



GREYFRIARS
CATHOLIC SCHOOL



2026/27

**TRANSITION WELCOME
PACK**



Headteacher Welcome

Dear Year 6 Students and Families,

I am delighted to welcome you to Greyfriars Catholic School as you prepare to begin your journey into Year 7. I love our school, and I know you and your family will too. We are really looking forward to welcoming you to Greyfriars and helping you feel part of our community from the very start.

Moving up to secondary school is an exciting step. We understand it can feel like a big change, so we have planned lots of opportunities to help you settle in quickly and feel confident about the year ahead. These include:

- Transition Days to meet your new classmates and some of your teachers
- A fun and friendly Summer School to help you feel at home
- A Year 7-only start to help you get used to your timetable and the school building
- A range of '*getting to know you*' and friendship-building activities early in the term

At Greyfriars, we will get to know you as an individual and support you every step of the way. You will be part of a form group, and your form tutor will help you feel welcome and ready to succeed. We are proud of the strong pastoral care we offer and of the way our students look out for one another.

One of the things that makes Greyfriars special is our Enrichment Programme. This gives you the chance to try something new and grow in ways that go beyond the classroom. Whether it's cooking, martial arts or creative projects, enrichment is all about discovering what you enjoy and developing your confidence.

We also live by the values of the Greyfriars Way. This means we expect everyone in our school to act with respect, take responsibility and give their best effort. These shared values help us create a school where everyone can flourish.

At Greyfriars, we believe your whole family becomes part of our school family. We are here to work in partnership with you, and we are excited to walk this journey together.

Warmest wishes

Ms Caldwell

Headteacher



A Welcome from Mr Cunningham

Dear Students and Families

It is a real privilege to welcome you to Greyfriars. My role is to help ensure that your transition into secondary school is smooth, supportive and exciting.

We know that starting a new school can feel like a big step, and we are here to help every student feel safe, happy and ready to thrive. Over the coming weeks and months, we will work closely with your primary school teachers, your families and with you to make sure you are well-prepared and confident about starting in September.

At Greyfriars, our mission is to champion all students so they can flourish individually and collectively. That means we care about you as a person, not just a pupil. We want you to grow in confidence, build friendships and discover your unique strengths — and we will support you to do just that.

By the end of your first half term, we hope you will already feel a strong sense of belonging and pride in your new school. There will be plenty of opportunities to ask questions, try new things and get to know your classmates and teachers.

If you ever feel unsure, worried or just want to talk something through, please know that we are here to listen and help. There are lots of people at Greyfriars who will support you — your Form tutor, your Year Team and of course, me.

We are excited to welcome you properly in September and to see all that you will bring to our Greyfriars family.

With best wishes,

Mr Cunningham

Head of Year 7 and Transition Lead



Your Start at Greyfriars

Transition Days

Our Transition Days are designed to help you feel confident, make new friends and get to know the school before you start in September.

This year's Transition Days are:

Wednesday 24th, Thursday 25th and Friday 26th June 2026

Each student will be invited to attend two of these three dates. On the first day, you will be in a smaller group to help you feel settled. On the second day, the whole year group will be in school, and you'll recognise familiar faces from your first visit.

Each day includes:

- Taster lessons with our staff
- Getting-to-know-you activities and games
- A chance to meet key adults who will support you
- Time to find your way around the school

Summer School

Our Summer School runs from **Tuesday 21st to Thursday 22nd July 2026**. It includes:

- Creative workshops
- Sports and team challenges
- Taster lessons in new subjects

There is a **voluntary** contribution of £2 per day to help cover some of the costs. This is entirely voluntary and is not expected.



Your First Day at Greyfriars

Your first official day as a Greyfriars student is: **Thursday 3rd September 2026**

On this day, only Year 7 will be on site. This gives you the space and time to settle in before other year groups arrive.

On your first day you will:

- Meet your form tutor and group
- Walk through your timetable
- Learn how break and lunchtimes work
- Be supported by staff and older students throughout the day

In the first term, Year 7s also go to break and lunch slightly earlier so that you have a bit more time to adjust to routines.

Getting to Know Each Other

We want you to feel part of the Greyfriars family as soon as possible. That's why we run extra team-building and "getting to know you" activities in your first few weeks. These sessions are designed to build confidence, grow friendships and help you feel at home.

We also have a fantastic residential trip later in the year for Year 7 students — more details will follow once term begins.



Our Mission, Vision and Values

Our Mission

We are a Catholic school that champions each and every student so they flourish individually and collectively. We live this every day.

