



# GARSTANG COMMUNITY ACADEMY



# Information Booklet for Parents and Carers 2026-2027

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## Introduction

We have created this information booklet to ensure parents/carers are informed of key information and events throughout the year. Please take the time to read the information booklet and share it with your child, as it will assist us to work together effectively to support them.

The details in this booklet attempt to respond to any queries that you or your child may have regarding our academy's systems and procedures. Of course, should you have any questions that are not answered in the information below, please contact the academy via telephone (**01995 603226**) or email [info@garstang.fcat.org.uk](mailto:info@garstang.fcat.org.uk).







## Message from Mr Singh

Since my appointment as Headteacher in January 2023, it has been my privilege to lead Garstang Community Academy on a journey of continuous improvement. We are building something special here, and it is a mission we are on together, with our students, staff, governors, and parents/carers. Our goal is simple: to ensure every child is supported to achieve their very best, not just academically, but as well-rounded individuals. We do this by focusing on high standards and a culture of high expectations, all while nurturing our students with an approach based on positive reinforcement and rewards. We believe that when children feel valued and supported, they are inspired to grow.

Everything we do is guided by our core mission: **Grow, Care, Achieve, Together.** These are not just words; they are the values that shape every school day and define our community. We invite you to see our mission in action. Please contact us to arrange a tour. Come and see our wonderful students and dedicated staff first-hand, and discover why Garstang Community Academy is the right place for your child to thrive.



# Inclusion

We are committed at Garstang Community Academy to ensuring that all students, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), are fully included in every aspect of school life. This includes access to the curriculum, participation in extra-curricular activities, and involvement in school trips. Support is tailored to meet individual needs, and we work closely with parents and carers to ensure the right approach is in place. When needed, our team also collaborates with external professionals to provide effective, well-rounded support. Our SENDCo, **Laura Cooper**, leads a dedicated team based in the Learning Support area. However, most of our support happens in the classroom, where staff work alongside students to help them succeed within a mainstream setting.

Many students with SEND will have been identified during primary school. At Garstang Community Academy, the process typically begins with referrals or observations from teaching staff and, when necessary, includes input from external agencies. These processes can take time, and in many cases, thoughtful adjustments made by classroom teachers are enough to effectively meet students' needs.

As a mainstream school, we welcome a wide range of learners with varied abilities and aptitudes. While we strive to meet the needs of as many students as possible, there are occasions when more specialist input is appropriate. In those cases, we work in partnership with families and the Local Authority to identify the most suitable support.



# Term Dates 2026/27

## Autumn Term 2026

**Starts:** Thursday 3rd September 2026

**Half term:** Monday 26th October – Friday 30th October 2026

**Ends:** Friday 18th December 2026

## Spring Term 2027

**Starts:** Wednesday 6th January 2027

**Half Term:** Monday 15th February – Friday 19th February 2027

**Ends:** Thursday 25th March 2027

## Summer Term 2027

**Starts:** Tuesday 13th April 2027

**May Day:** Monday 3rd May 2027

**Half Term:** Monday 31st May – Friday 4th June 2027

**Ends:** Wednesday 21st July 2027

## Inset Days (*Academy closed to students*)

*Tuesday 1st September 2026*

*Wednesday 2nd September 2026*

*Friday 20th November 2026*

*Monday 4th January 2027*

*Tuesday 5th January 2027*

*Monday 22nd February 2027*

*Monday 12th April 2027*

*Friday 2nd July 2027*





# Teaching and Learning

At Garstang Community Academy, we believe that an exceptional education transforms students from passive recipients of information into independent, resilient, and highly motivated learners.

Our evidence-based teaching and learning framework is purposefully designed to move beyond traditional rote learning, ensuring our classrooms are intellectually stimulating, inclusive, and deeply engaging spaces.

By combining rigorous academic standards with proven pedagogical techniques, we cultivate the skills your child needs to thrive both in their examinations and in their future careers.



# Teaching and Learning: Lesson Approaches

- **Active Engagement:** Ensuring every student is an active participant in their own learning journey, rather than a spectator.
- **Targeted Questioning:** Utilising questioning techniques to challenge understanding and deepen thinking.
- **Individual Mini-Whiteboards:** Using whiteboards for whole-class responses so that every single child formulates an answer.
- **Immediate Feedback:** Allowing teachers to assess understanding in real time and instantly adapt the lesson to support or stretch your child.
- **Structured Collaboration:** Designing pair and small-group work to tackle complex academic problems together.
- **Communication Skills:** Helping students learn to articulate complex ideas clearly, confidently, and professionally.
- **Critical Thinking:** Teaching students *how* to think rather than just *what* to think, by encouraging them to question and evaluate evidence.
- **Lifelong Learning:** Instilling the intellectual confidence and curiosity your child needs to thrive in higher education and the modern workplace.





