



*GENERAL INFORMATION
FOR PARENTS*

PREP SCHOOL


September 2024

Our Vision

Birkdale provides a strong academic education through outstanding individualised teaching, which inspires all pupils to achieve their personal best. It offers a rounded education enabling pupils to pursue a wide range of interests, equipping them with skills and values to live a successful, fruitful and fulfilling life. Underpinned by a strong Christian ethos, where everyone is treated with care and respect.

Dear Parent/Guardian

This booklet is designed to give you some helpful information about Birkdale and to provide reference to some of the more important policies of the school. Please do contact the relevant Form Tutor if you require more information or have specific queries; we look forward to working with you to give your child the best possible education.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "C J Burch".

C J Burch
Head of the Prep School

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A THE SCHOOL ROUTINE

A-1 School Calendar

The school uses an online calendar (SOCS Calendar) which can be accessed via the following link <http://calendar.birkdaleschool.org.uk>. The SOCS web app can also be added to your mobile device. Parents are warmly invited to school concerts, plays, sports fixtures and other events, and your support is much appreciated.

A-2 The School Day - General

Registration is from 8.45 am, and all pupils are expected to be on the yard, lining up ready to be taken to their form rooms at this time. No supervision (apart from Breakfast Club – see below) is provided before 8.15 am and the school can accept no responsibility for the safety and welfare of members of the school before that time. The day begins with an Assembly (Prayers) or another meeting, which all pupils are expected to attend. Lessons finish at 3.30 pm for Pre-Prep and 3.50 pm for Prep, although there are many clubs and societies that run after this time.

Pupils must not leave the premises during the school day unless accompanied by a member of staff.

A-3 Arrival at School

To assist parents in their bringing children to school and a need for those parents to get to work, we have the following policy in place before school.

- The gates and buildings will be open for children using Breakfast Club at 7.30 am.
- From 8.15 am there will be a member of staff on duty in each yard. The School can accept no responsibility for the safety and welfare of pupils before 8.15 am.
- There is also a general staff presence in the building after this time.
- Parents arriving after 8.00 am, but before 8.15 am, are asked to remain with the children in the playground until those staff are in place (unless using Breakfast Club).
- There is additional specific supervision in the classrooms for Pre-Prep children and in the playground for children in the Prep department.

We ask all parents to note this policy and, in the interests of safety for their children, to respect it.

A-4 Before/After School Care

Breakfast Club - A supervised Breakfast Club is available in the dining room from 7.30 am - 8.15 am, where pupils will be served a healthy breakfast. A charge is added to the school bill. There is no need to book in advance. Parents should simply bring children to the dining room between those times. (Please note, no other supervision is provided for children before 8.15 am, and the school can accept no responsibility for the safety and welfare of pupils before that time.)

After School Care - If parents of Prep or Pre-Prep children know that they will not be able to collect their children promptly when school ends they are invited to book them into After School Care. A charge for After School Care is added to the end of term bill. A snack tea will be served, and pupils will be supervised whilst they play. If the weather is suitable this may include playing outside. Parents are asked to collect their children by 6.00 pm.

Bookings for After School Care should be made via email to afterschoolcare@birkdalschool.org.uk. We prefer bookings to be made by the Friday of the preceding week so that we can arrange catering, but we can usually accept a booking made in the morning for that evening.

'Late Pupils' – if parents are unavoidably delayed.

- Matron will look after Pre-Prep pupils in the Belmayne Reception area until 3.50 pm. Pre-Prep pupils not collected by then will be taken to After School Care and a charge will be added to the end of term bill.
- Matron will look after Prep pupils in the Reception area until 4.10 pm. Prep pupils not collected by then will be taken to After School Care and a charge will be added to the end of term bill.

NB pupils not collected promptly from clubs will be taken to After School Care and a charge will be added to the end of term bill.

A-5 *Absence from School*

Term dates are fixed in consultation with Sheffield LA and are published well in advance. It is a condition of entry to Birkdale that members of the school are not withdrawn from school during term time (except in case of illness) without the prior permission of the Head of Prep. Any difficulty in this area should be raised directly with him.

If a pupil is ill, parents are asked to telephone the school before registration at 8.45 am. If a pupil contracts/is exposed to an infectious illness, their Form Tutor and Matron should be informed at once.

Permission to miss school, for reasons other than illness, must be obtained in advance from the Head of Prep.

