



2025 - 2026
Junior School
(Years 3-4)
General Information

Activities

Activities are provided after the last lesson of the day, each day. Activities begin at 4.05 p.m. and finish at 4.50 p.m. The activities are mostly provided by external companies with some activities being undertaken by a member of staff. These activities are optional and further information will be sent to you from the Assistant Head, Co-Curricular.

After-School Care

After-School Care facilities, for the supervision of pupils whose parents are unable to arrange collection at the normal time, are provided from 4.05-6.00 p.m. or after Activities from 4.50 p.m. An After-School Care Supervisor is specifically employed for this purpose. A register is kept by him/ her. If pupils need to attend on an irregular basis, the Junior School Office must be notified on the day. Pupils are collected any time until 6.00 p.m. from the front of No. 24 Castlebar Road. There is a charge for this service. Any other pupils found uncollected outside the usual collection times are sent to After- School Care. Pupils are permitted to bring a small healthy snack.

Assembly

Assembly occurs on Monday morning in Haven Green Hall. All Forms and staff attend. It is conducted by a member of SMT. At times, all parts of the school will attend the same Assembly; at other times, different sections of the school will attend discrete Assemblies.

Beginning and End of the Day

Pupils in Junior School arrive at School between 8.10 – 8.25 a.m. and enter through the Playground gate on Blakesley Avenue, before making their way to Junior School via the back entrance.

All bags and coats are stored in the classrooms. Pupils meet their Form Teacher for Form Time as soon as they enter the building, and at 8.30 a.m., registration is taken. A pupil is marked absent after 8.30 a.m. The first lesson begins at 8.30 a.m. If a pupil arrives after 8.25 a.m., they must report to the Junior School Office, via the front gate on Castlebar Road, to be registered before going to class.

Lessons end at 4.05 p.m. At the end of each day, pupils are escorted out into the carpark by a member of staff to await collection. All pupils leave via the Carpark gates on Blakesley Avenue. If a pupil is not collected after 10 minutes they go to After-School Care. Parents are asked to pick up pupils promptly and not to park illegally on or near crossings, in the bus stops on Eaton Rise and Castlebar Road, nor across the driveways of residents.

Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club runs from 7.30 a.m. – 8.10 a.m. Breakfast Club must be booked in advance. Admission to Breakfast Club is through the No.24 Gate on Castlebar Road between 7.30 a.m. and 7.45 a.m. There is a charge for Breakfast Club.

Charities

Each year the school supports one or two main charities throughout the year. This charity work is coordinated by the Assistant Head, Co-Curricular, who is responsible for leading the development of pupil awareness and spearheading fundraising work. Durston House considers this charity work as an essential part of pupil participation in the life of the community, necessary for an individual's well-rounded education.

Communication

The school communicates administrative information to parents electronically, by email and text alerts via the school's messaging system and Parent Portal. This enables the school to communicate with individuals, classes, year groups or to the whole school. It also enables parents to reply and/or give consent online. In some cases, the school continues to send hard-copy information to parents, by post or with pupils. Parents are able to follow highlights of school life, the many activities and events that run throughout the year, by visiting our website or following Durston House on Social Media, including Facebook, Instagram, X & LinkedIn @durstonhouse

Curriculum Information

Parents can access curriculum information on the school's Virtual Learning Environment. The information consists of a curriculum map for each subject, outlining the topics covered each year. In addition, there are curriculum notes specific to each year group. These give further detail of teaching methodologies, resources, requirements for prep and assessment arrangements.

Daily Breaks

All pupils are taken off site for daily breaks at Castlebar Fields. All four parts of the school go to the field at different times of the day and are supervised by staff members. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 will be taken to and from the field.

Examinations and On-Going Assessment

Examinations take place once a year in Junior School, in the first half of the Summer Term. The results of these examinations are communicated in the second half of the Summer Term and are sent home for parents to view, once marked. Throughout the year, on-going assessment is carried out to aid teaching and learning. This is arranged subject by subject. Pupils' progress in the core skills is tracked using assessments at key points in the year. Digital standardised testing takes place annually. The tests are run through GL Assessment and consist of PTE, PTM and CAT4 (Cognitive Ability Test).

