



GOLDINGTON ACADEMY

YEAR 8 WELCOME INFORMATION

September 2025



Engaging minds - Nurturing success - Inspiring futures

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PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

This booklet is intended to provide parents and carers with some useful information and to ensure that important procedures and documents are shared.

You will also find a wealth of information about the school and its policies and procedures on the school website <https://www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/>, and we encourage you to visit the site on a regular basis.

We appreciate that changing school is exciting for the children and can be daunting for the parents. We want to do all we can to make starting at Goldington Academy positive and successful.

Should you have any comments or feedback about this booklet, or any other school related matter, please do not hesitate to contact a member of staff (*staff contact details are available on page 16 of this booklet*). Please do not wait until problems arise to get in touch or to let us know how you are feeling.



Mr F X Galbraith *BSc (Hons), NPQH, MBA*
Principal

PLAN OF THE SCHOOL



CHECKLIST

Before term starts

- Order uniform via 'Total Clothing' (see page 21) or make use of our second hand uniform shop
- Label uniform and PE kit
- Register for free school meals (if eligible)
- Set up your IRIS ParentMail account (you will receive further instructions)

On-going

- Notify us if your child is absent before 9 am on the day of absence
- Notify us if your child contracts one of the notifiable illnesses (see table on page 11)

TERM DATES

Goldington Academy	
Autumn Term 2025	
School closed – Staff Training Day (1)	Monday, 1 September 2025
Start of term	Tuesday, 2 September 2025
School closed – Staff Training Day (2)	Friday, 24 October 2025
Half term	Monday, 27 October – Friday, 31 October 2025
Last day of term	Friday, 19 December 2025
Spring Term 2026	
School closed – Staff Training Day (3)	Monday, 5 January 2026
Start of term	Tuesday, 6 January 2026
Half term	Monday, 16 – Friday, 20 February 2026
Last day of term	Friday, 27 March 2026
Summer Term 2026	
School closed – Staff Training Day (4)	Monday, 13 April 2026
Start of term	Tuesday, 14 April 2026
School closed – Bank Holiday	Monday, 4 May 2026
Half term	Monday, 25 May – Friday, 29 May 2026
Last day of term	Friday, 17 July 2026

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE

We endeavour to keep the school open at all times during the school term; however, there are very rare occasions when the school has to close. If such a decision is made by the Principal, the following action will be taken to communicate with parents:

- The school website will be updated to advise parents of the situation and will continue to be updated as and when more information becomes available.

<https://www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/>

- The school's phone message will be updated with pertinent information about the situation.

Tel: 01234 261516

- All parents and staff will be sent an app message advising them of the closure to the email address provided for our records. ***It is therefore important that you update your ParentMail App contact details whenever there is a change to your personal details.***
- Information will be shared via the school's  feed and Facebook page:

@GoldingtonAcad @Goldington

- The 'school closure' page on the Bedford Borough website will be updated to show our status as closed, and the information kept updated.

www.bedford.gov.uk/schoolclosures

- We will ask BBC Three Counties radio to include an announcement in their radio broadcast.

BBC Three Counties Radio: 95.5 FM

Rest assured that any such decision is taken very seriously and informed by rigorous assessment of any situation and risk that presents itself.

In the event of this occurring over a weekend or overnight, we will endeavour to take the decision as early as possible (and by 7.00 am at the latest) and notify staff and parents immediately thereafter.

ABSENCE PROTOCOL

If your child is absent from school, you must notify the school by 9.00 am with the reason for the absence using either of the following methods:

IRIS ParentMail: Use the Absence Reporting feature within the mobile App/desktop site.

Call or leave a voicemail on the Absence line: 01234 261516 option 1.

If we have not heard from you, we are obliged to investigate your child's absence.

HOLIDAY DURING TERM-TIME

You are strongly urged to avoid booking a family holiday during term-time. The law states that parents/carers do not have a legal right to take their child out of school for a term-time holiday, and schools no longer have the authority to permit such absence.

Full details of the school's Attendance Policy are available on the school website or from the school office.

