



Barnard Castle School
ESTD 1883

**PARENT
HANDBOOK**

2026/2027

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WELCOME FROM THE HEADMASTER

Welcome to Barnard Castle School!

Though formally known as Barnard Castle School, we hope you will soon come to 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 – and, more than that, as an ongoing conversation. A conversation between pupils and teachers, between challenge and support, between school and home. We want parents to feel central to that conversation throughout their time with us: informed, involved and always welcome to talk.

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. Yet the most important part of any school is not systems or structures, but relationships – and we place great value on the conversations we build with families along the way.

Your child's Tutor will be one of the key people in that relationship. Alongside your child's Housemaster or Housemistress, they will know your child well and will work closely with you to support their progress, wellbeing and growth, both in and beyond the classroom. They should be your first point of contact for most day-to-day matters, and we encourage regular and open communication.

As Headmaster, I also want parents to feel able to speak with me directly. Every two weeks, we host informal Saturday morning coffee mornings, which are a lovely opportunity to catch up, ask questions, share ideas or simply get to know one another better. I hope many of you will join us over the course of the year.

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.*

I very much look forward to getting to know you and your family over the months and years ahead: on the touchline, at concerts and performances, over coffee on a Saturday morning, or simply in passing at the top of the school drive. Above all, please know that I am always happy to have a conversation. You can always reach me at headmaster@barneyschool.org.uk, whether with a question, an idea, a concern or simply to say hello.

With best wishes,



David Cresswell,
Headmaster



HOW TO GET IN TOUCH



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



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



It's often quicker to contact departments directly, by phone or email, rather than using the General Office switchboard. Details are in the handbook. If no one is available, you can leave a voicemail or be redirected to General Office. Please note that HSMs and senior staff also teach, so they may not respond immediately.



Please keep the School updated with any changes to your contact details, including **phone numbers** and **email**, as these are essential for important communications.

MAIN CONTACT INFORMATION



Admissions

+44(0)1833 696030



Email

genoffice@barneyschool.org.uk



General Office

+44 (0)1833 690222



Website

www.barnardcastleschool.org.uk

OTHER COMMUNICATIONS



The **Parent Portal**, the **School website** and "**Involve Education**" (app) are useful channels of communication to keep up-to-date with School events.

Assessments & reports are issued at key points during the academic year and can be accessed through the **Parent Portal**.



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, to name just a few, in addition to the News page on the website



Instagram

@barnardcastleschool



LinkedIn

Barnard Castle School



Facebook

Barnard Castle School



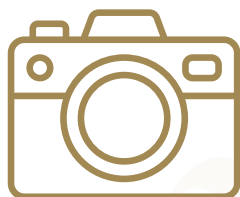
School Website

www.barnardcastleschool.org.uk

DATA PROTECTION & INSURANCE



The School routinely deals with personal data. The School's policy is to comply with the 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 their child's photograph to appear in School literature, they are asked to let the Headmaster know in writing.



The School's fees per term are 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 will 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.

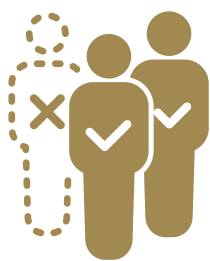
We value effort, resilience and determination. Success is not about avoiding mistakes, but learning from them. We encourage our pupils to try, to fail, and to try again. Character matters as much as knowledge. It is built through kindness, respect and quiet perseverance. We want every pupil to discover 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.

Everything we do at Barney is rooted in three values:

Community, Character, and Ambition.

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES



Attendance and Requests for Absence

Parents are expected to observe published term dates and the Exeat structure. Only the School can authorise absence during term time, and this will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Requests should be addressed to the **Second Master:**
mtp@barneyschool.org.uk

If a pupil is absent due to illness, parents must contact the HSM before registration which takes place at 8.30am, if this can be done on every day of absence. At the end of the absence, a parental note or email should also be sent for registration records.

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

Parents Away From Home

If parents are away during term time, the School should be informed in advance of any emergency contact arrangements.