## Structure of the Academy Day

Students are expected to adhere to the following daily schedule:

| Period       | Start Time | End Time |
|--------------|------------|----------|
| Registration | 8:40am     | 9:05am   |
| Lesson 1     | 9:05am     | 10:05am  |
| Lesson 2     | 10:05am    | 11:05am  |
| Break        | 11:05am    | 11:25am  |
| Lesson 3     | 11:25am    | 12:25pm  |
| Lesson 4     | 12:25pm    | 1:25pm   |
| Lunch        | 1:25pm     | 2:05pm   |
| Lesson 5     | 2:05pm     | 3:05pm   |

## Year Leaders & Tutor Groups

Your first point of contact in the academy is your child's Form Tutor or Year Leader.

| Year Group | Year Leader  | Contact Email                    |
|------------|--------------|----------------------------------|
| Year 7     | Mr Conway    | a.conway@garstang.fcat.org.uk    |
| Year 8     | Mr Grindley  | r.grindley@garstang.fcat.org.uk  |
| Year 9     | Mrs Shepherd | j.shepherd@garstang.fcat.org.uk  |
| Year 10    | Mr Passerini | p.passerini@garstang.fcat.org.uk |
| Year 11    | Mr McKiernan | j.mckiernan@garstang.fcat.org.uk |



# Uniform Guide

We require our students to wear an academy uniform to establish identity, build belonging, and maintain high professional standards. Uniforms must be worn correctly in school, during travel, and on visits.

## Official Academy Suppliers

- **The Uniform & Leisurewear Company Ltd** (Garstang / Lancaster) | [www.ualonline.com](http://www.ualonline.com)
- **Top One Uniforms** (Preston) | 01772 828616

## Essential Uniform Specification

- Navy blazer with academy crest
- Academy jumper or sleeveless jumper (optional)
- White long/short sleeved shirt
- GCA Year 7-10 tie or Year 11 tie as appropriate
- Student lanyard and badge
- Medium grey straight-leg trousers or grey pleated knee-length skirt
- Plain black socks (no trainer socks) or plain black tights
- Flat plain black shoes
- A suitable coat with no oversized logos
- Jewellery is not permitted with the exception of a wristwatch. No earrings are allowed due to safety reasons.

## Skirt Length & Appearance Notes

Skirt lengths must fall just above the knee and fully cover the upper thigh when standing or sitting. Hair should be tidy and of natural colour (no extreme hairstyles or 0-1 cuts). Minimal natural make-up is allowed, but nail varnish, false nails, and false eyelashes are prohibited.



# Standards Card & Equipment Checks

Every student has a **Standards Card** checked daily during morning tutor time.

- **Uniform & Equipment Compliance:** Students meeting standards are awarded 3 award points each week on ClassCharts.
- **Infringements:** Form Tutors or school staff will sign the card for incomplete equipment, untucked shirts, or jewelry.
- **Sanctions:** Accumulating 3 signatures within a half-term leads to a 1-hour after school detention. Accumulating 6 signatures puts a student out of circulation at lunch for a week, requires a Year Leader monitoring card, and triggers a parental meeting.
- **Missing Standards Card:** Triggers an immediate 1-hour after school detention.
- **Incomplete Equipment:** Students with missing gear will be loaned items or given a school pencil case in exchange for their mobile phone or a personal belonging until the end of the day.

**Standards Card**

"Every teacher has the right to teach and every student has the right to learn."



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tutor Group \_\_\_\_\_

Form Tutor : \_\_\_\_\_





## Essential Equipment List

Students must place their pencil case on their desk at the start of every lesson:

- School Bag & Pencil Case
- Blue/black pens & Green pen
- Ruler, Eraser, Pencil, and Sharpener
- Glue stick & Scientific calculator
- Whiteboard, pen, and eraser set

Please remind your child to bring a water bottle to school every day.



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## Physical Education (PE) Kit

Full PE kit is mandatory for every lesson. If medically excused, a note from home is required, and students must still change into their kit to participate contextually.

- **Essential Kit:** GCA contour polo (with badge), black shorts, black touchline socks, and training shoes (strictly no pimple soles).
- **Optional/Weather Kit:** GCA contour 1/4 zip sweatshirt, black/navy long-sleeved skins/leggings.
- **Activity Specific:** Gum shield (Rugby/Hockey), Football boots, and Shin pads.

**Note:** If a student has PE during Period 5, they may choose to go home wearing their PE kit.





## Mobile Phones & Electronic Devices

Mobile phones, smartwatches, and wireless headphones/Airpods are strictly **not permitted to be used or visible** during the academy day. They must be switched off and stored away in lockers at all times.