We believe that personal success is closely connected to community success. That is why we support every student to grow in confidence, knowledge and character, not just for their own benefit but for the good of others too.

Our Vision

It is our vision that each student should learn to live a life of meaning based upon Christ's teaching and example. We consider Catholic principles of dignity, service and community, and living life to its fullest to be at the very heart of our work. These principles are not only central to Catholic faith, but form a vital part of a holistic education that nourishes the mind, body and spirit.

The Greyfriars Way: Flourishing Through Our Shared Expectations

The Greyfriars Way helps every student flourish by creating a school environment where people feel safe, respected and supported to succeed. It is our shared standard for how we treat ourselves, one another and our school.

It is built on three core expectations:

- Respect for ourselves, others and our environment
- Responsibility for our actions and our learning
- Effort in everything we do, and encouragement for others to do the same

You will hear these values often, and you will see them in action across the school. They help us build a strong, caring and ambitious community where everyone is supported to thrive.

Our Core Values

At Greyfriars, three values run through everything we do.

Knowledge

We value knowledge in many forms: academic learning, understanding the world and developing self-awareness through reflection and experience.

Care

Care is at the heart of our school. We care for one another, for our wider community and for those in need. Every interaction is a chance to show kindness, dignity and compassion.

Ambition

Ambition inspires us to aim high, not only for ourselves but for others. We believe that when one person flourishes, the whole community benefits.



Behaviour and Recognition

Creating the Conditions to Flourish

At Greyfriars, we believe that every student has the potential to flourish. To make that possible, we create a calm and purposeful environment built on high expectations, clear routines and meaningful relationships.

Our behaviour expectations are shaped by the values of the Greyfriars Way: respect, responsibility and effort. We teach and model these values every day so that students feel safe, valued and ready to learn.

A Culture of Praise and Celebration

We are a school that notices the good. Whether it is a small act of kindness, a moment of resilience or an outstanding piece of work, we believe in celebrating the things that matter. Celebration happens in many ways:

- In tutor time, where form tutors reflect on individual and group successes
- In lessons, where teachers praise effort, growth and achievement
- In assemblies, where we come together to recognise contributions to our community
- In positive phone calls and messages home
- Through student leadership and responsibility

Community Awards Evening

Our Greyfriars Community Awards Evening is a highlight of the school. This is a special occasion where students, families and staff come together to celebrate excellence, character and contribution.

Awards recognise not only academic achievement, but also leadership, service, creativity, improvement and living out our values. It is one of the ways we honour the richness of student success both in and out of the classroom.

Attendance and Belonging

Being present, on time and ready to learn is an important part of life at Greyfriars. Good attendance helps students feel connected, confident and able to succeed.

We often say that **missing a day at school is like missing a chapter of a book**. It becomes harder to follow the story, and even harder to understand what comes next.

- The school day starts at 8.45am
- Students must be through the gate by 8.40am
- Families should contact the school before 9.00am to report an absence
- Form tutors regularly check attendance and punctuality to support good habits

Every day in school matters. It is part of belonging to a community that values learning, connection and growth.

Student Life at Greyfriars

Belonging, Leadership and Opportunity

Student life at Greyfriars is about more than lessons. It is about feeling known, taking part and growing as a person. We believe that school should be a place where you discover your talents, find your voice and make a difference.

From the moment you arrive, you are encouraged to take on leadership roles and help shape our community. Some of the ways students lead include:

- House Leaders, who help organise competitions and build team spirit
- Catholic Life Ambassadors, who help guide worship and prayer life
- Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, who promote kindness and inclusion
- Peer Mentors, Student Librarians and Form Representatives

These roles build confidence and show that every student can lead, whatever their interests. We encourage everyone to take part in the life of the school and celebrate those who give their time and energy to serve others.

We also offer the **Duke of Edinburgh Award**, starting in Year 9. This nationally recognised programme develops independence, teamwork and resilience through volunteering, physical activity and outdoor expeditions. It is a brilliant way to grow in confidence and experience.

Enrichment at the Heart of School Life

Our Enrichment Programme is a core part of life at Greyfriars. It is central to our mission to **nourish the mind, body and soul**.

Each week, every student takes part in one enrichment session. These lessons give you the chance to try something new, explore different skills and build confidence outside the classroom.



Enrichment at the Heart of School Life

Enrichment activities vary each term and may include:

- Cooking
- Creative arts
- Gardening and sustainability
- Martial arts and fitness
- Leadership and charity projects

'I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to join healthy cooking last term. I have made a new friend and have had so much fun and enjoyed the enrichment.'
Year 10 Student

You will take part in a new enrichment activity each short term, which means you'll experience six different opportunities over the course of the year. We believe learning does not stop at the classroom door. Enrichment helps students discover new passions, connect with others and flourish in every part of their development.