A-6 *Extreme Weather Conditions*

When there is a heavy fall of snow, the School policy is normally to remain open and provide teaching for all members of the school who are able to attend. Parents are therefore asked to bring pupils to school if at all possible. If the weather deteriorates during the day, and weather conditions in home areas are becoming difficult, parents are asked to telephone the school if they wish to take their child home early. The general principle, though, is that normal teaching will continue whatever the weather. In severe weather, please consult the school website for information, and if possible avoid telephoning the school. Also, treat with extreme caution any telephone call from your child on this subject, especially if it conflicts with the advice on the website.

In the unlikely event that the school has to close due to extreme weather conditions we will automatically revert to remote teaching using Google Classroom.

A-7 School Lunches

Healthy, nutritious menus are prepared by well-qualified staff. Requests for special arrangements (on dietary or medical grounds) should be addressed to Matron.

A-8 Nut Allergies

In the Prep School a number of pupils have a nut allergy, and some will react simply by coming into contact with a nut product. Reactions can range from mild to very severe. For the benefit of the wider school community may we ask for your support in the following way: when choosing snacks for pupils to bring into school please opt for those that are free from nuts/nut products. The School kitchen is a nut free environment.

A-9 Clubs

Clubs take place before school, at lunchtimes and after school. The link to book on to the after school clubs is available on the school portal <https://birkdaleschool.myschoolportal.co.uk/login> in the school information section under School Cloud - Prep Clubs. There are activities for pupils in every class of the school. Most clubs are free of charge and are run by teachers. However, there are a number of clubs which are run by specialist coaches from outside school. For these activities there is a charge, which is added to the end of term bill and the booking information for these clubs is sent via BirkdalePost.

For reasons of safety, parents should collect their children promptly from inside the school building from after-school clubs.

A-10 Medical Care

The School has a medical room where emergency first aid is administered during school hours at both Clarke House and Belmayne House. It also has a fully equipped first aid room at its Castle Dyke sports fields.

Prescribed medication is only administered by Matron if brought into school and taken to the medical room by parents so that a form can be completed and signed. The medication must be in the original packaging as dispensed by the chemist/pharmacy.

If a pupil becomes ill during the school day they should report to Matron in the first instance. Matron will then contact parents if she considers it necessary.

Matron will give Calpol/Paracetamol, as required, after discussion with parents.

B HOW DO I MAKE CONTACT?

In most instances, communications would be directed to the Form Tutor who is the first point of contact for parents and retains an overview of your child's pastoral care and academic progress.

The school uses My School Portal <https://birkdaleschool.myschoolportal.co.uk/login> an online system designed to streamline communications between the school and parents, by bringing all information and services together into one easy-to-use dashboard. Parents and guardians have instant access to information about their children, such as school timetables, sports fixtures, grades, school reports as well as all BirkdalePost messages. The My School Portal web app can also be added to your mobile device.

B-1 Postal Address

Birkdale Prep School, Clarke House, Clarke Drive, Sheffield S10 2NS.

B-2 Telephones

Please restrict telephone messages from parents for pupils to emergency matters only.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| School Office | 0114 267 0407 |
| After School Care (after 3.50 pm) | 0114 267 0407 |

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Bursar's Department (Accounts/ fees) * | 0114 266 8400 |
| Senior School Office * | 0114 266 8408 |
| Registrar (Admissions) * | 0114 266 8409 |

* all are located on the Senior School Site

Sports Fields, Castle Dyke (Ringinglow Road) 0114 235 1781

B-3 My School Portal

The school uses My School Portal <https://birkdaleschool.myschoolportal.co.uk/login> an online system designed to streamline communications between the school and parents, by bringing all information and services together into one easy-to-use dashboard. Parents and guardians have instant access to information about their children, such as school timetables, sports fixtures, grades, school reports as well as all BirkdalePost messages. The My School Portal web app can also be added to your mobile device.

B-4 BirkdalePost

Routine letters and mailings are sent electronically to parents using BirkdalePost. This provides you with a personal online 'mailbox' where you can always view such communications from any internet-connected PC and, where appropriate, complete simple reply forms. Further guidance on BirkdalePost is available on the school website and portal.