THE SCHOOL DAY

The school day: Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Friday

8.50 am – 9.15 am	Registration
9.15 am – 10.15 am	Period 1
10.15 am – 11.15 am	Period 2
11.15 am – 11.40 am	Break
11.40 am – 12.40 pm	Period 3
12.40 pm – 1.40 pm	Lunch
1.40 pm – 2.40 pm	Period 4
2.40 pm – 3.40 pm	Period 5

The school day: Thursday

8.50 am – 9.40 am	Registration & Life Skills
9.40 am – 10.35 am	Period 1
10.35 am – 11.30 am	Period 2
11.30 am – 11.55 am	Break
11.55 am – 12.50 pm	Period 3
12.50 pm – 1.50 pm	Lunch
1.50 pm – 2.45 pm	Period 4
2.45 pm – 3.40 pm	Period 5

- Students should hand in their mobile phone in the small hall from 8.30 am.
- **School starts at 8.50 am.** Children arriving after this time (but before 9.10 am) will be marked in the register as *late*.
- **Registration closes at 9.20 am** and children arriving after this time, according to guidance from the Department for Education, will be marked in the register as *absent without authority*.
- Morning break is from 11.15 am to 11.40 am (except Thursdays when it will be 11.30 am – 11.55 am).
- Lunch time starts at 12.40 pm and ends at 1.40 pm (except Thursdays when it will be 12.50 am – 12.50 pm).
- **The school day ends at 3.40 pm.** Once dismissed, students may collect their phones from the main hall.

YEAR 8 CURRICULUM

In Year 8, students are taught as a form class for geography, history, life skills, science, music, computing, French/Spanish and religion, philosophy & ethics.

Pupils are taught in mixed ability groups for English and work in ability sets mathematics in Year 8.

In English, mixed ability teaching allows pupils to share ideas within the classroom across the ability range. Teachers plan carefully to differentiate for all students, stretching the highest attainers and supporting those who need a little more help.

Mathematics is taught in sets from Year 8 enabling us able to tailor class work and homework more closely to the class's ability. Students also benefit from being able to motivate each other, as they are all at a similar ability level, and can move at the same pace. This leads to them growing in confidence and self-esteem.

For design & technology, cooking and nutrition and art, students are taught on a rotation in design groups. Students study drama and dance for half the year, swapping subjects at February half term.

Students get two physical education lessons each week; for one lesson they are taught in their form group and for the games lesson they have single-sex groups.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Teachers submit termly assessments of pupils' attainment in all subject areas. This enables the school to carefully track pupils' progress throughout the year. The judgements are made using the school's rigorous and robust assessment system and take into account pupils' understanding, as demonstrated through verbal responses, written class work and homework tasks.

Testing is another form of assessment that we use in school to check progress. Pupils may be tested at the end of a term or the academic year. Some subjects work on a modular cycle and end of unit tests, on a specific topic area, are administered at regular times throughout the year.

Whilst we recognise that tests can be stressful for some pupils, we feel that this is an important skill for pupils to develop in preparation for the exams they will sit at the end of Year 11. Pupils are well supported in the lead-up to tests, with revision lessons and focused activities prepared and delivered in order to promote the success of each individual child; special arrangements will also be made for pupils with specific needs. subject teachers will be able to offer parents/pupils support and guidance in this area.

EXAMPLE YEAR 8 TIMETABLE:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Reg	Registration	Registration	Registration	Registration/Life Skills	Registration
1	French	PE	PE	Mathematics	Geography
2	Computing	Music	Drama	RE	Art & Tech
Break					
3	Mathematics	English	English	History	History
Lunch					
4	Art & Tech	Geography	Science	French	Science
5	Science	Mathematics	Mathematics	English	English

PASTORAL CARE

We have a strong pastoral team in place in order to support your child, starting with your child's Form Tutor and then involving the Head of Year as and when it is necessary.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Department works closely alongside parents, pupils and staff to support those with specific educational needs. In addition, we have a Student Support Hub Manager in school who works with individuals and small groups of pupils to offer additional support for a range of emotional, social and behavioural issues. More information on SEND and pupil support is available in the Learning section of the school website or from the school office. Please see the school's Early Help Offer for more information on all of our support services.

WELFARE

We work very closely with the local Education Welfare Officer (EWO), who is based at Borough Hall. Occasionally, the EWO may be requested to visit where there has been a cause for concern, for example frequent or long absences from school.