Form Teachers

Form Teachers are the first point of contact for pupils and parents. They are responsible in the first instance for the general welfare of the pupils in that Form. He/she is responsible for overseeing the Pastoral Care of a pupil, which includes their academic and personal development that year. The Form Teacher reinforces policies and guidelines, which are designed to create the ordered, calm and safe environment that is Durston House. He/she liaises with the Head of Year and the Assistant Head Pastoral, registers the Form twice daily and disseminates any information or correspondence. Form Teachers coordinate the school reports for the pupils in that Form and write a general Form Report. The Form Teacher will help the Form to develop a collective spirit of loyalty, trust and support.

Formal School Occasions

Throughout the year, there are several formal school events that staff and pupils attend. The three major occasions are the Carol Service in the Autumn Term (Years 3-8 only), the School Concert in the Spring Term and the Prize Days in the Summer Term. As well, at the end of each term, all staff and pupils attend the Final Assembly on the last day, immediately prior to finishing for the school holidays.

Games

All pupils go to Games once a week. Increasingly, through Years 3-4, there are opportunities for pupils to represent the school in matches. All pupils go to Swyncombe Playing Field on Monday mornings unless they are playing in a fixture against another school, which may take place on a Monday morning OR Monday afternoon. All pupils need to come into school in their games kit and stay in it all day. They must bring in their equipment in their Games Bag or Durston drawstring bag, when required. Termly information about the required kit is located in the Pupil Diary.

Games Pick Up

Pupils in Junior School will be collected at 4.05 p.m. from the carpark on Blakesley Avenue. Pupils may be collected from the location of an afternoon fixture if parents have been watching.

Games – Fixture Information

All Fixtures will be published on SOCS with one term's notice. SOCS will display the timings and location of the fixture. Parents wishing to pick up their child from a fixture will need to indicate this on SOCS. Occasionally fixtures may need to be postponed or cancelled, this information will be updated on SOCS and it is recommended parents check the 'live' online calendar throughout each term.

Houses

Pupils continue in one of the four Houses to which they were assigned on joining the school– Arundel, Conway, Warwick and Windsor. Whole House meetings are held throughout the term. Different activities occur, and inter-House cultural and sporting competitions are held. The Houses comprise pupils from all year groups. One member of staff is the Head of House, and one of the prefects from Year 8 is the House Captain. The Houses are also divided into House Vertical Groups which comprise pupils from Reception to Year 8 and are led by a Year 8 pupil. A pupil will stay in the same House throughout their time at Durston House. Each House competes against the others for the House Shield.

Instrumental Music Lessons

All pupils are able to learn one or more musical instruments. They are taught by visiting music teachers (VMTs), who enter into a contract directly with parents.

A weekly timetable of lessons taught in school is prepared by the Head of Music. Throughout the year, there are opportunities for the pupils to perform to the school and to parents. Some pupils may be invited to join the orchestra or ensembles. The Head of Music sends out a letter to all parents during the Summer Term, on which requests can be made for pupils to receive lessons in a particular instrument or singing in the new academic year. There are also tasters available for children who wish to try an instrument before signing up. Further information about instrumental tuition can be sought from the Head of Music.

Junior Choir

The Music Department runs the Junior Choir, comprising pupils from Years 3-4. The choir prepares programmes of choral work to enhance the major, formal occasions in the school year. Auditions will take place at the beginning of the school year and again at the beginning of each term. A timetable for rehearsals will be provided when Junior Choir rehearsals begin. Junior School Choir rehearses on a Tuesday and Thursday morning at 7.50 a.m. Pupils are expected to be punctual to sessions, arriving at 7.45 a.m. at No. 20 Castlebar Road. Please note that pupils will not be let in any earlier than 7.45 a.m., which is when the office opens.

