



Toft Hill Primary School

School Brochure

2023/2024

Welcome to Toft Hill Primary School

Dear Parent/Carer

This brochure is designed to give you a clear understanding of what daily life is like in our school. Some of you may be new to the area or just new to our school, whilst others are very familiar with our school and its aims. We wish to extend a warm welcome everyone, and trust that you and your family will enjoy a long and happy association with the school.

We are very proud of the successes of our school - the good relationships we have with families and friends within the community, and of the governors, staff and children who work hard to make our school a happy place where we can learn together in friendship.

The education and welfare of your child is of paramount importance to us, as of course it is to you. Co-operation and close relations between home and school are vital if every child is to fulfil their potential during the time they spend with us.

Most pupils settle into school very quickly and are very happy; some may take a little time to acclimatise to their new environment and routines but will soon find their feet. We strive hard to ensure that transition into our school and between year groups is as smooth as possible.

We trust that you will find the information in this booklet useful, and hope that it allays any anxieties you or your child may feel as you join our happy school community. Of course, if you have any concerns or further queries, please contact us - the sooner we are aware of any problem the easier it is for us to deal with it.

We look forward to your support and to meeting you on many occasions over the coming years.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Leanne Nesbitt

Headteacher

CONTACTS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Visits from prospective parents and pupils are welcomed and encouraged at all times.
Please contact school to make an appointment.

Toft Hill Primary School
Toft Hill
Bishop Auckland
Co. Durham
DL16 0JA

Tel: 01388 832393

E. Mail – toft Hill@durhamlearning.net

Website: www.toft Hill.durham.sch.uk

The school is maintained by Durham County Council. The address of the Education department is:

The Director of Education
County Hall
Durham County Council
DH1 5UJ

Telephone: 03000 26 0000

GOVERNORS

Chair	Mrs Alison O'Sullivan	Parent Governor
Joint Chair	Mrs Amanda Majer	Parent Governor
	Mrs Kelly Reynolds	Co-opted Governor
	Mrs Helen Pepper	Co-opted Governor
	Mrs Victoria Bell	Parent Governor
	Mrs Teresa Millward	Parent Governor
	Miss Rachel Higgin	Parent Governor
	Mrs Leanne Nesbitt	Headteacher Governor
	Mrs Lisa Shaw	Teacher Governor

The Governing Body meets regularly. They are committed to ensuring the highest quality of education and welfare for your child. If you wish to contact any members of the governing body, this can be done via school.

What is Toft Hill Primary School all about?

Mission Statement

Here at Toft Hill Primary we believe that all children are entitled to an enriched education where diversity is value and celebrated.

- We challenge all pupils to achieve their best and strive for academic, creative, sporting and personal achievement.
- We celebrate perseverance; resilience and risk taking, ensuring pupils welcome challenge and are not frightened to make mistakes.
- We foster a culture of mutual respect and aim to develop self-esteem and confidence to enable pupils to live and work co-operatively with others to become positive citizens in society.
- We aim to promote a positive attitude to learning and for pupils to become independent life-long learners.

What is the school building like?

Toft Hill Primary School was opened in 1915. The building houses 7 classrooms, two small teaching rooms, hall, main office and Headteacher's office, staffroom and toilet facilities. Surrounding the building are extensive grounds including a large field area, garden and wildlife area as well as a hard play area and a MUGA. We have a summerhouse which is located on the field this has heating and lights and is used for teaching purposes and meetings. A second small summerhouse is used by the older pupils as a base for our Outdoor Club.

The premises are safe and secure and provide secure access to the yard for children from Reception to Year 6. The office is in the main reception area, accessible from the pedestrian access gate. We have an Early Years Unit which has its own outdoor area which pupils access throughout the day. The school hall is used for a number of purposes including small group teaching, PE, assemblies and dining. We make good use of our school field for PE, outdoor learning, science, etc.

Who will be teaching my child?

Our warm, welcoming staff are always available should you have any queries.

We operate an open door policy and you can often catch staff on the yard before and after school as they collect and bring children out each day. However, there are times when they may be unavailable at short notice, for example when they are busy preparing for the working day, or attending meetings etc. In these instances an appointment will always be made for you to see staff at the earliest mutual convenient time. Please contact the school office, 01388 832393.

Class	Teacher		Other staff
Reception	Mrs Robinson		Miss Coatsworth, Miss White
Year 1	Miss Alderson		Mrs Stones, Miss Simpson
Year 2	Mr Way		Mr Backhouse
Year 3	Mr Young		Miss Richardson
Year 4	Mr Dickinson		Miss Aldworth
Year 5	Mr Sproat	Mrs Watson	Mrs McCready
Year 6	Mrs Pearson		Miss Scott, Mrs Shaw, Mrs Bolton

How are classes organised?

The school is organised into Early Years, for pupils in Reception, and six further classes, all with single age groups.

When organising teaching activities, staff organise pupils according to the activity they are undertaking – children may be grouped with those of similar ability for certain activities, or within mixed ability or friendship groups for other activities. Teachers plan work to meet children's abilities at all levels, and Teaching Assistants work across the school supporting learning for individuals or different groups of pupils.

There are occasions when your child may have a different teacher for a day or session. This is because staff have other responsibilities in school, in addition to their teaching duties, which they need to fulfil. Also, staff may be undertaking professional training or having non-contact time for preparation, planning and assessment. In these instances we make arrangements for Higher Level Teaching Assistants and occasionally supply teachers to come into classes to cover work set by the class teacher. Wherever possible we try to ensure the same staff members work with the children on a regular basis, and the children soon become familiar with them. At all times we aim to ensure the highest possible standards of teaching and learning, and the minimum amount of disruption takes place.

What arrangements are in place for children starting in Reception?

For pupils who are new to our school, we offer opportunities for parents to visit the school and meet with staff, and then for children to visit the Reception class on new starter days during the summer term. This ensures your child can become familiar with their new class and the staff in school.

Pupils starting in Reception Class will do so gradually, staying for half days, building up to attending full time from the second week of the Autumn term onwards. However, we appreciate that many children have already accessed full-time Nursery provision and so aim to get them into full time education as soon as possible. For September 2022 .