CHILD PROTECTION

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mr Atkinson) and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Jones) are obliged to ensure that the school operates effective safeguarding practices for all pupils. School staff are therefore encouraged to take the attitude that it could happen here. We hope that parents appreciate how difficult it is to carry out this delicate responsibility and accept that the school is always acting in the child's best interests. Parents can also report concerns directly to the school's safeguarding team, as well as their child's Head of Year, Form Tutor or any other member of school staff.

OPERATION ENCOMPASS

The school has been given the opportunity to take part in a project that will run jointly between schools, Bedford Borough Council and Bedfordshire Police.

Operation Encompass is the reporting to schools, prior to the start of the next school day, when a child or young person has experienced or been exposed to any domestic abuse.

Operation Encompass will ensure that a member of the school staff, known as a Key Adult, is trained to allow them to liaise with the police and to use the information that has been shared, in confidence, while ensuring that the school is able to make provision for possible difficulties experienced by children, or their families, who have been experienced a domestic abuse incident.

We are keen to offer the best support possible to all our pupils, and we believe this will be extremely beneficial for all those involved.

WITHDRAWAL FROM PE/BREAK TIMES

If, for medical reasons, it is necessary for your child to be excused temporarily from PE lessons, or to remain inside during break times, we ask that you discuss this with your child's Form Tutor.

MEDICATION

Unfortunately, we are not normally able to give medicines, either prescribed or otherwise to a child. Please ask your doctor to take this into account when prescribing medicines. Medicines will only be administered at school when it would be detrimental to a child's health or school attendance not to do so. Parents' written consent is required. The form is available online and in school:

[Medical form](#)

There are exceptions to this policy, e.g diabetes or epilepsy, for which a special policy exists, supported by the School Health Team.

ILLNESS ADVICE

Please find below a basic summary showing recommended times for children to be away from school when suffering from childhood diseases. A comprehensive list is available in ***Guidance on Infection Control in Schools***, a copy of which is on display in school or it can be viewed on the GOV.UK website or by following the link below to the Health Protection Agency website:

[Guidance on Infection Control in Schools](#)

Please notify us if your child contracts one of these conditions:

CONDITION	ABSENT FOR
Chicken Pox	Until all vesicles are crusted over
Impetigo	Until lesions are crusted/healed or 48 hours after starting antibiotic treatment
Measles	4 days
Scarlet Fever	Child can return 24 hours after starting appropriate antibiotic treatment
Sickness and/or Diarrhoea	48 hours after symptoms stop
Conjunctivitis	None
Head Lice	None
Mumps	5 days
Tonsillitis	None

HEAD LICE GUIDANCE

Sadly, head lice are a fact of school life. We wanted to share with you a chemical free strategy for keeping head lice at bay. It is important to recognise that there is no way to protect against re-infection and that a systematic routine of combing your child's hair, as detailed below, is the best way to control head lice:

- At bath time, after your child's hair has been washed, apply conditioner.
- Comb through hair before rinsing conditioner, with a bevel-edged toothcomb, available at Pharmacies and from the 'Bug Busting' kit.
- The teeth in the comb are spaced close enough to lift out newly hatched lice.
- Follow this up by using a nit comb, which will remove the empty eggshells (known as the nit).

Lice cannot become resistant to the combing method, which fits in with weekly hair washing and is a safe no-pesticides way to cope with lice routinely and in a crisis.

Bug Busting kits may be purchased from www.nits.net. For live cases of head lice, you may acquire a prescription from your doctor to cover its cost.

Please ensure that long hair is always tied back in school.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

CLUBS

Extra-curricular activities are a vital part of any school provision. At Goldington Academy, we pride ourselves on the quality and variety of our provision and the partnerships we have forged with local cultural providers.

We provide a wide selection of extra-curricular activities in the form of clubs, which take place either before school, at lunch time or after school. A programme of extra-curricular activities will be published each term. Clubs change from term to term; a daily bulletin is read out by the class teacher which will give any necessary updates on clubs, school events etc. It is your child's responsibility to listen carefully to the bulletin every day.

