



Parent/Carer Handbook



MIDDLETON SCHOOL

Walnut Tree Walk, Ware, Hertfordshire SG12 9PD

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Headteacher: Mrs Donna Jolly MA

Chair of Governors: Mrs Gemma Jeffrey



Welcome to Middleton School

You may be reading this booklet in order to help you come to a decision about the future school for your child, or you may already have a preference for our school. In either case we hope that you will find the information useful.

If you need any further help or advice please do ask. We will do our best to help and you can be certain of a warm and friendly reception.

Middleton School was formed by the amalgamation of Broxbournebury and Hillside schools in September 1990. We moved to our new premises in September 1993 and the school was officially opened on 24 March 1994 by Mr. C. Hart, our former caretaker. The school is located in the town of Ware. The pupils come from the whole of East Hertfordshire, most of them travelling to school by bus or taxi.

We have had three Ofsted inspections in recent years, one in 2006, one in 2009 and another in 2013. On all occasions the school achieved the highest praise and had no key issues to address. In the most recent reports the total learning environment was described as *outstanding*. A copy of the most recent report is included in this folder.

We are very proud of these achievements and staff work very hard to maintain high standards.

The school caters for children with learning difficulties in the age range 4 to 11. There are places for approximately 80 children including provision for children with autism and speech, language and communication needs.

Although all the children have learning difficulties it is expected that they will all make good progress and many will eventually leave school able to read and write and lead a perfectly normal life. They will be taught the full range of National Curriculum subjects but in smaller groups and at a pace suited to their individual needs.

We expect each child to enjoy coming to school and parents/carers can help by giving full encouragement and praise for effort.



School Times

8.50	Registration
9.00	Session
10.30	Break
10.45	Session
12.00	Lunch
1.00	Session
1.50	Break
2.00	Session
3.10	End of School

Teaching time, excluding assemblies, playtimes and dinner break: 23 hours per week

Organization

The school is organized into three main parts.

Lower School

The Lower School caters for pupils in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One. The aim is to provide a secure and stable environment where children can develop their full potential.

The youngest pupils are in classes which aim to provide an environment where children can be educated at an appropriate level whilst at the same time allowing a further assessment of future educational needs to be made. It is not always possible to be certain about the educational needs of very young children and this period of assessment is very important. It does mean that not all children in the Lower School will necessarily move up to the Middle School. For a small number of children some other form of provision may be more suitable.

We try to keep class sizes small and each class has at least three teaching assistants. There are other additional adults who may also support including permanent members of the support team as well visiting students and volunteers. Access to a Speech and Language therapist is available if required, although speech and language development is a priority in all the work the children do in school. Therapists work alongside classroom staff and set targets that can be worked on generally within the classroom setting. We use Signalongqas part of an holistic approach to language development.

The children follow the programmes of study set out for the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One of the National Curriculum as appropriate and only in very rare instances will pupils be disapplied.

The classrooms have access to a common multi-purpose activity area where children can take part in art, technology and cookery activities in small groups.



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Key Stage 2

Key Stage 2 is divided into two areas, Middle School and Upper School, each with three classes and also with their own department leader.

Pupils in Key Stage 2 follow the National Curriculum content in all subjects. The one exception to this being Modern Foreign Languages. Modern Foreign Languages are not required to be taught until Year 3 (H3). All of our children are working below the age related expectations for Year 3 and therefore we deem it inappropriate for them to follow a formal programme of study in MFL.

We do however recognise the importance of providing experiences which develop an understanding of other cultures. We provide appropriate opportunities to learn about other cultures and countries and this may include exposure to and experience of the language of that country.

Within Middle and Upper School there are six classrooms as well as a common multi-purpose activity areas where pupils take part in practical activities such as cookery and design and technology in addition to other areas suitable for small group work



Pupils in their final year follow a transition programme in preparation for transfer to secondary education at age eleven. Teachers work very closely with staff in the receiving schools in order to promote a smooth transition.

Class Organisation 2016 – 2017

Name	Robins	Penguins	Owls	Toucans	Puffins	Swifts	Eagles	Kingfishers	Kestrels
Pupils	8	8	8	9	9	10	10	11	11
Staff	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3
Year Groups	R/1	1/2	2	3/4/5	3/4	3/4/5	5	5/6	5/6



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Admission

Pupils are admitted to Middleton only after a full assessment leading to an Education Health and Care Plan as set out in the *Code of Practice*.

