# Welcome to Nursery:

# A Parent's Guide

# Academic Year 2026-27




## St Gerard's Catholic Primary School

*"Guided by God, St Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School is an inspiring and aspirational community where we learn to love, hope, dream and achieve."*

*"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its' own right. Good parenting and high quality early Learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.*

*The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all Early Years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life."*

*Statutory Framework Early Years Foundation Stage.*




**A Warm Welcome!**

We would like to welcome you and your child to **St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School**. Some of you will already be familiar with our school as your child may have spent some time already in our Nursery, or you may have had previous children who were in our Nursery. If this is your first visit to St. Gerard's, we hope that it is a very happy experience, leaving you with the secure feeling that you can contact us at any time if you or your child, have any doubts or worries.

Your child's education and well-being is of paramount importance to us and we recognise that no-one knows your child better than you. We can learn a great deal from you that will enable us to provide a learning environment tailored to the interests and needs of your child. We look forward to a strong partnership between our staff and parents, where you are involved in your child's learning and your views are highly valued.

The purpose of this booklet is to illustrate our expectations of the children but also you as parents/carers:

- Punctuality & Attendance
- Behaviour
- Achievement & Attainment
- Curriculum
- After Schools activities
- Pupil Enjoyment & Engagement
- Learning Environment and Security

Helping our children emotionally and socially is every bit as important as helping with school work. Home and school have a direct impact upon each other. Parents can help to form the vital bridge between the two main areas of their children's lives at home and school.

At St. Gerard's you are always welcome, because the more parents and teachers can talk to each other informally the more they can build a positive relationship and ensure your child is happy, secure and progressing to the best of their ability.

In addition to Parent Evenings, our school attempts to involve parents in the life and work of the school in many ways. We like to involve parents in every aspect of your child's learning.

**Who is Who?**

**Mrs Tickle** is our Early Years Lead and she is responsible for overseeing the management of our Foundation Stage classes and is also our Nursery Class Teacher. If you would like to speak to her about anything then please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

**Nursery Staffing Structure:**

- Nursery Teacher Mrs Tickle BA(Hons) PGCE, NPQEYL
- Nursery Teaching Assistant Mrs Harrison (Level 3)

**Settling Down**

For most children Nursery can be quite daunting for the first few weeks. They are likely to be more tired than usual. School makes all sorts of demands on emotional and physical energies.

Even if they settle in well, a few weeks into the term, your child may become clingy or weepy – this is often a reaction to being tired - keep the pressure low and provide opportunity for extra rest and your child will soon settle down again.

**There are four themes in the EYFS.**

**A Unique Child:**

This theme is about how children develop: they are all different and their learning needs and styles are unique too. Positive relationships and good communication are vital so that we can plan for individual learning needs. Children need to learn about risks and safety, how to make good choices, and how to stick to boundaries. They do best when their all their physical and emotional needs are met.

**Positive Relationships:**

This theme is about children learning to manage their feelings and build friendships.
We will; Respect all families and aim to develop a positive two-way relationship with parents and carers. Support, listen to and work with children to help them learn.

**Enabling Environments:**

This theme is about how we plan for, and monitor, each child's progress. We will: **I**nvolve parents and the local community. Ensure that inside and outside spaces at the setting are safe, interesting and engaging. Support children when they move on, working as a team to help your child succeed.

**Learning and Development:**

This theme is about how children learn – through play and exploration, with adult support for each individual. We will: Encourage the children to develop their imaginations, to get actively involved in learning and to make decisions.
Develop their creative and critical thinking, balancing the need for both children and adults to decide what learning should take place.

**Working together to make a difference**

At St. Gerard's we like to feel that parents are always welcome, because the more parents and teachers can talk to each other informally the more they can build up trust and often resolve minor problems before they turn into major ones.
In addition to Parent Evenings our school attempts to involve parents in the life and work of the school in many ways. We like to involve parents in their children's learning

- Parents have a vital role to play in their child's education.
- Helping our children emotionally and socially is every bit as important as helping with school work.
- Home and school have a direct impact upon each other.