TRIPS AND VISITS

At Goldington Academy, we strongly believe that learning should not be confined to the classroom. Regular and purposeful educational visits are organised throughout the year to bring reality to what is being taught. Our pupils are given many opportunities to experience learning through real-life contexts which include educational visits linked to the curriculum e.g. a visit to Mountfitchet castle and toy museum. We also welcome visiting groups and speakers to provide an alternative learning experience for our pupils, including workshops, author visits, performing dramatists, CSI and other themed curriculum experiences.

Examples of educational trips & visits:

- Sister Act Theatre Trip, London
- Macbeth Theatre Trip, Bedford
- Biennial ski trip
- Madrid/Paris
- Cuffley residential
- Mountfitchet Castle

With ever decreasing school budgets, parental contributions for such opportunities are essential. Although regrettable, it is likely that such enrichment activities would have to be cancelled should parents be unable to make the requested contribution.

HOMEWORK

The aim of our homework policy is to encourage the continuation of learning at home as an essential part of a student's education. The Education Endowment Foundation found that homework that is linked to classroom work tends to be more effective. It not only reinforces classroom learning; it also helps students to develop the skills, attitudes and understanding that they need to realise their full potential and to develop independent learning skills for the future, including the habits of enquiry and investigation. In addition, it should help to foster the role of parents and carers as co-educators of their children.

Homework enables pupils to:

- consolidate and reinforce the knowledge, understanding and skills developed at school (apply, research and consolidate)
- prepare for new learning activities, for example through additional reading
- develop their ability to retrieve and recall information previously learnt
- access resources not available in school
- develop the skills, confidence and motivation needed to study independently
- show progress and understanding
- enhance their study skills e.g. planning, time management, self-discipline, etc
- manage particular demands, such as end-of-year assessments and GCSEs

More information can be found in the school's homework policy, which is available on the school website or from the school office.

English, maths and science homework will be set weekly. All other subjects will either set extended tasks or projects to be completed over a longer period of time or set shorter and more frequent tasks which link directly to the sequence of learning in lessons.

In addition to the formal homework pupils receive, we also expect pupils to read on a daily basis.

Homework will be set electronically. Every student will be given a unique login.

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

We operate an 'open door policy' and welcome all parents and carers into school.

There are several formal opportunities during the year for you to meet with your child's teachers. In the Autumn Term you will have the opportunity to meet with your child's Form Tutor to discuss their progress and how they have settled in at Goldington Academy. Later in the year, you will be able to meet with subject teachers (online) to discuss their progress in specific curriculum areas. Two interim reports are sent home electronically each year informing you about current attainment, effort and behaviour. In addition, you will receive a full report on your child's achievements and future targets.

If you have a concern or query about anything relating to your child in school, please contact your child's Form Tutor in the first instance. Whilst all teaching staff will endeavour to see parents as and when required, their teaching commitment takes priority, and they will usually be unavailable during the school day and often before lessons start in the morning. It is best, therefore, to contact a member of staff via email. All staff emails are available on our website: [Staff emails](#).

All whole school communication will be via IRIS ParentMail for which you will be required to sign up to. This may include texts that need to be sent at short notice e.g. if an after-school club is cancelled. It is therefore important that you keep us updated of your mobile telephone number and email address, as well as updating your own IRIS ParentMail account.

We keep parents informed of curriculum matters, news and events through letters home and in our termly newsletter all of which are sent via our IRIS ParentMail system for which you will be required to sign up to. These are also published on the academy's website, <https://www.goldington.beds.sch.uk/>, which contains a wealth of information. We have a dedicated "[For Pupils and Parents](#)" section on our website too with specific information and resources for each year group.

We use X ([@GoldingtonAcad](#)) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/Goldington) to inform parents too.

YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

IMPORTANT NOTE - It is essential that the contact information we hold on record for your child is correct in case we should need to contact you in an emergency. **Please update your ParentMail app account, once your child has enrolled with us if there are any changes to your contact details or your child's medical or dietary information.**

PUPIL MOBILE PHONES IN SCHOOL

If pupils bring a mobile phone to school, they do so at their own risk **and the phone must** be labelled and handed in at the small hall between 8.30 am and 8.50 am. It can be collected from the main hall at the end of the school day. We must emphasise that the school cannot be held liable for any damage that may occur whilst the phones are in our keeping, as they are brought to school at the pupils' own risk. Phones not handed in will be confiscated and may only be collected by a parent/carer.

