



BARNARD CASTLE SCHOOL

# NEW PARENT HANDBOOK

2025-26



WELCOME

## CONTENTS

- 4. MESSAGE FROM THE HEADMASTER
- 6. HOW TO GET IN TOUCH
- 9. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS
- 10. DATA PROTECTION
- 11. INVOLVE SCHOOL CALENDAR APP
- 12. A BARNEY EDUCATION
- 15. CHAPEL
- 16. GAMES | FIXTURES
- 19. ATTENDANCE | ABSENCES
- 20. TRIPS | WEEKENDS
- 21. AFTER HOURS
- 23. SCHOOL FEES
- 24. BOARDING
- 26. CONTACT INFORMATION
- 27. GOVERNORS
- 28. FAQs

## MESSAGE FROM THE HEADMASTER

Though formally known as Barnard Castle School, we hope you will soon call us what we call ourselves: Barney.

While it is your child who will walk through the school gates each day, we see education as a shared endeavour. The partnership between school and home matters, and we want you to feel informed, supported and involved throughout your time with us.

This handbook sets out the key information you will need day to day. It is designed to answer practical questions and help you navigate school life with confidence. Alongside this, the Parent Portal on our website provides up-to-date information, key dates and useful links. Just as important are the relationships we build with you along the way, through regular communication, school events and ongoing conversations.

Your child's Housemaster or Housemistress will be a familiar face. They will play a central role in your child's experience here and are your first point of contact for most matters. They will work closely with you to support your child's progress, wellbeing and growth, both in and beyond the classroom.

At Barney, we believe young people grow best when they are challenged and supported in equal measure. We value effort, resilience and kindness, and want our pupils to develop the confidence to lead and the humility to listen. Our motto captures it well:

*Parvis imbutus tentabis grandia tutus*

When you are steeped in little things, you shall attempt great things safely.

As Headmaster, I look forward to getting to know you and to seeing you on the touchline, at concerts and performances, or simply at the top of the school drive. Please get in touch at any point, whether with a question, a concern or just to say hello.

With best wishes

**David Cresswell**  
Headmaster



OUR PURPOSE IS CLEAR. WE EXIST TO INSPIRE AMBITION AND BUILD CHARACTER WITHIN  
A DOWN-TO-EARTH, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY. WE LIVE BY OUR MOTTO:

*PARVIS IMBUTUS TENTABIS GRANDIA TUTUS*

WHEN YOU ARE STEEPED IN LITTLE THINGS, YOU SHALL ATTEMPT GREAT THINGS SAFELY.

EVERY SMALL MOMENT MATTERS HERE. AND THROUGH THOSE DAILY ACTS OF KINDNESS,  
EFFORT AND COURAGE, SOMETHING GREATER BEGINS TO TAKE SHAPE.

## HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

The best person to contact with any queries or concerns is almost always the Housemaster or Housemistress. They are in contact with your daughter or son on a daily basis and have the best first-hand knowledge. As a general rule, always try them first.

The School's General Office number is 01833 690222 and can be used for general contacts and to leave urgent messages for pupils.

For most purposes it is quicker and easier to email or phone the direct numbers of the various departments and sections of the School without going through the General Office switchboard, and parents are urged to do this. A list of contacts can be found at the back of this handbook. If there is no-one immediately available to take your call on any of the direct lines, you can either leave a voice-mail or have your call diverted to General Office to leave a message. The area code for all numbers is 01833. Please do remember that all Housemasters/Housemistresses and senior staff also teach, so they may not be able to respond immediately.

Please be sure to keep the School fully up to date with your phone number, if you move house, change your work number or change any other contact details. Equally important is your email address by which you will receive important information and regular updates.

## Main Contact Information

General Office: +44(0)1833 690222

Admissions: +44(0)1833 696030

Email: [genoffice@barneyschool.org.uk](mailto:genoffice@barneyschool.org.uk)

Website: [www.barnardcastleschool.org.uk](http://www.barnardcastleschool.org.uk)



## OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The electronic Parent Portal, the School website and the termly School Calendar are useful channels of communication about forthcoming events and recent achievements.