CHAPEL



Chapel Services

Pupils attend Chapel each week, it is a very important part of life at Barney.

Throughout the year there are a number of special services, to which you are invited, these include the Remembrance Service, Carol Services and Candlemas.

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.

For more information, contact the **Director of Music, Matthew Lowe.**



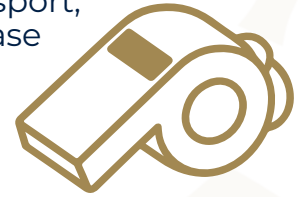
GAMES | FIXTURES

Guidelines for Supporters

Parents are always welcome to come and support 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 are aware should they drop out of a fixture at the last minute, they leave teammates and coaches potentially short and unable to fulfil a fixture. Your support in ensuring this does not 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 for your child 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 roadside, and that your daughter or son will, under normal circumstances, be taken back to School for collection.



AFTER HOURS

Day Pupils After School & Extended Day Provision

The School day ends for day pupils at **5.10pm**. Pupils remaining after this time should only do so as part of a supervised activity or event.

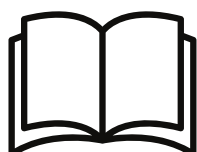
For Extended Day Provision, supervised prep and meals are available for a **small charge***

For arrangements, please contact **General office**



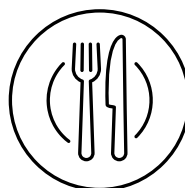
EARLY ARRIVAL

Breakfast available from 7:30pm.



PREP CLUB

Supervised prep available



EVENING MEAL

A meal is provided free of charge for pupils **involved in evening activities only.***



FLEXI BOARDING

Occasional boarding available.

CHARGES

EARLY ARRIVAL

£11

LATE PICK-UP including tea until 6:00pm

£11

LATE PICK-UP including tea until 7:00pm

£20.50

LATE PICK-UP including tea until 8:00pm

£28

FLEXI & OCCASIONAL BOARDING

£100
per night
(Mon-Fri)

£180
per night
(Sat-Sun)



For further information: admissions@barneyschool.org.uk

EXEAT WEEKENDS

One weekend each half term is normally designated as an Exeat weekend.

There are usually no lessons or fixtures on these Saturdays.

Boarders may return home and activities are arranged for those remaining in School.

TRIPS & WEEKENDS SCHOOL TRIPS & EXPEDITIONS

Trips and expeditions take place both in the UK and abroad throughout the year.

Parents are asked to complete an annual consent form for local School trips.

Recent destinations include:



FRANCE



SOUTH AFRICA



SPAIN



GREECE



ITALY



ICELAND

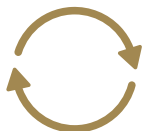


USA

SCHOOL FEES

Invoices are issued at the end of each term for the following term, and are payable before the start of term.

Payments can be made by:



Direct Debit

Payments are collected monthly from August to May.



Direct Bank Transfer

Please quote the account reference shown on your invoice.
(See below)



Credit or Debit Card

Payments can be made via the Accounts Office:
01833 696002



Cheque or Bankers Draft

Payable to Barnard Castle School.



Flywire (overseas parents)

Allows overseas parents to pay in local currency while reducing exchange costs and bank charges.

*Further info available on request

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



For further information, please contact the Accounts Office:

fees@barneyschool.org.uk or 01833 696001

BOARDING EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING



- Pupils should bring their own pens and pencils and may wish to have a scientific calculator and geometry set.
- Pupils whose first language is not English should bring a paper bilingual dictionary.
- All textbooks and exercise books are provided by the School.
- All clothing must be clearly labelled with the pupil's name and initials, and boarders' items should also include their School number.

Boarders are recommended to have:

- At least three pairs of trousers or skirts
- Six shirts

Additional requirements are detailed in **House Handbooks**.

Boarders wear casual clothing during evenings and weekends.