- Parents can help to form the vital bridge between the two main areas of their children's lives at home and school.

**Nursery Hours**

- Morning session **8:40am – 11:45am**
- Afternoon session **12:15pm – 3:15pm**
- All Day Sessions **8:40 pm – 3:15 pm** (lunch can be purchased and this is payable online to School Grid, or you can provide you child with a packed lunch.)
- Fruit and milk are provided daily at snack times.

The children walk into their classroom via the EYFS school gate on the Quinn Street side of our School. We encourage them to walk into school without you and we ask that you say goodbyes at the gate. **This is an important first step to independence**.

There will often be times when you may need to speak to the teacher. Whilst we encourage regular parental involvement, please take into consideration that the teacher is very busy welcoming and preparing the children in the morning and therefore you may need to make an appointment with them after school.

The Nursery operates on a password system. If anyone other than yourself is going to be collecting your child please contact the school office, and the person who is collecting your child needs to be aware of the password.

For security, the gate will be locked so **it is important for the children to arrive on time**. If you do arrive late, please bring your child to the main entrance of the school.

At home time, your child will be collected from the classroom door. The gate will be opened for you, so you can come and collect your child. For your child's safety we will not allow the children to leave until the Teacher has seen you.

**Records**

While your child is with us, we will record some of the things they do in their learning journey. We take photos and make notes to show how your child is developing using the iPad. These are gathered into a lovely portfolio which is given to you when your child leaves us. You can always ask to see your child's book and we are more than happy to explain anything to you. We actively encourage you to contribute towards your child's learning journey. All data collected is in line with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations)

**Nursery Hours for your child**

At 3 years old your child is entitled to 15 hours of government funding to come to our Nursery Class. Depending on your child's age on entry to our class the 15 hours will either be
5 morning sessions per week, at 3 hours per session. Or…
5 afternoon sessions per week at 3 hours per session.

**30 Hours Extended Entitlement:**

To ensure your child continues to attend on a full-time basis you must check the School Gateway and refresh your 'entitlement-code' every 3 months. Failure to update your code will result in a disruption to your child's full-time hours. Please refresh your code and hand it to the school office as soon as possible.
If you are not entitled to the extra 15 hours via a code, then you may pay for the extra 15 hours at a cost of £75 per week.

**Supporting St Gerard's Catholic Primary & Nursery School at home:**

The best ways to support us at home are to:

- Spend lots of time talking with your child;
- Read plenty of books together;

- Encourage your child to take part in lots of activities – digging in the garden, visiting interesting places, taking part in sports.
- Play lots of games together – spending quality time with your child is the very best way to help him or her learn and develop.
- Let us know if your child does something new or interesting.
- Let us know if you have any problems or worries about your child, or if you need our help.

You can also help us to create a holistic picture of your child by commenting on their home learning activity and providing photos of their activities on Class Dojo.

**Home Learning Activities**

A Home School letter will be sent to you at the end of the week via a link on Class Dojo. The home school letter will provide information about the children's week in school, what they'll be learning the following week plus any relevant updates and news. A home learning task is set weekly and is for all Nursery Class children to complete. This is an activity linked to their learning and a great opportunity to support your child's educational journey at home.

**Outdoor Provision**

The children will have access to the Early Years outdoor area throughout their time in Nursery. Children will access this provision every day and will be using it in all weathers. Please ensure that your child has a suitable warm, waterproof coat with a hood for school, each day.

**Letters**

Letters will be uploaded to our new 'School App' and onto our school website on a regular basis – paper copies can be requested. Please ensure you check your child's bag for any letters/permission slips.

**Sickness**

We understand that children are occasionally ill and are unable to attend Nursery.
If this is the case then we expect parents to:-

- Contact school before 9.30am.
- On their return to school please provide a short note for our records. Sometimes school will require medical evidence.