B-5 E-mail

You are also able to contact us by email. Individual staff email addresses are available to current parents via the school portal and we would be most grateful if parents would *not* share those details beyond the bounds of the school community in order that staff time is used to best effect. Below are some general email addresses:

| | |
|--|--|
| General Enquiries – Prep School | prepschool@birkdaleschool.org.uk |
| General Enquiries – Senior School | enquiries@birkdaleschool.org.uk |
| Admissions Enquiries (all ages) | admissions@birkdaleschool.org.uk |
| Bursar’s Section (Accounts / fees etc) | billing@birkdaleschool.org.uk |
| Catering Department – Prep School | prepcatering@birkdaleschool.org.uk |

B-6 Contact Details for School Coach Services

| Coaches to: | Contact details: |
|---|--|
| Waverley/Moorgate/ Wickersley/Tickhill | Birkdale Senior School Bursar’s Department 0114 266 8400 billing@birkdaleschool.org.uk |
| Barlborough | Mr Iain Kane Director of Finance and Operations, Sheffield Girls’ School 0114 358 7601 i.kane@she.gdst.net |
| Chesterfield/Dronfield/ Meadowhead | Birkdale Senior School Bursar’s Department 0114 266 8400 billing@birkdaleschool.org.uk |
| Thurgoland/Tankersley/ High Green | Kys Travel 0114 233 1000/07890 789 111 kysttravel@gmx.com |
| Worksop | Birkdale Senior School Bursar’s Department 0114 266 8400 billing@birkdaleschool.org.uk |
| Baslow/Grindleford/ Hathersage/Dore | Mr Iain Kane Director of Finance and Operations, Sheffield Girls’ School 0114 358 7601 i.kane@she.gdst.net |
| Darley Dale/Bakewell | Mr Iain Kane Director of Finance and Operations, Sheffield Girls’ School 0114 358 7601 i.kane@she.gdst.net |

All details are, to the best of our knowledge, correct at the time of publication.

Further details of the services are contained in a separate booklet which is available from the school website, on the school portal or from either school office.

C WHAT SUBJECTS ARE TAUGHT?

C-1 Pre-Prep (PP1 – PP3)

The aims of the Pre-Prep Department are to give children the best start to their education by establishing sound working habits, providing a thorough grounding in reading, writing and number work and also developing a spirit of enquiry and creativity.

Each year group has two forms with the Form Tutor taking the children for the majority of their academic lessons. Some specialised teaching in the classroom takes place in Music, Design Technology (DT), Drama and Modern Foreign Languages, and then additionally in PP3 in Art and PE.

There are a number of Teachers' Assistants in Pre-Prep who work with all six classes.

C-2 Prep (P1 - P4)

The emphasis is to develop literacy and numeracy skills through a high percentage of English and Maths lessons. However, in line with the school's policy of developing the whole person, a varied curriculum is maintained as children experience teaching in Modern Foreign Languages, Science, ICT, DT, PE, Music, Art, RE, Geography, History, Games, Swimming, Drama and PSHE. Period allocation (a period is 30 minutes) is shown below:

| Subject | P1 | P2 | P3 | P4 |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| English | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Maths | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Science | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| History | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Geography | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Modern Foreign Languages | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| RE | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| PE/swimming | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Games | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Music | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Art | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| DT | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| ICT | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Drama | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| PSHE | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

C-3 Games and PE Lessons

Pupils have their PE lessons in the School Hall and also make use of outdoor space at the Prep School. Swimming starts in Prep 1, the children are taken by coach to Ponds Forge for their swimming lessons. Our schedule for swimming is as follows:

| Prep | |
|------|-------------------------------------|
| P1 | Half termly, in rotation with Drama |
| P2 | Half termly, in rotation with Drama |
| P3 | None |
| P4 | Half termly, in rotation with PE |

Pupils playing rugby must wear gum shields. Pupils playing cricket, when a proper leather ball is used, must wear a cricket helmet when batting or wicket-keeping. Cricketers may wear their own helmet or one provided by the school. Otherwise pupils are expected to wear the designated school sports wear.

If, for any reason, members of school teams are likely to be unavailable to play on any future date, parents are asked to write to the member of staff concerned well in advance.

What should I do if my child has an injury and cannot participate in games sessions?

Whilst we fully expect pupils who are in school to take a full part in all lessons, we do understand that at times a child's health might prevent them from taking part in sports activities.