This can be a worrying time and parents/carers are very welcome to visit the school on an informal basis even before the assessment procedure has begun.

We will try to explain the purpose of the school, the way we teach and some of the complexities of the procedure for admission.

We are fortunate in having a purpose built school and can admit children who have physical difficulties.

Almost without exception we find that once children have been admitted they soon settle down and really begin to enjoy school again.

Attendance

We ask parents/carers to inform us on the **first day** if their child is absent through illness to let us know what is wrong. When the child returns to school this explanation should be confirmed in writing. This can be done in the home/school book if a child has one and we photocopy it for the registers or else by email to the admin address.

Attendance is monitored by the Attendance Improvement Officer. Where there are continued concerns it is likely that parents/carers will be contacted. We would ask that parents/carers support us in continually raising the levels attendance by ensuring children are only absent when unavoidable.

Holidays during term time

Children are expected to attend school everyday. Leave of absence is **NOT** a right. Taking time out is disruptive to learning as they will miss important lessons, events and trips. Any follow-up activities subsequently prove difficult for children.

As our children already find learning difficult this is an additional barrier to achievement and is further disadvantaging them. As a school we have a responsibility to remove barriers to achievement. Nationally there is pressure to reduce the amount of time pupils miss in school due to holidays taken in term time. We do recognize that occasionally leave of absence during term time is unavoidable. The Headteacher is not at liberty to authorize any ~~in~~ term absence unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Child Protection Procedures

This is a very sensitive area and we undertake our role within it very seriously. We are duty bound by procedures and will take action where we deem it necessary. As always our prime concern will be the child. We are required to report any obvious or suspected cases of abuse. This will include anything disclosed to us by children. Incidents will include: non-accidental injury, severe physical neglect, emotional or sexual abuse. **We believe that in order to protect the child it is better to be safe than sorry.**



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Behaviour

In order for staff to deliver the curriculum a high standard of behaviour is expected. We are very proud of the standards of behaviour exhibited by our pupils. We receive very positive feedback about the behaviour of our pupils from external providers and visitors.

Children in every school and home however misbehave from time to time. Where a problem arises children expect discussion matched to their level of understanding and where appropriate a sanction to follow. We aim to ensure that each incident is treated fairly and consistently. Just as we do not expect parents/carers to inform us of every minor misdemeanour at home we will consider any minor matter to have been dealt with and will expect children to put it behind them and move on.

Where incidents recur or are more serious in nature parents/carers will be informed as soon as possible. This will either be by letter or telephone.

In order to preserve the health and safety of our pupils and staff all teachers and teaching assistants are trained in ~~H~~Hertfordshire Steps which is a recognised form of physical intervention which preserves the dignity of the child at all times and is only used as a last resort measure. There are a very small minority of pupils who will require such intervention on rare occasions.

Once again parents/carers will be informed if intervention has to be used. We are also duty bound to officially record all interventions.

Tolerance

As a school we aim to recognize and value diversity by ensuring that:

- all pupils have an equal and strong sense of belonging within the school community.
- we endeavour to develop and promote understanding and respect for social, moral, spiritual and cultural diversity;
- pupils from different ethnic and faith backgrounds mix and get on well with each other;
- any incidents of bullying will be dealt with in an appropriate manner in line with our Anti-Bullying Policy.

All members of Middleton School have a right not to experience racism or homophobic behaviour at school whether or not this is directed at them. Any form of racist or homophobic behaviour is unacceptable and will be dealt with appropriately. Bullying of any description is not tolerated at Middleton School and incidents will be dealt with in the appropriate manner in line with our policy.



Administering Medicine

There are occasions when pupils have to take medicine during the school day. In order that this is carried out in a safe way we adhere to the DfES (now DfE) guidance '*Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Years settings*' (2005).

Medicines should only be brought to school when essential; that is where it would be detrimental to a child's health if the medicines were not administered during the school day. We will only accept medicines that have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist prescriber. Medicines should always be provided in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacist and include the prescriber's instructions for administration.

We do **not** accept medicines that have been taken out of the container as originally dispensed or make changes to dosages on parental instructions.

Medicines will only be given to children if we have clear written instructions from parents/carers. Under no circumstances will medicine be given to children without parental consent.

All parents/carers should be aware that we do not have medically qualified staff on the premises. We will try our best to carry out the instructions of parents/carers but there may be occasions where a child misses a dose. If this is likely to have serious consequences then the child should remain at home until the course of medication is complete.

