

St Gilbert's Church of England Primary School



Parents' Handbook

Our vision to inspire a love of learning

Inspirational teaching that enables all our children to flourish as confident and independent learners

A vibrant curriculum that fires each child's imagination to explore and fulfil their own potential

A loving Christian school family that values every child and takes pride in their achievements



A warm welcome to St Gilbert's Church of England Primary School

We are exceptionally proud of our school and are confident that we provide a vibrant and stimulating learning environment in which pupils of all abilities thrive, founded on a strong Christian ethos.

We want your child to experience success in everything that they do as part of our school family.

We aspire for them to maximise their potential and we will encourage them to take a full part in the life of the school by taking on leadership responsibilities, representing the school within the community and being involved in activities during and after the school day.

We strongly believe that your child should not just grow academically through inspirational teaching but that they should also be nurtured personally and socially so that they become confident, well balanced and happy, prepared for the world beyond St Gilbert's.

Staff and Governors believe that learning is lifelong and that everyone within our school community should seize every opportunity to develop and grow. We are committed to providing a high quality education for all children and we look forward to working alongside you in partnership in realising this for your child.

We hope that you and your family enjoy being part of our school family and share with us the pride and pleasure in the achievements of all the children.

Miss F Dicker
Headteacher



Your Parent Handbook

We hope you will find this handbook valuable and informative and that it will enable you and your child to settle into our school with ease.

In addition, there is a wealth of information available on our website, e.g. term and diary dates, Maths and English booklets to help you keep up-to-date with the ways your child is taught and the academic expectations for their year group, links to other helpful websites and class pages. We also have E-Safety information that will help you support your child with 'online behaviour'.

In periods of bad weather notices of any school closures are first posted on the website homepage.

The school will also send out letters, via Parentmail, regarding learning, activities and events which will also include weekly newsletters.

Help our drive towards sustainability by signing up to receive school letters by Parentmail so that you will never miss a letter. Please contact the school office for more details. All our letters are also available to download from the website.

If you have queries or questions, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will be happy to help.

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Being a Christian School

As a church school, St. Gilbert's sees the growth of its children and their faith as something which underpins everything we do. We value the warm and positive ethos which is palpable as you walk around the school. We encourage our children to ask questions, to explore what having a faith really means, opening them up to experiences with a variety of faiths and denominations, and support them in their journey as they make decisions about the place of God in their lives.

We have chosen 6 values to strengthen and focus our worship and daily lives in school and will continue to build upon these as we learn and grow together as Christians. These values are:

- Trust
- Friendship
- Forgiveness
- Compassion
- Service
- Thankfulness

These are also underpinned by the British Values they learn about, as well as our teaching of 'Character Education' which enables all our children to understand, care about and act on core ethical values such as respect, justice, civic virtue and citizenship, and responsibility for self and others.

Our recent church inspection found us to be an Outstanding School and commented,

'Stamford St Gilbert's core Christian values of trust, friendship, forgiveness, compassion, service and thankfulness are deeply embedded and have a profound impact on the daily life of the school. Staff, governors, parents and children talk very enthusiastically about them. Furthermore, children not only speak about the values openly but explain how they impact on their personal lives and faith journeys saying 'we have a connection with God'.



Our School Day

Staff will be on the playground from 8.40 am to welcome your child for the day ahead. No child should be on the playground without parental supervision before 8.40 am. At 8.50 am they will come into school with their class teacher, for registration and to begin learning.

Any child arriving after 8.50 am should report to the office. Parents will be able to sign in their child electronically so that we know they are safely in school. *Please note: For security reasons parents should only access the building via the school office during school time. Only employed staff should open the security doors around school.*

A typical day in the life of...

a Foundation Stage child (4-5 year olds)

8.40am	Meet my teacher at the gate and go straight into my classroom.
8.50am	Register
9.00am	Collective Worship
9.20am	Lessons
10.30am	Playtime
10.45am	Lessons
12.15pm	Lunchtime – either a hot meal or packed lunch in the hall.
1.15pm	Lessons
2.45pm	Playtime
3.15pm	Home time – our parents wait on the skipping area and the teacher lets us go one at a time from the gate on the Foundation Stage play area when she can see our parents, who are waving to us.

