



# WELCOME PACK

2023-2024





## Welcome to Cedars School

I am delighted to welcome you and your family to Cedars School, part of the Cedars Academy Trust. We pride ourselves on building strong relationships with parents and carers to provide a truly child centred experience for each of our students.

This pack will provide you with some key information to help you prepare your child for the next step on their educational journey.

We hope that our carefully planned transition programme will ensure that your child can become familiar with Cedars School so that they will very quickly feel part of the Cedars family.

Your child's new class team will work with you and their current school or setting to introduce them to the school in whichever way suits your child's needs best, whether it is visits to them in their current setting, visits to Cedars, video calls with new teachers, Social Stories or a blended approach of all of these.

Our dedicated 'Transition' section of the school website contains photographs, videos and key information for you to refer to and to share with your child to build up their familiarity with Cedars.

Finally, I would like to warmly welcome you to attend an informal Welcome Meeting in June (dates to follow). It will be a great opportunity to meet other new families and speak in person with the class team and our Services team. Your child's new teacher will be in touch with you directly to share further details. I do hope you will be able to make it, I look forward to meeting you.

Michelle O'Reilly  
Headteacher  
Cedars School



# Cedars School Vision

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The curriculum is founded upon a **developmental** approach.

The promotion of physical health, social and emotional **well-being** are our core principles.

We value **play and creativity** as core developmental skills.

Our approach is **holistic** and considers **all** aspects of school life as learning experiences.

We fully promote the development of **social, moral, spiritual and cultural character** of each pupil.

We are proactive in building strong and meaningful **partnerships** with parents/carers.



We work closely with professionals, partner schools and agencies to embrace a **multi-agency approach** to learning.

*— Fit For Life*

# Academy Services

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## Safeguarding

Cedars School fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children. We follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSBC) and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)

If you have a concern about your child or a child at school, Please contact Keith Vincent or one of our services team.



**Keith Vincent**  
Director of Inclusion  
Designated Safeguarding Lead

[keith.vincent@cedarstrust.org.uk](mailto:keith.vincent@cedarstrust.org.uk)



**Michelle O'Reilly**  
Headteacher (School)  
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

[michelleoreilly@cedarstrust.org.uk](mailto:michelleoreilly@cedarstrust.org.uk)

# Academy Services

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Our Academy Services Team are there to **support you and your child** whilst they are with us at Cedars.

The Academy Service Team provide support to students who may be facing barriers to accessing the curriculum because of **acute social, emotional, mental health difficulties**. They coordinate a wide range of **therapeutic programmes** within school and work closely with our **multi-agency partners** to ensure there is a holistic, joined-up approach for each child experiencing difficulties.

The team work across Cedars School and College, they are the first port of call for queries about **Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs)** and coordinate the **annual EHCP Review Meetings**.

Sometimes caring for a child with additional needs can cause difficulties for families. Our Academy Services Team are on hand to talk to and **signpost you to local organisations and services**.

If you have any concerns about your child, their EHCP, their wider access to appropriate health or social care or need support yourself, please contact one of the Academy Service Team.

You can find out more about the team and their services on our webpage.

<https://cedarstrust.wixsite.com/website-1/familysupport>



Hannah Hadley  
Family Liaison  
EHCP Coordinator KSEYFS/1/2  
hannah.hadley@cedarstrust.org.uk



Helen Jarvis  
Family Liaison  
EHCP Coordinator KS2/3/4  
helen.jarvis@cedarstrust.org.uk