If a child is well enough to attend school but is unfit for Games, PE or Swimming, parents are asked to send a doctor's note/parental letter to the school marked 'For the attention of Matron/Head of PE & Games' who will liaise with the relevant members of staff. The number of pupils at Birkdale Prep School who are 'off games' is very small but when there are pupils 'off games' the following procedure is used:

1. Pupils not well enough to take part in Games/PE/Swimming lessons will accompany the group and watch the lesson, be it at school, Ponds Forge or Castle Dyke. In the case of Castle Dyke, pupils 'off games' are expected to bring wet weather clothing (gloves, hats, coats etc) in order to stay warm.
2. In circumstances where an injury or illness occurs at school, Matron will provide a note excusing a particular child at her discretion.
3. Where it is not possible for them to go out to watch, either due to very bad weather or due to pupil illness, pupils may occasionally be supervised at Clarke House by staff, where they will be expected to do any outstanding work. Please note this is a rare occurrence and will be organised by the Head of the Prep School (or in his absence the Deputy Head or Teachers) and the Head of PE & Games.
4. Please note that pupils who fail to bring the required kit for PE, Games and Swimming are likely to receive a warning which if occurs again may result in a detention. The children are aware that non participation may affect future selection for school teams. In the case of Swimming, pupils will usually be sent to Matron, who has a limited supply of clean swimming attire and towels.

C-4 *Instrumental Music Lessons/Speech and Drama Lessons*

Individual instrumental lessons are available on a wide variety of instruments at an extra cost. We have a large team of highly skilled instrumental teachers, some of whom are members of our permanent staff and others who visit the school each week as peripatetic teachers (often referred to as “peris”). Lessons are normally organised on a rota during lesson times for pupils in PP2-P4. It is unusual for children in PP1 to require lessons at this early age, but if they do, these lessons take place outside of academic teaching.

If lessons need to be rotated in academic teaching time they are arranged so that a pupil does not miss the same lesson more than once in a half term. If a pupil learns more than one instrument, then only one of those lessons would be scheduled within academic time. Each lesson lasts for 30 minutes. There are also opportunities to study Speech and Drama on the same basis with our LAMDA teacher.

For further information, do liaise with the Head of Instrumental Studies/Director of Prep School Music.

D UNIFORM

D-1 An Overview

Birkdale has a good reputation for the appearance of its pupils and we expect that pupils will wear their uniform with pride.

Clear guidance on uniform can be found on the Birkdale website <https://www.birkdaleschool.org.uk/links/parents-information/uniform/>, and parents are asked to support the school by ensuring that pupils have the right garments and that they wear them neatly. Pupils should normally be in uniform on arrival and departure from school, and for all school activities. Please ensure all items of clothing are named clearly.

If you require any assistance or advice regarding school uniform, please contact the relevant School Office in term-time, or the Bursar's section in the holiday period.

| | | |
|----------------------|--|---------------|
| Prep School: | prepschool@birkdaleschool.org.uk | 0114 267 0407 |
| Senior School: | enquiries@birkdaleschool.org.uk | 0114 266 8408 |
| Bursar's Department: | accounts@birkdaleschool.org.uk | 0114 266 8400 |

E FEES: WHEN DO I PAY AND WHAT DOES IT COVER?

E-1 Tuition Fees and Extras

Tuition fees are charged in advance. Most extras are charged in arrears.

Tuition fees include lunches, textbooks, general stationery and games travel. Uniform, public examination fees, A Level textbooks, most academic trips, P2 Castleton trip, P3 Lake District trip and P4 London trip are compulsory extras. All other extras are optional. These include Pupils' Absence Insurance and non-academic expeditions such as sports tours and ski trips.

The School's charges are invoiced termly by email and settlement is required in full in advance before the start of each term. Payment can be made by the following methods:

- Cheque (made payable to Birkdale School)
- Bank transfer to our HSBC bank account, number 60019127, sort code 40-23-67. Please quote the pupil's name or code in the reference field when making the transfer to ensure the payment is correctly allocated.
- Debit Card via the School's website or over the phone (please phone the Bursar's Department on 0114 266 8400). This is for payments below £1,000.

Late payment by any of the above methods may incur an interest charge of 2% over the Bank of England base rate.

Payments from overseas are required to be made through our partner Flywire. Please contact the Bursar's department for further details if you will be making a payment from an overseas account.

Alternatively, the School's charges may be paid by Direct Debit on either a termly or a monthly basis. Payment on a monthly basis will incur an administration charge of £50 per annum per family. There is no administration charge for payment by Direct Debit on a termly basis. To make payment on either basis, please contact the Bursar's Department.

E-2 Books, Stationery etc.

All textbooks (except at A Level) and general stationery is provided free by the school, but payment for loss or damage is expected, this includes badges.

E-3 Insurance

The school is fully covered for third party liability, but there is only very limited cover for personal possessions and parents are strongly advised to arrange full cover through their own household insurance policies. Bringing valuable items to school is strongly discouraged, except where absolutely necessary (e.g. musical instruments).

