

WELCOME TO GREATSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Thank you for considering Greatstone Primary School as your child's future school.

At Greatstone we offer a very friendly, caring, positive environment which is child centred, sympathetic and open. All children are provided with the opportunity to develop their personal, intellectual, social, physical and creative talents giving them the best possible start in education. We work to encourage and lead each individual in developing confidence, stamina and, above all, a love of learning. We have high expectations of all our children, in all they do and we are proud to say they rarely, if ever, let us down.

With Governors and parents backing, we set and adhere to values and expectations that we believe our own children should follow and should expect to receive from others. With such comprehensive support both children and staff are able to work in a happy, relaxed and supportive atmosphere where everyone feels valued, safe, unthreatened and hopefully proud and pleased to be part of our school.

Education is a partnership between home and school and we place a great deal of emphasis on our partnership with parents. We believe that children learn best when home and school work together for their benefit. When your child starts school, it is not where your job ends and ours begins. It is where our job begins and yours continues!

We never forget that we are dealing with your most precious possessions and hence, we take your trust in us extremely seriously. We give, and expect in return, a total investment in your child's future.

So that you can see us in action and we can answer any questions you may have, visits to the school are actively encouraged. Please call the office for an appointment.

We look forward to meeting you.

AIMS OF GREATSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The aims of Greatstone Primary School are:-

1. To educate every child to the best of their individual ability in a friendly, caring environment where self-discipline, tolerance, respect for others, independence, pride and responsibility are expected and continually encouraged.
2. To instil in each child a willingness to learn and the understanding of how to learn.
3. To prepare each child to be an honest, caring, tolerant member of society.

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Our well maintained rural school is set in large, open grounds. We are fortunate to have excellent buildings, superb facilities, first class resources and a dedicated staff. Our school building comprises twelve separate classrooms, an ICT suite, a library, an infant playroom, music room and two study rooms. There is a large hall and an administration wing. We have asphalt play areas and a large field and covered picnic tables providing an additional outdoor learning facility. We have a poly tunnel and a purpose built gardening area.

We benefit from having some of the very latest educational equipment, furniture and resources. Every classroom has an interactive whiteboard and the children also have access to class based laptops.

We have a purpose built nursery catering for children aged 2-4 years. (Please see the separate prospectus for further details)

BEHAVIOUR

It is our view that all children within Greatstone Primary School have a right to learn and that all teachers have a right to teach. Pupils who remove this right from other children or staff are in breach of the school's Behaviour Policy. Our Behaviour Policy, which is consistently applied by all adults who work in school, aims to praise positive behaviour, attitude and effort and to increase children's awareness of the need to make a positive contribution to their community. Members of staff will provide attention to those who are behaving correctly. When pupils have to be reminded of the rules, this will be done quietly and calmly with the aim of getting the pupil back on task as soon as possible. The inappropriate behaviour will be criticised not the child.

THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Our school community is made up of children, parents, teachers and teaching assistants, support staff and Governors. Everyone has their part to play and this brings with it certain responsibilities.

Children

- Come to school with their parents and friends.
- Always try their best in everything they do.
- Be independent in managing their own possessions.
- Understand and follow the school rules.
- Follow the class routines.

Parents

- Bring their children to school and collect them on time.
- Ensure that their children attend school .
- Support their child by hearing them read and encouraging them to complete any tasks that their teachers ask them to do at home.
- Keep the school informed of any concerns they may have about their child's welfare.

Teachers and Teaching Assistants

- Take responsibility for the children between 8.55am and 3.15pm. (or 4.30pm if an extracurricular club is attended)
- Work closely with parents.
- Provide the highest quality of education and care at all times.

Support Staff

- Manage the day-to-day running of the school

Governors

- Support and assist the Headteacher in the strategic direction of the school.

THE SCHOOL COUNCIL

As part of our drive towards higher standards and self esteem, there is an established School Council that meets regularly to discuss a variety of issues to do with school. The children elect their own representatives from every class in years 2 to 6 to form the committee along with two members of the school staff. Through the School Council, children can have real influence in helping to develop the ethos of the school, school policies and practice that affects us all.

YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING

Children are taught by their own class teacher in mixed ability classes with pupils of approximately the same age.

We value every child as an individual and recognise that learning happens both formally and informally inside and outside the classroom.

We aim to provide a curriculum which is broad and balanced and promotes the development of the whole child.

We know that children learn in different ways, have different interests and abilities and with this in mind our curriculum is carefully planned to be thematic, practical and aspirational to ensure that all our children are encouraged to reach their full potential.

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage (Reception Classes)

In Reception the children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. This is organised into 6 areas of learning:

- personal, social and emotional development
- communication, language and literacy
- problem solving, reasoning and number
- knowledge and understanding of the world
- physical development
- creative development

Each of these areas has its own learning goals. By the end of Reception most children should have made significant progress towards achieving these goals.