Our Social Media accounts are a great way to keep up to date with what is happening at Barney; we post regularly to LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook on sporting events, theatrical performances and academic success just to name a few, in addition to the News page on the website.

You can follow us by searching for the below:



**Facebook**

BarnardCastleSchool



**Instagram**

barnardcastleschool



**LinkedIn**

Barnard Castle School

## Assessments and Reports

Assessments and reports are summaries of progress, which occur at key points in the academic year. They can be accessed through our Parent Portal.

## DATA PROTECTION

The School routinely deals with a considerable amount of personal data, for example when receiving and processing applications for places, compiling and maintaining pupil records (which inevitably include details relating to parents and guardians), and maintaining records of pupils after they have left. The School's policy is to comply with data protection law and take all reasonable precautions to ensure that any information processed on parents and pupils by the School is kept confidential and is not disclosed to third parties, save on request or with consent. Personal data is held in accordance with our Privacy Policy, available on the school website.

The School may sometimes wish to publish (or to allow publication of) images of pupils - in School magazines, newsletters, prospectuses or advertisements, website, etc. It will do so responsibly and with due regard to pupils' safety. Should any parents not wish a daughter's or son's photograph to appear in School literature, they are asked to let the Headmaster know in writing.

## INSURANCE

The School fee per term is inclusive of Pupils' Personal Accident Scheme Insurance. Details of this can be found on the Parent Portal. Personal effects, in particular musical instruments and personal computers, should be insured if they are not already covered under existing policies you hold.

## INVOLVE SCHOOL CALENDAR APP

We're excited to announce the launch of our new school app, Involve! Your one-stop hub for the school calendar, timetables, and all extra-curricular opportunities, designed to keep families seamlessly connected and informed. More information to follow at the start of the academic year.

## A BARNEY EDUCATION

Barney is a community where young people grow not just academically, but personally, socially and emotionally. We aim to help pupils become well-rounded and well-grounded, ready for whatever comes next.

We value effort, resilience and determination. Success is not about avoiding mistakes, but learning from them. We encourage our pupils to try, to fail, and to try again.

Character matters as much as knowledge. It is built through kindness, respect and quiet perseverance. We want every pupil to discover their strengths and feel supported when challenges come.

We also believe in balance. Hard work and high standards go hand in hand with laughter, friendship and fun. It is possible to aim high and enjoy the journey.

At Barney, everything begins with a simple equation:

**Community + Character = Ambition**





## CHAPEL

### **Chapel Services**

Pupils attend Chapel each week, and it is a very important part of life at Barney. Throughout the year there are a number of special services, to which you are very much invited, with the Remembrance Service, Carol Services and Candlemas particular highlights. Please check the School calendar for more information.

### **Choral Society**

The Choral Society is open to all parents and friends. It meets in an informal and friendly atmosphere in School on Thursdays from 7.30pm - 8.30pm during term time to rehearse for two concerts each year. Singers of all standards are welcome - no audition is needed - and both beginners and experienced performers will find enjoyment. Simply turn up to Music School and you can be sure of a warm welcome. Contact Director of Music, George Ford, for more information ([GEF@barneyschool.org.uk](mailto:GEF@barneyschool.org.uk)).

## GAMES | FIXTURES

### **Guidelines for Supporters**

Parents are always welcome to come and support at sporting fixtures, and are greatly encouraged to do so. The School has a responsibility for the conduct of every aspect of its sport, including the supporters (pupils, parents and other adults alike). Please support in a positive manner, applauding good play and promoting good sportsmanship. Please be aware of the need for both players and spectators to refrain from open criticism of, or dissent from, umpiring or refereeing decisions.

### **Commitment**

One of the key values we have at Barney is commitment. It is important our pupils know that if they drop out of a fixture at the last minute, they leave teammates and coaches potentially short and unable to fulfill a fixture. Your support in ensuring this doesn't happen is greatly appreciated. If a pupil does need to miss a fixture, please inform a coach and tutor at the earliest possible opportunity.