We have fresh fruit and I can swap a token for a carton of fresh milk at any time during the morning

a Key Stage 1 child (Year 1: 5-6 year olds; Year 2: 6-7 year olds)

8.40am	Meet my friends on the upper playground where I line up when I hear the whistle. My teacher takes us into the school.
8.50am	Register
9.00am	Collective Worship
9.20am	Lessons
10.30am	Playtime – we have our fresh fruit and I can swap a token for a carton of fresh milk.
10.45am	Lessons
12.15pm	Lunchtime – either a hot meal or packed lunch in the hall.
1.15pm	Lessons
2.45pm	Playtime
3.15pm	Home time – our parents wait on the top playground. We line up and walk up onto the top playground where our teacher lets us go once we've seen our parents.



a Key Stage 2 child

(Year 3: 7-8 year olds; Year 4: 8-9 year olds; Year 5: 9-10 year olds; Year 6: 10-11 year olds)

8.40am	Meet my friends on the lower playground where I line up when I hear the whistle. My teacher takes us into the school.
8.50am	Register
9.00am	Collective Worship
9.20am	Lessons
10.15am	Playtime – I can have fresh fruit or another healthy snack from home
10.30am	Lessons
12.15	Lunchtime – either a hot meal or packed lunch in the hall
1.15pm	Lessons
3.20pm	Home time – we collect our things and meet our parents out on the bottom playground.



Our School Uniform

Our pupils take great pride in their uniform and it is expected that all pupils will try to keep as smart as possible throughout the school day. Our school uniform is practical and based on our school colour of navy blue. All uniform, including shoes and bags, must be clearly labelled.

For Boys

White shirt, or white or navy polo shirt
St Gilbert's sweatshirt
Medium grey trousers and/or shorts
Grey socks
Dark, sensible warm and waterproof coat
Black, navy or brown shoes/sandals

For Girls

White shirt, or white or navy polo shirt
St Gilbert's sweatshirt or navy blue cardigan
Navy blue skirt, tunic or tailored blue trousers
Blue/white gingham dress (for the summer)
White or navy socks or tights
Dark, sensible warm and waterproof coat
Black, navy or brown shoes/sandals

P.E. Kit

Navy shorts
Blue/white T-Shirt
Trainers
P.E. kit bags
KS2 may need – plain navy tracksuit (only the school's logo is permitted)
– rugby shirt

The following items can be purchased from www.kitmanuk.co.uk as detailed on the school website: fleece-lined jackets, sweatshirts, polo shirts, hats and caps, P.E. T-shirts, shorts, jog pants, fleece, rugby shirt and kit bags and book bags. Water bottles can be purchased at the school office. We have "nearly new" sales throughout the year. Children are not allowed to wear trainers during the school day unless, of course, they are taking part in a P.E. lesson!

We expect children to adopt a suitable, age appropriate hairstyle and we actively discourage extreme hairstyles that could draw attention to the child and single them out from the rest of the school. If as a school we feel a hairstyle is unsuitable, we will ask for this to be rectified. Hair must be tied back during the school day if shoulder length and fringes appropriate so children are able to learn without distraction.

The only jewellery allowed in school are watches and stud earrings. All other items of jewellery are considered unsuitable for school on the grounds of health and safety. High value items such as Fitbits are also not allowed to be worn by children. Jewellery should be removed for P.E. and swimming lessons.



Personal Items in School

We request that children do not bring in items from home unless requested by staff, as these can sometimes get lost or damaged, which is upsetting for children. Children are asked not to bring mobile phones into school, however occasionally it may be important for a child in Year 5 or 6 to bring in a mobile as they may be walking home. At this time a permission form needs to be completed. These should be switched off as soon as the child is on the school premises and handed to the class teacher at the beginning of the day for safekeeping. However, the school cannot take any responsibility for any valuable items that may be brought into school.

Medication, Illness or Accidents in School

Your child's well-being is of great importance to us. If your child becomes ill at school, you will be contacted immediately. Remember we need to have up-to-date contact numbers in case of emergency. We have members of staff who are qualified in basic first aid and if necessary they will give simple treatment and you will be notified of any incident.

Should your child, for any reason, require short-term essential medication during the day then you will need to be available to administer it. Children needing long-term treatment for conditions such as asthma or diabetes may bring in the necessary medication, which will be kept in a secure place until required. The school will work with you and your child to ensure that this is managed appropriately. We will ask you to complete a Medical Information Form to advise of any medical conditions you feel we need to be aware of.

Information on any allergies your child has must be shared with staff so that they are fully aware and prepared.

Should children have sickness or diarrhoea, they need to be off school for 24 hours after the last episode.

Travel to/from school

We encourage children to walk, cycle or scoot to school whenever possible and use the pedestrian entrances into school. We have bike and scooter racks within our grounds. Please make sure that, for safety reasons, your child does not ride their scooter/bike in the school grounds. In the interest of child safety, please do not park cars on the zig-zags at the front of the school (even if dropping a child off). Parking is very limited on Foundry Road; please consider parking further away from school and walking the rest of the way.

Both car parks are for school staff only. Please don't obstruct the entrance to this car park or the entrance to the BT premises on Foundry Road.

Please note that dogs are not permitted on any part of our premises including our car parks.