The school also has Personal Accident insurance for all pupils and comprehensive world-wide travel insurance for all official trips and expeditions.

The school can arrange absence insurance which will provide a refund of fees in the event of absence due to sickness, accident or quarantine. Details of this insurance can be obtained from the Bursar's Department.

E-4 *Notice on Leaving the School*

If you wish to withdraw your child from the School you must either give us a full term's notice to that effect or pay to the School a term's fees in lieu of notice. This means that if, for example, you wish to withdraw your child with effect from the start of the Christmas term (ie, at the start of an academic year) then you would need to tell us in writing that you wish to withdraw your child on or before the first day of the preceding summer term (ie, the final term of the preceding academic year) or pay the fees in lieu of notice referred to above.

F GUIDANCE AND POLICIES

Guidance on procedures and behaviour is issued to pupils orally. Some sections from this guidance are reproduced below to help parents understand the high standards which we expect of Birkdale Pupils. The school website also holds information on school policies, these can be found in the parent information section, <https://www.birkdaleschool.org.uk/links/parents-information/handbooks-information/>.

The Christian faith is central to the life of our school community. Stemming from this, our core values are:

- Respect
- Humility
- Integrity
- Courage
- Compassion

The main purpose of the following guidelines is to help us, as a community, to live up to our core values.

F-1 General Matters

- 1) External doors are kept locked during lesson times. Pupils should not open any of these doors. They should inform a member of staff if someone is asking for entry. The school gates are locked during the pupil's playtimes 10.20-10.40 am and 12.20-1.45 pm. Visitors wishing to gain access during those times should either contact the office or give prior warning of your precise arrival time or by obtaining the attention of a duty staff member.
- 2) Large sums of money and expensive items should not be brought to school. If this is unavoidable they should be handed to the school office for safekeeping until the end of the school day.
- 3) There should be no buying or selling between pupils.
- 4) All clothing and property should be clearly and permanently named.
- 5) Pupils walking home, using public transport or playing in school fixtures may bring a mobile phone to school. This must be handed in to the school office at the start of the school day. Misuse of a mobile phone will be treated as a very serious issue and will usually result in a detention and the mobile confiscated. Videos and pictures may not be taken during the school day without the express permission of a member of staff.
- 6) Eating during lesson time is forbidden, unless directed by a member of staff.
- 7) Knives, fireworks, guns, water pistols and catapults of any description are forbidden on school premises.
- 8) Sweets, chewing gum, bubble gum, crisps and similar snacks, drinks in glass bottles or cans are all forbidden on school premises, unless as directed by a member of staff.
- 9) The possession of solvent-based glues, erasers and liquid paper is forbidden.

F-2 Policy on Pastoral Care

Aims

- To keep staff informed about a pupil's welfare and behaviour.
- To collate information which can be used to identify developing patterns of behaviour.
- To ensure that pupils know there is a system in place which supports them and that they have easy access to staff for this support.
- To ensure pupils know that staff are concerned for their welfare.

Pastoral Structures: Pastoral responsibility is held by the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

However, in practice pupils should be encouraged to make their first approach to their Form Tutor or a member of staff with whom they feel most confident. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) co-ordinates pastoral care and acts as a clearing house.

Pupil Voice

We are passionate about promoting Pupil Voice throughout the school and there are many forums with which pupils can get their voice heard.

1. Weekly Form Time.
2. It is part of the ethos of the school to create an atmosphere for friendly pupil/staff interaction and pupils are encouraged to approach an adult of their choice if there is something they wish to discuss in private.
3. School Council – Throughout the school year, representatives from each form attend the fortnightly school council meetings. Giving the children the opportunity to organise the content for our 'Smart School Council' meetings, provide feedback on aspects of school life, develop opportunities for them to be involved in planning and contributing to school events, providing opportunities to make requests for action, and purchase or consideration based upon their insights. All forms then participate in fortnightly school council meetings in which they can discuss and vote on a topical question.
4. Smart School Council Notice Board- pupils are often invited to comment, vote or brainstorm ideas on the notice board.
5. Comments box- there is an anonymous comments box in the entrance hall that all children can use. This is checked regularly by the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility

- > Form Captains (Form Captains and Vice Captains are members of the School Council)
- > Monitors (classroom based)
- > Prefects
- > Librarians
- > Head and Deputy Head of School
- > Tech Monitors