



HAZLEGROVE PREPARATORY SCHOOL



PARENTS' GUIDE TO THE MIDDLE SCHOOL
2024 - 2025

Contents:

Introduction	1
An Open Door	1
Pastoral Care	2
Learning Support	3
School Calendar	3
A-Z Hazlegrove Guide	4
Parent Portal and Acta Diurna	4
The School Day	5
Year 5 and 6 Trips and Outings	5
Boarding	6
Going Home	6
After School Clubs	7
Journals	7
Prep (Homework) Expectations	8
Catching Up Missed Work	8
Class Structure	9
Movement Between Sets	9
Academic Aims	9
Pupil Progress	9
English - Accelerated Reading Scheme	10
Tests and Examinations	10
Music and Drama	11
Future Schools	12
Sport and Inter-School Fixtures	14
Houses	14
Lunch and Break Times	15
Tuck	15
Electronic Equipment	15
School Equipment	15
Pencil Case Equipment	16
Lost Property	16
Hair, Jewellery and Make-up	16
School Shop	17
Middle School Transformers	17
Our Community	17

Introduction

The aim of this handbook is to help you and your child make a smooth and happy transition into Middle School at Hazlegrove. We also hope that it will be useful for those who join the school in Years 5 and 6, and for existing parents who want to support their child through transition within Middle School.

The step from Year 4 to Year 5 is significant for both parents and children. Pupils now have to take responsibility for personal organisation – to look after their own belongings, find their way around the main school and be ready for lessons in different locations. It is also the stage at which pupils are set Prep four nights a week and expected to work slightly more independently.

Pupils in the Middle School are taught by their form tutor for English and some humanities in order to limit the number of different teachers each class has and to allow tutors to get to know their class very well. The remainder of their timetable is taught by subject specialists. Children are expected to find their way to each lesson at the right time with the correct equipment – which can be a struggle at the start of the year!

The Middle School years are also the time when you might begin the process of considering the right senior school for your child. We aim to fully support you in making your decision and would encourage you to make an appointment with the Headmaster or Mr Farquhar to discuss the options available and whether they might be the right 'fit' for your children.

An Open Door

You are always welcome to come and discuss any problems or concerns about your child's education. The first point of contact is your child's form tutor.

That said, please be aware that it is not always appropriate or possible to catch a member of staff first thing in the morning at drop-off! Do instead feel free to phone or e-mail and we will respond as soon as possible, or messages can be left with the school office. Please do bear in mind that most staff teach all day, often have evening duties and do not have secretarial support. We can of course arrange an appointment for a longer discussion if necessary. Other senior staff in the Prep School to whom parents may need to speak can be contacted via the school office.

Head of Middle School (Pastoral) is Mr D Jenkins

Pastoral Care

The children at Hazlegrove are surrounded with care. That care includes at its core staff for whom going many extra miles is an everyday thing, and who unashamedly make time to talk about the children. It includes a dedicated Pastoral Leadership Team which meets every week, a tutor system, a pastoral care curriculum embedded in everything we do and model, and an ever-developing framework for social and emotional literacy and support. It can encompass initiatives for everyone, from wellbeing festivals, Pre-Prep yoga clubs, being a Girls On Board school and having school pets to be with when a quiet moment is needed, to a school counsellor alongside our comprehensive Jigsaw PSHE curriculum which runs throughout the Pre-Prep and Prep School. We don't hide key issues or say it's 'just their age' - we look proactively at what we could do about that. We review and reflect on every incident to learn from it. Pastoral care is about developing in the children the tools they will use when things are more challenging for them or for their peers, so that they can cope well with everything life can throw at them with positive self-esteem, resilience, and a sense of belonging to something.



Learning Support

We seek to help all pupils with either special educational needs, or specific learning difficulties, to achieve their individual potential and to feel confident within the school community.