Students are forbidden from using phones to capture images or videos of any student or adult in the academy, or to send offensive/bullying material. Smartwatches must remain completely disconnected from data networks.





| Year Group | Key Dates                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Year 7     | Meet the tutor - Thursday 1st October 2026<br>Progress Evening - Thursday 28th January 2027                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Year 8     | Progress Evening - Thursday 25th Feb 2027                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Year 9     | Options Evening - Thursday 7th January 2027<br>Progress Evening - Thursday 11th February 2027                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Year 10    | Learn to Learn Evening - Thursday 15th October 2026<br>Progress Evening - Thursday 18th March 2027<br>Y10 Mock exams - 7th - 21st June 2027                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Year 11    | Y11 Mock Exams window - 23rd November 2026 - 7th December 2026<br>Mock results morning - Wednesday 13th January 2027<br>Progress Evening - Thursday 14th January 2027<br>Final GCSE exams commence on 10th May 2027 (practical and vocational courses could be assessed earlier)<br>Exam Results Day - 19th August 2027 |

## Learner Reviews & Key Academic Dates

Parents will receive two progress reports regarding their child's academic attainment and performance throughout the academic year.

## Progress Report Schedule

- **Year 7, 8, & 9:** Learner Review 1 (January 2027), Learner Review 2 ( July 2027)
- **Year 10:** Learner Review 1 ( January 2027), Learner Review 2 (July 2027)
- **Year 11:** Learner Review (January 2027)



# Home-School Communication Platforms

The school employs two essential applications to keep families synchronised with day-to-day student progress:



**Bromcom MCAS (My Child at School):** Serves as the primary system for broader student administration, including monitoring attendance, accessing formal assessment reports, checking the school calendar, and reading institutional communications.

**ClassCharts Parent App:** Used for tracking real-time behaviour and positive achievements, monitoring negative behaviours with context, checking accumulated reward points, and tracking homework deadlines assigned by teachers.



# Attendance & Punctuality

There is an undeniable, direct link between high school attendance and final academic attainment. Garstang Community Academy sets an aspirational goal of **100% attendance** for every student, with a minimum standard target of 97%

- **The Academy Day Start:** Morning registration begins promptly at **8:40am**. Any student arriving past 8:40am is marked late and issued an immediate detention. Arriving after 9:10am results in an unauthorised 'U' code, which acts as a recorded absence and directly damages overall attendance percentages.
- **Reporting Absences:** If a student is absent due to unexpected illness, parents must contact the academy by **8:40am** on each consecutive day of the absence, stating the child's name and tutor form.
- **Term-Time Holidays:** Absences due to holidays during active term time will not be authorised under any circumstance. Unauthorised holiday leaves are coded accordingly and can result in legal fines issued by the Local Authority.



# Safeguarding, Anti-Bullying, & Behaviour Expectations

Our primary objective is to maintain a safe, welcoming, and productive environment.

## Anti-Bullying Protocol

At Garstang Community Academy, we educate our pupils to be **Upstanders**, meaning students are expected to stand up and speak out against injustice or mistreatment. Bullying is strictly defined as the repetitive, intentional hurting of a person or group.

If a student experiences or witnesses bullying, they must immediately tell a teacher or report it via the school voice boxes, the online reporting form, or by emailing **[ineedtotalk@garstang.fcat.org.uk](mailto:ineedtotalk@garstang.fcat.org.uk)**. When bullying is reported, the academy conducts student interviews, contacts both families, implements interventions, and conducts supervised restorative meetings.

## Designated Safeguarding Team

- **Lead Pastoral Manager:** Mr Baker ([l.baker@garstang.fcat.org.uk](mailto:l.baker@garstang.fcat.org.uk))
- **Pastoral Manager:** Mr Porter ([D.porter@garstang.fcat.org.uk](mailto:D.porter@garstang.fcat.org.uk))







## Network & IT Facilities Rules

All school computer network usage is strictly monitored.

Students are legally held responsible for all activity logged under their personal username, must keep passwords completely secret, and must never access public chat rooms or social networking sites on school grounds.

Inappropriate use of social media outside of school hours that impacts the school community or brings the academy into disrepute will be treated with extreme severity and involves police notification.



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# Travel & School Bus Services

Active school bus services are centrally organised through the Lancashire County Council. Parents can find full operational routes, check free student travel eligibility criteria, or buy discounted seasonal passes on the council website.

- **Garstang Community Academy 46X Service:** The academy independently contracts a dedicated school bus service running directly from Lancaster and Galgate to lower travel expenses for unentitled families. The 46X service runs exclusively for GCA students at an annual rate of £957, payable across an 11-month installment plan. For administrative inquiries, email [finance@garstang.fcat.org.uk](mailto:finance@garstang.fcat.org.uk).
- **Bus Behaviour Expectations:** Students must remain polite, courteous, and follow the direct safety instructions of the driver or appointed Bus Monitors at all times. Behavioral infractions on transport will be handled via the academy's internal behavior management systems.