The school must be informed by letter or telephone call if a child is absent and the reasons given or in person by the parent/guardian/carer to the School Administration Office.

The school will endeavor to contact parents whose children are not in attendance on the same day of absence. When problems with attendance or punctuality are identified the School's Education Welfare Officer will become involved initially in a supportive way. This may include home visits. Awards are given to classes and individual children for good attendance. Parents must fill in an Absence Request Form for leave of absence. This may not be authorised

Children are only in school for 190 days.

We expect every child to achieve at least 96% attendance (National average).

**Medical Appointments**

- If possible please arrange for any medical appointments to be made outside of school time.
- If appointments do have to be made in school time then school requires seeing proof of appointment.

**Medicines**

Children who are prescribed medicine on a permanent basis must request a consent form from school, which then needs to be completed by you stating what medicine the child takes, the dose and that they need or are able to administer it themselves. These medicines will be stored in a locked cupboard.

Antibiotics that are prescribed by the doctor can only be administered by staff if the dosage is four times per day, a form will also need to be completed in order for the school.
Children who need inhalers must keep them with them at all times.

Please ensure that there is sufficient medicine in school for your child.

**Packed Lunches:**
You may prefer your child to bring a packed lunch. Sandwiches, fruit, yoghurt and a fruit drink would be ideal for a healthy mid-day meal.
Please encourage your child to learn how to open – lunch boxes, packets, straws, cellophane, etc. The midday assistants will be there to support your child through lunch times.
Please label your child's lunchbox carefully because children get very upset if they are unsure which one is theirs.
In the interest of **Health and Safety:** No hot food, glass or fizzy drinks**,** sweets or chocolate! Please note we are 'Nut free school.' Please do not send any food items containing any nut products to school, as we do have pupils with severe nut allergies and must keep them safe.

**Fruit**
Fruit is free for all children and it will be offered daily. The children will have access to a range of different fruits e.g. apples, satsuma's, bananas, tomatoes and strawberries (when in season). We encourage them to sample as many different ones as possible.

**Milk**
During the afternoon under 5 years old are given fee milk.

**Water**
Research has shown that children can learn more effectively when they drink plenty of fresh water. As a healthy school, we encourage the children to bring a water bottle with fresh still water every day (not fizzy or flavored water).
Please provide your child with a re-usable water bottle when the children start in the Nursery Class and ensure that they bring it each day.

If you are experiencing financial hardship please contact Mr Landrum (Head Teacher), Mrs Farrell (Deputy Head Teacher) or Mrs Wright (Family Support Worker) who will listen sensitively to your situation. If you prefer to speak to our Early Years Lead Mrs Tickle, you may do so.

**School Uniform**
School uniform is worn in our Nursery Class by all pupils. This outfit is also worn during PE.

Boys :
Purple school logo hoodie
Purple school logo t-shirt
Plain purple joggers
Black shoes with Velcro fastening (no shoe laces)
Waterproof cost with a hood
Summer term: Purple logo t-shirt, plain purple shorts

Girls :
Purple school logo hoodie
Purple school logo t-shirt
Plain purple joggers
Black shoes with Velcro fastening (no shoe laces)
Waterproof cost with a hood
Summer term: Purple logo t-shirt, plain purple shorts

Spare clothing may be plain white t-shirt and plain black joggers.

**ALL CLOTHING MUST BE CLEARLY LABELLED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME**

We ask parents for full support for the correct school wear. The child in uniform identifies with their school and friends.

**Their attitude and neat dress is reflected in good school work.**

**TRAINERS/CONVERSE ARE NOT PART OF SCHOOL UNIFORM – PLEASE ENSURE YOUR CHILD HAS THE CORRECT FOOTWEAR**

**No jewellery (including studs or sleepers) are allowed.**

Extreme haircuts including 'passing' fashions are not appropriate in our school where our high standards of appearance are viewed with pride.

