



Grow Independent School

Starter pack

Welcome!

This booklet contains all you need to know about starting at Grow Independent School. It is also our way of finding out more about you.

Some of this pack is purely for your information, and some of it needs to be completed and returned to us.

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PARTS FOR PARENTS:

Aims and Values

Our Passion:

Supporting the learning and development young people to enable them to be more courageous, compassionate and curious.

Our Belief:

That educators can help make the world a braver, safer and more loving place for all.

Our core values:

We are committed to supporting and celebrating **ACHIEVEMENT** for all.

We cultivate **BELONGING** and strive to create a space where all feel safe and have courage.

We always act with **COMPASSION**, building trusting relationships through empathy and kindness.

Why we are here:

To facilitate meaningful learning in a nurturing environment.

To engage students who have not previously been able to thrive in other school environments by prioritising connection and building trusting relationships.

To understand the motivations, needs and aspirations of our students and support them in overcoming barriers to achieving their full potential.

What we do:

Grow Independent School provides young people with high quality education in a safe and nurturing environment.

We promote equality, acceptance and social justice, and we always challenge bias, discrimination, prejudice and oppression.

We strive to be continuous learners as well as teachers by promoting curiosity and asking questions.

We place the safety and wellbeing of all within our school at the centre of our decision-making.

We aim to develop young people who are compassionate, curious, self-aware, brave and who can contribute positively to the world beyond school.

Communicating

We want to ensure that parents and students are heard, and we value clear communication.

Meetings: To make sure that we can give you enough time when you require it, please request a meeting with the person you would like to speak to either by emailing office@growschool.co.uk or speaking to the greeter (you'll find out more about the greeter's role shortly). We can then arrange a phonecall or meeting at a time to suit you and the teacher.

Correspondence: You are welcome to email any time, it is particularly important to contact us if you have any concerns about your child or feel we should know something. We continuously check emails on the office@growschool.co.uk email address throughout the day, or you can call our school phoneline on 01282 541949. Leave a message if we don't answer, we check this regularly too.

Contacting teachers: We work hard to keep our teachers' work/life balance in good shape, so each teacher at Grow can be contacted through our main office email as above. You can request an appointment to speak to an individual staff member this way.

Arriving and Leaving

Car Park: The car park outside our building is often very full, but the cars tend to be stationary as they belong to people who are at work in the surrounding offices. When you drop your child off, please observe them walking to the bottom front door to ensure they arrive safely into the building.

Arriving: When students arrive, they will be greeted either at the bottom or the top of the staircase by our designated 'greeter', this is a person who knows what time your child is scheduled to arrive at school and will be expecting to meet them. If your child attends following our full timetable, there will be a **daily arrival time slot of 9:45-9:55**. This is covered in more detail in the 'School Day' section later.

Departing: When collecting students at the end of the day, our greeter will come down to the front entrance with the students and observe them moving from the building to your car. The school day ends at **3:15**.

If students are walking home, please inform us of this in writing via email before the end of the school day.

Emergency Contact

Contacting you: We will need to have at least two emergency contacts on our system from your admissions form who will be our first people to call in the case of an emergency. If you know that your usual emergency contact might be difficult to contact on any given day, please send us an email with another temporary emergency contact.

Contacting us: The best way to contact us for non-urgent matters is through the office email address. You can call the school number on 01282 541949, and this phone will be manned between the hours of 9:00 and 4:00pm. If you don't receive an answer, leave a message and it will be returned very shortly.

Medical and Dietary Needs

Medical needs: Although we will already have a good awareness of any medical needs your child may have, it is important that you keep us updated regularly on any changes to their needs.

Medicine: We have a responsibility to maintain the health and safety of the pupils under our care during normal school hours or during any other school event or activity. This may extend to administering medicine or taking other medical action in an emergency. Please note the following:

1. We can only administer medicines prescribed by your doctor and only if your child needs 4 doses a day. Very few medicines need to be taken during normal school hours and in most cases the appropriate dosage of medicine when prescribed to be taken “three times a day” can be given before school, after school and at night. The same principle can also be applied to medication such as creams/drops.
2. All medicines should be brought to the school office where you will need to complete a medical form giving your consent for a member of staff to give your child medication. This therefore provides the school with a written record of all prescribed medication given to pupils. This record is kept together with the instructions, and is checked and completed by the designated member of staff. The record gives the date and time of administration, the dose given, the name of the child and the name of the staff member administering the medication. When helping a child to take their medicine the designated staff member checks the identity of the child with the child in question and another member of staff.
3. Medicines are then kept in a secure place, refrigerated if necessary, until it is time for your child’s medication to be given. It is not the responsibility of the staff to ensure medications are within date and they will only administer the amount as per the personalised label.
4. Parents are welcome to come into school to give medicine to their own child, but it is important that you let us know beforehand.
5. At the end of term, all medicines must be collected, otherwise they will be destroyed.