Valuables

Expensive toys and games are best left at home, since damage in school can cause unhappiness. The school cannot accept responsibility for valuables and money brought into school.

If children do need to bring money to school it should be given to the teacher for safe keeping. We do not permit children to buy or sell items in school. Similarly they are not allowed to swap items.

Religious Education and Collective Worship

Middleton school is not affiliated to any religious denomination, and the Governors have agreed the following policy regarding religious education and collective worship:

This will be taught by class teachers and will be broadly Christian in nature. The school will take for guidance, the Hertfordshire recommended syllabus, modified to meet the needs of the pupils. The approach will be cross-curricular and the proportion of time spent on religious education will vary at different times of the year, being greater at times of major Christian festivals.

In special schools collective worship has to take place daily so far as is practicable. Currently the school holds a whole-school weekly assembly. Departments also hold assemblies for smaller groups of children. Parents/carers may request that their child does not take part in either religious education, or collective worship.

Transport

Arrangements for transport are made when the pupil is first admitted to the school and is usually free of charge. If, however, parents/carers choose to send their child to Middleton School and it is not the nearest offering the kind of education given on the child's EHCP, the Local



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Authority is not obliged to provide free transport.

It should be pointed out that the school is not directly responsible for transport and cannot be held accountable for children before they arrive at school in the morning, or when they leave school in the afternoon. The school does however work very closely with transport operators to promote positive pupil behaviour when in cars/taxis/buses.

Problems related to transport should be first discussed with the Headteacher, but they may be referred to the Passenger Transport Unit at County Hall.



Uniform

We have a school uniform and we hope that parents/carers will co-operate and ensure that pupils are suitably dressed for school. The uniform is very simple and, apart from the sweatshirt, items may be purchased from any supplier. School sweatshirts and polo shirts are available for purchase from school.

In the summer months T-shirts may be worn without a school jumper, but these should be of one single colour and without writing or pictures. Jeans or other casual clothes are not suitable for school.

To avoid damage to floors we do not permit any pupils to wear metal studs or heels. All children should have a pair of plimsolls or trainers to change into.

It is a good idea for children to be provided with an old shirt or apron to wear for art and craft activities. Jewellery is not permitted unless there are extenuating circumstances. Nail polish or make-up are also not permitted.

We think that personal appearance is important and part of each child's education is learning how to look after themselves.

We do need the co-operation of parents/carers to make sure that each child arrives at school clean, tidy and suitably dressed for all the activities in which they take part.



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- ✚ Grey skirt or trousers
- ✚ Black or brown school shoes with low heels
- ✚ Plimsolls or trainers for indoors
- ✚ Blue Middleton polo shirt, plain blue polo shirt or white traditional shirt.
- ✚ Royal blue Middleton sweatshirt or cardigan
- ✚ In summer a simple blue and white checked school dress may be worn as an alternative

P.E. Kit

All pupils in the school take part in physical education activities and should have the following kit:

- ✚ PE Shorts
- ✚ T-shirt or top
- ✚ Trainers or plimsolls
- ✚ Swimming trunks or costume and towel
- ✚ Tracksuit bottoms (optional)

School Trips

We think educational trips and visits are very important for our children.

Many of our trips out are free, however if a trip is more expensive the only way we can run them is by asking for voluntary contributions from parents/carers. Trips are always subsidised and we keep requested contributions as low as possible. We will do all we can to help a parent/carers who is facing particular difficulties and any request to the Headteacher will be dealt with in strictest confidence.

Pupils whose parents/carers do not make a voluntary contribution will take part in the activity, the shortfall being made up from school funds. If a high proportion of parents/carers do not contribute then we may have to cancel the trip.

Non-residential trips and visits outside school hours

The Governing Body reserves the right to charge in full for any activity taking place outside school hours.

Residential Trips

The board and lodging element will be charged to all parents/carers except those in receipt of income support or family credit. The cost in these cases will be met from school funds. Voluntary contributions will be sought with respect to other costs involved in running the trip.

If a high proportion of parents/carers do not contribute then the trip will not take place.

Once again it is only if parents/carers co-operate with the school that we can provide the extras that are so important to each child's education.



Swimming

All pupils in the school will take part in swimming. Contributions are requested to pay for the cost of professional tuition.

Materials for use in School

We hope parents/carers will make a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of materials used in technology. Pupils will then be entitled to take home any items made.