How are things organised everyday?

Often the first thing pupils and parents are worried about are the general everyday routines that we employ to help make our school a happy and safe environment. We hope the following information will help answer some of those all important questions you may have about our school. If you have any queries about any of the issues, staff are always available and only too willing to help.

When should my child arrive at school? When does the school day end?

In usual circumstances this information applies. However, due to the recent government changes regarding the easing of lockdown restrictions, it is not yet known what the rules will be in September. School leaders will keep parents informed.

Reception to Year 6

Your child should arrive on the school playground between 8.45am and 8.55am. The bell sounds at 8.55 am. Obviously, your child's safety is our main concern, and with that in mind there will be two members of staff on duty from 8.45am onwards, one on the school yard and one at the main gate, to supervise the children. Please do not send your child to school before this time, as the school cannot accept responsibility for pupils arriving early and is unable to provide supervision.

It is important that your child is punctual – it can be very disruptive when children arrive late, missing the start of a lesson. Children, therefore, need to be in school for 8.55am. Registration closes at 9.15am. Arrival after this time will be indicated on the registration system. School systems monitor lateness and could trigger an interview within school to see if any support is required.

School lessons finish at 3.15 pm. Children will then pick up coats and belongings and when they are all ready will be escorted out of school by their teacher. Adults stay with all of our children on the school yard until they are picked up, or if they have permission to walk, set off home.

If, due to unforeseen circumstances, parents will be late arriving to collect children could parents please, as a matter of courtesy, inform school.

Can I come into school when I drop off and pick up my child?

Unfortunately we cannot accommodate every child's parent in school, with approximately 200 pupils – we simply do not have the space and, obviously, our primary concern must be for the children's safety.

Therefore we ask that you drop your child off in the playground when you arrive at school. We always welcome parents of new starters, who may wish to come into the yard and wait with their child, for the first few weeks of school. As your child becomes older you may prefer to wait near the gate and begin to develop your child's independence. We ask that anyone who has a dog does not bring it on to school premises, for health and safety reasons.

When you collect your child at the end of the school day, we ask that you similarly wait in the Early Years yard, your child will be brought to the classroom door and parents should step forward to collect them.

We know this is a new experience for our youngest children, but they very quickly get used to the routine and enjoy feeling more 'grown up' as they become more independent. Please rest assured that we take good care to ensure our new pupils are given extra supervision to begin with.

If it is wet or snowy, children should go straight into the school at the start of the day – staff

will supervise them until it is time for class to start. For safety reasons, could we please ask that parents avoid coming in with their child – staff and older pupils will be there to help them with wellies etc.

What are the school hours?

The school day is organised as follows:

8.55 am	-	10.30 am
10.30 am	-	10.45 am - morning break
10.45 am	-	11.45 am (KS1)
10.45 am	-	12.05 (KS2)
11.45pm	-	1.00 pm – KS1 Lunch
12.00pm	-	1.00 pm – KS2 Lunch
1.00pm	-	3.25pm

Most of the sessions are split into smaller units of time. There are assemblies during the afternoons. Children are also given a toilet break during the afternoon session.

Do the children wear uniform?

Yes, our children do wear a school uniform. We take pride in encouraging a collective belonging to our school, and the Governors have the following policy for uniform.

The basic recommended school uniform comprises:

- Black/grey trousers or skirt
- Jade green or white polo shirt
- Red sweatshirt or cardigan.

Items embroidered with the school's logo are available from the school office but supermarket t-shirts and sweatshirt are acceptable.

In addition we have t-shirts and black or red shorts available to purchase for PE, and school fleeces can also be ordered. Please ask in the school office.

Pupils must wear sensible footwear, to ensure their safety. Pupils must have a change of footwear for PE.

PLEASE ensure you mark each garment with your child's name. This is vital if we are to successfully identify lost and found items. Unclaimed clothes are kept for a short time in a lost property box but eventually we do dispose of them.

How safe is the school?

We work hard to ensure your children are educated in a safe and secure environment. As such, we operate:

- a visitor's security pass system
- electronic gate/door locks
- door alarms
- mobile phone for any staff who are away from the school with children e.g. swimming lessons, school visits etc.

While the children are in lessons, no unauthorised visitors will be able to enter. All doors conform to fire and health and safety regulations.

If parents and visitors need to come into school in lesson time, we ask that you come to the main office. This is manned for the majority of the day – if staff are busy in another part of the school, they will return as quickly as possible!

What equipment does my child need?

PE Kits

Pupils are expected to change into PE kit for their PE lessons. They are not permitted to wear their PE/clothing underneath their normal clothes. All jewellery and watches should be removed for reasons of safety. PE kit consists of a t-shirt and shorts.

For indoor PE/Dance

Black shorts and T-Shirt
Plimsolls/ gym shoes/bare feet (no trainers)

For Games

Shorts and T-Shirt
Tracksuit/ sweatshirt in colder weather
Trainers (must be a change from normal day wear)

Tights should not be worn under shorts for hygiene reasons.

Obviously all children are expected to take part in PE and games which are part of the National Curriculum. If there are specific medical reasons for any child not to take part, this should be explained to the class teacher.

Stationery

School will provide all stationery required. For health and safety purposes each child will be provided with a clear plastic storage box and a variety of stationery. This can be wiped clean at the end of each day. Children have trays in which to store belongings.

School resources

Children will be given resources to take home, such as homework books, reading books and reading records/logs. They need to return these as requested, and children will be expected to look after these school resources.

Bags

Book bags and PE kit bags are available to purchase from the school office.

Where will my child keep their belongings?

Some classes have lockers in the corridor or in the classroom. Some children will have a peg in the corridor. Coats and PE kits are to be hung in the cloakrooms or stored in lockers. Lunch boxes and book bags are stored in the classroom. Pupils can keep books etc. in trays in class.

If your child has personal belongings in school, it is their responsibility to look after them. Parents are strongly recommended not to allow their children to bring anything valuable to school - we discourage children bringing in precious belongings, as they may get damaged or lost.