Where a child has long term medical needs or where more frequent administration of medicine is prescribed, the school management makes a risk assessment. The school management decides whether to accept responsibility for medication and when it does, it accepts the duty with reasonable care and follows the guidelines contained in the school’s policy.

Children with acute medical conditions will have an individualised Care Plan written by the SENDCO in consultation with medical professionals and parents.

Attendance and Absence

Attendance: We understand that attendance may have previously been an issue for many of our students. We will work with you to ensure that we are doing everything we can to help your child feel they can engage with our learning environment on-site here at Grow.

Where students are not able to attend the Grow site in-person consistently, need a reduced timetable, or have any other pre-existing condition which makes regular attendance challenging, we may need to agree a hybrid approach to your child’s timetable with you to ensure that your child is engaging as well as they possibly can.

We will register your child as either present or absent on the basis of what has been agreed in their individualised learning plan. Where a student is regularly absent from agreed engagement, we will conduct a review meeting of the individual learning plan and work with both you and your child on how we can adapt the approach to make it easier for them to engage with the learning.

Educational Visits and Off-Site Learning

Educational Visits: We aim to bring as much ‘real-world’ experience as we possibly can into your child’s learning. Going on educational visits forms an important part of cultivating curiosity, inspiring creativity and supporting a deeper and more meaningful experience of a topic. When we plan on taking your child on a visit that is not to one of our regular off-site locations (see below), you will be informed at least two weeks prior to the visit taking place.

Off-Site Learning: We are very lucky to have a partnership with ‘Harwes Farm CIC’, an amazing outdoor learning facility not far from neighbouring town Colne. We propose that students attend learning sessions located at this provision to be able to develop a deeper understanding of sustainability, horticulture, animal care and the science of nature. It is also a place to be inspired to do artwork, compose and perform music, write creatively or choreograph movement and dance all inspired by nature and the outdoors. This is an important and fundamental part of our curriculum, and we will agree with you and your child when regular visits to the provision will take place, depending on their personalised curriculum and timetable.

In addition to the visits to Harwes Farm, we also take students off-site for their physical education provision. This will either be at Empower HQ (within the same mill building as Grow) or at other local sports facilities within walking or short driving distance of Grow.

Finally, we are blessed with lovely outdoor spaces right on our doorstep including a river walk and several local parks. We are near to local town Barrowford where there are many opportunities to visit local businesses, shops, artists and eateries. When opportunities arise for being outdoors or offsite, we may move the learning to another location that benefits the student’s experience of the subject/topic.

By signing the ‘Permission for off site learning form’, you are giving permission for us to take your child off-site to participate in any of the above.

Term Dates 2023-24

Term	Start date	End date
Autumn 2 2023	Monday 6 th November	Friday 15 th December
Spring 1 2024	Tuesday 9 th January	Friday 9 th February
Spring 2 2024	Monday 26 th February	Thursday 28 th March
Summer 1 2024	Tuesday 23 rd April	Friday 24 th May
Summer 2 2024	Monday 10 th June	Friday 19 th July
Bank Holidays	Friday 29 th March and Monday 6 th May	
Teacher training days	Monday 8 th January and Monday 22 nd April	

PARTS FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

The School Day

This is explained here in this infographic.

Have a look and if you have any questions about it, you can always ask when we next see you.

The School Day at Grow Independent School

Arriving
When you arrive, come in through the bottom door and head up the stairs. Ring the bell at the top, and our greeter will meet you.
Place your things in your locker and make your way to meet your key person.

Put things away in your locker
Go to your key person

Your Lessons
You will have a timetable which shows you what lessons you have throughout your day.
These will be in groups of no more than two other students, except for P.E. and outdoor learning.

Look at your timetable
You will be in a small group

Breaks
We don't have a fixed breaktime, but between each lesson we know you might need to get a drink, have a snack, go to the toilet or stretch your legs.
You can go to the toilet or request a break from your lesson whenever you need to.

You can take a short break between lessons

Lunch
You can choose your lunch each week from our menu, or you can bring your own packed lunch.
Your lunch break is half an hour and is marked out on your timetable.
You can choose how to spend your time once you have finished eating.