Other Equipment

All pupils in the school will be provided with the books, pens and pencils they need. Many children do bring their own equipment to school and this is encouraged. The following items are desirable for children in the Upper School and would make good birthday or Christmas presents: Pen, pencil, rubber and ruler, simple calculator, coloured pencils or felt tipped pens, pencil case, school bag or case.

School Meals

All pupils will require a meal in the middle of the day. This may be a packed lunch provided by the parents/carers or it may be a meal provided by Hertfordshire Catering Limited. We work closely with Hertfordshire Catering to provide healthy options.

All pupils eat together in the dining room.

If parents/carers opt for a school meal then money must be paid on Mondays in advance. Payment can be made on line through WisePay on the school website.

We are not permitted to provide meals on credit. School meals should therefore be paid for in advance. Some parents/carers may wish to pay each half term and should contact the school finance officer. The meals provided at school represent excellent value and a choice is available.

Parents/carers on income support may be eligible for free school meals. Applications can be made by telephone and details of how to apply are available from school.

Family Support

At Middleton we recognize that having a child with additional needs can be challenging in itself. We employ a Family Liaison Officer whose role is to support parents and carers however we can. This includes:

- ✚ Providing a first point of contact for parents and carers, establishing positive supportive relationships between home and school,
- ✚ Looking to source and create opportunities for pupils to participate in activities after school in a range of provisions,
- ✚ Providing and promoting a programme of learning opportunities, workshops and social experiences to support parents and carers.

We have links with the after school club at Pinewood and some children are collected by Pinewood staff at the end of the day to access this provision. Currently the specialist dance group Dance Base work out of Middleton and some of our youngsters attend classes along with other children with additional needs from other schools.



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We ensure that all details of after-school clubs and adult learning classes are distributed to parents/carers. In school we provide extended provision through lunchtime and after school clubs.

Friends of Middleton

We have a very active Parent Teacher Association who co-ordinate a range of fund raising events and social activities throughout the year. Meetings are very friendly and informal. Children at Middleton benefit from many extra activities and resources paid for by the FOMS

School Governing Body

The school governors have a general responsibility for the effective management of the school, acting within a framework set by national legislation and the policies of the Local Authority. They are not expected to make detailed decisions about the day-to-day running of the school.

The governors do, however, work with the Senior Leadership Team to decide on the general policies of the school, curriculum and conduct, managing the budget, staffing, behaviour and attendance and community use of the school.

Parents/carers are represented by three elected members. Notification of the election and results are sent to all parents/carers in one of the regular newsletters. We are often looking for new governors so please let us know if this is something you might be interested in.

Minutes of full governing body meetings are available on request and on the website.

Annual Reviews

We hope that these notes will help parents/carers to understand how we carry out annual reviews on each child.

What is the annual review for?

When children come to Middleton school they have a document called an **Education Health and Care Plan** which lets everyone know what kind of special needs the child has and how these needs are to be met.

Each year we are expected to look carefully at each child to see if their needs have changed and to make sure that we are still providing the best education possible.

How is the review carried out?

- ✚ We let everyone know that we are carrying out a review (parents/carers, teachers, medical practitioners etc.)
- ✚ We write a detailed report on each child and this is sent home to parents/carers with a sheet for them to make comments if they wish.
- ✚ We hold a consultation evening when parents/carers can talk with staff about their child's educational needs.
- ✚ If a change of schools is being considered then the attached educational psychologist will be asked to help with the review. Parents/carers may ask to see the school doctor or educational psychologist even if a change is not being considered.
- ✚ After we have spoken to everyone the school will write a review document which will be sent to County Hall.



- ✚ Parents/carers will get a copy of the review and will be given a chance to comment before it becomes part of a new EHCP.

Where can I find out further information?

If you would like to know more about annual reviews or Education Health and Care Plans then please contact the school.

We will do our best to help and we may be able to lend you a book explaining everything in more detail.

Year 5 Reviews

We hold an annual information evening for all parents/carers of Year 5 children. This is an important stage so adequate preparation for secondary transfer is essential.

We support parents/carers and pupils through this process.

What can parents/carers do to help?

Parents/carers can help most by taking a real interest in what their child is doing at school.

Come to the Parent Consultation evening and then let your child know that you are pleased with the progress that has been made.

If you have any problems or worries then talk to your child's teacher. We will always do our best to help.

