions.

We very much look forward to your child joining us very soon.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E.H. Rogers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Eileen Rogers
Executive Head Teacher

THE SCHOOL DAY

INFANT SCHOOL DAY

Morning session **8.50am until 12 noon**

Afternoon session **1 until 3.15 pm**

Drop-off and collection from school

Children may arrive to school between 8.40 and 8.50am, and should come into the school through the door nearest their classroom. Details of this will be in the class booklet. Class doors will shut at 8.50am prompt and if you are late you will need to sign your child in at the school office and provide a reason for absence.

Please do not allow your children to climb on or use any outdoor apparatus before this time as any accidents at this time will not be covered by insurance.

At the end of the day children will be released from their classroom door. If you are delayed for any reason, please telephone the school so that we can make arrangements for your child to be supervised until your arrival. Similarly and for the safety of your child if you have made arrangements for somebody other than yourself to collect your child please could you make the class teacher, teaching assistant or the school office aware prior to the end of the day. Please note it is our policy that nobody under the age of 16 can collect a child.

JUNIOR SCHOOL DAY

Morning session **8.50am until 12.10pm**

Afternoon session **1.10 - 3.15pm**

Children may arrive to school between 8.40 and 8.50am. We cannot accept responsibility for pupils being on site before this time. Children can be dropped off and collected from the Junior Playground. Any pupils arriving late should sign-in at the school office.

SCHOOL ABSENCE

Any absence from school **must be reported**. If your child is unwell in the morning you should call the school office and leave a message on the absence line or report it using the online form on the school website before 9am. If you do not report an absence the school will contact you for a reason.

All medical appointments and holiday requests should be made in advance by completing a leave of absence form, available in either school office or through our website. Please note holiday requests will only be authorised in truly exceptional circumstances and medical appointments should be made out of school hours where possible.

Report an absence

Infant School Office: 0118 973 4880

Junior School Office: 0118 973 2666

SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

Both schools send out the majority of communications to parents by email. If you would prefer to receive hard copies or do not use email then please let the school office know. Copies of all letters and forms sent out are also available from either school office.

If you wish to contact us by email you can at:

Infant School: admin@gorseride-inf.wokingham.sch.uk

Junior School: admin@gorseride-jun.wokingham.sch.uk

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Our school colours are green and yellow (the colours of the gorse plant).

sweatshirt / jumper / cardigan	bottle green
polo shirt	gold / yellow
shoes	dark, sensible
trousers / shorts / skirt	plain grey
summer dress	green or yellow check or stripe



PE KIT

Children will be placed into school houses when they start school which is reflected in their PE kit.

PE T/shirt / sweatshirt	In child's house colour (red, blue, green or yellow)
Shorts / joggings bottoms	black

Children should come to school wearing their PE kit on their PE day(s). You will be informed of these days at the start of term.

All garments should be clearly named. Sweatshirts and polo shirts with the school motif can be ordered from My Uniform www.myclothing.com or Price and Buckland www.price-buckland.co.uk

JEWELLERY

In the interest of safety, we expect that jewellery is not worn to school apart from small stud ear-rings in pierced ears. Watches may be worn but should be given to the teacher for safe-keeping during PE and games. Smart watches are not permitted. We are not able to claim for any lost or stolen jewellery.

OUTDOOR WEAR

The children have outdoor playtimes throughout the year unless the weather is very wet. A warm coat is essential in Winter. In the Summer we encourage children to wear a sun hat and use sunscreen.

In Early Years the children spend time outside in all weather so it is important that they bring in appropriate clothing including wellies.

Children in the juniors are required to have a pair of trainers in school with them every day for outdoor play.

LOST PROPERTY

We require all clothing to be marked with the child's name so that missing items are easily returned to their owners. All named articles will be returned to pupils. The Junior School has a lost property trolley in the hall. Any items of uniform which remain unclaimed at the end of a school year will be passed to the PTA for sale at a second hand uniform stall.

OTHER RESOURCES

Children will receive a book bag upon entry to school which they use throughout their time in the Infant School.

Stationery for lessons is provided by the school. However some Junior children may choose to also bring their own pencil case, but in order to maximise space in class, we ask that any such items are small in size.

In Year 6, some children need to bring a mobile phone to school; if this is the case we ask that it is handed into the class teacher at the start of day and collected again at the end of the school day. pupils must not use their mobile phones on the schools grounds for any purpose, at any time, including before and after the school day. Unless there are exceptional circumstances and it has been agreed with the school, children in other year groups **must not** bring a mobile phone into school. All children should bring a named water bottle to school with them every day.

SCHOOL MEALS

We offer three hot meal choices every day including meat, vegetarian or a jacket potato, a dessert is also provided. Parents are responsible for pre-ordering their child's meals (more information on this will be provided separately).