During their time in the Foundation Stage, children have free access to learning areas inside and outside. Activities are child-directed with highly trained adults facilitating learning. Children also take part in focus-group activities with adults working on particular skills. Children learn when they are motivated and interested so the Foundation Stage is set up around the interests of the children and there are lots of opportunities for play as it is through quality play that children develop the social skills, attitudes and language required for all later learning.

The curriculum for Key Stages One and Two (Years 1 - 6)

We are a state primary school and therefore must follow the National Curriculum. For literacy and maths we follow the agreed National Frameworks. In addition to literacy and maths, the following subjects are included and are either taught separately or combined to complement each other in 'topic' or 'project' work: science, ICT, history, geography, music, art & design, PE and design & technology.

We also support the Every Child Matters agenda (www.everychildmatters.gov.uk), which aims to achieve the following outcomes for every child:

- being healthy: enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle
- staying safe: being protected from harm and neglect
- enjoying and achieving: getting the most out of life and developing the skills-for-adulthood
- making a positive contribution: being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour
- economic well-being: not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life

Within these frameworks, we aim to provide for the full academic, personal, health and social development of each pupil, and to encourage pupils to work and think independently and to make decisions within a moral code.

Homework

Reading is the main activity; all children are encouraged to take books home regularly. As children progress through the school, they are given additional tasks and activities to undertake at home.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Non-denominational Religious Education is provided for all children as part of the curriculum and is in accordance with the agreed Syllabus for Kent Schools. Assembly is

an important part of the school day when we meet together as a community. It is a time when we place emphasis on the development of values and attitudes towards each other and the world around us. Assemblies are non-denominational and although they are of a broadly Christian nature due consideration is given to the multicultural society in which we live.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from religious education and collective worship should they so wish.

SEX EDUCATION

We include sex and relationships education as part of our curriculum. This is done at an age-appropriate level and involves children learning about themselves, recognising changes as they grow, building positive relationships and raising self-confidence and esteem. At other times if children ask teachers questions relating to sex or sexuality, it is our policy to answer their questions in an age-appropriate way, honestly and with regard for our equality policies.

We will always try to inform you about the kind of questions your child is asking so that you may also respond to them. Should they wish to do so parents are given the opportunity to remove their children from these lessons.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

We are fully committed to the principles of inclusion and work hard to ensure that every child reaches their potential.

The school caters effectively for children with special educational needs by assessing their need and then formulating an individual education plan (IEP). The plan targets specific areas for a child to focus on, strategies and additional support that they will receive. Parents are consulted very closely if we feel that a child is experiencing difficulty and are kept fully informed about progress and developments. The school has a special needs co-ordinator (SENCO), who is responsible for monitoring the children's progress and liaising with teachers to ensure the best provision for each child. Provision may include additional help in the classroom or being withdrawn to work individually or in a small group.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We oppose and challenge discrimination on any basis. The Governors of Greatstone Primary School endeavour to ensure that resources, code of conduct, school organisation and recruitment policies reflect a determination to ensure equal opportunities for all.

CHILD PROTECTION

The school has a Designated Child Protection Coordinator (the Headteacher) and a clear policy for dealing with any incidents of this nature. All staff are kept fully informed

of current procedure and practice. The school takes part in County training to ensure that its procedure for safeguarding children is up to date and used consistently.

BULLYING

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Staff at Greatstone Primary School are alert to signs of bullying and will act promptly against it in accordance with School Policy.

WELFARE

The health and welfare of your child is our first priority. We will always contact you if we have any concerns.

Medical Matters

Any child who becomes ill in school will be cared for and comforted until you can be contacted. We will need your telephone numbers and numbers of other emergency contacts in school. You will need to ensure that these are kept up to date.

If your child has been ill please ensure that they are really fit enough to return to school so that their work is not affected and other children exposed to infection. If your child is declared fit to return to school but needs continued medication please contact the school office so that arrangements can be made to administer the correct dose. All medicines, prescribed by a doctor, must be brought to and collected from school by the parents/guardians in a named container and handed directly to a member of the office staff. A Medication Sheet must be completed as authorisation for the administration of the correct medication.

Arriving and Leaving

No child should be on the school premises before 8.45 am as the safety, supervision and welfare of the children do not become the responsibility of the school until this time. Children must be collected promptly at the end of the school day.

The safety of the children is paramount and any parent wishing to collect their child early or during the school day must report to the school office to enable them to be signed out. If a relative or someone different is collecting your child please inform us so that we can ensure that they are handed to the right person.

Children and families are encouraged to either *walk or cycle to school* whenever possible. Our school travel plan supports this.

Food and Drink

Children are encouraged to have a healthy diet and fruit is provided free for all Early Years and Key Stage 1 Children to eat at playtime.

Milk is available, free of charge, to children under the age of 5. Children above the age of 5 can purchase milk through a scheme run by 'Cool Milk'. An application form for this scheme can be obtained from the office.

All children have access to drinking water throughout the day.

We are a healthy eating school and we expect children to eat a range of foods. We encourage them to do this if they have school meals and we expect children to bring packed lunches from home that reflect our healthy eating code.