Food in School

We promote healthy eating in school. FS & KS1 children are provided with a free piece of fruit each day. Milk is offered daily at break time. It is free for under-5s and available for 5 years and over at a subsidised price. You can register your child online at www.coolmilk.com. We also run a Tuck Shop on a Friday, which sells snacks that all comply with the Food Standards in Schools. Tokens are also available from the office at a cost of £1 for 10 in the bandstand on a Friday morning before school.



Children are encouraged to bring a plastic bottle of water to school each day. Please label the bottle with your child's name and fill with water only as this helps their concentration. Juices and fizzy drinks are not allowed. Plastic water bottles are also available from the office at a cost of £1.20.

Note that we are a nut-free school. We have children and staff in school with nut allergies and would ask for your support in ensuring that nuts of all kinds and nut products (for example, peanut butter, chocolate and hazelnut spreads), are not brought into school for snacks or lunchtimes.

Lunchtime arrangements

Cooked lunches are available from The Farm Kitchen who cook meals on site on a daily basis. All children in Foundation Stage and KS1 are entitled to a free hot dinner. (Children in KS2 may also be entitled to free school meals. Please speak with a member of staff in the office to find out if your child is eligible and to pick up an application form.) All meals need to be ordered at least a week in advance via The Farm Kitchen's website: www.thefarmkitchen.com. Alternatively, children may bring packed lunches with healthy foods to school, but sweets and fizzy drinks and chocolate are not permitted.

Attendance – appointments/absence

Each half-day session at school has to be marked in a register. Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. By law, only the Headteacher can approve absence. An unauthorised absence is when a child is absent unnecessarily or when a child is absent, no explanation is offered and permission has not been given. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

If your child arrives late, please make sure he/she comes via the school office where you must sign them in electronically.

If your child is absent from school, it is essential that a note, e-mail (enquiries@stgilberts.co.uk) or telephone call reaches school as soon as possible on the first day of absence, explaining the reason for the absence and expected length of absence.

If your child has to leave during the school day, please send a letter via the class teacher explaining the circumstances and come to collect your child via the school office. Please try to make all dentist, doctor or other appointments out of school time, if at all possible, as this will avoid your child missing any of their learning. For medical appointments a copy of the appointment must be provided. We will photocopy the original and return it to you.

From 1 September 2013, a number of changes to the law on absences during term time came into force and they make it clear that parents will no longer be able to remove their children from school for family holidays.

Absences **may only** be authorised under 'exceptional circumstances' and the changes make it clear that family holidays **do not** count as exceptional circumstances. Children removed from school for the purposes of family holidays will have to be recorded as 'unauthorised absence'. Unauthorised absences are recorded on your child's school report and feature among the information passed on



to secondary schools at Year 7. Absence should be requested in writing to the Headteacher prior to any absence being taken.

Unauthorised absences also have a wider impact on the school. From September 2013 the rate of unauthorised absence carries greater weight as part of Ofsted inspections. This is a significant change in the law that the school must implement and parents should be aware of. We hope that parents will understand these changes and ensure that requests for authorised absence are reserved for genuinely exceptional domestic circumstances.

Further information about this change is available on the Department for Education website.

Your child's attendance is recorded on their summer report and the school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and promote attendance. But more fundamentally important is that children like to arrive at school on time to join friends in starting their day and many children experience difficulty in bridging the learning gap that so quickly arises after a few days away from school.

All unauthorised absences – those that are not explained above – are investigated and recorded in accordance with Government guidelines. Cases of persistent lateness and unexplained absences will be referred to the Educational Welfare Officer. We monitor absence regularly. We will contact parents to congratulate children who have 100% attendance on a short termly basis and will also invite parents in for meetings when there are concerns.

The school is committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and we thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Pupil Premium

Additional grant budget is available from central government that can be used to enhance our children's life at school. If you are in receipt of state benefits please pop in to meet Mrs Dobson, the Senior Administrator, to discuss.

The Curriculum

At St Gilbert's we provide a lively, active and challenging curriculum in a stimulating environment that meets the requirement of the National Curriculum.

Our planning is carried out on a whole school basis so that all staff have an overview of the experiences provided for each child as they move through the school. The teachers work closely together in teams, to ensure that all children have the same learning opportunities but also so that learning meets each individual pupil's needs.

Homework

When children have worked hard in school all day, they appreciate time to relax and spend it with their families. However, we recognise the value of working at home together with parents. In the early years, homework may consist of Reading, Spelling or Mathematics. We encourage children to read every day. Homework increases into longer, more demanding tasks as the children grow older. All children must complete their homework on time.



Youth University

KS2 children are offered the opportunity to take part in many varied and different activities during Friday Youth University afternoons. Year 4 children have a weekly swimming session at Stamford Endowed Schools pool and there is an opportunity for children to take music lessons for woodwind, violin and guitar. There are also activities such as art and design, sport, drama and computing. KS1 children take part in a variety of “Creative Friday” activities.