If your child has any food allergies please speak to the school office, our caterers are happy to provide alternatives e.g. gluten free, dairy free etc.

All children from reception to the end of Year 2 are eligible to have a free school meal every day. Meals for children in the Junior School currently cost £2.45 each. Parents can pay for these online. You will receive instructions on how to register for this on entry to school. **Please note all meals need to be paid for in advance.**

Some Junior children may also be entitled to free school meals and if parents feel this could apply to them they should request an application form from the School Office. (Please see information on pupil premium).

Children may bring their own packed lunches if you wish. Please could you make sure that your child's lunch box is clearly named and that it contains no glass bottles, fizzy drinks or sweets. **We are a nut free school and due to allergies we cannot allow apples in School.**

HEALTHY SNACKS

At Gorse Ride Schools we actively work to encourage the children to make healthy choices. The school also takes part in the "Free Fruit & Vegetables for School" Scheme. This provides children, throughout the Infant School, with a portion of fruit or vegetable for their morning snack. In the Junior School, if you wish to provide a morning snack the children are only permitted fresh fruit or vegetables.

MILK SCHEME

Milk at school is available and encouraged for all children under the age of five. If you would like your child to receive milk please register at www.coolmilk.com. Forms are also available in the school office if you would prefer to complete a registration by post. Your child is eligible to receive free school milk if they're in receipt of pupil premium.

EXTENDED CARE CLUBS

Our Breakfast Club runs a two tiered start time of either 7.30am or 8am. Children are provided with a healthy breakfast and will be taken to class for morning registration at 8.50am.

After School Club is held every day from 3:15pm until 6pm. It offers a welcoming, caring and fun environment for children attending both the Infant and Junior Schools. Children can enjoy a choice of indoor or outdoor activities as well as a light tea, fruit, snacks and drinks.

Please refer to our school website for the latest costs, further information and registration details.

EXTRA CURRICULAR CLUBS

We run a number of exciting and varied extra-curricular clubs across the schools. A clubs newsletter with full details is sent out before the start of each term. Registration forms and further information are also available from either school office.

PUPIL PREMIUM

Pupil Premium Grant additional funding (known as Pupil Premium) is given to the school each year to support children who;

- Are or have been in care for 6 months or more
- Have parents in the forces
- Have been adopted from care
- Have parents who receive certain income support payments

If your child falls into one of these categories, please ensure that the school is aware of it as soon as possible to release the additional funding. Income support eligibility will also subsidise school trips etc. **Please be assured that in all circumstances strict confidentiality will be maintained.** If you have already given the school this information, you do not have to do it again.

TERM DATES 2024 – 2025

AUTUMN TERM 2024

Inset Days

Tuesday 3rd September & Wednesday 4th September 2024

START OF AUTUMN TERM

**Thursday 5th September (Infants Y1 & Y2 / Juniors)
Wednesday 11th September (Nursery & Reception)**

Half Term

Monday 28th October - Friday 1st November

Return to School

Monday 4th November

END OF AUTUMN TERM

Friday 20th December - 2.15pm finish

SPRING TERM 2025

Inset Day

Monday 6th January 2025

START OF SPRING TERM

Tuesday 7th January

Half Term

Monday 17th February – Friday 21st February

Return to School

Monday 19th February

END OF SPRING TERM

Friday 4th April - 2.15pm finish

SUMMER TERM 2025

START OF SUMMER TERM

Tuesday 22nd April

Half Term

Monday 26th May – Friday 30th May

Inset Day

Monday 2nd June

Inset Day

Monday 14th July

END OF SUMMER TERM

Wednesday 23rd July - 2.15pm finish

CAR PARKING

The school gates are closed to parents between 8:30am and 3:30pm.

It is extremely important that no-one parks or stops on the yellow zig-zag line in Gorse Ride South immediately outside the school or turns cars around in the entrance to the school drive. The advice from the Police is that parents who wish to park in Gorse Ride South should park on the far side of the road facing Nine Mile Ride. Parents' delivering or collecting children in Gorse Ride North should park facing Barkham Ride. We regularly remind children on the road safety rules and appreciate parents' support in keeping all children safe by adhering to safe and sensible parking practices. Please note both Gorse Ride South and Gorse Ride North are 20mph zones.

SAFETY RULES

- Scooters and cycles **may not be ridden** in the school grounds except during cycling training classes.
- Children may not leave the school grounds without permission. If they need to leave school early for any reason, a parent or carer must complete a request for absence form and arrange for their child to be collected by an adult.
- Our site is both smoking free and dog free - please help us to keep to these rules.

We appreciate parents' support for the above safety rules and ask that adults on site recognise their position as role models to the children.

EMERGENCY CONTACT

We need to keep up-to-date information regarding parental contact in an emergency. Parents will be asked to complete the necessary form which is then stored in the office. It is imperative that you notify the School Office if you move home and/or if yours or any of your family contacts' telephone numbers change. We rely on parents to inform us so that our records are always up-to-date. This is for your child's benefit should we need to contact you.