The Objectives Of The Unit Are:

- To apply a whole school policy to meeting each child's individual needs
- To provide different levels of intervention to match the child's need
- To ensure that all staff are aware of every child's individual needs

Children Are Helped Through:

- Early intervention and assessment to address difficulties
- Structured, multi-sensory, cumulative programmes incorporating IT
- Identification of small steps for success
- Revision, over-learning and reinforcement
- Promotion of self-esteem

School Calendar

All the relevant phone numbers and contact details can be found in the school calendar. This is sent out to all parents at the start of each term, and it is worth reading it carefully and highlighting events that affect you and your child. The school calendar can also be found on the school website and via the Parent Portal. Events at which pupils are expected to wear a blazer are marked with a (B). Events at which parents are welcome are marked with an *.

Timings of matches are planned a term ahead and details may occasionally change nearer the time. If your child is involved in a match, please confirm the timings on the noticeboard outside the ICT Room or by using the Match Line 01963 442602 (see 'Sport and Inter-School Fixtures'). Team lists are also accessed via the Parent Portal and SOCS which Year 6 children can access on their iPads .

A-Z Hazlegrove Guide

The A-Z Hazlegrove Guide has been compiled by staff to help parents, guardians and older pupils understand how Hazlegrove works. It is a practical guide outlining all aspects of life at the School. It is not a document that is likely to be read from cover to cover. It is perhaps more useful as a reference point which will help to guide you in the right direction, you can either navigate using the links or at the end of these you can scroll through the whole document if you wish. The guide is updated on an annual basis and is available to download from the Parent Portal.

Parent Portal and Acta Diurna

Hazlegrove uses a School Management system, called iSAMS which includes Parent Portal. Through the portal you will be able to access information about your child's timetable as well as school reports. The school calendar is detailed together with up to date team lists and concert programmes.

You will also be able to see the contact details that we hold for you, in order to access the portal for the first time the school will send you a link.

ACTA DIURNA: You will receive emails from the school about events, trips, reports and etc, from this email address.



The School Day

Each day follows a similar pattern although there are slight differences to timings on Wednesday and Saturday due to matches.

7:45am	Boarders' Breakfast
8:00am	Drop off from this time for Day Pupils
8:30am	Registration
8:40am	Assembly
9:10am	Lessons Start
4:00pm	1st Home Time (Breaktime for those children staying after school)
4:25pm	Junior Clubs (Years 3-6)/Senior Prep/Optional Middle School Prep
5:05pm	2nd Home Time
5:10pm	Lower School Prep/Middle School Prep/Senior Clubs
5:50pm	3rd Home Time; boarders change into home clothes
6:00pm	Boarders' Tea
6:30pm	Junior Activities/Free Time/Music Practice
7:30pm	Juniors start to come upstairs for showers
By 8.30pm	All Lights Out

Lessons finish at 12.45pm on a Saturday.

Year 5 and 6 Trips and Outings

Letters will be sent home when a trip is organised. Likely trips include:

- Year 5 Residential Trip to Naturesbase in Wales
- Year 5 Trip to Bovington Tank Museum
- Year 5 Trip to Haynes Motor Museum
- Year 6 French Trip
- Year 6 Trip to Fleet Air Arm Museum

Information regarding school trips can be found on the school portal.

Boarding

Hazlegrove is committed to providing an exceptional standard of care to the boarding community. A good number of pupils board on a full time basis as well as flexi board.

We believe that the happiness of each child is of vital importance, and each house is run by the Houseparents as an extended family. The first and last weekend of each term are in-weekends when all boarders are in school. There are regularly over fifty children boarding at other weekends, which means that we run a full programme of activities that cater for all interests and needs.

Children have set times to do their prep, music practice and reading. They receive the necessary support to ensure that these are all done constructively. We also keep a close eye on their health and diet as well as their manners and general conduct.

Parents of full time boarders receive a concise guide to boarding when their child begins.