# The School Day

8.30-9.10am	Parent Drop-off, taxis and registration, individual learning tasks and breakfast	
9.10-12pm	<b>Morning Session</b>	15 minute break time to be taken anytime in this window as best suited to the class needs.
12pm	<b>Lunch</b> – Staggered 45 minute lunch break + 30 minute session in class	
	<u>Reception/KS1/2</u> Mouse, Bat, Hedgehog, Squirrel, Rabbit, Otter, Deer and Fox classes begin going to lunch from <b>12pm</b> and are back into class for <b>12.45-1pm</b> depending on when they come to the dining hall.	<u>KS3</u> Wren, Goldfinch, Robin, Starling, Woodpecker, Raven, Owl and Kingfisher classes begin going to lunch from <b>12.15pm</b> and are back into class for <b>1pm-1.15pm</b> depending on when they come to the dining hall.
1.15-3pm	<b>Afternoon Session</b>	15 minute play time to be taken anytime in this window for Reception/KS1/2
2.50pm	Parent collection and taxis	

# Communication

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As a school we pride ourselves on effective communication and our aim to become 'paperless'.

Your child's Teaching Team can be contacted between the hours 8:00am and 4:30pm Monday - Friday. They will be in touch to introduce themselves and to let you know how to contact them.

As a school we use various platforms of communication:

- **Facebook** to celebrate whole school achievement or signpost services
- **Arbor** to communicate whole school messages/information
- **Arbor** for all payments
- **Bloomz** to communicate class/individual messages
- We also welcome emails and telephone calls as appropriate

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/cedarsschool>



Website: <https://www.cedartrust-school.org.uk/>

Please find more information on each of these platforms on the next pages.



Bloomz is an app that works both on your smartphone as well as on your computer. You will receive quick updates and photos of class activities, be able to access our class calendar, and more. All in a private and secure environment.

No one other than yourself and other families in your child's class will be able to see the information or photos posted on your child's class page.

Please note that by signing up to Bloomz you are authorising your child's photographs to be shared on their class page. If you do not wish your child's photograph to be shared, please contact the class teacher.

Your **private messages** between you and the teaching team on Bloomz remain private and only you and the teaching team will see the information or photographs shared here.

### **New BloomzParent**

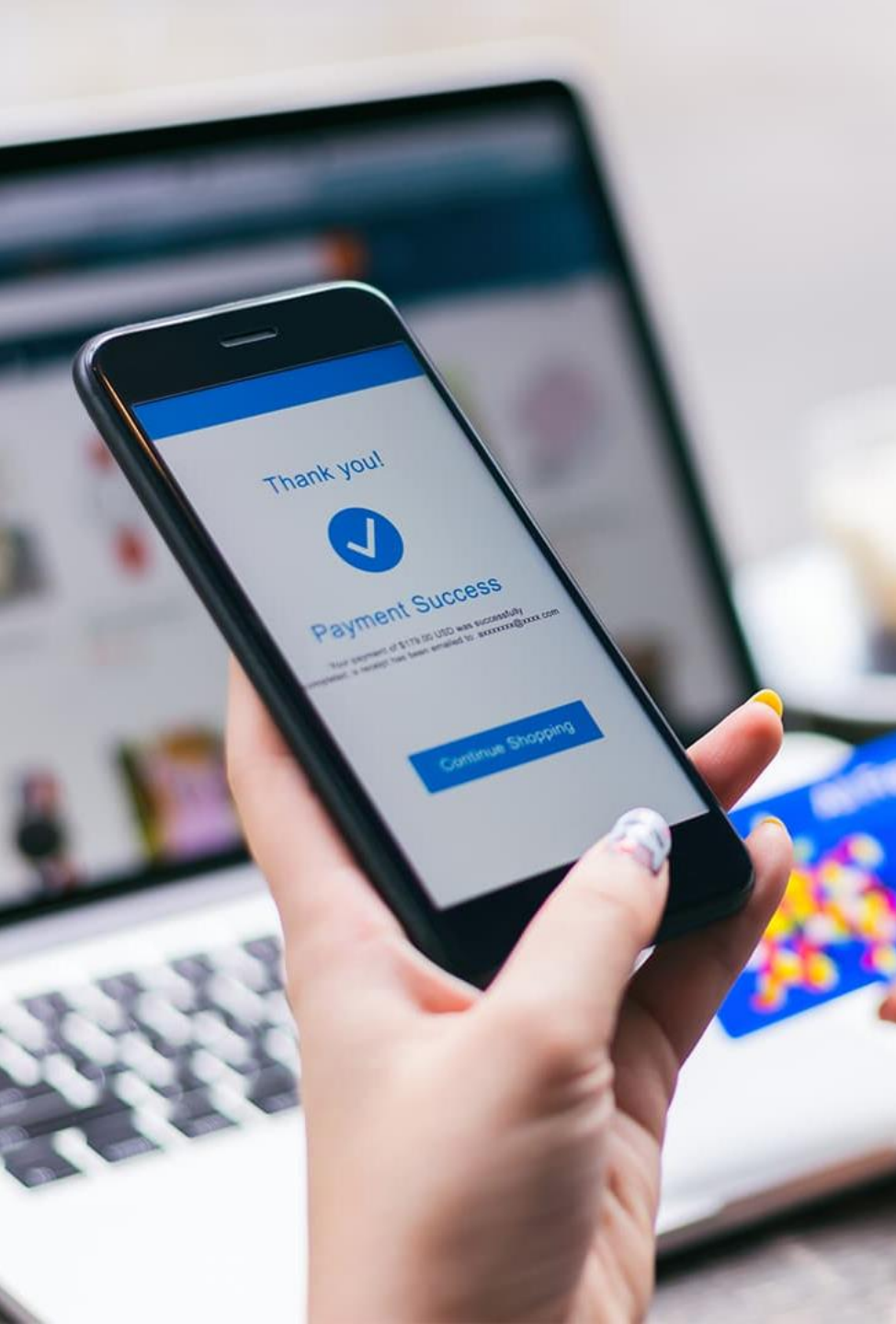
Download the "Bloomz" app from the AppStore/PlayStore and click on "Enter Code".

