

Friday 6th February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Attendance – Every day and lesson counts

Getting to school on time is essential for students' learning and wellbeing. We ask that families make every effort to ensure students who do not travel on school buses arrive punctually so they can begin lessons without disruption. When students arrive late, we will be contacting home to make parents and carers aware. We understand that bus arrival times are outside of students' control; however, when buses do arrive, students are expected to go straight to their lessons. Thank you for your continued support in helping all students start the day ready to learn.

Every Day Counts		
If you finish the academic year with the following attendance percentage this is the number of days and lessons, you will have missed.		
100%	0 days missed	0 lessons missed
98%	4 days missed	20 lessons missed
97%	6 days missed	30 lessons missed
95%	10 days missed	50 lessons missed
93%	13 days missed	65 lessons missed
90%	19 days missed	95 lessons missed
85%	28 days missed	140 lessons missed
80%	38 days missed	190 lessons missed
70%	57 days missed	285 lessons missed
Every Lesson Counts		

Headteacher: Mr J. Gower

The Gryphon School is a member of the Sherborne Area Schools' Trust, a company limited by guarantee. Registered in England with the Company Number 08130468.

Ongoing parking issues affecting residents

We have received several concerns from local residents on St Aldhelm's Road about parking at drop-off and pick-up times, and we want to work together to ensure our neighbours feel safe, respected, and able to access their homes without obstruction or damage. Please remember that drivers must not block driveways at any time, park on grass verges or on residents' land, stop on junction corners or in positions that restrict visibility, or show any lack of respect for neighbouring properties. Your cooperation is essential in helping us maintain positive relationships with those who live around our school. Thank you in advance for showing consideration and care.

Free School Meals eligibility

Many families will be affected by the current cost of living crisis. We want to ensure families are aware of any support that may be available at this time. Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get certain qualifying benefits. There are many benefits to free school meals, such as:

- Improving behaviour & concentration
- Introducing healthy eating habits from a young age
- Giving children the nutrition they require
- Access to free activities via the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme
- Providing extra funding to the school to support your child's education

Please visit the Dorset County Council web page for further information and a quick and easy online application form - [Apply for free school meals - Dorset Council](#). The application process is confidential, and the school won't see any specific information about your income or the benefits you receive. If you have any questions, you can contact Dorset Council's Free School Meals team on 01305 221090 or email freeschoolmeals@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk for confidential advice and support.

Children's Commissioner's Guide for parents on managing children's digital lives

Dame Rachel de Souza, Children's Commissioner, has recently published a guide for parents and carers on managing children's digital lives. Supporting children's safety is a shared responsibility between families, schools and wider society. For parents and carers, this responsibility has become increasingly complex as children's lives are now deeply intertwined with the digital world. Many parents face difficult decisions about how to balance protecting children from online harm with enabling access to spaces that are now central to learning, socialising and play. This guide focuses on the challenge of managing children's everyday online habits. I hope this guide will be a useful resource for you. ['What I wish my parents or carers knew...': A guide for parents and carers on managing children's digital lives | Children's Commissioner for England](#)

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New Ofsted Framework

There is a very useful video for parents and carers about the updated Ofsted Framework: [Information for parents about the new Ofsted Framework](#)

Key Dates for the next half term

- Friday 13th February – INSET Day (Students not in school)
- Monday 16th – Friday 20th February Half Term
- Monday 23rd February – Students return to school (Week 1)
- Thursday 26th February – Y8 Parent-Teacher Evening
- Thursday 5th March – World Book Day
- Friday 6th March – Y11 Mock Exams 2 Begin
- Monday 16th March – Y13 Mock Exams 2 Begin
- Friday 27th March – Final Day of Term

Yours faithfully,



Jim Gower
Headteacher
The Gryphon School

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