CONTACT INFORMATION

SENIOR SCHOOL

Mrs Dolby
Bowes Housemistress
bowes@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 696029

Mr Riley
Durham Housemaster
durham@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 696005

Mr Midcalf
Marwood Housemaster
marwood@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 696058

Mr Fairwood
Tees Housemaster
tees@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 696037

Mr Cresswell
Headmaster
headmaster@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 696009

Mr O'Connor
Deputy Head (Academic)
noc@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 696048

Miss Johns
Director of Sixth Form
rlj@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 696072

Accounts Department
accounts@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 696002

CCF Office
ccf@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 696020

Mr Pickering
Dale Housemistress
dale@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 696036

Mr Lavery
Longfield Housemaster
longfield@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 696014

Mr Imms
Northumberland Housemaster
north@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 696004

Mr Chaloner
York Housemaster
york@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 696047

Mr Pepper
Second Master
mtp@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 696089

Mrs Riley
Deputy Head (Pastoral)
cjr@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 690222

Medical Centre
medical@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 696063

General Office
genoffice@barneyschool.org.uk
01833 690222

GOVERNORS

Mrs C J Sunley
Chair of Governors

Mr N Bliss
Vice Chair

Dr J Elphick
Vice Chair

Mrs S Metcalf
Clerk to Governors

- The Governing Body meets at least once each term.
- Sub-committees covering Education, Welfare & Staff Development, Finance & Estates, Strategy, Marketing & Development and Governance also meet regularly.
- Written correspondence should be marked **Private and Confidential** and sent via the School.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How many preps are set?

- Year 7 & 8: Two preps per night, 25 minutes each
- Year 9: Usually two, occasionally three preps, 30 minutes each
- Year 10 & 11: Three preps per night, 35 minutes each
- Sixth Form: Prep set as required

Do pupils return to common rooms between lessons?

No. Common rooms are used before registration, at break, at lunchtime and after lessons.

What should I do if I have a complaint?

Please refer to the School's Complaints Policy available via the website.

How will we know if my child has been selected for a team?

From September 2026, fixtures and team sheets will be published on Involve.

When will my child receive their timetable?

New pupils receive timetables on Induction Day. Returning pupils receive them during Tutor Time on the first day of term.

What should I do if my child is ill or has an appointment?

Please contact their Tutor or HSM as soon as possible.

Can my child leave School before 5.00pm?

No, unless permission has been granted in advance by the Second Master.

Can pupils use mobile phones during the day?

Mobile phone use is restricted to Sixth Form pupils only, and only at certain times and in designated areas. Pupils in Years 7–11 may not use mobile phones during the School day.

How does setting work?

Maths and English are set throughout Years 7–11. Science and Languages are usually set from Year 8 onwards. There is no setting in the Sixth Form.

Will someone help new pupils find their way around?

Yes. New pupils are guided throughout their first day and support is always available.

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

In the first instance, their HSM and the Head of PE should be informed via telephone or email. Sending a letter into School with the pupil is also acceptable.

Pupils should still bring their kit to School. Injured pupils should get changed and attend Games lessons, where staff can supervise them appropriately. If they are physically unable to get changed, for example due to a cast or similar injury, they must still attend lessons but will not be required to change. If the weather is poor, appropriate outdoor clothing should also be brought.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the difference between assessments and reports?

Assessments record effort and attainment grades, together with a comment from the tutor.

Reports contain grades and comments from subject teachers, as well as comments from the pupil's tutor, HSM, and the Headmaster.

Is there a rota for lunch?

Yes. The rota is posted along the Dining Hall corridor.

What are House activities?

House activities often centre around preparation for House competitions and encouraging participation and support within Houses.

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

Our pastoral support network is extensive. Pupils are encouraged to use the "12 to Turn To" system, which identifies multiple trusted adults and peer support options.

What are the Mind/Body/Soul activities?

Years 7 and 8 follow a carousel programme introducing pupils to a wide range of physical, creative and academic activities.

How does my child receive a merit?

Merits are awarded by teachers for excellent work and contribute towards House competitions and awards.

We hope you have found this handbook useful. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

WELCOME TO BARNEY!



Barnard Castle School
COMMUNITY · CHARACTER · AMBITION