Library

Pupils are able to borrow books from the School Library and take Accelerated Reader Quizzes during their designated Library Lesson under the supervision of their English Teacher or the school Librarian. All borrowed books must be returned via the Return Box. The Library is also open for borrowing books and taking quizzes at designated break times and lunch times throughout the week.

Lunches and Snacks

Pupils' lunches and snacks are provided by the school kitchen. There are a variety of choices available each day, and allergies and food intolerances are catered for. At lunchtimes, pupils with allergies wear a lanyard which will indicate their specific allergy to staff. Menus are published on the school website. Parents are sent information about menu choices before each term. Throughout the school, nuts, sesame seeds or food containing nuts are banned as there are some pupils who suffer from a serious allergy to them.

Off Games

A pupil may be excused from Games by the Deputy Head having received a letter (hard copy or via email) from their parents requesting permission for them not to participate. A justifiable reason is necessary. The school's position is that if a pupil is too unwell to participate in Games, they should not attend school at all, except in the case of physical injury or recuperation after medical treatment. A pupil excused from Games remains at school under supervision, where they work on written tasks assigned to them by the Head of PE. The pupil does not do prep at this time. The pupil may be collected at the normal time, 4.05 p.m. from the front gate of the Junior School building.

Office Opening Hours

The school offices are open from 7.45 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. each day during term time.

Outings & Trips

Throughout the year, pupils in all parts of the school are taken on Outings to museums, galleries, theatres, castles, battlefields, woodlands, rivers, ancient ruins, as well as places of religious significance. Places seen, data collected, information gathered, experiments carried out and pictures studied can be integrated into lessons on return to the classroom. Once a year, in the Summer Term, Trips Week takes place. All pupils from Year 4 attend a residential trip, inspired by the curriculum, spending at least two nights away from home. Team building activities deepen a pupil's natural curiosity and living with peers helps them take responsibility for themselves.

Parents Evenings

In the Autumn Term, there is an Informal Parents Evening for each year group. This is an opportunity to meet socially, the teachers and other parents. In the Spring Term, there will be a Formal Parents Evening for each year. At Parents Evenings, there is the opportunity to discuss a pupil's progress with their Form Teacher and subject teachers.

Personal Accident and Dental Accident Insurance

All pupils are covered under the School's Pupils' Personal Accident (including Dental Accident) insurance scheme. There are no additional charges, as the premiums are incorporated within the current fee structure.

Prep

Prep will be set weekly in Maths, English and French and Reasoning. Prep will be 20-30 minutes in duration. Humanities and Science preps will be set over a half term. Prep will be slowly introduced to Year 3. Prep is designed to prepare pupils for future lessons, or as an extension of what has been learned in the lesson. A prep timetable will be provided for each year group.

Formal prep is set by the teacher on the VLE and pupils are expected to log on to it, daily, to check prep requirements. Once prep is completed, it should be 'marked as done' on the VLE and returned to the teacher on the set date.

Reading is expected on a daily basis. Pupils should read for 30 minutes a day, and record this in the Pupil Diary.

Pupil Absence

If a pupil has an unplanned absence owing to illness or some unforeseen circumstance, parents telephone or email the Junior School Office (in the morning) with an explanation before 9.30 (JScOffice@durstonhouse.org) on the first day of absence and make subsequent contact for each further day of absence.

Requests for any planned, future absence from school must be made by parents, in writing, giving the dates and reasons for such absence. The office will send you a form to complete. The Headmaster considers the request and takes whatever action necessary. We do not believe that it is in the best interests of your child to miss school and discourage holidays and travel during term time. However, each application will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Pupil Diary

Each pupil has a Pupil Diary in which information to aid knowledge is held, and a daily calendar for note-making is available. Daily reading is recorded in this diary. The diary is also a means of communication between home and school, enabling notes from teachers to parents, and vice versa, to be passed on. It is expected that the pupil diary is signed by the Form teacher and parents daily.

Reports

Reports are sent to parents twice a year at the end of the Autumn and Summer terms.