Going Home

On a weekday, day pupils may go home at 4.00pm, 5.05pm or 5.50pm. When leaving school at the end of the day, it is essential that pupils always sign out at the De-Reg hut in the car park with a member of staff on duty. There is no signing out at the end of morning school on a Saturday, exeat or holidays. We would ask that parents please park in the main car park. Outside normal leaving times (eg dentist/doctor appointments) pupils must sign out and be collected from the School Reception. If you know you are going to be late collecting your child, please call the School Office and we will let your child know. They will then either be able to join a club or do prep.

On a Wednesday and a Saturday however, clubs are more flexible and children may leave once they have the permission of the staff member they are with, without an official sign out.

At 5.50pm the boarders change into their home clothes in preparation for supper and any day children remaining after this time can join them (there is a charge of £4.00 for day children). If you would like your child to stay for supper, please call the School Office.

After School Clubs

A huge variety of clubs are offered each term. You will receive an email from the Deputy Head before the start of each term, asking you to book places within the Parent Portal for the clubs in which your child would like to take part.

Most of the clubs are organised internally, but the list will include some chargeable extras, such as ballet, horse riding, judo, golf and laser pistol shooting.

Once a pupil has opted for a club they are expected to remain committed to attend for the duration of the term. One term's notice must be given before cessation of any chargeable clubs. Please make a note of the clubs that have been chosen in their journal.

Occasionally a school club is cancelled unavoidably. In this case boarders are offered the choice of either joining an alternative club for the session or going to the library. Day pupils are welcome to take up either of these options or arrange to go home where possible.

If a day pupil attends a late club that finishes after 6pm, they should be collected directly from the activity. If you are late, children will be taken into Supper and then prep with the Boarders until you arrive.

After this time, you should speak to the duty member of staff who carries a mobile phone (07717 826934).

Journals

As children move up through the school and become more independent, the journal remains an important means of communication between home and school.

It contains a diary for recording prep that has been set and other significant school events, such as instrumental music lessons, matches or concerts. There is a space for comments by parents and the class teacher and it should be signed by both every week.

They are also used to record Merits, Plus Points, Stars and any sanctions:

Merits are awarded for excellent attainment or effort.

Pluses recognise good classwork and effort.

Stars are awarded for good citizenship (for example – consideration and helpfulness).

There is a copy of the child's timetable in their journal.

Numbers - when necessary a number and a note are used to record poor behaviour or failure to complete work. This highlights to both parents and tutors areas where we can help our children to improve.

Prep (Homework)

The children are given weekly prep (homework). Preps are set on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday evenings, with the aim of consolidating the learning objectives that have been covered in lessons.

Preps are designed to be completed independently. However, if you have provided any significant input, please add a note at the bottom of the piece of work to help us maintain an accurate understanding of what your child is able to do on their own. Please resist the temptation to do it all for them!

Children are encouraged to talk to the relevant member of staff if they are encountering any problems or need a little longer to complete a task, to help them take ownership of their work and develop their own time management skills.

Across the school, we encourage regular reading, language vocabulary and maths consolidation (e.g. times tables). From Year 6 onwards, pupils have access to specific apps that enable them to do this independently. [Click here](#)

Catching Up Missed Work

There is a 'catch-up' period between 12:45pm and 1:15pm when a member of staff may sign a pupil in for them to complete work, or a pupil may voluntarily attend. If children are away for any reason, we encourage them to ask the teacher if there is any work they should catch up.



Class Structure

Years 5 and 6 pupils are taught in mixed ability forms, and have separate sets for Maths. Setting means putting a group of children together for one specific subject, based on their ability in that subject.

Streaming means putting a group of children together for the majority of their lessons, based on their overall ability.

Our approach in the Middle School is to set for Maths, but for other academic subjects to be taught to parallel classes.

All our setting is flexible, as we take into account both the academic and personality profile of each year group.

Movement Between Sets

It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that pupils are placed within the correct set, and the responsibility of those teaching a setted subject to identify those who may not be fully benefiting from their current placement. It is expected that there will be adjustment between sets during the year, particularly at the start of the year and after exams.

If you are concerned about the set in which your child is placed, please contact their tutor in the first instance.