### **Dropping off pupils after away matches**

The School is always keen to help domestic arrangements and save parents unnecessary journeys to School by dropping off pupils on the way back from sports fixtures where we can, but we need to ensure that we are acting responsibly when we do so. If you wish your daughter or son to be dropped off at a specific location on the route back to School, please contact the member of staff in advance to make the arrangement. If in the event you are unable to be at the pre-arranged drop-off point on time, please understand that we cannot keep other children waiting or simply leave children on the road-side, and that your daughter or son will therefore, under normal circumstances, be taken back to School for collection.





## ATTENDANCE | ABSENCES

### **Attendance and requests for absence**

As a condition of admission, parents are asked to observe the published term dates and the exeat structure. By Government legislation it is only the School (and not parents) that can authorise absence from School during term time, and this permission can only be given well in advance and in the most exceptional of circumstances. Requests should be addressed to the Second Master ([mtp@barneyschool.org.uk](mailto:mtp@barneyschool.org.uk)).

When pupils are unavoidably absent through illness, please ensure that a parental phone call is made without fail to the Housemaster/mistress before registration time (8.30am) on every day of absence so that we are kept informed. Without a phone call from parents, we have no way of knowing whether a pupil is simply ill, or 'missing' (which could cover anything from truancy to an accident on the way to School).

At the end of the period of absence, please send a parental note or email to the Housemaster/mistress for statutory registration records.

The School's Leave of Absence Policy is available for consultation on the website.

### **Parents away from home**

If parents are going to be away from home during term time (on holiday or on a business trip) please make sure that the School is notified of the arrangements well in advance. This applies equally to boarding and day pupils. It is important that we should know who to contact if an emergency occurs in your absence.

## TRIPS | WEEKENDS

### **School trips and expeditions**

Trips and expeditions are arranged both at home and abroad throughout the year. Amongst the most exciting ones recently have been those to South Africa (Hockey, Netball and Rugby), Italy, Greece (Classics), France (MFL, skiing and History) and Iceland (Geography). The Choir and Wind Band have performed in Barcelona and Paris, and there have been summer adventure holidays on the Great Glen Way, the Mediterranean and in Sweden. We issue an annual Consent Form for participation in local School trips. If this form is not returned, pupils would be unable to attend any trips.

### **Exeat weekends**

One weekend in each half of term is usually nominated an exeat weekend. There are no lessons or matches on these Saturdays, and day-pupils are not required to attend School. Boarders can return home for exeats. For those boarders who are unable to go home, special activities are organised.

## AFTER HOURS

### **Day pupils in School after School hours**

The School day ends for day pupils at 5.10pm and those who remain in School should only do so as participants in a properly supervised activity or an event, such as a play or concert. Under such circumstances, a meal will be provided free of charge.

However, if parents occasionally or routinely require day children to remain in School, a meal and teacher-supervised prep facilities will be available until 7pm for a small charge. Similarly, breakfast can be provided for day pupils from 7.30am by prior arrangement. Parents can make suitable arrangements by contacting General Office on 01833 690222.

**Flexi boarding** is available, as is **Occasional boarding** (overnight accommodation) at £95.96 per night (Monday-Friday) and at £174.24 per night (Saturday/Sunday). For more information, please contact [admissions@barneyschool.org.uk](mailto:admissions@barneyschool.org.uk).

### **Extended day:**

Early arrival (from 7.40am): £10 per day

Late pick-up, including tea: £10 until 6.00pm; £19 until 7.00pm

Late pick-up, including tea and supervised prep (Senior School only): £26 until 8.00pm



## SCHOOL FEES

### Payment of School Fees

Bills are issued at the end of each term for the next term, and are due for payment strictly on, or before the first day of the new term. There are various ways you can pay your account:

#### 1. Direct Debit

The scheme operates over 10 months and instalments are collected on the first working day of the month from August until May.

#### Please note:-

The scheme is only available to UK Bank Accounts.

