



The Catholic School of Saint Gregory The Great

New EYFS Starter FAQs following Webinar

Do the children have to use bookbags or can they use a backpack?

We encourage all of our children to use bookbags for two reasons:

- to protect the books which tend to become dog-eared if they are carried in a backpack because it's not flat*
- because we don't have room in our cloakrooms for backpacks and bookbags fit in children's drawers*

So, it is a wider school issue which is why we encourage bookbags rather than backpacks – we hope you understand this. The older children tend to use backpacks but this is really to prepare them for secondary school and because they have sports kits etc to bring to and from school in addition to their usual PE kit. They are usually off the reading scheme too by the time they are using a backpack meaning that our scheme books don't become tatty.

Do you plan on offering the 'walking bus' service in the mornings and after class, or has that been discontinued given the current social distancing circumstances?

We do offer a walking bus service usually and it's really popular to give parents a few extra minutes at the start and end of the day to get to and from work without needing to pay for childcare. Because of the one-way systems in place and the need to keep yeargroups separate from each other (in their bubbles), it is not possible to run the service at the moment and we will review it in November and keep you fully informed.

The ParentPay site says :*"It is not currently possible to make payments using child care vouchers within ParentPay. However, if your school accepts this form of payment, the school administration team can process the vouchers on your behalf."* Do you have further details about paying with childcare vouchers?

As a school we do not currently take childcare vouchers. This is something we can ask our Business Manager to look into for the future as soon as we get into the new school year. The Childcare Trust does accept vouchers for breakfast club and after school care.

Do we have to sign up to Parent Pay?

Yes. The office will not be able to take cash for the foreseeable future due to COVID-19 and Parent Pay is where you will pay for trips, clubs and other activities. The website/app is very user friendly. A login for Parent Pay will be sent to you in September as soon as your child is registered fully into school on their first day.

Did we understand correctly that there is no need to send a morning and afternoon snack in our child's bag each day? We just need to pack the cleaned and filled water bottle?

The government provide a free piece of fruit or veg daily to every child in EYFS, Y1 and Y2. From Y3 you will need to send your child in with a healthy fruit/veg snack but you don't need to worry about this yet. The children all have their snack with their classmates sitting in a circle and learning how to have conversations – we call this 'oracy' time and the children love it! Try having some conversations about their day with them around the dinner table at night time!

I do not engage with social media at all. What information do I miss out on on Twitter and can I find it elsewhere?

The school social media platforms are not the only place or even the primary place for information that is shared. Social media is used more often than not to send a quick reminder or to share pictures of an event – all official school information comes out via newsletters, emails and the school website. Things that are on social media are 'in addition to' the core activities of the school. In September you will be asked to join Class Dojo – this is a platform that we use for sharing quick class reminders and it's also the platform we would use to post daily home learning in the event of a partial school closure so it will be important that you can engage with that platform. Our Twitter account is a closed account meaning that only people (parents) that we allow into it are able to see the content on there....we have a couple of parents in the school who do not use any other social media but the closed Twitter account.



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I already have a child at St Gregory's, will I be given additional login information for Parent Pay/Parents Evening/ Tapestry or will I be able to toggle between the children within login for each app?

For the Parents Evening system, you will sign in using each child's name and date of birth.

For Parent Pay we will provide you with a login and password in September and once you activate the account you will be able to see both children on the same account.

For Tapestry you will have one login and see all children.

If my child is entitled for Free School Meals. Do I still need to apply?

*Yes. Please apply even though they will receive a Universal Infant Free School Meal because you may also be entitled to Pupil Premium funding (about £1900) that will be spent on your child's schooling. This will then also ensure you're on the Free School Meal register for when your child starts Y3 so that they continue receiving free school meals. Please also apply if your circumstances change during your time at St Gregory's. **It takes less than 5 minutes!***

Do you provide clubs for Reception children?

Yes. We provide a small selection of clubs for Reception classes from January. The children will be so tired after school for the first few months we feel that the children need to get used to school and get into their own routine.

When should I let the school know about allergies or dietary restrictions?

The pupil information form that you've already sent back had a space to let us know about this but if you haven't done so on there, please email the school office and we'll make sure it gets recorded onto your child's profile. It is also a good idea to share this information directly with the class teacher on your September Zoom call because they will be helping your child order and choose their lunches each day and so will hold this information ready for the right time.