HOME SCHOOL AGREEMENT

Every school has, in accordance with national regulations, a home school agreement which sets out the rules and expectations for our partnership.

At Goldington Academy, we believe the agreement recognises the importance of the family in a child's education and reflects our commitment to working together with parents and children. You will be asked to indicate that you have read the booklet and agree to its terms as part of your online registration process.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM EMAIL ADDRESSES

Mr Galbraith	Principal	galbraithf@goldington.beds.sch.uk
Mrs Chapman	Vice Principal	chapmanl@goldington.beds.sch.uk
Mr Atkinson	Assistant Head Teacher	atkinsonw@goldington.beds.sch.uk
Miss Thomas	Assistant Head Teacher	thomass@goldington.beds.sch.uk
Mr Roopnarain	Assistant Head Teacher	roopnarains@goldington.beds.sch.uk
Miss Andrews	Assistant Head Teacher	andrewsv@goldington.beds.sch.uk
Mr Birchall	School Business Manager	birchallm@goldington.beds.sch.uk

SEND:

Mr Roopnarain	SENDCo	roopnarains@goldington.beds.sch.uk
Miss Johnstone	Deputy SENDCo	johnstonec@goldington.beds.sch.uk

Improving School Communications with IRIS ParentMail

Communicating with parents is an important part of what we do; making sure you get the correct information about activities, events and things that really matter is something we care about.

To achieve this we will be using IRIS ParentMail, a service used by over 6,000 schools, nurseries and children's clubs to communicate to parents. IRIS ParentMail will be beneficial to you because you can:

- Use a free mobile app on Android and iOS to pick up school messages instantly
- Top up dinner money or pay for school trips/items in just a few taps
- Complete forms, give consent/permissions and give feedback on surveys
- Keep on top of school meetings and events
- Notify the school of absence

Registering with IRIS ParentMail is very easy! Over the summer you will be sent either an email and/or text message from IRIS ParentMail. When you receive this, please just follow the instructions in the message.

Please be assured that IRIS ParentMail is registered with the Information Commissioner and guarantees that all information you provide will be kept private and will not be passed on to any other organisation.

Once registered, if you have an Android or Apple smartphone, we highly recommend you download the IRIS ParentMail App for the best user experience. To do this, simply search for "IRIS ParentMail" in your App store. This is especially important to enable you to receive forms from time to time which you may be asked to respond to.

If you need any additional information or assistance, please visit the help site:
<https://help.iris.co.uk/education/parentmail/home-pmx.htm>

Payments

Online payments to school with +Pay!

We have introduced a more convenient way for you to pay for school meals, trips, etc. using a secure service called +Pay. +Pay is integrated within IRIS ParentMail which allows payments to be made to the school online using a debit or credit card.

We will no longer accept cash and cheque payments, making the school a cash-free environment.

What are the benefits to parents and pupils?

- +Pay is easy-to-use and will offer you the freedom to make online payments whenever and wherever you choose, twenty-four hours a day
- 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
- Full payment histories and statements are available to you securely online at anytime
- Your children will not have to worry about losing money at school

Making secure payments online using your credit or debit card

You will have a secure online account. A link will be sent by the school asking you to register. You will then be prompted to create login details and to keep them safe and secure. If you have more than one child at our school, or children at other schools that also use IRIS ParentMail, you can create a single account login for all your children.

Making a payment is straightforward and +Pay holds a payment history for you to view at a later date. Once you've activated your account you can make online payments straight away.

You will receive your registration message either by email and/or text with a welcome pack in due course.

UNIFORM, APPEARANCE, JEWELLERY AND EQUIPMENT

UNIFORM

Our uniform will be available from our online store via 'Total Clothing'. More details will follow after Easter.

A second hand uniform shop is also available to current and prospective pupils. A price list is available on our website: [Second hand uniform](#). Uniform is available by email request; please contact student services at (office@goldington.beds.sch.uk) with your requests, including size requirements, to find out what we have in stock. A pop-up shop for new Year 7 parents will take place in early July. More details to follow.