Rewards and Sanctions

Anything that a pupil does that is clearly worth approval and encouragement, be it in their work or behaviour, is rewarded with a "Plus Point". At the end of term, special certificates are presented at assembly to those who have achieved the most points. For exceptional work or behaviour, pupils may receive a 'Red Letter' reward, or a Commendation from the Headmaster, which will be awarded at Assembly.

As part of the school's **Behaviour Policy**, there are a number of systems in place to promote positive behaviour whilst addressing misbehaviour. The School will work in partnership with parents to bring out the best in each child. Please see the Behaviour Policy for more details.

School Bags

All pupils in Junior School should use the school rucksack (large) and school sports bag supplied by Stevensons.

School Calendar & SOCS

A calendar of events is published on the school website, on a termly basis. It is a comprehensive list of events and fixtures for the term, which parents are asked to refer to.

We use SOCS for the School Calendar, Fixtures, and booking of After School Activities. Parents can access SOCS using their Parent Portal logins.

School Council

Pupils in Years 3-8 have the opportunity to have their voice heard, representing their peers as members of the School Council. Within each form, pupils can stand for election, at the beginning of the school year. Those who are successful attend weekly meetings where ideas are discussed and plans to develop school life are formulated. The School Council aims to enhance the Durston experience for pupils as well as help with fundraising initiatives.

Security

The security of pupils at the school is paramount. The front gate of the Junior School is shut and electronically locked during the school day. If parents wish to enter the grounds of Junior School, they should push the buzzer on the outside of the front gate on 20 Castlebar Road and wait until the Junior School Office has identified them and let them in. Once inside school property, it is essential that all visitors report directly to the Junior School Office, from where contact with staff, concerns or issues can be dealt with and visitor badges are issued, where necessary. Parents should not go directly to their child's form room or to any other part of the building. If they are visiting the school, parents are asked not to admit other visitors to the school property. Please advise such people to make contact with the Junior School Office in the first instance. It is vital that the Junior School Office is notified of any changes to drop-off and pick-up arrangements for any pupil, as well as changes to personal and contact details that the school must know.

Term Dates

Dates are published well in advance. A copy of those dates is sent to all parents, and can also be found in the School Calendar, and on the school [website](#). Parents are asked to stick to the holiday dates and not to remove pupils from school in term time.

Themed Weeks

Throughout the year, pupils in all sections of the school take part in themed weeks. In November, the pupils and staff focus on Anti-Bullying, reflecting on the nature and causes of bullying and how best it can be tackled at Durston House. In the Spring Term, Durston recognises the importance of wellbeing in Wellbeing Week as well as the Literary Festival. Later in the year, another themed week occurs - our STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Week. For both, events, workshops and speakers are organised to enhance the pupils' learning in these areas of school life and to encourage them to pursue this learning beyond the curriculum.

Uniform

Pupils in the Junior School wear full school uniform. Details about Uniform can be found at the end of this booklet, or under the Uniform tab on the school website. All uniform should be clearly named. Lost, unnamed uniform is kept in the Junior School Office and is displayed at the end of term in the Junior School Garden. Alternatively, parents may search the lost uniform bins themselves at any time.

Pupils are required to come to school wearing their PE/Games kit on days that they have PE or Games.

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

All pupils have access to a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Each pupil has a login to the site, where they can access set prep, catch-up on missed work, view extension work, seek guidance in a pupils' learning and important curriculum information. Work can be sent directly by or to the Form Teacher online. Pupils must check the VLE daily.

Year Groups and Forms

Junior School comprises of Years 3 and 4 and is situated at 20 Castlebar Road. Each year has a maximum of three Forms, each with approximately 16 pupils. Each Form has a Form Teacher who has day-to-day responsibility for looking after the pupils and is the first point of contact for parents. He/she takes the pupils for the majority of their lessons. Most of these occur in the Form Room. Pupils have specialist teachers for PSHME, French, Art (Year 4 only), PE, Music and Computer Science. There is a Head of Years 3 & 4 who oversees pastoral care across both year groups.