HOME LEARNING

We believe that parents have an extremely important part to play in the education of their children. There are many ways that parents can work in partnership with the school to support their child's learning.

Encouraging your child with reading and writing is particularly important. We expect all children to take reading books home regularly from Reception onwards.

In Reception and Year 1, teachers will suggest games and activities that be can done at home to help support with learning such as Read, Write Inc, high frequency words, number facts and fine motor skills.

By Year 2 children will be given a more formal maths and literacy activity to complete each week to reinforce the learning that has taken place in school.

This continues throughout the school, with the expectation of time to be spent on homework increasing as they move through the school.

At times children may also be asked to complete some research or a project in relation to a topic they are learning about.

We value any kind of support parents can give and do ask that parents recognise the importance of these activities and try to spend time with their children in these ways.

Further guidance relating to specific year group expectations and time to be spent on home learning is discussed at the beginning of each academic year.

LIBRARY

We want to encourage a life long love of literature and we have well-stocked libraries at Gorse Ride. The Junior School has a large library which children are encouraged to visit regularly. Each class in the Infant School has its own mini library which can be accessed daily and children also have the opportunity to visit the FBC library regularly to enhance our reading curriculum.

HOME-SCHOOL LINKS

THE ROLE OF PARENTS & CARERS

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. As part of a positive partnership between home and school we ask parents to:

- help promote the ethos and vision of the school
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general
- support their children with home learning
- ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible
- ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit
- engage with external agencies and if necessary work with the school to support their child
- reinforce the school values at home

CAN I VOLUNTEER IN SCHOOL?

We welcome all parents and carers who would like to volunteer in school. It is a great opportunity to see children's learning in action and for adults to share their skill set.

Dependant on the school timetable and curriculum, volunteers may be asked to hear readers, support with an art or practical activity or work with a small group on an activity or game. You will not be expected to work alone with children.

We also run a scheme called the Gorse Ride Readers, this is for parents who would like to commit to visiting us at a set time each week to listen to readers. Full training is provided by our Head of Literacy and you will be required to have a DBS check.

Whether you are able to give time on a regular basis or occasionally, we would be very grateful for your support and you are able to arrange this with your class teacher.

GORSE RIDE SCHOOLS PTA

What is the PTA?

Gorse Ride Schools Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a registered charity run by a committee of volunteers made up of Gorse Ride Schools parents, who work with the parent/carer community to raise much needed funds for the schools. If you are a parent/carer of a child at the school, or you work for the school, you are automatically a member of the PTA.

How does it work?

The PTA organises a range of fundraising events for the pupils and parents. This year's events have included:

- Christmas & Summer Fayres
- Infant & Junior School Discos
- Quiz Night
- Lolly Fridays
- BBQ's
- Sponsored Bounce
- Preloved Uniform Sales
- World Book Day Sale

What is the money used for?

Recently the PTA has donated money to the schools to fund items and projects, such as:

- Brand new Smartboards in every classroom
- Additional reading books and resources for the Read, Write, Inc Scheme.
- Classroom furniture and blinds
- New playground toys for both Schools
- Maths resources and equipment for the Inclusion team
- Year 1 outdoor learning area
- New Wi-fi system for the Infant School
- 60 class iPads and class cameras
- Year 3 & 4 classroom refurbishment

Each year the PTA also donates money for many smaller requests from the school.

How can I help?

Support – Attend an event, sponsor your child, buy a second-hand book or uniform, share our posts on Classlist and Facebook

Volunteer – Gorse Ride Schools PTA has a successful track record in raising significant funds for the school, but its success relies upon parents and staff volunteering their time to help. It's fun and a great way to get to know other parents/carers across the schools.

Shop – Fundraise from the comfort of your own home!

Visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/gorseridepta/ follow the instructions and the PTA will receive a donation from sales made with participating retailers. It doesn't cost you anything!

Profit Match – Do you work for an organisation that like to 'give something back to the community'? Please enquire with your HR department about any Profit Match / Match Funding schemes they may run and ask if Gorse Ride Schools PTA could benefit.

GORSE RIDE SCHOOLS PTA

Gorse Ride South | Finchampstead | Berkshire | RG40 4EH | RG40 4JJ

Email: gorseride_pta@hotmail.co.uk

Registered Charity No.: 299863

Stay in Touch - All parents/carers are welcome to join us! Come & find out about the upcoming events and discover how the funds raised by the PTA will be supporting Gorse Ride Schools. New ideas and fresh thinking are always appreciated!

Email us gorseride_pta@hotmail.co.uk

www.gorserideschools.co.uk

Infant School Office: 0118 973 488

Junior School Office: 0118 973 2666