Sometimes children bring in items for specific lessons – please emphasise to your child that he/she needs to look after them and, whilst teachers may from time to time hold valuables for pupils (e.g. during PE), the responsibility for valuables remains with pupils.

Can my child wear jewellery?

With your child's safety in mind we request that you do not allow them to wear jewellery for school. Injuries to ears, necks, fingers, etc can happen if children wear jewellery when playing or taking part in PE, and we wish to avoid such injuries wherever possible. If your child does wear jewellery to school the school accepts no responsibility for any injury. Jewellery (including earrings) **should** be removed for PE, including swimming. If not they must be taped over to prevent accidents. We appreciate that children do like to have their ears pierced, and would advise that this be done during the six week holiday, so that they can still be removed during school hours and for PE lessons.

Can my child bring their mobile phone to school?

Mobile phones are not permitted in school. (This includes after school events such as discos). If they are brought in accidentally or if your child needs access to their phone after school hours then they should be left in the school office or with their class teacher. The school will not accept responsibility for loss or damage to mobile phones on school premises.

What happens if my child is ill, or needs to take medicine?

If your child is too ill to attend school, please notify the school office before 9.10 am on the first day of absence. **It is the parents' responsibility to inform school of any absence.** We operate a first day absence policy, and will contact you if we haven't had a message. You can e-mail, leave a voice mail message or use the Class Dojo messaging service

This information is very important. By law we have to keep a strict record of absences. If we do not receive a reason from a parent then the absence has to be recorded as unauthorised.

The rate of unauthorised absence is very low. Most parents keep us well informed as to why their children are not at school. Where the child is regularly late or absent, or an absence is unexplained, then procedures will be implemented which may be a letter or an interview with the head teacher.

Parents collecting children needing medical treatment during school hours (e.g. a hospital appointment) are asked to call at the school office. All non-essential appointments should be arranged outside of the school day. This enables an exact record of pupils on site to be maintained. This information is important in cases of emergency fire drill.

Please note that no child will be allowed to leave school early unaccompanied. No child will be sent home unescorted during school hours. If your child arrives home alone during school hours please check with the school immediately.

Infectious illnesses

If your child contracts an infectious disease such as Whooping Cough, Measles, Mumps or Chicken Pox, please check with your doctor to establish when it is safe for your child to return to school without putting others at risk of catching the illness.

If your child has an upset stomach and has been vomiting, please allow 48 hours after their last bout of vomiting before they return to school. This allows us to try and limit others catching any 'bug'.

Head Lice

Unfortunately, it is no longer part of the school nurse's role to come into school and check for head lice, so we ask parents to be vigilant, and let us know if there is any incidence of head lice. Although we cannot send out letters to specific children, we can highlight problems in our newsletters, on social media e.g. Facebook, via text and group letters.

Medicine

If your child improves and is well enough to attend school but requires medicine during school hours please ensure that all medicines are in their original packaging and the pharmacists label is clearly visible indicating your child's name, name of medicine and dosage required. This must be brought into school by an adult. It is a legal requirement that we ask parents to complete and sign a form giving us permission to administer medicine.

Please note –

- **No child is permitted to have medication in his/her possession.**
- **No medication should be brought into school by children.**
- **School cannot administer the first dose of any course of medicine.**

What if my child needs to take medication because of a medical condition?

Please notify the school of any special medical problems which may affect your child whilst at school or on a visit.

If your child has any medical condition, e.g. asthma, and needs to take medication, such as inhalers, please complete a form, available from the school office and ensure that your child brings an inhaler to school. This will be kept accessible, in the classroom.

We will ensure all staff who work in school, on a regular and supply basis, are informed of the condition and mindful of your child's needs.

School medicals

At various times during their school life, pupils will undergo health screening checks carried out by a doctor and/or nurse. All such examinations are carried out in accordance with County Policies. Where further action is seen as necessary parents will be informed in order that they might make suitable arrangements with their own Optician, Dentist, Clinic or Doctor as preferred.

What happens if my child is injured or involved in an emergency?

During school hours, minor cuts, scrapes etc. are treated at school. In some instances, e.g. head bump, a note will be sent home so parents are kept informed. If the incident warrants it, then a phone call will be made to parents informing them of the incident. In the event of a serious accident (e.g. suspected broken arm), parents will be immediately contacted. If no contact can be made the child will be taken to hospital for treatment to begin and a message will be left at the parent's home and at school. No child will be left unaccompanied at any hospital or clinic. If necessary the child will be returned home.

All teachers, classroom assistants and administrative staff have attended a basic First Aid course.

Mrs Tully and Mrs Stones are lead 1st Aiders and are trained to deal with medication.

Mrs Nesbitt, Mrs Jones, Mrs Stones, Mrs Tully, Mrs Lowe and Miss Coatsworth are paediatric first aiders

Emergency Contact

It is vitally important that we should be able to make contact with parents or a named responsible adult in case of an emergency.

Parents are asked to complete a data collection sheet when their child starts school. Parents will be provided with a login to Arbor and they will be able to change key information for example, a change of telephone number, via the app. We need to have an up to date phone numbers at all times and also the number of a relative or friend in case we are unable to contact the parents.

A current email address is also useful. We use Class Dojo to keep parents informed and to provide vital information such as notice of school closure due to inclement weather, so up to date emails are also essential.

Can I take my child on holiday during term time?

The law says that parents **do not** have the right to take their child out of school for holidays during term-time. We cannot authorise leave of absence, unless there are **very** exceptional reasons for doing so. It is important that parents carefully consider the implications of taking their child out of school during term-time. As a parent you need to consider that there are times during a school year when a child may experience particular problems because of term time leave such as:

- Disadvantages if close to exams or tests, for example SATs in Year 6.
- Settling in problems at the start of a school year.

If you are considering taking your child out of school during term time please make an appointment to discuss the matter. The local authority will issue a fine for unauthorised absences of 7 or more days.

What are the arrangements for collecting money?