#### 2. Direct Bank Transfer

To make payments directly to the School Bank Account the following details will be required:

**Account Name: Barnard Castle School**

**Bank: NatWest**

**Sort Code: 51 61 33**

**Account Number: 74037609**

**IBAN: GB74 NWBK 5161 3374 0376 09**

**BIC: NWBK GB 2L**

The Account Ref on your invoice should be quoted on all payments eg. ABC001

#### 3. Credit or Debit Card

Payments by card can be taken in the Accounts Office in person or via telephone on 01833 696002

#### 4. Cheque or Bankers Draft

Payable to Barnard Castle School

#### 5. Flywire for Overseas Parents

We've recently partnered with Flywire to enable overseas parents to make GBP payments to school in their local currency, substantially reducing their foreign exchange costs and bank charges. Further information is available on request.



# BOARDING

## EQUIPMENT

Pupils will need to bring their own pens and pencils, and they may wish to arrive equipped with a scientific calculator and geometry (mathematical instruments) set.

If pupils are coming from overseas and English is not their first language, they will need a dictionary explaining words from their own language into English. Dictionaries should be in book format and not electronic because these are permitted in class but not in examinations.

Otherwise, all necessary text books, exercise books, files, writing paper and notebooks will be supplied by the appropriate teacher during the first few days.

## CLOTHING

It is also recommended that boarders have at least three pairs of trousers or skirts and six shirts. Other items required are listed in the Boarding House Handbooks.

Boarders wear casual clothing in the evenings and at weekends.

All clothing items must be clearly marked with the pupil's name and initials (plus school number for boarders). This allows for identification, especially after laundry.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Bowes Housemistress: <b>Mrs Dolby</b>	bowes@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696029
Dale Housemaster: <b>Mr Pickering</b>	dale@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696036
Durham Housemistress: <b>Mr Riley</b>	durham@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696005
Junior Boarding Housemaster: <b>Mr Edwards</b>	junior@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696052
Longfield Housemistress: <b>Mr Lavery</b>	longfield@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696014
Marwood Housemistress: <b>Mr Midcalf</b>	marwood@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696058
Northumberland Housemaster: <b>Mr Imms</b>	north@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696004
Tees Housemaster: <b>Mr Fairwood</b>	tees@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696037
York Housemaster: <b>Mr Chaloner</b>	york@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696047
Headmaster: <b>Mr Cresswell</b>	headmaster@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696009
Second Master: <b>Mr Pepper</b>	mtp@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696089
Deputy Head (Academic): <b>Mr O'Connor</b>	noc@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696048
Deputy Head (Pastoral): <b>Mrs Riley</b>	cjr@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 690222
Director of Sixth Form: <b>Mrs Johns</b>	rlj@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696072
Medical Centre:	medical@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696063
Accounts Department:	accounts@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696002
General Office:	genoffice@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 690222
CCF Office:	ccf@barneyschool.org.uk	01833 696020

## GOVERNORS

The full Governing Body meets at least once each term. The Sub-Committees of Education, Welfare and Staff Development, Finance & Estates, Strategy, Marketing & Development and Governance all meet at least termly.



Mrs C J Sunley  
Chair of Governors



Mr N Bliss  
Vice Chair



Dr J Elphick  
Vice Chair



Mrs S Metcalf  
Clerk to Governors

The Chair of Governors may be contacted via the School. Any written correspondence should be marked 'Private and Confidential' and will be forwarded to her at the earliest convenience.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **When will my child get their timetable?**

On New Pupil Induction Day for new pupils and in Tutor Time on the first day of School for returning pupils.

### **What do we do if my child has an appointment / is ill?**

You would need to contact their HSM/Tutor and inform them as soon as possible.

### **Can my child leave school before 5:00pm?**

No, unless in special circumstances previously agreed with the Second Master, all pupils should be taking part in or helping out in the activities which run 4.10-5.00pm every day.

### **Can they use their mobile phones throughout the day?**

Mobile phone usage is restricted to Sixth Form only, at limited times of the day and in certain areas only. Pupils in Years 7 – 11 are not permitted to use mobile phones at any point during the school day.