Choose or bring your lunch
Lunch is for 30 mins

Unusual Lessons
Some lessons take place away from the Grow building. These lessons are P.E. and outdoor learning. These will either be in the gym, at a sports centre or at Harwes Farm.
We might also take advantage of nice weather sometimes and have lessons outside.

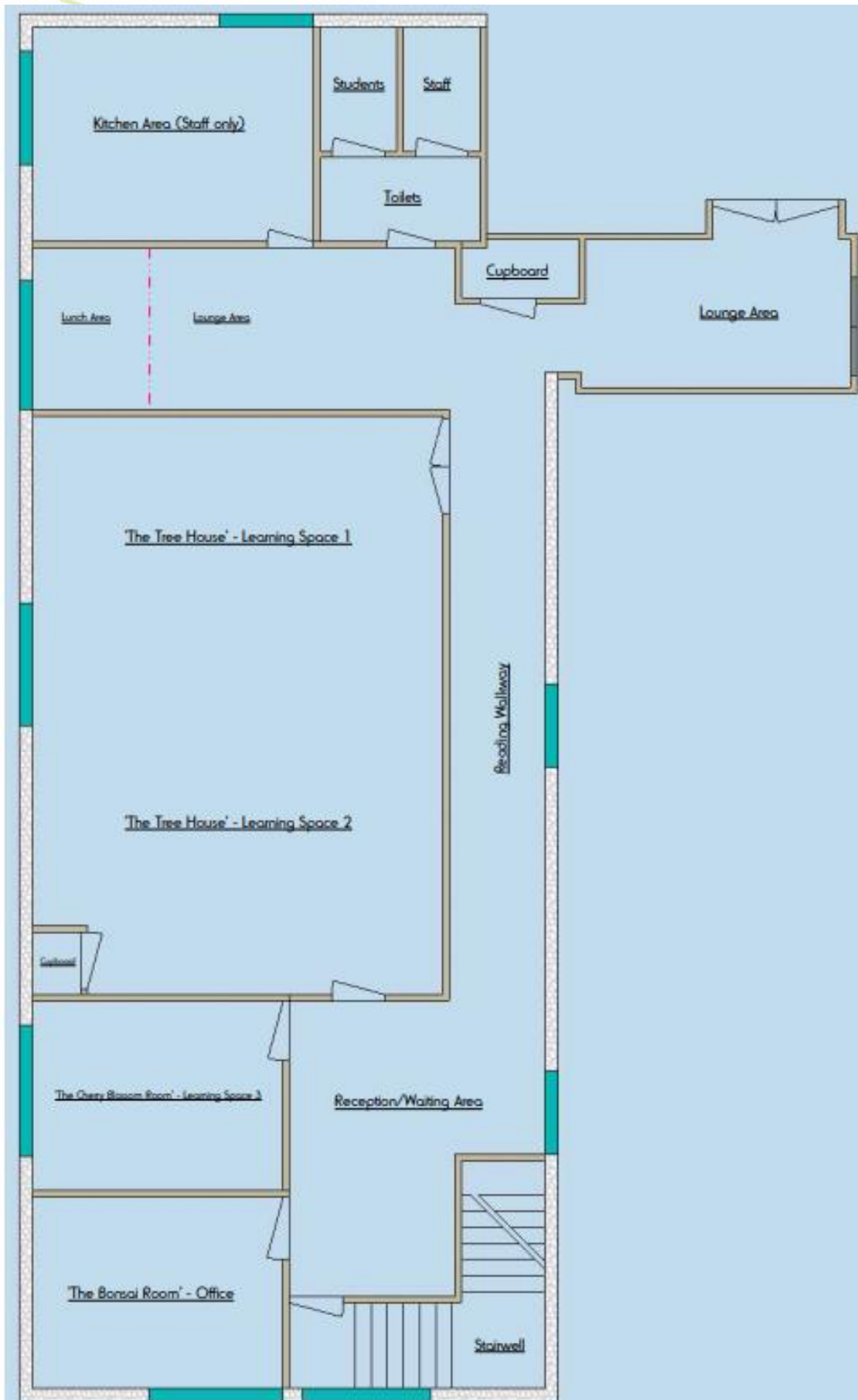
Sometimes we visit the gym nearby
We visit the farm regularly

Leaving
At the end of the day, you will need to tidy up the area you have been working in and get your things from your locker.
You will be taken downstairs to meet the person picking you up.