Payments can be made in cash or bank transfer at the pop-up shop, or by bank transfer if you make a request via email.

All clothing should be clearly marked with full name, using name tapes or indelible pen.

- Trousers with decorative items, such as buttons or embroidery are NOT permitted. Trousers should be grey, tailored and NOT be made of stretch, lycra, skinny or highly fashionable in style, nor should they have cargo or jeans style pockets.
- Dark grey **shorts** do **not** form part of the school uniform and therefore they should not be worn.
- Jewellery other than that listed below is NOT allowed:
 - One small plain stud in each ear
 - One ring permitted on each hand
 - Bracelets on the grounds of religious or medical needs

Please note - piercing retainers are not allowed to be used as a substitute for piercings. Any student attending school with piercings that are not permitted will be asked to remove them, once they have healed. No other visible body piercing is acceptable. A watch may be worn provided it is marked with the owner's name.

- The wearing of wrist bands and bracelets is not permitted, unless for religious purposes.
- Only badges provided by the school are to be worn.

- Hair styles should NOT include unnatural colours, patterns or designs. Any student wearing unnatural colour in their hair will be asked to remove it immediately.
- No tramlines or patterns should be shaved into hair or the eyebrows.
- Hair bands should be discreet and plain in colour e.g. black, blue etc. Fashion type hair bands should not be worn in school.
- Trainers should not be worn during classroom based lessons, unless otherwise agreed by the Academy Principal. If trainers are to be worn for an agreed reason, they should be black and discreet.
- Light make-up may be worn e.g. concealer, mascara. However, students may be asked to remove makeup if it is deemed to be inappropriate or too heavy e.g. foundation.
- Nail varnish should NOT be worn. Any students who are found to be wearing nail varnish will be asked to remove it. Continued wearing of jewellery, nail varnish will result in a referral to the Head of Year and may result in a consequence such as loss of break/lunch time.

The Governing Body recognises that areas such as uniform can be open to subjective interpretation and, on occasion, abuse. Therefore, to avoid difficulty or embarrassment, we ask parents and pupils to operate well within these guidelines rather than at their extremes.

Coats appropriate for the season are an important part of school kit for your child. All children go outside at break and lunch time and, as you know, the British weather can change during the school day!

School bags are necessary for keeping books and letters clean and safe on the journey to and from school.