Catholic Life and the House System

Living Our Faith Together

At Greyfriars, our Catholic identity is at the heart of school life. It shapes how we treat one another, how we reflect on the world and how we grow in community. We are proud to be a Catholic school, and we welcome students of all faiths and none into a community shaped by compassion, reflection and service. We believe that every person is made in the image of God and has unique dignity and purpose. That belief is reflected in how we learn, how we serve and how we support one another.

How Does Catholic Life Fit with Other and Non-Faiths?

Greyfriars is a diverse school, with students and families from many different backgrounds. We see this diversity as a gift. Catholic Social Teaching calls us to uphold the dignity of every person, to work for the common good and to act in solidarity with those in need. These are values that speak across faiths and can be lived by all.

We invite all students, whether they are Catholic, of another faith or have no faith, to take part in the reflective, compassionate and community-focused life of the school. Everyone belongs here.

Prayer and Reflection

Each day begins with a moment of prayer in form time. This is a chance to pause, reflect and think about what really matters. Students often tell us that this helps them feel calm, focused and grateful.

Throughout the year, we gather for Masses, liturgies and services to mark important moments in the Catholic calendar. Students are actively involved in leading worship through music, readings and prayer.

Our Chapel sits at the heart of the school. It is open throughout the day for quiet reflection, and we often offer a form time prayer and mass led by our leader for Catholic Life.

Retreats and Pilgrimages

Taking time away from the usual routine helps us grow in self-awareness, friendship and spiritual understanding. Students have the opportunity to attend retreats and pilgrimages throughout their time at Greyfriars.

These are moments to think deeply, build relationships and reconnect with what matters — whether you are a person of faith or not.

Catholic Life Ambassadors

Our Catholic Life Ambassadors help bring our faith to life across the school. They lead liturgies, support charitable work and promote the values we live by. Their leadership helps make our Catholic identity something seen, shared and celebrated.



The Four Houses: Finding Your Place and Leading Together

Every student belongs to one of our four Houses. These are more than just teams — they are communities of identity, belonging and leadership. The House system forms the foundation of our student leadership team. Students take part in leadership projects that shape school life, from events and competitions to charity work and Catholic Life initiatives. Each House is named after a saint with a special connection to courage, learning and faith.

St Irenaeus of Lyons

“The glory of God is a human fully alive.”

We honour the idea that being truly alive — in spirit, mind and action — brings joy to God and fulfilment to us.



St Josephine Bakhita

“The Lord has loved me so much; we must love everyone.”

A symbol of resilience, forgiveness and hope. Josephine reminds us that we are all capable of compassion and strength.



St Edmund of Abingdon

“Learn, as if to live forever.”

A local saint and teacher who stands for wisdom, lifelong learning and peace.



St Frideswide of Oxford

Patron Saint of Oxford

A woman of courage and purpose who reminds us to live faithfully and stand up for what is right.



Faith and Flourishing

Catholic Life at Greyfriars is not just about tradition — it is about transformation. Through prayer, service, community and celebration, students are invited to grow in faith, in hope and in love. We aim for every student to flourish individually and collectively, rooted in the dignity and joy of being fully alive.



Uniform and Equipment

Ready, Respectful, Safe

At Greyfriars, everything we do is guided by three simple expectations:

Be ready. Be respectful. Be safe.

These values apply to how we behave, how we learn and how we present ourselves. Wearing the correct uniform and being fully equipped for learning show that we are prepared, that we respect our community, and that we take pride in belonging to Greyfriars.

Main School Uniform

We expect all students to wear full and correct school uniform each day. School uniform helps build a shared sense of purpose and pride. Families play a vital role in supporting this expectation.

Compulsory items:

- Blazer with Greyfriars school logo (available from Stevensons)
- School tie (available from Stevensons)
- White shirt with collar
- Black trousers or black knee-length skirt (must be school uniform material)
- Grey V-neck jumper
- Plain black socks or plain black tights
- Plain black leather-look school shoes (trainers are acceptable if leather-look and completely black)

Optional items: Religious head coverings or dress should be in keeping with school colours (plain black, grey or red)

You can purchase uniform items from **Stevensons**, either in person at their Summertown store or online at: www.stevensons.co.uk Oxford Branch Summer Appointment System <https://www.stevensons.co.uk/book-an-appointment>

Important notes about uniform:

- No hoodies, tracksuit tops or non-uniform jumpers
- No coloured t-shirts under shirts
- No false nails or eyelashes (for health and safety)
- Mobile phones must be turned off and kept in bags during the school day
- **If you are unsure – don't buy it! Please check with us first**

If a student arrives out of uniform, the pastoral team will follow this up. If there is a genuine issue, please contact your child's Form Tutor or Year Leader. We are happy to help.