If using a web browser, go to [bloomz.com](https://bloomz.com) and click on "Join Bloomz" followed by "EnterCode"

Your code will be shared with you by your child's new teaching team in September.







All money owed to the school, such as dinner money or contributions towards school visits should be paid via the Arbor Parent App.

Payments can be made online via your Arbor Parent App account. Every child, when admitted to Cedars, is set up with an Arbor Parent account and we will issue you with an account activation letter.

Further information and frequently asked questions about the Arbor Parent App is available via the School Office or our website.

We hope that you will find Arbor to be a fast and easy way to pay for school items.



# Uniform

As you appreciate, a simple uniform is helpful in establishing good standards of appearance in the school, however we do make allowances due to the needs of our students.

## Uniform for all students

White polo shirt (no logos other than Cedars please)

**Royal** blue sweatshirt (no logos other than Cedars please) Yr R,1,2,3,4,5,6

**Navy** blue sweatshirt (no logos other than Cedars please) Yr 7,8,9

Mid grey or black trousers/skirt/leggings as preferred

Black shoes – **preferably easy fastening and suitable for active play.**

A warm, waterproof coat – **easily washable**

A pair of wellies to keep at school

We recommend that *all* children consider wearing trousers or leggings to enable them to make the most of our outdoor and movement curriculum.

We ask that all pupils do not wear jewellery for health and safety reasons.

Uniform is available to order from:

<https://logosunlimitedschoolwear.uk/product-category/cedars-academy/>

We do ask that all uniform be clearly named. Branded uniform is not compulsory.



# Physical Development Kit

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We advise that students wear the following for Physical Development lessons:

Plain White T-Shirt (no logos other than Cedars please)

Blue or black shorts/joggers

White socks

Trainers or sandshoes

For swimming/hydrotherapy:

Plain bathing costume/swim trunks or shorts (not Bermuda shorts)

Goggles if preferred

Towel



Uniform is available to order from:

<https://logosunlimitedschoolwear.uk/product-category/cedars-academy/>

We do ask that all uniform be clearly named. Branded uniform is not compulsory.



The Cedars curriculum is delivered within a learning environment that stimulates creativity, challenges, motivates and is fun!