Academic Aims

In the Middle School, our broad academic aims are to actively engage and extend the children from the point they join us and to equip them with the skills they need for their onward journey into Common Entrance. In practice, this means we plan lessons that capture their imaginations, challenge, encourage discussion and foster independence in both problem solving and approach.

Pupil Progress

The progress and achievements of each pupil are carefully monitored and parents are kept informed of their child's progress through parents' meetings, grades and reports. Full details are available in A Parent's Guide to Reports and Parents Evenings. [Click here](#)

English - Accelerated Reading Scheme

Hazlegrove is passionate about instilling a love of reading in our children. To help us achieve this aim we run a programme in the school called the Accelerated Reading Scheme. This enables us to closely monitor the children's reading progress. Children take a 'Star Test' on the computer at the beginning of each term which gives us an approximate reading age. The children are then told the range within which they can choose their books (ie 3.3 - 5.5 etc). When they have finished reading their book they take a short test on the computer. The English Department closely monitor the results and guide the children to make sure they are making progress and above all, loving what they read.

If you are considering purchasing books for your children please check the website www.arbookfind.co.uk to see if the books are on the Accelerated Reader programme. We would also value your co-operation in encouraging your child to read at home as much as possible.

Tests and Examinations

In the Middle School, children have regular mental maths tests, and are likely to have short topic tests in different subjects over the course of the year.

Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have end of year assessments during the summer term, as well as regular modular assessments as appropriate. Throughout the year assessments are set for English, Mathematics, Languages, Science and Humanities.

Pupils are encouraged to take assessments seriously, but in their stride and not to become over-anxious about extended periods of revision or disappointing results. We ask parents to do the same! It is good practise for the Middle School to get used to completing and coping with assessments, but their results are taken in the context of their other work throughout the term too.

We also use other forms of external assessment:

CAT Tests

All pupils take standardised tests annually.

The results from these tests are used internally, as indicators of underlying ability.

Music and Drama

Music and drama are a key part of Hazlegrove life in the Lower School. In Years 5 and 6, children receive weekly class lessons by specialist teachers in both music and drama. Inspiring topics such as "Alchemy Island" and "The Lost Words" are covered in music lessons, with drama in Year 5 focussed on building the key skills needed for the Year 5 plays in the Summer Term. In Year 6, children work towards a musical-based production in their music and in their drama lessons from the Autumn Half Term. This is performed in March. In addition, our separate Year 5 and 6 choirs, timetabled during the academic day, provide an opportunity to work towards our Carol Service at Wells Cathedral, our big Spring Concert and the Easter Service at Sherborne Abbey. Outside the classroom, our maturing instrumentalists can join ensembles such as the school orchestra, wind band and string ensemble. Those who lean towards the performing arts can join an after-school drama club. Our ensembles perform throughout the year at our larger concerts (including 2 with King's Bruton) and school events such as Speech Day. Once at the required level, instrumentalists are expected to contribute to at least one ensemble during the week. Talented singers may be asked to join our invitational Chapel Choir.

Instrumental lessons are timetabled during the school day, and occasionally at 4pm for boarders. Budding actors can sign up for paid Speech and Drama lessons with Miss de la Poer. A huge effort is made to ensure that individual academic subjects are not overtly affected, with our admin team in constant communication with class teachers. Music practice is greatly encouraged, with a recommended 'little and often' approach. Boarders are allocated a fixed music practice time, fully supervised by our staff, from Mondays to Fridays. Performance in our weekly informal concerts is encouraged.



Future Schools

An important decision that you will make during your child's time at Prep School is the choice of senior school. A few highly selective schools require registration during Years 4 and 5 but the majority begin to assess pupils in Year 6 and 7. The first steps in choosing a school would normally be both to visit a range of schools, as early as you feel able, and to arrange an appointment to speak to the Headmaster. The next step would be to register your child at one or more schools and to let us know your decision. Schools will use a combination of tests, taster days, interviews and the reference provided by us as part of their selection process. In preparation for their first assessment day at a senior school, pupils will usually be offered the following:

1. Interview practice

Pupils have an interview workshop, usually with the Headmaster or a senior member of staff, which runs through commonly asked questions and essential tips to help pupils come across as well as they can. In preparation for any further interviews or assessments, pupils are offered refresher workshops if appropriate. This is usually only necessary when there has been a long time lag between senior school assessment days.