PE Kit

Compulsory items:

- Black/red polo shirt with Greyfriars logo
- Black shorts or skort
- Black sports socks
- Trainers and Astro turf trainers or turf football boots for use on the Astroturf

Optional items:

- Black tracksuit bottoms
- Black sports leggings
- Plain black Greyfriars hooded top

Equipment: Be Ready to Learn – Every student is expected to bring a full set of equipment each day. Pencil cases should be placed on desks at the start of every lesson.

Checklist:

- School
 - I planner
 - Pencil case
 - Two black or blue pens
 - Whiteboard pen
 - Pencil, ruler, sharpener & rubber
 - Scientific calculator (e.g. Casio)
 - Maths set (e.g. Helix Oxford)
 - Colouring pencils/ pens
 - Red and green pen (optional)
 - Highlighters (optional)
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Need Support?

We understand that purchasing uniform and equipment can be a challenge. If you need help with any items, please contact your child's Year Team. We are here to help and will always do our best to support families.

SEND and Inclusion

Support for Every Learner

At Greyfriars, we are committed to ensuring that every student — whatever their starting point — has the support they need to thrive. We believe that inclusion is not just about access, but about belonging, understanding and encouragement.

Our experienced SEND and Inclusion Team works closely with students, families and staff to support learning, emotional well-being and personal development. We take time to get to know each young person and build trusting relationships so they feel safe, supported and ready to learn.

The Beacon and Targeted Support

Greyfriars is home to a number of specialist spaces that support students in different ways. These include:

- The Literacy Hub, where students can build reading and writing confidence
- The Lantern, for small group student support in a welcoming environment
- The Beacon, a welcoming space for 1:1 and small group support as well as a calm environment for independent learning.

The Beacon is a central part of our inclusion offer. It is a space students can access:

- For timetabled support lessons
- When they need help managing emotions or friendships - break and lunchtime
- If they feel overwhelmed and need a calm space - at the discretion of their teacher or year leader.

The Beacon is also open every **break and lunchtime** for any student who wants a quiet space to chat, play games or just take a breather.

Homework Club and Extended Support

From **Monday to Thursday**, we run an after-school **Homework Club** in the library from **3.10pm to 4.00pm**.

Students can:

- Get help with their homework
- Use school computers and the printer
- Work in a supportive, quiet environment

Homework Club is open to everyone — whether you need extra help or just prefer to get your work done before going home.

A Warm Welcome for Year 7s

To our new Year 7 students: we are really looking forward to meeting you. The Inclusion Team will work closely with your primary schools and families to ensure that your move to Greyfriars is smooth and supported.

Whatever support you need, there is always someone to talk to. Our aim is to help you feel confident, happy and ready to flourish in your own way.



School Lunches and ParentPay

Eating Well, Feeling Ready to Learn

We want every student to enjoy their lunchtime and feel well-fed, healthy and ready to learn. Our school meals are provided by **Aspens**, who offer a variety of nutritious hot and cold options every day.

Meals are available at both **break and lunch**, and there is always a vegetarian option. Students can choose from a range of dishes, including fresh main meals, pasta pots, sandwiches, fruit and snacks.

Students may also bring a **packed lunch**. We encourage healthy choices and ask students to avoid high-sugar items and energy drinks.

→ *Energy or high-caffeine drinks are not allowed in school and will be confiscated if brought onto site.*

Where Do Students Eat?

During warmer months, students are welcome to eat:

- Outdoors on benches and green spaces
- In the school restaurant
- In the main hall (open at break and lunch)

We want students to enjoy a calm and respectful dining experience.

ParentPay: A Cashless System

Greyfriars is a **cash-free school**. All payments for food and school activities are made using **ParentPay**. Students use their **thumbprint** (biometric data) to pay for food in the canteen.

You will receive **ParentPay login details** on the first day of term. This will include instructions for setting up and using your account.

- You can top up your child's account using a credit or debit card
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- You can set up automatic top-ups for convenience
- If you already have a ParentPay account, you can add your Greyfriars child to it
- Even if your child receives free school meals, you must still activate the account

Free School Meals

If your child is eligible for **free school meals**, their account will be **automatically topped up each day** to cover the cost of a full meal. Families may choose to top it up further.