Uniforms may be purchased from:

**Boydell's 17-19 Victoria Road Widnes Cheshire WA8 0PU 0151 424 3257.**

**Laser Schoolwear 35 Alforde Street Widnes, Halton, WA8 7TR 0151 424 1166**

**Kits4all 14 Lugsdale Road Widnes WA8 6DH 0151 420 7504**

**Breakfast Club**
We run a breakfast club in school each morning from **7:30am – 8:45am**. If you would like to use this facility you must book 24 hours in advance.
During breakfast club, children will receive a breakfast (cereal, toast and a drink) and are supervised for the session. Children from Nursery through to Year 6 are invited to attend Breakfast Club. (There is an additional charge of £3.00 for Nursery children to attend Breakfast club as this facility is not included in their 15 or 30 hours extended entitlement).

**After School Club**
Our after school club is available to all children from Nursery to Year 6. The club runs until 6pm each school day and costs £8 per session or £12 in total if you have two or more children.

**HEALTH & SAFETY**
**Parent Access to School**

Parents are not permitted to walk through school with their child to class; the child will be accompanied by a member of staff.

Parents wishing to see a member of staff should speak to Miss Gilbert or Miss Thomas in the school office.

No dogs are allowed in the School Playground. Anyone who does bring a dog into the school playground will be asked to leave.

**Smoking**
Our school is a no smoking area. This applies to staff, parents and visitors. Smoking is not permitted in school or around the areas of the school.
Children are taught in the science curriculum about the health dangers of smoking.

**Car Park**
The staff car park should only be used by staff and any disabled visitors.

Please do not park directly outside the school where the yellow lines are visible.
Please consider our local residents when parking around the school.

**Safety of children**

Children must be collected from school at **3:15pm** by a responsible adult. Children under the age of 16 should not be collecting siblings from school. If someone else is collecting your child from school other than you, please inform the school as early as possible.

We understand that there are some parents who request that the child's mother or father does not pick up their child or have access to the child in school. The safety of your child is important to us and sometimes this can put the school in a difficult position if the adult still has parental rights. If this is the case the only way we can refuse access is if we have a solicitor's letter stating that mother or father does not have parental rights. A copy of this letter should be kept in the child's confidential file in the school office.

If you change your telephone number or mobile number throughout the year **it is important** that you let us know about it. There have been times when we have tried to contact parents and we have been unable to. This also applies to change of addresses or any other information that you think the school needs to know.

If you are wishing to change Nurseries we advise that firstly you speak to Mrs Tickle our Early Years Lead, before making this decision as sometimes moving a child from school can cause distress. However, we understand that often it is unavoidable due to family circumstances. It is advisable to let the Headteacher know you are considering changing schools before making this important decision.

**Parent Code of Conduct**

At St Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School we are very fortunate to have supportive and friendly parents and carers.

We expect parents and carers to show respect and concern for others by:-

- supporting the respectful ethos of our school by setting a good example in their own speech and behaviour towards all members of the school community;
- working together with teachers for the benefit of children.
- correcting own child's behaviour, especially in public where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive or unsafe behaviour;
- respecting the school environment, including keeping the school tidy by not littering.
- following the parking rules and doing the right thing when delivering and collecting children from school.
- In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment, the school cannot tolerate:-
- disruptive behaviour which interferes with the operation of a classroom, an office area or any other part of the school grounds;
- using loud and/or offensive language or displaying temper;
- threatening harm or the use of physical aggression towards another adult or child.
- damaging or destroying school property;
- abusive or threatening emails, phone or social network messages ;
- smoking and consumption of alcohol or other drugs or accessing the school site whilst intoxicated ;

**The above behaviour on school premises will be reported to the appropriate authorities and Governors may prohibit an offending adult from entering the school grounds to safeguard our school community.**