2. Online or paper-based test practice (where applicable)

Although some senior schools do not carry out a formal academic assessment, many now use the ISEB (Independent Schools Examination Board) Pre-tests or other similar online assessment tools to screen pupils during their assessment procedure. At least one regular weekly workshop is offered during clubs and/or lunchtimes, in order to support those pupils who wish to have extra practice. Times of these are advertised and parents informed, but the onus is on the pupils to come along when they are advised to do so. We also set pupils some practice tests or exercises to complete in their own time, and encourage them to take screenshots of any questions that they want to ask us about at their next workshop. Pupils make the most of these sessions if they have completed these tasks beforehand, so that we can work through any common mistakes.

3. Year 8 entry routes

All our pupils will take exams in their final term. Although not all senior schools require these, we believe that they provide a focus for learning and development of study skills, which is vital for pupils' preparation for the next stage of their education. Most pupils sit Common Entrance papers. A few candidates will sit academic scholarship papers at some point in the year, which may be set by the ISEB or by the senior school itself, and are always marked by the school concerned.

One thing that really helps all of the support, above, to run as smoothly as possible is if we are informed by you as soon as you have entered your child for a senior school: the more notice we have prior to an assessment day, the more time we have to organise the most appropriate support.

4. Awards (non-academic)

Once you have chosen a senior school and your child is registered there, if you are considering applying for a non-academic scholarship, the first thing to do is to check what awards are on offer and whether they 'fit' your child's profile. Secondly, please do come and talk to your child's form tutor and the relevant Head of Department directly. They will need to know what senior school has been chosen in order to give you the best advice about the commitment and preparation needed and what the senior school would expect, should a scholarship be awarded. If everything is positive, the next step is to confirm with your child's tutor and the relevant Heads of Department that this is definitely the chosen route, so that we can make sure all the right preparation is happening, and enter your child for the award by a set closing date. Most scholarships are means-tested, so if funding is going to be important, it is well worth speaking with the Bursar about whether or not they advise applying for a bursary. Sometimes being a scholarship candidate can help with that application, but the senior school will let you know if this is the case. It is important that parents and pupils are aware that both outcomes are a possibility. Not every child that sits an award will win one and Hazlegrove has no control over how the senior schools allocate them each year.

Sport and Inter-School Fixtures

Team sports are played as follows:

	Girls	Boys
Autumn	Hockey	Rugby
Spring	Netball	Hockey
Summer	Cricket	Cricket

In the calendar, look for U10 (Year 5) and U11 (Year 6) matches.

Information about matches, teams and timings will be posted on the noticeboard outside the ICT Room and on the Parent Portal of the school website, by 6pm on the previous day. A match update line will also give details on match days (01963 442602).

Houses

All pupils are placed in one of four Houses when they join the Prep School and will have the opportunity to represent their House in a number of school events. If your child has an older sibling, they will usually be placed in the same House.

Each House has a member of staff at its helm who rallies the team!

Dover	Red	Norton	Yellow
Lyon	Blue	Tremlett	Green

A House competition is run each year, with a cup being awarded at the end of the summer term. The competition includes:

- Weekly star totals
- Subject competitions
- Sports day
- Merit and plus totals
- Termly House matches
- Inter-House quizzes

...amongst others.

Lunch and Break Times

In Years 5 to 8 pupils are on a rota, having early or late lunch for a week at a time. They are signed in to ensure that they have eaten. Teachers and catering staff monitor children's choices to ensure they maintain a healthy diet. At break times pupils are served snacks and encouraged to have a drink, milk or water. Please make sure your tutor is aware of any child's eating difficulties or allergies.