On the **first day of term**, all students should bring a **packed lunch**. Students entitled to free school meals will be offered a meal by the school.



Term Dates 2026-27

INSET Days (No Students in School)

- Tuesday 1st September 2026
 - Wednesday 2nd September 2026
 - Friday 2nd October 2026
 - Monday 4th January 2027
 - Monday 19th July 2027
 - Tuesday 20th July 2027
 - Wednesday 21st July 2027
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Term 1

Start Dates:

- Year 7: Thursday 3rd September 2026 at 8.40am
- Years 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13: Friday 4th September 2026
- Year 12: Friday 5th September 2026
- **End of Term:** Friday 23rd October 2026

October Holiday: Monday 26th October – Friday 30th October 2026

Term 2

Monday 2nd November – Friday 18th December 2026 (early closure on final day)

- **Christmas Holiday:**
 - Monday 22nd December 2026 – Friday 1st January 2027
 - Bank Holidays: Friday 25th December, Monday 28th December, Friday 1st January
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Term 3

→ Tuesday 5th January – Friday 12th February 2027

February Holiday: Monday 15th February – Friday 19th February 2027

Term 4

→ Monday 22nd February – Thursday 25th March 2027 (early closure on final day)

Easter Holiday: Friday 26th March – Friday 19th April 2027

Bank Holidays: Friday 26th March, Monday 29th March

Term 5

→ Monday 12th April – Friday 28th May 2027

→ Bank Holiday: Monday 3rd May 2027

May Holiday: Monday 31st May – Friday 4th June 2027

→ Bank Holiday: Monday 31st May

Term 6

➤ Monday 7th June – Friday 16th July 2027 (early closure on final day)



Frequently Asked Questions

Am I put into sets for lessons?

For most of your lessons, you will be taught in your **form group**. PE and Design Technology may have different groups depending on class size. You will be **set by ability in Maths** early in the term.

Will my friends be in my form group?

We ask your Year 6 teachers who you work well with. While we can't guarantee everyone will be with their current friends, we do our best to ensure that everyone has a **friendly face** in their group — and we'll help you make new friends quickly.

Will I need my PE kit on the first day?

No. If you have PE on your first day, you will not need your kit until the following lesson.

Where do I go on my first day?

Before the summer holiday, you will receive a letter with all the information you need. When you arrive on your first day, staff from your **Year Team** and **Form Tutors** will be there to meet you at the gate and guide you to the right place.

What happens if I get lost?

Don't worry — it happens to everyone at first! In the first few weeks, we do not expect you to know your way around. You will be given a **map**, and there are always staff and older students around to help.

What should I do if I get upset or fall out with a friend?

There are lots of people you can talk to. Your **form tutor** is usually the first person to go to, but you can also speak with your **Year Team** or any trusted member of staff.

What happens if I lose something?

Make sure your name is clearly written on everything you bring to school. If you lose something, it will usually be handed into **Student Reception**, where you can collect it.

What subjects will I study?

In Year 7 you will study:

- English, Maths and Science
- Religious Education
- History and Geography
- French
- Design Technology
- Physical Education (Sport)
- Music, Art and Computing
- Enrichment

What happens if I use my phone in school?


Phones must be **turned off and kept in your bag** throughout the day. We strongly advise not bringing a phone unless it is needed for your journey.

If a phone is **seen or heard**, it will be **confiscated**, and your parent or carer will need to collect it from school. Not having phones in school helps students **focus on learning** and **stay safe**.


Contacting the School

We want all families to feel confident contacting the school. Whether you have a question before your child starts or need to get in touch during the school year, we are here to help.

Transition Queries

For questions about transition or starting in Year 7:  **Email:** transition@gfcs.uk

Main School Contact

 **Phone:** 01865 749933

 **Email:** office@gfcs.uk

Reception Opening Hours:

- Monday to Thursday: 8.00am – 4.00pm
- Friday: 8.00am – 3.30pm

Safeguarding Contacts

If you have a concern about a child's safety or wellbeing, please contact our safeguarding team:


Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- Mr David Edmed

Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for Safeguarding:

- Mr David Edmed

You can contact them through the school reception:

 01865 749933

Student Well-Being and Support

Your child's **form tutor** will be the first point of contact for most questions or concerns. You will be given their name and contact details before the start of term.

We also run well-being workshops throughout the year and have a dedicated pastoral team for each year group. If your child needs support, we are always here to help.



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