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# Forest School and Outdoor Learning

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Forest school forms part of our curriculum for **all** classes throughout the school.

We use our wooded grounds in **all** weathers to build independence and self-esteem in our students. Students learn about the natural environment whilst developing personal skills such as teamwork and problem solving. We also use our woodland environment to develop skills in other curriculum areas such as mathematics and communication.

We are also an OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) school and encourage very active, messy and fun play in all of our grounds.

As your child will be outdoors everyday, we recommend that your child always has access to a **warm, waterproof coat**, and a pair of **wellington boots** that can be kept at school.

It is also a good idea to keep a spare change of clothes in school in case of very wet/muddy conditions.

We know that buying new uniform can be costly. If providing any part of our uniform or kit is difficult, please contact one of the Academy Services team who will be only too happy to help.





# Educational Visits

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Educational visits enhance the curriculum offered within the school. This includes swimming as well other educational visits in the local area.

For local visits within 35 miles that happen during the school day, we do not normally seek signed parental permission after an initial form is signed upon entering the school. However, your child's class team will inform you of any upcoming visits and discuss the details with you.

We aim to cover costs for educational visits wherever possible. Where it is not possible, we may ask for a voluntary contribution. No child will miss out on a visit because of difficulty in making a contribution.

## **Residential Visits**

We offer a range of residential visits throughout the year. Visits are planned to enhance social skills, independence and resilience.

All experiences are subject to Gateshead Council's Educational Visits (Evolve) health and safety checks.

We hold regular parental meetings and hand out information packs to share event details and communicate all aspects of each visit.

# Breakfast Club

We are very fortunate to run a breakfast club that is funded by Greggs. This enables all students to have a breakfast for **free** should they want it.

We offer a range of cereals, toast and fruit within the classroom when students arrive from 8.30-9.10am.





# Lunches

We pride ourselves on treating our students as individuals and support them with their dietary requirements in all ways we can. We understand that food and lunch times can cause our students some difficulties so encourage them to choose their lunches early on in the day. Our students are offered a choice of a hot school meal every day or are able to bring a packed lunch from home.

Our menus are changed termly and can be accessed via our school website.

A school meal currently costs **£2.40**. We encourage all our parents to sign up to pay online using the Arbor Parent app.



## Free School Meals

If you are receiving Income Support/Universal Credit, your child may be entitled to free school meals. A copy of the application form is available in this pack, from the school office and on our website.

Children may bring in a packed lunch if they would like. As a healthy school we ask that children do not bring in fizzy drinks, energy drinks or sweets.





## After School Clubs

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We hold after school clubs over 4 nights of the week.

Through our partnership with Gateshead Kestrels, physical development clubs include swimming, multi skills, trampoline, football, basketball, athletics and more.

In addition, we also have social clubs, messy play, art club, gardening, soft play and performing arts club.

In consultation with our school council, a list of club activities will be agreed in September and will include a range of clubs that are appropriate for each developmental age.

Students then sign up to attend clubs they are interested in.

We ask for a voluntary contribution of £2 for clubs on school site and £4 for swimming lessons at Gateshead Leisure Centre.

More details can be found on the school website.

# Medication

If your child needs to have medication administered by an appointed, trained staff member in school, could you please make sure that you follow these instructions:

Only medication prescribed by a doctor/consultant may be given to a pupil (not over the counter medications).

All medicines should be given to transport staff by a responsible adult and must be signed for in the transport medication book (if the child attends school by transport)

Medication can only be given at school if parent/carer has signed the appropriate form.

The school needs to be informed of any change in dosage of medication **IN WRITING** before the new dosage can be given.

Pain relief medication, can be administered after 12pm if the corresponding consent form is completed.





## **What happens if my child is unwell at school?**

Students who become ill during the school day are looked after by their team or a first aider and if necessary, parents or carers will be contacted and asked to collect the child from school. It is very important that we have a contact telephone number where we can contact you during the school day. Please do not bring your child to school if they are feeling unwell.