Meals, often using our home grown produce, are cooked on the premises and are available to all pupils. There is a choice of a hot meal or a salad and a choice of dessert. **Money for school meals must be brought in to school by your child, on the first day of each week only, in an envelope or purse marked with your child's name and class.** Cheques should be made payable to Greatstone Primary School. Payment can be made termly in advance.

Free meals are available for those on certain support benefits. If you feel your child is eligible for free school meals application must be made on a form available from the school office.

Facilities are provided for pupils to eat a packed lunch prepared by their parents. Each meal should be brought to school in a box clearly marked with your child's name.

Parent – Teacher Liaison

If we have any concerns about your child's progress, happiness and well-being or behaviour the teacher will contact you straight away to discuss this with you.

If you have any concerns that you want to discuss with us then please contact us or come and see us as soon as possible. If you want to talk to the class teacher or Headteacher then it is a good idea to telephone or send a note to request a mutually convenient time. The most difficult time for teachers to talk to parents is at the beginning of the school day. It is important for teachers to give their attention to welcoming and settling in all the children in the class, so please try to help us by leaving discussions until the end of the day.

Regular newsletters are sent home and uploaded to the school website to tell you about special events, school activities, news and to give you information on day to day school life. We also regularly post information on the school website:

www.greatstoneschool.co.uk

Resolving Problems

Occasionally, you may have a query or a concern and you will want to speak to someone. Such problems can be discussed and usually resolved informally with the class teacher or Headteacher. We aim to deal with every problem as quickly as we can and to resolve the matter satisfactorily for both parties. Very occasionally this is not possible and for these occasions the school has an agreed formal complaints policy, which is available to parents and kept in the School office

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ENTIRE SCHOOL SITE OPERATES A NO SMOKING POLICY.

ATTENDANCE

Parents have a legal responsibility to make sure their child is in school and on time every day. Children who arrive late miss out on the sense of belonging that comes from being part of our daily routines and also disrupt their own learning and the learning of others.

All absences from school must be notified either by telephone or by email **on the first day of absence**, between 8.30 and 9.30 a.m. In the interest of child protection the office staff will follow up any unreported absences.

The school term dates are published a year in advance and we therefore do not see any reason for parents to need to take their child out of school during term time. If a family feels leave in term time is unavoidable, a Request for Absence form must be completed at least two weeks prior to the leave date. This can be obtained from the School office. The Governors will then decide whether to authorise the absence. No parents can demand authorised absence for their child as a right.

Authorisation for absence will not be given for outings, shopping trips or family visits.

The School monitors each child's pattern of attendance and the Education Welfare Officer will work with families whose child's attendance or punctuality is not acceptable.

ADMISSIONS

Reception admissions

If you wish your child to join our Reception class then a common application form must be completed. These forms are available from November to the end of January, on line, from any local school or the Local Authority Admissions Team. On this form you can select four preferences for your child's school and list them in order of your preference.

A place in our Nursery does **not** guarantee a place in Reception therefore a form should be filled in for **all** children.

It is the policy of Greatstone Primary School to admit new entrants at the beginning of the Autumn Term, without regard to ability and aptitude. Children whose fifth birthday falls between 1st September and 31st August will be admitted in September. A programme of visits for parents and children will be arranged to take place during the Summer Term preceding a child's admission in September.

Admissions mid-year or to other year groups

Parents and carers of children who wish to join the school, in any class, at any other time of the year should:

- telephone or visit the school personally to enquire if there are any vacancies in the required year group
- make an appointment with the Headteacher to discuss arrangements for admission and to view the school

UNIFORM

We are proud of our uniform and the sense of belonging it instils. We expect all children to wear uniform and all parents / carers to support the school in this matter. Our uniform is simple, comfortable and flexible and comprises:

Winter: Term 2 to end of Term 4

Bottle Green V-neck jumper or cardigan
White shirt (not polo shirt) and school tie
Dark grey/black school trousers/skirt
Sensible, plain black shoes/trainers

Summer: Term 5 to the end of Term 1

Bottle green polo shirt,
Dark grey/black tailored shorts/school trousers/skirt,
Green checked/striped dress,
Sensible, plain black shoes/trainers or /black/white sandals,
Or winter uniform.

School ties, jumpers, and green polo shirts are available for sale from the school office. There is also an optional school fleece available for outdoor wear only.

PE Equipment

Indoors: Bare feet, plain black shorts
Plain white T-shirt

Outdoors: Football boots, plimsolls or trainers
(separate from everyday wear),
Footballers must have boots and pads.
Plain black shorts, white T-shirt
Sweater or tracksuit for colder weather.

All items of clothing must be clearly marked with your child's name.

Hair

Long hair must be tied back and no extremes of fashion are allowed.

Jewellery

No jewellery should be worn except for stud earrings or sleepers for those who have pierced ears which must be removed by the child for PE.

AND FINALLY.....

All schools are very different and finding the right one for your child is not an easy task. We wish you every success in finding the school that best suits your child's unique personality, interests and learning needs.