We are trying to become a cashless school. If you do need to use cash to pay for dinner money etc. please make sure that it is sent in a **sealed envelope**, clearly marked with **class, name and amount**. We use Arbor, which is an online system, for making payments. Mrs Tully will arrange this.

If you wish to change lunchtime arrangements, i.e. move children to or from school meals, the school office requires notice of one week, as meals are ordered in advance.

School meals cost £2.81 per day.

All KS1 pupils receive a free school meal.

What happens at lunchtimes

School Meals

School meals are provided and prepared by Taylor Shaw. Menus are sent home for children to pre-select. They are provided with a least two choices. All children are expected to eat the food they have selected in order to avoid unnecessary waste. Where a child has a medical condition requiring a particular diet, this can be provided when the school receives details from the pupil's doctor. All children in Early Years and Key Stage One currently receive a free school lunch.

Packed lunches

Children are allowed to bring packed lunches on the understanding that the responsibility for the safety and condition of the lunch lies with the child. We are keen to encourage a healthy diet in school, and ask that you do not put sweets, fizzy/energy drinks into packed lunches.

Free meals

For each child who is entitled to a Free School Meal we are given additional funding, which goes a long way to improving resources and helping us provide more opportunities for the pupils, as well as providing important information to the DFE and OFSTED.

Even if you don't intend to take up the free school meal, it is vital that we have a record that your child is entitled to it, so we can access this funding. Your child is entitled to free school meals if you are in receipt of a range of benefits. If you think you may be entitled to free schools meals, then please contact Mrs Tully in the school office. The matter will be dealt with the utmost discretion.

Children staying for lunch are supervised by four lunchtime supervisors, who work hard to monitor and organise lunchtimes, as well as encouraging a healthy diet and cooperative play.

We believe it is very important that children see lunchtime as a social and enjoyable experience, and as such we allow them to choose who they would like to sit next to. Of course it is expected that our high standards of behaviour are maintained by pupils both in and out of the dining area.

How are break times organised?

Staff supervise pupils on a rota basis. Pupils have a range of areas to play in, and in good weather we are able to take advantage of our playing field for additional space at break and lunch times. There is the trim trail area on the field, and areas for playing games and football, as well as quieter seating area.

Can my child bring drinks into school?

Children are able to water during lessons. This is freely available in the majority of classrooms:

- Only still water can be drunk in the classrooms.
- All water should be drunk from a plastic bottle with a sports type top. These are available to buy from the office.
- The bottles are to remain the responsibility of the child and are usually taken home on a Friday to be cleaned. During this period of additional cleaning bottles should be taken home daily.
- The bottles are to remain in the classroom except when they are taken home.
- No drinks are allowed in the playground.

KS1 pupils have snacks available during the morning or at break time and are able to have 'Cool Milk', if ordered. The milk is ordered from, and paid for directly to the Cool Milk Company. Once they receive payment, they add your child's name to the weekly delivery list. To enable your child to receive 'Cool Milk', please register at www.coolmilk.com.

KS2 pupils may bring in a snack from home e.g. piece of fruit or a healthy snack to have at break time.

All pupils are provided with water or milk at lunchtimes.

How does the school manage behaviour?

Our school prides itself on its effective management of good behaviour, based on positive reinforcement, reward and encouragement.

The school behaviour system reinforces three main behaviour rules:

- Follow all instructions
- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Stay safe

All pupils are familiar with the school rules, and have regular opportunities to discuss behaviour in class, during assemblies and school council meetings. We believe this collective responsibility for behaviour helps us maintain a calm and happy place for all of our children to achieve in.

Behaviour expectations

- A good standard of behaviour is expected in school, walking and talking quietly.
- Pupils are expected to be friendly and kind to each other, and treat one another with respect.
- Playground behaviour should be peaceful and fighting and bullying will result in sanctions.
- We will not condone aggressive or threatening behaviour of any sort and children are made aware of the procedures for sorting problems that may arise.
- Sweets and toys are not allowed in school without special permission.
- Good behaviour is also expected when travelling to and from school, with particular regard to road safety rules.

Rewards include:

- Praise
- Stickers
- House points
- Certificates
- Achiever of the week
- Golden time
- Text message home

Restorative Approach

A structured approach is taken in the resolving of issues and staff follow a set of restorative questions:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking?
- What were you feeling?
- Who has been affected? And how?
- What needs to happen now?
- What do you need to do now?

Sanctions

From time to time children fail to behave in an acceptable manner. On these occasions there are a series of consequences. On most occasions unacceptable behaviour can be dealt with by the class teacher and/or support staff but if this behaviour persists other members of staff may become involved. In more serious cases a child may be taken to the Deputy Head teacher or Head teacher.

The success of sanctions will vary with different children. What is effective with one child may be inappropriate for another. There may also be occasions when children move immediately onto levels 3, 4, or 5 if the situation is serious enough. It is up to the teacher to decide when a senior member of staff becomes involved.

Stage	Response	Consequence
1	Warning	Verbal warning
2	Loss of privileges	Name recorded. Loss of Golden Time or breaktime.
3	Involvement of senior member of staff	If there is another incident in the same day the child will be sent to the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher. The child may be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spoken to and returned to class. • Kept in Deputy Headteacher's class for the rest of that session. • Loss of other privileges such as playtimes/lunch break.
4	Involvement of Headteacher	If necessary children will be sent to Mrs. Nesbitt to discuss behaviour if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their behaviour has not improved after being out of class • The incident is serious enough to warrant Head teacher involvement • They have been sent to the Deputy Head repeatedly. This will result in pupils being put on a report card – a means of monitoring behaviour in all sessions (lessons, break and lunch). Children may lose privileges such as clubs, trips and special events, or be kept in at break or lunchtime and parents may be informed.
5	Contact home	Mrs Nesbitt or Mr Dickinson will contact parents to seek their support in developing a behaviour modification programme. E.g. use of a report card, use of behaviour diaries, regular behaviour reviews, special arrangements for arrival/leaving school, etc.
6	Exclusion	Fixed term or permanent. A last resort but it is sometimes necessary.

What happens if my child is bullied?

Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy has been written after discussion with representatives of all partners – pupils, staff, parents and governors. We hope everyone will work together to make it successful.

Toft Hill Primary School aims to work effectively against bullying. We know that there are times when bullying occurs. We know that this can be distressing to all concerned. We want to protect those who are being bullied. We want to counsel those who bully, make them aware of the consequences of their behaviour and teach them there is a better way to behave.

We believe that all pupils have a right to feel safe and happy at school so that they can concentrate on their learning. As part of this we have a system where children from the School Council support others in the playground.

Bullying

- Can be physical or verbal.
- Can be psychological in nature.
- Is often premeditated.
- Can include taunting, teasing, physical abuse, harassment, intimidation or extortion.
- Can be sly and underhand.
- Is intended to hurt or make the victim uncomfortable.
- Involves some sort of power over the victim. E.g. greater physical strength (over a younger child); greater numbers (a group onto one); knowledge to inform.
- Can be indirect, spreading lies and nasty stories or excluding someone from social groups.
- Can be long-term and deep-rooted.

Bullying is not

- A one-off incident
- Two children having a fight.
- Friends falling out, arguing and name-calling.
- Bumping into another child in the playground.

BULLYING – DON'T SUFFER IN SILENCE

Information for pupils

WHEN YOU ARE BEING BULLIED

- Be firm and clear – look them in the eye and tell them to stop.
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible.
- Tell an adult what has happened straight away.

AFTER YOU HAVE BEEN BULLIED

- Tell a teacher or another adult in school.
- Tell your family.
- If you are scared to tell a teacher or an adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you.
- Keep on speaking up until someone listens.
- Don't blame yourself for what has happened.

WHEN YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT BULLYING WITH AN ADULT, BE CLEAR ABOUT

- What has happened to you?
- How often it has happened.
- Who was involved?
- Who saw what was happening.
- Where it happened.
- What you have done about it already.

ADVICE TO PARENTS

If your child has been bullied

- Calmly talk with your child about his/her experience.
- Make a note of what your child says – particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened.
- Reassure your child that he/she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying.
- Explain to your child that should any further incidents occur he/she should report them to a teacher or another adult immediately.
- Make an appointment to see your child's class teacher.
- Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing.

Talking with teachers about bullying

- Try to stay calm – bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened, give dates, places and names of other children involved.
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school.
- Stay in touch with the school; let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

If your child is bullying other children

Many children may be involved in bullying other pupils at some time or other. Often parents are not aware that their child is involved in bullying.

Children sometimes bully others because:

- They don't know it is wrong.
- They are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family whom they admire.

- They haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends.
- Their friends encourage them to bully.
- They are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings.

To stop your child from bullying others

- Talk with your child; explain that what he/she is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy.
- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want.
- Show your child how he/she can join in with other children without bullying.
- Make an appointment to see your child's class teacher, explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing; discuss with the teacher how you and the school can stop him/her bullying others.
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school.
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when he/she is co-operative or kind to other people.

How safe is the school?

Your child's safety is of the utmost importance to us.

- We ensure that all exits and entrances to school are secure and only accessible using our security keys. All visitors are expected to sign in and report to the school office.
- We hold regular fire drills and health and safety checks.
- All adults working with children have DBS checks.
- We teach children to behave safely, and use resources in a safe and sensible way.
- All school trips, activities and visitors undergo risk assessments.

Will my child go swimming?

We hope that parents welcome the opportunity to improve their children's safety in and near water. The school is able to provide swimming tuition for pupils in KS2. All children are expected to be able to swim 25 metres and to self-rescue before they leave Year 6.

Please note that where swimming is provided as part of the curriculum for any child it is a compulsory element within the timetable unless there are specific medical reasons for the child not taking part.

Swimming lessons will take place at the pool at Woodhouse Leisure Centre.

What forms do I need to fill in when my child starts school?

Data Collection Sheet

This information is collected to help inform us of your child's personal details e.g. parents names and contact numbers, allergies and ethnicity. It also allows us to analyse the makeup of the whole school population. All data is confidential.

Education Visits for (EV4)

This is filled in when your child starts school and covers all educational visits we make, other than residential visits. Information on this form includes emergency contacts.

Free School Meals Entitlement Check

Available from Mrs Tully: please fill in these forms if you are eligible for free school meals, whether you require them or not.

On-line Safety Agreement

This is a form that gives your consent for children to have access to the Internet in school. All internet sites are heavily vetted and we have a very secure firewall system in place. In addition we will ask you to keep all passwords for the Learning gateway secure, by completing the agreement. E-safety is a regular and important feature of all ICT work.

Photographic consent form

A permission form allowing us to photograph your child, for purposes of display, website, press etc.

Class Dojo consent form

We need parental permission to use Class Dojo as a means of communication. No sensitive data is ever shared through this means of communication but it is essential in keeping close contact between parents and school

What if my child has Special Educational Needs?

Many pupils experience difficulties at some stage during their educational career. Specific difficulties are dealt with individually or in small group situations. In most instances children encountering problems will remain working within the class on work which has been carefully tailored to their needs. In certain circumstances it may be possible to provide some additional form of support by means of an extra teacher or assistance within the classroom. On other occasions a child may be withdrawn from class in order to benefit from small group or individual attention. There is no single rule or approach adopted as each pupil's needs vary greatly. The school will notify parents if it believes your child will benefit from any additional support.

If your child appears to be having significant difficulties, it may be necessary to formalise the additional support they require. In these instances we will develop a School SEND Support Plan for your child, which details the specific actions the school will take to provide additional support. You will, of course, be given copies of the support plan to sign and add your own comments to.

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator is Mrs Nesbitt. The Special Educational Needs Governor is Mrs Amanda Majer.

The school follows the Code of Practice and stage procedures for Special Educational Needs. Further details are available on our website.

THE CURRICULUM

What will my child be taught?

The aim of our curriculum is to encourage pupils to become competent, self-reliant learners, with the necessary knowledge and skills of the world about them.