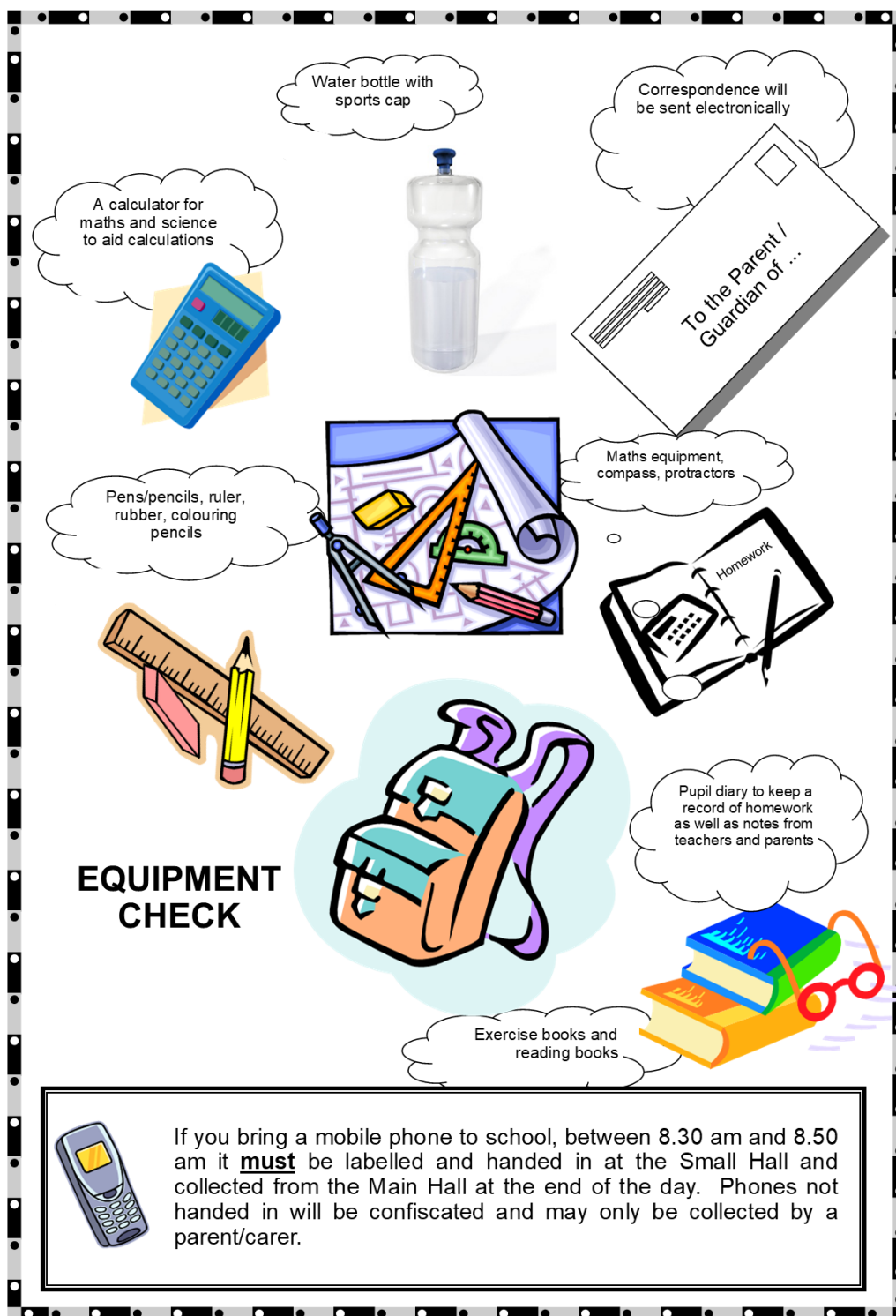
REQUIRED UNIFORM LIST

Item	Buy from
Basic Uniform	
Blazer or fitted blazer – navy with logo	School shop
Tie – navy	School shop
Collared shirt – white	Anywhere
V-necked pullover - grey with logo (not compulsory) OR	School shop
V-necked slipover - grey with logo (not compulsory)	School shop
Skirt – grey check OR	School shop
Trousers – plain dark grey tailored	Anywhere
Shoes – sensible style, black	Anywhere
Socks – plain black	Anywhere

Item	Buy from
Girls' PE Uniform	
Girls PE t-shirt – navy with logo	School shop
Girls PE jumper – ¼ zip navy with logo	School shop
PE skort or PE shorts – navy with logo	School shop
Plain black leggings (To be worn under skort not on their own!)	Anywhere
Games socks – navy	School shop/ Anywhere
Tracksuit bottoms – plain black or navy with no logo	Anywhere
Under armour (winter months) – plain black or navy	Anywhere
PE socks – short white	Anywhere
Gum shield and shin pads	Anywhere
Sport footwear – trainers and football boots	Anywhere

Item	Buy from
Boys' PE Uniform	
Boys PE t-shirt – navy with logo	School shop
Boys rugby shirt – navy and white	School shop
PE shorts – navy with logo	School shop
Games socks – navy	School shop/ Anywhere
Tracksuit bottoms – plain black or navy with no logo	Anywhere
Under armour (winter months) – plain black or navy	Anywhere
PE socks – short white	Anywhere
Gum shield and shin pads	Anywhere
Sport footwear – trainers and football boots	Anywhere

<https://www.totalclothingshop.co.uk/goldingtonacademy>



Full details can be found in the school's [Uniform and Equipment Policy](#), which is available on the school website or from the school office.

SCHOOL MEALS

From January 2025 all school catering has transferred to being in-house and we strive to provide excellent food, of high nutritional value, that is competitively priced. A copy of the School Food Standards can be found [here](#). Specific queries about school food can be addressed to the School Catering Manager Jasmine Keen who can be contacted on keenj@goldington.beds.sch.uk. Alternatively, you may wish to contact the School Business Manager, Mike Birchall at birchallm@goldington.beds.sch.uk or the Principal galbraithf@goldington.beds.sch.uk.