## **Absence and Illness**

Regular attendance is very important for your child.

We expect your child to attend school everyday unless there is a valid reason for absence such as sickness or medical treatment.

If your child is going to be absent from school, please contact the school either through a phone call or an email/Bloomz message to the Class Teacher.

The Academy Services Team are on hand if you have any worries or concerns about your child's attendance and will be able to support.

Regular attendance is essential in order to acquire and develop the many skills which will increase independence and confidence.

# Term Dates

## Autumn term

Start of term	Half term	Last day of term
Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> September 2023 Students return Wed 6 <sup>th</sup> Sep	30 <sup>th</sup> October to 3 <sup>rd</sup> November 2023	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December 2023

## Spring term

Start of term	Half term	Last day of term
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	19 <sup>th</sup> to 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2024	Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> March 2024

## Summer term

Start of term	Half term	Last day of term
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> April 2023	27 <sup>th</sup> May to 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2023 (bank holiday 27 <sup>th</sup> May)	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> July 2023

All dates are inclusive.

In addition to these dates, schools will be closed to pupils on Monday 1 May 2024 (Bank Holiday).

Three days within the above terms are to be used for professional development for staff. These dates are to be determined and agreed by individual school governing bodies. Dates proposed are:

Training day 1: Monday 4th September 2022

Training day 2: Tuesday 5th September 2022

Training day 3: To be confirmed

In addition, one occasional day within the Summer Term 2024 is to be utilised for the purpose of closure for possible election purposes, this day to be used near the end of the summer term and agreed by individual school governing bodies.

The start of the Autumn Term 2023 is proposed as Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

## Cedars Parents

Cedars Parents aim to meet in the first week of the month. We understand how isolating it can be to be a parent of a child with additional needs, so we try our best to meet up and support each other, whilst extending our friendships.

A group of parents come together with a member of school staff. These meetings are very informal, and we use this time to look at training needs, social events, fundraising, to talk about what's happening in school and to have a general chat.

As a school, we value this group and welcome the feedback from all parents and carers, while trying to act upon it.

If you have any queries about this, we recommend that you look on the school parents Facebook page or contact Naomi Parkin at [naomi.parkin@cedarstrust.org.uk](mailto:naomi.parkin@cedarstrust.org.uk)





# Leadership Team

We're happy to help, call the school or email us at the addresses below to get in touch.

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**Michelle O'Reilly**  
Headteacher (School)  
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

[michelleoreilly@cedartrust.org.uk](mailto:michelleoreilly@cedartrust.org.uk)



**Keith Vincent**  
Director of Inclusion  
Designated Safeguarding Lead

[keith.vincent@cedartrust.org.uk](mailto:keith.vincent@cedartrust.org.uk)



**Joanne Carr**  
Deputy Headteacher  
[joanne.carr@cedartrust.org.uk](mailto:joanne.carr@cedartrust.org.uk)

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a silver pen, writing on a document. The background is blurred, showing a desk and a window with greenery outside. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

## **Documentation**

You will find our welcome pack available on our website, however, we will also ensure that paper copies are distributed when you come in to meet your child's new teaching team.

Please ensure that all forms have been completed and are returned to school – you can bring them to the school office or scan and email them directly to Michelle Klitzke at [michelle.klitzke@cedarstrust.org.uk](mailto:michelle.klitzke@cedarstrust.org.uk)

## **Emergency Contact Numbers**

We need to have up-to-date address and phone numbers of all the students. If any personal details change, please let us know immediately, as we should always be able to contact you if an emergency occurs.

If you require any information in this booklet in an accessible format or in a different language, or if you require help to complete the forms in this pack, please let the Academy Services Team know.

You can call the school on **0191 4874595** and ask for the Academy Services Team or a member of the Leadership Team.

We hope this pack will have the information you need to plan for September 2023. You can find additional information on our website: <https://www.cedarstrust-school.org.uk/>

You can also contact any of your child's new teaching team.

We look forward to welcoming you and your child to Cedars.