We are always grateful for help in these sessions, so if you have some time to spare, do come and see us!

Sports Teams

The school participates in inter-school matches and tournaments in a range of sports. There are also other opportunities for children to experience new sports, which are organised by the local school sports organisation.

Young Governors are an important part of the school. They are, as one member put it, ‘The Voice of the Children’. Each class in KS1 and KS2 has two representatives, who are elected by members of their class in October each year. The children meet regularly for lively discussion and planning sessions and play an important role in working with staff to lead school improvement initiatives to benefit the whole school community.

House Captains are elected from Years 5 and 6 to represent our four houses, named after inspiring sporting champions: Farah, Ennis, Ruddock and Adlington. They run inter-house initiatives and competitions across school. They also help with the organisation of numerous fundraising activities throughout the year, raising awareness and of the world around us and how we can support people in need.

Eco Committee

The Eco Committee is also elected by the pupils. It meets regularly to discuss any improvements in the school and our Eco agenda, and the endeavours of our Eco Representatives and Eco Ambassadors have been instrumental in the achievement of our Eco School Green Flag awards over the years.

Extracurricular Activities

We believe in the importance and value of organised, additional activity. The range offered to the children varies according to individual members of staff and volunteers, the weather and demands from our local community. Some of the clubs running are football, netball, art and craft. Letters are sent out at the beginning of each term. Teacher-led clubs are not held during Parent Evening weeks.

Educational Visits

Children will participate in a variety of visits in connection with their learning. These range from excursions into the locality to a day’s outing further afield. Our Y6 children are given the opportunity to be involved in a residential stay in a different part of the country. These visits play a vital role in enriching your child’s learning journey.



The Board of Governors

The Board of Governors oversees the strategic direction of the school working with the school to ensure that pupils' education is of the highest quality. More information about the governors can be found on our school website.

Gilbert's Gang

Before and after school care is available from 8.00 - 8.50am and from 3.15 – 6.00pm. Gilbert's Gang also runs holiday activities dependent on uptake.

In the mornings, the children can choose from a selection of quiet board games or colouring. Then, after having fresh orange juice or a piece of fruit, they will be escorted to their classrooms ready for the start of the school day.

After school, the children are split into KS1 and KS2 for the first part of the evening, with the younger children using a Foundation Stage classroom and outdoor area and the older children using the mobile. The playground and field are used for outdoor games, weather permitting. At 5pm the two groups come together for the rest of the evening.

For more details, please contact Mrs Adele Pinto on 07957 780 222.

All Saints' Church

We are linked with All Saints' Church and Father Mark Warrick conducts our Collective Worship every fortnight. All KS2 children attend services in church and parents are invited to join us for these services.

Eco/Healthy Schools

We are lucky enough to have a sixth green Eco School Flag and Healthy School Status. Our Eco Committee is very active in ensuring our school progresses towards sustainability. We hold Green Days 4 times a year for different year groups, when parents and members of the school community can come along and get 'stuck in' developing our grounds and helping out. This is also a good time to share ideas.

The school actively encourages the community to use sustainable transport wherever possible and we have a number of initiatives to encourage walking, cycling and scooting to school.

Working Together in the Community

The community provides us with many rich experiences especially in Sport, Music and Art. Similarly, our premises are used by several external groups and we are also a part of Stamford's larger education network, giving students in other schools an opportunity for work experience and/or voluntary contributions. This is further reflected in the quality of voluntary classroom help the school enjoys.



Parents in School

We hope that all parents will become involved in the life and work of the school. By fostering good relationships and developing a shared understanding, this can enable your child, with support and encouragement, to achieve greater success and fulfilment.

Parents are most welcome to come into school at any time to talk to us, although it is advisable to arrange a time with the class teacher or the Headteacher, so that uninterrupted time can be given. If you have any concerns or issues that need attention, please talk to the school as soon as possible.

There are three opportunities during the year at Parents' Evenings in November, April and July when you can discuss your child's progress and achievements. Written reports are sent to you in July.

In addition, there are special occasions such as concerts, some Acts of Collective Worship and Sports Day to which you are warmly invited, along with termly Open Afternoons.

If you would like to offer help in school, please do not hesitate to contact either your child's class teacher or the Headteacher. It is a rewarding experience for everyone. You will need to complete a DBS check (which we can support you with) and confidentiality forms.

PTA – Parents and Teachers Association

The PTA consists of a group of parents, friends and teachers who aim to build links between home and school as well as raise money for extra resources and learning experiences for the children. They organise many educational, fun and social events for all to enjoy. All parents are members automatically and all their contributions and suggestions are appreciated. More information about the PTA can be found on our school website.