Meal deals are available every day at a cost of approximately £2.60; however, there is also a selection of individually priced items, giving students greater choice of food and some control over how much money they spend.

So why should you opt for a school lunch? Here are some of the main reasons:

- It is a fantastic way to encourage your child to try new things.
- Catering staff quickly learn what children like and adapt the menu choices when necessary.
- Dietary needs and special requirements are recognised, understood and catered for.
- It is the best way of ensuring children are attentive and in the best frame of mind to learn in afternoon lessons.

We use a fingerprint (biometric) cashless catering system, which brings the following benefits:

- Accounts can be topped up at any time using ParentMail +Pay.
- The speed of service is quicker, enabling the child to spend more time socialising as queue times are less.
- It reduces any risk of bullying as the students don't have to carry money to school.
- It provides anonymity to those students who qualify for free school meals.
- Parents can see what their child is eating on a day-to-day basis through ParentMail +Pay. There are no vending machines.

We ask that packed lunches brought in to school are balanced and healthy. Please do not send chocolate, nuts, fizzy drinks and drinks in glass bottles. **All children need to bring a water bottle with them. No bottled drinks are for sale within school; however, we do have water coolers for students to refill their bottles and a juice machine (which can be purchased using their own bottle).**

Payment for school meals is required in advance.

School meals will not be available to a pupil if there is no money on their school meal account.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

From September 2024, children who are eligible will be automatically signed up for free school meals.

In Bedford Borough, 21% of children receive free school meals. This means they get a choice of healthy, hot meals, with cultural, dietary and religious requirements catered for, every school day, at no cost to the family.

Some schools also offer reduced rates for school trips, clubs, after school care, holiday activities and uniform to children who receive free school meals.

During some school holidays, the Council may provide families receiving income-related free school meals with supermarket vouchers. Find out more on our Free school meals provision during school holidays webpage.

Free school meals are worth around £470 per year, per child, and they are known to help children thrive and:

- help children be ready to learn, contributing to improved behaviour and learning
- boost attainment and attendance
- help children achieve their potential and increase a child's lifetime earnings
- offer the child the opportunity to develop social skills by sitting with friends whilst they eat
- help families save on food costs
- improve diet quality and helps combat childhood obesity, saving the NHS money in the long term

The school will also receive additional funding to cover the catering cost of free school meals, as well as school funding grants, such as the Pupil Premium, based on their take up of free school meals.

For children in year three and above at a school in Bedford Borough, free school meals are available to pupils / families who receive one of more of the benefits listed below.

The child must attend a school in Bedford Borough, although they may not live in the borough.

- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earning from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

ACCESS TO AND PARKING AT SCHOOL

We take the safety of the members of both our school and local community very seriously. Due to the location of the school and the volume of traffic outside school at the start and end of the school day, we rely on the co-operation of parents to help us to reduce the risks presented.

If you are able to walk or cycle with your child to school, to avoid using a car, we would be very grateful. Many of our pupils' cycle to school and we have a large, purpose-built bike shelter for storing bikes securely, which is kept locked during the school day. Delivery and collection of bikes is supervised at the start and end of the school day. **Please note we cannot accept liability for bikes left at school overnight or anywhere on the school premises, other than the bike sheds, without prior permission.** We encourage children to attend a Bikeability Course should they wish to cycle to school.

If, however, you need to use your car please ensure when you stop to drop-off or park you do so safely and considerately.

Access to the school site for parents is on foot. Whenever you come to school, please enter and leave via the school reception. For safety reasons it is important that we know who is on the premises at all times and we ask that you sign in and out when you visit school.

HOW CAN PARENTS GET INVOLVED?

PARENTS' FORUM

Parents' Forum is a chance to meet the Principal and other senior members of staff. The evening begins with a short presentation on a particular topic of interest before a question-and-answer session on aspects of your child's school life at Goldington.

The dates for 2025/26 are:

Wednesday, 24 September 2025

Wednesday, 3 December 2025

Wednesday, 4 March 2026

Wednesday, 3 June 2026