In order to achieve this, the school places great value on the learning of English and Maths and our first priority is that all children acquire competence in the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and number. We also aim to develop expertise in the fields of Science, Computing, Humanities, Arts and Physical Education. The school curriculum includes all the elements of National Curriculum and statutory Religious Education, but also includes Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) which includes Relationships and Sex Education and other cross-curricular themes. The curriculum underpins the developments of children spiritually, morally, socially and culturally (known as SMSC).

Reception class

In the Early Years Foundation Stage learning is delivered through structured play. There is a balance between child-initiated learning and adult-led tasks based on the Early Years Curriculum, covering seven areas of learning:

Prime areas of learning	Specific areas of learning
Communication and language	Literacy
Physical development	Maths
Personal, social and emotional development	Understanding the world
	Expressive arts and design

Areas of learning are set up in the Early Years Unit, which operates in a classroom, along with a lovely outdoor space. Staff interact with the children, as well as leading specific tasks.

Year 1 – 6

In Key Stage 1 and 2 the curriculum is delivered thematically wherever possible. The basis of curriculum planning is a quality whole class text. Teachers then make links with other subjects e.g. art and science. In addition some subject areas may be taught discreetly.

Sometimes curriculum coverage is 'blocked'. For example, an entire week might be dedicated to art meaning that the whole of the art curriculum for that term will be covered in one week and art will not occur again until the next term.

The National Curriculum is made up of the Core Subjects and the Foundation Subjects.

Core Subjects	Foundation Subjects
English	Art and Design
Maths	Design Technology
Science	Computing

	Geography
	History
	Music
	Physical Education
	MFL – French (KS2 only)

Schools are also required to teach religious education. There is also a requirement of the school to teach PSHE (Personal, Social and Health education).

Religious Education and Collective Worship

Religious Education plays a central part in our curriculum. We follow the Durham Agreed Syllabus for RE. (If parents would like more detail of the content of the syllabus, then please contact school).

The local church is often invited to conduct Assemblies.

Assemblies are held regularly to promote good relationships within the school and community. The school endeavours to create an environment where all individuals are listened to and their opinions respected. Assemblies are sometimes Christian in content but stories from other World Religions are also included.

Any parent who wishes their child(ren) to be exempt from this type of Religious Education is asked to get in touch with the Headteacher.

Will my child be given homework?

In line with National Curriculum requirements we provide regular homework for pupils, in order to support learning taking place, to practice skills and also to develop the independence of children.

Reading

It is expected that pupils will undertake daily reading practice. When children join school in Reception class, we provide each pupil with a reading bag to protect the books – replacement bags are available at the school office. Teachers may also ask children to complete tasks related to their reading activity. It is important that books are returned daily, so teachers can monitor home reading, and comment on progress made in.

Other tasks

Homework tasks will depend on the age and ability of children, but in general terms the following can be expected:

Reception

These may include:

- Reading books and key words
- Counting in the environment.
- Reciting nursery and counting rhymes.
- Identification of shapes in the environment.

Fastening and unfastening buttons and zips and tying shoelaces – getting dressed and These may include:

Years 1 and 2

Activities may include:

- Reading books and key words
- Learning spellings
- Learning number facts
- English activities
- Maths written method activities

Years 3 and 4

Activities may include:

- Reading
- Spellings
- Reading comprehension activities
- Maths written method activities
- Learning number facts
- Self-directed project (1 term)

Years 5 and Year 6

They may include:

- Reading
- Spellings
- Reading comprehension activities
- Maths written method activities
- Learning number facts
- Self-directed project (1 term)

As children progress towards Year 6 they may often be given additional activities and this will also include SATs revision. It is expected that parents encourage greater independence as children move into upper Key Stage 2.

Does the school provide tuition for music?

A small number of pupils may benefit from the specialist tuition provided by the Peripatetic Music Service. For those selected to play an instrument it has to be remembered that much of the work is undertaken in the pupils' own time. At the present time we have brass lessons. The nature of the work requires a considerable degree of commitment on the part of all concerned. In the early stages of learning the sounds emerging from a novice may not be very attractive. Parents will need to display a great deal of patience and commitment if their children are to persevere and succeed. Acceptance of specialist tuition involves a long-term commitment. In addition to this provision the school organises opportunities for specific year groups to have music tuition from specialist staff for part of the year, along with additional opportunities for short blocks of time.

How is my child assessed?

Your child is regularly assessed in a number of ways during their time in school.

Throughout all lessons, in whole class work, independent work and in guided and supported sessions, teachers and teaching assistants regularly monitor and record progress and achievement. Pupils are given feedback through discussion and written comments, and as they progress through school they are given the opportunity to revisit and improve work, thereby learning from any mistakes.

Older pupils are also taught to assess their own progress against the lesson intention and so become involved in setting their own targets for improvement.

In addition children undertake more formal assessment so teachers can review their independent skills as they develop. These formal assessments include termly maths, reading comprehension and grammar, punctuation and spelling assessments for pupils from Year 2 to Year 6, Year 1 phonics reading tests, and National SAT tests for Year 2 and 6 pupils.

You will be kept fully informed of your child's progress and achievement when you meet your child's teacher at parents' evenings, and when you receive your child's termly progress report and annual report in the summer term.

How do teachers mark work?

The school operates a carefully considered and structured marking policy which is designed to help pupils understand where they have been successful, why they may have made an error and how they can put it right or improve their work further.

It is not helpful or profitable for pupils to have all their errors highlighted all of the time especially in areas where they might be experiencing difficulty or where they lack confidence. Teachers will, therefore, mark each child's work according to their need and the nature of the task. Often there will be written feedback on how a child can improve their work, for younger/less experienced children this will be by use of marking codes – a sign or symbol will be used instead of words. In addition parts of the work may be highlighted by the teacher or by the child themselves, in order to focus attention on successes and areas for improvement. As children mature we also involve them in peer assessment of each other's work.

Older pupils may use an app called SeeSaw that allows pupils to share work electronically with their teacher and it allows the teachers to comment on the pupils' work.

When do I need to come to parents evening?