Reassessments

There may be occasions when either the parents/carers or the school feel that a full reassessment of a pupil's needs is required. This will involve further examinations and reports by the school, the school medical officer, and the educational psychologist. Parents/carers are kept very fully informed and are expected to contribute to the reassessment.

Complaints

The school has a [Complaints Policy](#) which is available on request. A leaflet outlining the process is issued to all parents / carers.

These arrangements have three stages. In the first instance any complaint should be discussed informally at the school with the Headteacher, other staff or a school governor. Secondly, if necessary, a formal complaint may be made to the governing body and thirdly a formal complaint may be made to the Local Authority.

A full document setting out the arrangements is available for inspection at school.

Communication

Information is circulated to parents/carers via home/school books where appropriate, letters, newsletters, text message and website. The school often receives letters and flyers from organisations, agencies and charities that are co-ordinating activities for children. From time to time we send these letters/leaflets home, or mention the event in our fortnightly Middleton News. This does not mean we are approving or recommending the activity. We are only acting as the distributor.



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Staff List

Mrs Donna Jolly	Headteacher
Mrs Debbie Hartley	Deputy Headteacher
Miss Jackie Otley	Lower School Manager / Penguins Class
Mrs Diane Hart	School Business Manager
Mrs Lisa Cox	Middle School Manager / Swifts Class
Mr John McGrath	Upper School Manager / Kestrels Class
Miss Emily Burns	Owls
Mrs Lydia Easton	Outreach Leader
Mrs Patricia Rayfield	Toucans
Miss Charlotte Glynn	Puffins
Mrs Keily Tomlin	Kingfishers
Miss Maggie Shaw	Eagles
Mrs Rachel Hart	Eagles
Miss Polly Farmer	Music
Mrs Gill Cherry	Higher Level Teaching Assistant
Ms Fiona Sale	Learning Facilitator / Swifts Class
Mrs Sharron Graffato	Family Liaison Officer

Teaching Assistants

Mrs Lauren Pritchard	Mrs Margaret Goodall
Mrs Angela Graves	Mrs Tracey Greenhill
Mrs Meriel Hargraves	Mrs Karen Moss
Ms Chrisanthi Stavrou	Mrs Paulene Mansfield
Mrs Lorraine Warren	Miss Emily Whiddington
Mrs Jill Wood	Mrs Lisa Wilkinson
Ms Sue Burdick	Mrs Claire Adamson
Mrs Joanne Whitehead	Ms Sarah Mason
Mr Ben Andrews	Miss Laura Chant
Mr Ethan Perkins	Miss Leanne Wood
Mrs Carla Perkins	Miss Kerry O'Smotherly
Miss Abbey Laurence	Mrs Kerry Reilly
Mrs Claire Adamson	Mr Calum Hartley
Mrs Penny Theodossiou	Mrs Lisa Want
Miss Stacey Day	Miss Lizzie Southerill
Mrs Kerry Reilly	Miss Stephanie Parkes
Mrs Sarah Wood	Mr Luke Shasha
Miss Shelley Scott	

Office Staff

Mrs Helen Joseph	Receptionist
Mrs Natalie O'Neill	Finance Assistant

Lunchtime Support

Mrs Emma Saunders	Miss Wendy Saint
Miss Jade Benson	Miss Dora Aggudey

Premises Support

Mr John Hayes	Caretaker
Mrs Linda Perkins	Cleaner

Herts Catering Limited

Mrs Cathie Hawkes	Cook (Herts Catering)
Ms Jane Hartfield	Catering Assistant
Miss Kizzie Hampton	Catering Assistant



Governing Body 2016 . 2017

Name	Designation
Mrs Gemma Jeffrey	Parent Governor, <i>Chairman</i> <i>Governor Training Co-ordinator</i>
Mrs Maggie Shaw	Staff Governor
Mrs Pauline Wallace	Co-Opted Governor
Mr John Glover	Local Authority Governor
Miss Jackie Otley	Co-Opted Governor <i>Health and Safety Governor</i>
Mrs Pat Hawkins	Co-Opted Governor <i>Safeguarding Governor</i>
Mr Roger Hawkins	Co-Opted Governor
Mrs Fiona Humphreys	Co-Opted Governor
Mrs Donna Jolly	Headteacher
Mrs Linda Crisp	Parent Governor
Mr Ben Riley	Parent Governor <i>Vice-Chairman</i>
Mrs Kerry Weller	Parent Governor
Mr Barrie Anderson	Clerk to the Governing Body