Get your things.
Meet the person collecting you outside

The School Building

This is a map of our school building. It's not easy to get lost because it's such a small building, but it might be helpful for you to know where the rooms and toilets are:



Meals and Snacks

You are welcome to bring a drink and snack into school if you like. We encourage you to drink plenty throughout the day and stay hydrated, especially on days when you have P.E. or if the weather is warm. Please don't bring in energy drinks or drinks containing caffeine. We encourage students to consider eating a balanced and healthy range of foods.

You can also bring a packed lunch for your lunch break of whatever you like to eat, we can keep some things in our fridge if needed.

If you would like Grow to arrange a meal for you, from January 2024 you can request a menu and choose what you would like to eat from it each day for the next week. You will need to complete this and give it to us on a Friday (at the latest) for the following week. The menu will include things like:

- Baked potato and cheese/ beans/ tuna
- Ham, turkey, beef, cheese, egg mayo, tuna mayo sandwiches with or without salad
- Cheese, tuna or ham salad box
- Cheese and ham / cheese toasties
- Cheese and onion pie / meat and potato pie
- Soup of the day and a roll.

These meals are all costed around the £3 mark and will be delivered to Grow warm and freshly made ready for lunchtime.

You will eat your lunch with other students and lunch break is a good time to socialise, read, play a board game, or go outside if the weather is good.

Clothing and Belongings

Uniform: We do not have a school uniform at Grow, but if you would like us to arrange for you to have some clothing with our Grow logo on, this can be arranged. Please visit our website to see pictures of the uniform options, and these are priced as below:

Hoodie £21

Polo Shirt £15

Zipped Hoodie £25

Beanie Hat £13

If you prefer to wear your own clothes, we just ask that they are practical and comfortable, but also suitable for going outdoors on walks etc. High heels, flip flops and shoes with a big wedge aren't safe to wear so we would discuss this with you. We might also discuss your clothing with you if we think you aren't warm/cool enough for the weather.

P.E. kit: When you know you have P.E. try to remember to bring some suitable sportswear with you, or come wearing your P.E. gear. On days when we are going to the farm, they will provide clothing including wellies and waterproof coats. If you prefer to wear your own, come in them on the day we are going to the farm.



Equipment: We have all the pens, pencils, rubbers etc. that you will need at Grow. You do not need to remember to bring a pencil case, unless of course you want to bring one. You can keep your bag, coat and anything you bring in your locker. We will also source any resources you need for lessons involving cooking so no need to worry about that.

Other belongings: If you bring anything else in that you would like to show us, maybe something you are proud of or something you would like to share with us, make sure that stays safely in your locker so you don't lose it. You are the person responsible for anything you bring in, and it goes without saying that you can't bring in anything that isn't safe. If you aren't sure whether something is safe to bring, just ask us first.

Phones: This is a tricky one, because we know that phones can be so useful when you need to find something out or contact someone. What we also know is that the research shows how phones can make us feel disconnected from each other, distracted, sometimes anxious and they are specially designed to make us feel more and more dependent on them.

We know that our brains release dopamine (a chemical that leaves us wanting to repeat an action) whenever we get a message or a 'like' on our post or video. This can lead to us becoming addicted to our phones, and means we don't learn things as effectively when our phones are around us (if you want to know more about this, a good place to start is 'The Attention Fix' by Dr. Anders Hansen.)

So, we would encourage you to leave your phone in your locker when you are in lessons, and if you really want to, you can have it at lunch time. We are happy to discuss this with you further though.



IMPORTANT: You won't get in 'trouble' for wearing the wrong things, forgetting to bring a P.E. kit, having your phone out or anything else that you might have worried about with school uniform before. We all forget things sometimes! We do encourage you to try to organise yourself effectively though and will help you to do this as it's a good skill to have for life.

Curriculum

We are keen to make sure that we design a curriculum that fits in with your goals, interest, talents and aspirations. Below is a form for parent and student to complete which will help us understand you better and build in the learning that is most relevant to you:

Student Questionnaire

Your name:

Your date of birth:

What subjects do you most enjoy learning about?

What do you think are your strengths? What are you good at?

What do you enjoy doing when you're not at school?

Do you know what you want to do when you leave school?

Do you know what career/s you might be interested in doing when you're an adult?

Are there any subjects that you don't like doing? Why?

Use this space to tell us anything about you that you would like us to know. For example, interesting facts about you, things that worry you, things that help you, things you don't cope well with... anything at all!

Parent Questionnaire

Your name:

Your Child:

What subjects from the below selection do you think would be relevant and suitable for your child to study with us? Choose as many as you need to. (English and Maths is assumed along with other statutory subjects)

Science Art Music Drama History Geography Religious Studies

Design & Technology Dance Spanish Hair & Beauty Health & Social Care

Caring for Children Performing Arts Computing Physical Education

Other:

What are your child's strengths?