We can only hope to achieve our aims for the children if their education is regarded as the dual responsibility of parents and teachers. At regular intervals during the school year parents will be invited into school to discuss their child's progress. These meetings provide an opportunity for parents and staff to get to know one another and to exchange views/observations. It should be emphasised however that these formal meetings are not the only opportunity parents have to speak with staff – we have a number of open events during the year, where you can meet

staff informally, and of course, should you have any concerns you are most welcome to make an appointment to speak with teachers at any time during the school year.

Are there any activities before and after school?

Toft Hill Primary School has both before and after school care for parents who need child-care.

Breakfast Club

Breakfast club is available between 8:00 and 8:45am. After this time children will join others on the yard. Children have a choice of cereals, toast and juice or milk. The cost is £2 per child.

After School Care

After school care is available each day until 6:00 pm.

After school care	1 st child	Sibling
3:15 – 4:15	£3.00	£2.00
3:15 – 5:15	£6.00	£4.00
3:15 – 6:00	£8.00	£5.00

In more normal circumstances the first part of each session has had a special theme for activities which are specified in the table below. At the current time the children have had table top activities to keep them amused and to prevent movement between class bubbles.

Day	Club
Monday	Sewing
Tuesday	Art and craft
Wednesday	Cookery
Thursday	Games
Friday	Cinema club

After School Clubs

Throughout the year there are a number of activities taking place in school that your child could become involved in.

Some examples of recent activities include:

- Rugby
- Gymnastics
- Change4Life
- Multi-skills
- Table tennis
- Outdoor and adventure club
- Choir
- Board games

In addition, we have had a number of other activities throughout the year for a short period, such as Seasonal Craft club. Other opportunities for clubs will continue to be offered whenever they arise.

The school also runs activities for children throughout the day, such as the School Council.

We have a number of opportunities for your child to develop their sporting skills. It is our aim

that children become interested in and enjoy sport, through the PE Curriculum as well as extra-curricular activities, special events, visits and visitors. We use our PE funding to offer a range of activities for children, including additional coaching in PE, and extra-curricular clubs and events. For example: Athletics, Swimming, Cricket, Rugby, Tennis, Multi-skills, Netball and Basketball.

Additional **enrichment activities** are developed throughout the year to enhance opportunities for all pupils in school. For example:

- Play in a Day
- Pantomime
- Disco
- Charity events (NSPCC, Children in Need, Sport Relief)
- Safety Carousel
- School Council, Eco group
- Lockerbie Manor residential visit
- Visits e.g. Heritage walk to Locomotion museum, Newcastle city centre, Bishop Auckland
- Visitors e.g. Stone Age day, author, local history

What special arrangements are made when children move year groups?

As well as the special visits organised for pupils joining Reception class, we ensure that children are given opportunities to meet their new teachers before moving year groups. Children have a morning each summer term when they work with their new teacher.

For pupils moving into secondary education, we have good transition arrangements. Pupils from our school can feed into up to five or six local comprehensive schools. There are a number of days organised for Y6 children to visit the local secondary schools where children undertake activities with pupils from other feeder primaries. We work closely with the Heads of Year 7 if we feel there are any pupils who may be more vulnerable before they move to the comprehensive.

What do Governors do?

We have a very supportive and active Governing Body. Governors make major decisions regarding the school curriculum, its budget, the staff and the premises. Each term, there is at least one full meeting. At other times smaller groups of Governors meet as a committee. The School and Governor Support Service provides a wide range of help and support services for School Governors, including training courses, a resource centre, an advice line, a magazine, access to a network of local support groups of Governors, and a Durham County Association of Governors.

Governing Bodies are made up of Parent Governors, Teacher Governors, Local Authority Governors and co-opted Governors who represent the local community. Information on how to become a School Governor is available by writing to or telephoning:

School and Governor Support Service
Education Department
County Hall
Durham
DH1 5UJ
Tel: 03000 265704

How is a decision made about who is admitted to the school?

The Governors will admit any pupil of appropriate age to the school, provided the limit agreed with the Local Authority is not exceeded.

The Education Committee is legally responsible for all admissions to County and Controlled Schools.

It may not be possible to offer your child a place at your chosen school if it receives more applications than it can take within its admission limit. Where this happens, the Authority will consult the Governing Body of the school and allocate places according to the following criteria in order of priority.

1. **Medical Reasons**

Pupils with very exceptional medical factors directly related to school placement. Application under this criterion should be supported by written evidence from a doctor.

2. **Sibling Links**

Pupils who have a brother or sister already attending the preferred school or associated school on the same site and who is expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission.

3. **Distance**

Pupils who live nearest the preferred school measured by the shortest walking route. This will be based on the parents' address. The Authority will, however, consider the overall availability of school places in an area to ensure that no children have an unreasonable distance to walk. This may override proximity to the preferred school.

Prospective parents are always welcomed and encouraged to visit and they should contact school to make an appointment.

What happens if the school is closed?

Whilst we hope it will never be necessary, there may be occasions when, due to circumstances beyond our control, it is necessary to close the school. In times of severe weather or heating breakdowns we may have very little notice of such closure. Should it be necessary to close the school we will contact parents via our Class Dojo and the Arbor messaging service. Information may also be shared on the Durham County Council website, our school website and broadcast on local radio.

GUIDANCE ON SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS

RATIONALE

The Headteacher, in consultation with the Governing Body, has a responsibility of care to both the children and staff in school. Whilst every effort will be made to keep the school open, when the Headteacher, in consultation with the Chair of the Governing Body, considers that the weather conditions place either children or staff in danger it is likely that the school will be

closed.

Aims

1. To ensure that the school remains open and operates normally wherever possible.
2. To ensure the safety of both children and adults at all times.

School will be closed when:

1. There is insufficient staff in school by 8.15am to provide suitable care for the children and it is uncertain whether staff will be able to reach school by 8.50am. This includes catering and cleaning staff.
2. Public transport ceases to run.
3. It is not possible to make the school grounds safe.
4. Weather conditions are bad and the Meteorological Office is issuing further severe weather warnings for the area.