Tuck

Fruit and snacks are supplied at both morning and afternoon breaks. Please do not allow your child to bring in sweets or other snacks at any time. If they would like to bring in a cake for a birthday, this should be taken to their tutor room where it will be shared out at an appropriate time. Allergens should be clearly displayed. We are a nut free school.

Electronic Equipment

Day pupils are never allowed to bring electronic equipment into school. This includes mobile phones, iPods, games, cameras etc. Permissible items are calculators and electronic dictionaries or translators. If boarders have electronic equipment in the boarding house, it should remain there during the school day. All Year 6 pupils will be issued with an iPad at the start of the year. Parents will receive a letter outlining the process and costs. Our expectations regarding their use are that children should ensure that their iPads are fully charged at the start of the day and to only use the iPad at the specific instruction of a member of staff. Teachers will monitor their safe and responsible usage and we would encourage parents to take an active role in this too.

School Equipment

As well as their pencil case, pupils will also need to have their swimming kit, PE kit and Games kit in school every day. It is also important that they have appropriate outdoor play clothes – coats, gloves and hats in winter; sun hats in the summer. Sun cream should also be kept in kit bags during the summer term. Please ensure that all extra property is clearly named.

Pencil Case Equipment

Middle School pupils should have a named pencil case with pencils, a handwriting pen, eraser, sharpener, a small ruler, protractor and colouring pencils. In Year 6 it begins to be useful for pupils to have their own scientific calculator.

See the list below:

Yes Please	No Thank You
Earphones (Year 6)	Large, Rigid Pencil Cases
Pencils x3	Sharpies
Fountain Pen or Handwriting Pen	Gel Pens
Erasers (white, unscented)	Fineliners or Biro
15cm Ruler	Felt Tip Pens
Highlighters	Scented Rubbers or Pens
Basic Set of Coloured Pencils	Novelty Erasers (cars, animals, etc)
Pencil Sharpener (handheld)	Ink Erasers
Pencil Case (small, soft, with zip)	Pencil Toppers
Glue Stick	Tipex
Scissors	

Lost Property

Lost property is looked after by the school matrons who will return any labelled possessions to pupils daily. Unnamed items are kept by the matrons and then displayed to pupils and parents at various times (often on the last day of term) for identification. It is important that all items are labelled in an easy-to-find location with the child's name. Smaller, more expensive items, i.e. glasses, watches etc, can often be found in the school office.

Hair, Jewellery and Make-up

Hair must be kept tidy and above the collar. Long hair must be tied back. Hair must be its natural colour. Jewellery: No jewellery allowed apart from watches and small gold or silver, matching, stud earrings (one per ear). Makeup is not allowed, this includes clear mascara.

School Shop – Year 5 and Year 6

The school shop is on site and is open at the following times throughout the term:

Monday 8:15am – 9:00am, Tuesday Closed, Wednesday 3:00pm – 5:00pm

Thursday Closed, Friday 8:15am – 9:00am, Exeat/Half Term Fridays 3:30pm – 4:15pm

Payment for second hand clothes and accessories can be added to the school bill. Payment for new items can be made by cash, cheque or card. Please call the shop to arrange an appointment if a full uniform kit out is required.

Contact Details: E uniform@hazlegrove.co.uk | T 01963 442613

Holiday Opening Hours – are arranged by term.

Middle School Transformers

A child in each form will be given the role of being a Middle School transformer each week. This comes with a badge and the following expectations:

- To smile and be positive, to greet everyone
- To look after their friends and peers
- To speak to duty staff if they notice problems.
- To serve the break to their year group on the allotted day.

Our Community

We hope that this information helps your child to integrate comfortably into the Middle School community. We greatly look forward to welcoming you and building the relationships which underpin all we do. If you find you are suffering from information overload then please do ask any member of the Middle School team for advice! We will be happy to answer any questions you might have.



HAZLEGROVE

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