What do you think motivates your child?

What do they enjoy doing outside of school?

Do you have any thoughts about what your child would like to do after leaving school? Do they have a career in mind?

What subject areas and skills does your child find most challenging?

Use this space to tell us anything about you that you would like us to know about your child that you think is important in designing their curriculum. Include any relevant past experiences, worries, skills, passions, hobbies... anything at all you would like us to take into account.

Key Person System

At Grow Independent School, you will have a person who you will always meet first thing in a morning for a quick chat before your lessons start, and who is always there for you when you need to talk about something. Your key person will be listed on your timetable, and as much as possible we will make sure you keep the same key person throughout your time with us at Grow.

Staying Safe

At Grow, we have two key people who are our Designated Safeguarding Leads. This means that they are responsible for keeping children safe. These people are Sarah Hawthorne, also our head teacher, and Charlotte O'Brien who is also our SENDCo and Deputy Head



You have a right to be safe. If you talk to an adult in school, the following things will happen:

- Anything you tell us will always be taken seriously.
- We will listen to you carefully.
- We might ask you to tell us more about what's happening or explain in more detail.
- Sometimes, we might have to tell the designated safeguarding lead (above) who is in charge of keeping children safe.
- We will support you.
- We'll do everything in our power to keep you safe.

I'm feeling worried because...

- Someone is being unkind to me with their words and actions.
- Someone is hurting me or threatening to hurt me.
- Someone is forcing me to do things I don't want to do.
- Something is happening at home and it's making me feel unhappy or uncomfortable.
- Someone outside of school and my home is doing something that upsets me.
- Something has happened online that's making me upset or uncomfortable.
- I have a problem and I don't know what to do about it.

Remember, it could be an adult or another child that's making you feel this way.



What can I do if I'm worried?

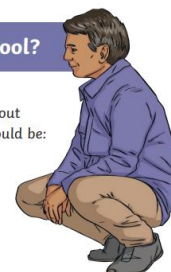
- Tell a parent, carer, family member or other **grown-up that you trust**.
- Tell any grown-up in school.
- Write down what is upsetting you and give it to an adult in school.

Remember, no problem is too small or silly to talk about!



Who can I talk to in school?

- You can talk to **anyone** in school about anything that is upsetting you. It could be:
- a teacher
 - a teaching assistant
 - the headteacher
 - a mealtime supervisor
 - anyone else that you trust and feel comfortable with



Positive Relationships

Parents and students are welcome to read our Positive Relationships Policy which can be found on our website. Below, we have summarised the main things you need to know about maintaining positive relationships at Grow below:

- Our ROOTS ethos reminds teachers and students what is important to us at Grow Independent school. This can be seen in our prospectus, we also have posters up around school. It stands for
 - Relationships
 - Opportunities
 - Ownership
 - Time
 - Space
- **Relationships** between us all need to be built on respect. We expect that all of our students and staff treat one another with respect and compassion.
- We see every day as a new **opportunity**, and even when we make mistakes or get things wrong it is just an opportunity for learning and growth. What happened yesterday doesn't impact on your chance to make today a positive one.
- Our students take complete **ownership** of the things they do. If a choice is made that has a negative impact on someone else, we encourage our students to own the action, acknowledge it, make it right, and learn from it. This is something the staff at Grow also do as part of their learning and growth.
- We all work hard to recognise when we need some **time** and **space**. It's important that we are all respectful of each other's boundaries, and we all need to be aware of when to move away from a situation. We encourage all students to have a compassionate awareness of the needs of others.
- We don't have rewards or sanctions. When things go wrong, we will talk about why things went wrong and how we can make them right.
- Communication and conversations about problems, worries or negative emotions are how we approach challenging or difficult behaviours. We see these behaviours as an outward sign that there are inner struggles taking place, or that a student's needs are not being met in some way.
- Knowing our emotions, recognising how we feel and being able to verbalise this is the most effective way of us managing our own behaviours more effectively. Students at Grow are encouraged to do this as part of their every day learning.
- It is extremely important that students share with a trusted adult if there are ever any incidents of negative behaviours from others. Any action which makes you feel anxious, hurt, upset or angry should be discussed with an adult. We will never tolerate bullying, name-calling, hurtful actions or a lack of respect.
- We aim to make every day enjoyable, and we hope that Grow is a place where our students and staff feel a sense of belonging and acceptance.