### **How does the setting work?**

Maths and English are setted in all year groups up to and including Year 11, Science and Languages are usually setted from Year 8. Humanities are not setted initially in Year 7 but a Latin set is identified in Year 7 and this set then stays together for their Humanities lessons. GCSE options subjects, including Humanities, are not setted in Years 10 and 11 and there is no setting in Sixth Form.

### **Will there be someone to show them where to go?**

On their first day in school they will be guided to where they need to be. There will always be someone available to point them in the right direction.

### **How many preps are set?**

How many preps are set?

Year 7 & 8: 2 preps per night, 25 minutes each

Year 9: Mostly 2 but occasionally 3 preps per night, 30 minutes each

Year 10 & 11: 3 preps per night, 35 minutes each

Sixth Form: Preps set as required

### **Do they come back to common rooms between lessons?**

No, common rooms are to be used before registration, break and lunchtimes.

### **What do I do if I have a complaint?**

Please refer to our Complaints Policy which can be requested via our website.

### **How do I (the parent/guardian) and my child know if they are selected for a team?**

The **School Sports Website**, has been updated and now includes all fixtures in the school. These can be seen via the address: [www.barnardcastleschoolsports.org.uk](http://www.barnardcastleschoolsports.org.uk). You can navigate to our Sports Calendar via the main menu, select the day you are interested in and then click the Details link. This shows the venue and if we're playing away, there will be a link to the location map of our opponent's school. You can also see the team selected for the fixture wherever you see a blue image. Normally we announce team selections at least the day before and in most cases 48 hours before.

### **How can I find out what is happening at school?**

An online version of the term calendar is available on the school website or Parent Portal. The News and Videos sections of the school website are also updated regularly. You can also follow the Barney social media channels.

**What are House activities?**

Typically, activities will revolve around preparation for participation in House competitions. When competitions are taking place, pupils who are not participating should support those who are. Tutors are asked to help in encouraging their tutees on such occasions and also willingly supervise swimming, running, football and other activities. House prefects and other senior pupils are also asked to help in the running of activities and the preparation of teams for Inter-House competitions.

**If my child is having problems, who can they talk to?**

Our pastoral care is second to none and we have a very robust system in place if a child needs to speak to someone. Our “12 to Turn To” which is posted in common areas and in the Pupil Handbook directs them to the many avenues they can turn to should they want to talk.

**What are the Mind/Body/Soul activities?**

In Years 7 and 8, pupils gain experience of a wide variety of activities (over 30 in total). These run on Mondays (3:30pm-5:00pm), Tuesdays and Thursdays (4:10pm-5:00pm). The programme is designed to expose children to as many different experiences as possible, and is broadly categorised into physical (‘Body’), mental (‘Mind’) and spiritual/ creative (‘Soul’). In their groups of 10-12, they are on a carousel system, changing activities every five weeks.

**How does my child receive a merit?**

These are awarded by teachers for excellent work. The pupil’s tutor collates them and records them for the House merit competition.

**My child is unable to take part in PE/Games. What should I do?**

In the first instance his/her HSM and the Head of PE should be informed via telephone or email. Sending a letter into school with the pupil is also an option. Your child should bring their kit to school; pupils who are injured must get changed and come out to their games lesson, where their respective teacher can supervise them. If they are physically unable to get changed (e.g. have a pot on their leg), they must still go out to lessons but will not be required to change. If the weather is inclement, then appropriate clothing should be brought.

**What is the difference between assessments and reports?**

Assessments record effort and attainment grades with a comment from the tutor. Reports contain grades and comments from teachers, as well as comments from your child’s tutor, HSM and the Headmaster.

**Is there a rota for lunch?**

Yes, the rota is posted along the Dining Room corridor.

**We hope you have found this book useful, but if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch.**

**Welcome to Barney!**



BARNARD CASTLE SCHOOL

BARNARD CASTLE SCHOOL | BARNARD CASTLE | COUNTY DURHAM DL12 8UN