Guidelines for Closure and Re-opening the School

In the case of closure the following procedures will be followed:

1. The Chair of the Governing Body will be consulted.
2. The Education Policy and Planning Unit at County Hall will be informed of the closure.
3. Local radio stations will be informed of the closure.
4. Arrangements will be made to receive any pupils who still arrive at school without an adult.
5. The school will re-open when conditions allow. This will be announced to parents via text message, the website and local radio. The Chair of Governors will be kept informed as will the Education Policy and Planning Unit.
6. When school is closed staff should report to their closest school.

Does the school charge for visits?

From time to time, educational visits are organised to enrich the curriculum for the benefit of pupils. Wherever possible we plan to subsidise trips to reduce costs. Under the 1988 Education Reform Act schools are prohibited from charging for activities during school hours which are an essential part of the curriculum. However, we may ask for voluntary contributions to help with the cost of certain activities e.g. educational visits during school hours. Unfortunately, if we do not receive enough contributions there may be occasions when a trip or activity may have to be cancelled.

Parents may also be charged for events their children take part in outside the school day e.g. disco, some after school clubs.

A termly charge is made for instrumental music tuition provided by the Music Support Service. Children who are entitled to free school meals do not pay for this service.

How is the information held about my child protected?

Schools, local education authorities and the Department for Education and Skills (the government department which deals with education) all hold information on pupils in order to

run the education system, and in doing so have to follow the **Data Protection Act 2020**. This means, among other things that the data held about pupils must only be used for specific purposes allowed by law. We therefore have a responsibility to keep parents informed about the types of data held, why that data is held, and to whom it may be passed on. This information is also available on the school's website.

Toft Hill Primary holds information on pupils in order to

- support their teaching and learning,
- monitor and report on their progress,
- provide appropriate pastoral care, and
- assess how well the school as whole is doing.

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

From time to time we are required to pass on some of this data to the Local Education Authority (LA), to another school to which the pupil is transferring, to the Department for Education (DfE), and to Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) which is responsible for the National Curriculum and associated assessment arrangements. Local arrangements exist to transfer relevant information to primary health care services.

The **Local Education Authority** uses information about pupils to carry out specific functions for which it is responsible, such as the assessment of any special educational needs the pupil may have and arrangements for the transport of pupils to and from school. It also uses the information to derive statistics to inform decisions on (for example) the funding of schools, and to assess the performance of schools and set targets for them. The statistics are used in such a way that individual pupils cannot be identified from them.

The **Qualifications and Curriculum Authority** uses information about pupils to administer the National Curriculum tests and assessments for Key Stages 1 and 2. The results of these are passed on to DfE in order for it to compile statistics on trends and patterns in levels of achievement. The QCA uses the information to evaluate the effectiveness of the National Curriculum and the associated assessment arrangements, and to ensure that these are continually improved.

The **Department for Education** uses information about pupils for statistical purposes, to evaluate and develop education policy and to monitor the performance of the education service as a whole. The statistics (including those based on information provided by the QCA) are used in such a way that individual pupils cannot be identified from them. The DfE will feed back to LAs and schools information about their pupils where they are lacking this information because it was not passed on by a former school. On occasion information may be shared with other Government departments or agencies strictly for statistical or research purposes only.

Pupils, as data subjects, have certain rights under the Data Protection Act, including a general right of access to personal data held on them, with parents exercising this right on their behalf if they are too young to do so themselves. If you wish to access the personal data held about your child, then please contact the relevant organisation in writing:

- the school at Toft Hill Primary School, Toft Hill, Bishop Auckland, DL14 0JA
- the LA's Data Protection Officer at The Education Department, County Hall, Durham,

DH1 5UJ;

- the QCA's Data Protection Officer at QCA, 83 Piccadilly, London, W1J 8QA,
- Ofsted's Data Protection Officer at Alexander House, 33 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6SE

- the DfES's Data Protection Officer at DfES, Caxton House, Tothill Street, LONDON, SW1H 9NA

The School's Data Protection Officer: Mr Mark Dickinson

What can I do if I have a problem or wish to complain?

We work hard to ensure the smooth running of the school, and hope that parents feel any issues are dealt with promptly and fairly. If you have a query regarding your child please contact the class teacher who will deal with the matter promptly, or if unavailable (ie during registration/lesson time) will make an appointment to see you.

If it is a more serious matter which needs immediate attention then the Head Teacher or Deputy Head will listen sympathetically and endeavour to resolve your concerns.

There is also a School Complaints Procedure available from the Head Teacher or the school website.

What are the school holidays?

School Holidays 2023/2024

Holiday	Closing Date	Date Re-open for teaching purposes
Summer 2023	Friday 21st July 2023	Tuesday 5th September 2023
Autumn Half-Term 2023	Friday 27th October 2023	Tuesday 7th November 2023
Christmas 2023	Tuesday 19th December 2023	Thursday 4th January 2024
Spring Half-Term 2024	Friday 16th February 2024	Monday 26th February 2024
Easter 2024	Thursday 28th March 2024	Tuesday 16th April 2024
Bank Holiday	Friday 3rd May 2024	Tuesday 7th May 2024
Summer Half-Term 2024	Friday 24th May 2024	Tuesday 4th June 2024
End of Summer Term 2024	Tuesday 23rd July 2024	Wednesday 4th September 2024

School Holidays 2024/2025

Holiday	Closing Date	Date Re-open for teaching purposes
Summer 2024	Tuesday 23rd July 2024	Wednesday 4th September 2024
Autumn Half Term 2024	Friday 25th October 2024	Monday 4th November 2024
Christmas 2024	Friday 20th December 2024	Tuesday 7th January 2025
Spring Half Term 2025	Friday 21st February 2025	Monday 3rd March 2025
Easter 2025	Friday 11th April 2025	Monday 28th April 2025
Bank Holiday	Friday 2nd May 2025	Tuesday 6th May 2025
Summer half Term 2025	Friday 23rd May 2025	Tuesday 3rd June 2025
End of Sumer Term 2025	Friday 18th July	TBC

