



Welcome to Parkside



Welcome

A warm welcome to The Parkside School. We are an outstanding specialist communication and interaction school, supporting the individual needs of pupils in the heart of Norwich.

Parkside has high but different expectations for each of its pupils. We understand that pupils different needs require different approaches and their personalised learning journeys, lead to varying outcomes that best support their needs.

Pupils at Parkside have a highly personalised route to support them becoming a confident and active citizen and the School encourages a community spirit, where pupils learn to care for one another.



Our aim is to provide a learning environment with outstanding teaching, support and pastoral care. We will empower all students to have the skills necessary to become valued members of society who will not be afraid to try new experiences, or feel limited by their particular needs and who will aspire to achieve their best.

Carolyn Ellis-Gage, Head Teacher

Opportunities to explore ...

All new pupils are invited into the school with their parents and carers to have a look around and to get a sense of their new school environment. This gives the children and their families the chance to become familiar with the school and it's also a great opportunity for us to get to know the children too!

We will ask parents and carers, to fill out some forms so that we have permission for your child to join in some of the activities offered by the school, e.g. horse riding, swimming, trips out. There is support available to help complete the forms if required, please contact the School Reception and they will be able to advise you with this further.

We realise that starting a new school can be an anxious time for children, as well as for their parents and carers so if you have any concerns, please contact the school and let us know so we can help to support your families needs.



In Primary phase we take the pupils horse riding to Western Equestrian Centre. Horse riding has many benefits to children with complex needs such as sensory benefits, creating a mood-boosting experience or helping children and young people to overcome any developmental difficulties they may have.

Recreation Road Teaching Pool (above) is conveniently situated just behind our school, enabling us to walk with the children to their swimming lessons. Swimming promotes confidence and helps with co-ordination.

We are really pleased that School Trips are able to go ahead again, and Gressenhall Rural life Museum (above) is a favourite with the pupils at Parkside!

Fitness and Wellbeing



We have recently installed a new gym as part of our wellbeing and healthy lifestyles programme. It includes 5 pieces of cardiovascular equipment and a dual pulley weight stack. The pupils have been very excited to start using it this year and staff have been trained in supervising them within it. Classes have now been using the Health Club in lessons, not just within PE!

The aim is to equip pupils at Parkside with the skills, knowledge and confidence to access a gym environment outside of School, as part of their healthy lifestyle and to support them in gaining their independent living skills.

Recreation Road Sports Centre

Just across the road from the school is The Recreation Road Sports Centre which we use regularly for PE lessons. We share the use of its facilities with two other schools in the local area and it is a great space to enjoy.

We believe that PE is really important to build up self esteem and confidence. The PE Department firmly believes in Sport for All and caters for the full range of abilities by adapting the sports activities to ensure that we are all inclusive and meet the needs of every pupil.



Dining

School Meals are provided through Norse at the standard charge for those families who are not eligible for free school lunches.

Children have a set menu over a four- week period with different meals each day, consisting of a main meal and dessert. Schools meals are cooked on the premises to provide a healthy, nutritional lunch and a packed lunch is provided when children are out of school on visits.

Children may bring their own packed lunch to school and will eat it in the dining room with the pupils having school meals. Packed lunches should be kept in a sensible bag or container with their name marked on. Please avoid glass bottles.

When not eating their meals children play out on the school playground, or join in the activities organised during wet weather. Staff supervise the children during their lunch break, normally under the direction of a senior member of staff.

Primary pupils also benefit from structured group activities at lunchtimes to develop interaction, co-ordination and motor control.

We also have a Breakfast Club at school and a snack trolley at break times.



Parkside has it's own registered nutritionist, Andrea Carroll Langan.

Part of Andrea's role is to run workshops for families who are interested in learning practical tips on eating and all round family wellbeing.



The school encourages all pupils to eat healthy balanced meals and advice to families about healthy lunchboxes is always available upon request. If you would like any ideas around healthy eating or lunchbox ideas, please let the school office know and we can arrange for someone to contact you.

Getting to and from school ...

Parkside School is attended by some local children but many pupils come from much further afield. Each day pupils who require transport to school arrive and depart either by taxi, or on one of our many school busses provided by Norfolk County Council. Transport to and from school is provided for all children by Norfolk County Council, free of charge for those who live more than three miles from school (or over two miles for those entitled to free school meals).

Please follow the link below to the website if your child will require this service and follow the guidance.

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-and-college-transport/home-to-school-transport/who-can-get-free-school-transport>

We do encourage families who live nearby to walk to school if possible as it can become quite congested at school drop off and pick-up times, not to mention the fitness benefits!

If your child will be biking or scooting to school, we have a bike and scooter park just inside the school gate, so pupils are able to leave them locked up safely. Please note that locks will need to be provided.



Meet Bella ... our adorable Therapy Dog



Bella is a Cavapoo and she joined our school in 2020, much to everyone's delight.

When she's not snuggling and entertaining the children and staff in school, she likes to cause mischief at home with Mrs Ellis-Gage and her family!

Bella is a very popular member of our school community and brings many benefits and joy to the pupils. She is good at reducing anxiety and enabling children and young people to feel more secure. Caring for Bella also improves the pupil's ability to think of the needs of others.

The pupils are able to walk her around the site with staff, pet her kindly and enjoy her company in class!



'Time to Talk' ... our monthly drop-in coffee morning for parents, carers and grandparents



We hold a drop-in session in Norwich City Centre and another in Great Yarmouth each month. These are run by our School's Parent Support Adviser, Natasha Peachment and Emma Blake, our school's Community Development Co-ordinator, giving parents, carers and grandparents the chance to come together and have a chat in a supportive, but informal group.

Our school Parent Support Adviser is available to support families with a variety of different issues and can be contacted by getting in touch with the school office in the first instance.

The Arts

'the special language of children, who, even before they learn to speak, respond intuitively to dance, music and colour...'

Ernest Boyer

The arts are very important to us at Parkside, both in terms of curriculum content and the extra curricular clubs and therapeutic practices that we offer.

We are conscious of the beneficial effects that free expression through arts activities can have on wellbeing and behaviour, and believe that through providing a wide range of opportunities to creatively explore themselves and their world, pupils are more likely to develop holistically.

Speech, language and communication development is a primary focus for our school, and this is supported by our arts provision, through weekly communal singing, group music making, opportunities to perform on stage before an audience, group art projects, dramatic improvisation and role play.

We welcome visiting artists, musicians and theatre groups to work with and inspire our pupils, and have been involved in some really exciting projects.



Reading

Language and literacy skills are acquired through listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Here at Parkside, we recognise reading is an important skill to develop. We aim to encourage the enjoyment of books and sharing books and are lucky to have our own library in school. We use a range of reading schemes, including Collins Big Cat and the Oxford Reading Tree. To develop pupils reading skills a number of approaches are used, including the use of phonics and whole word reading. Phonics lessons teach the letter sounds in an enjoyable, multi-sensory way, focusing on the teaching of letters by their sound, not their name.

We encourage you, as their parents/carers to be sharing books and listening to your children read, which will in turn, help your child's reading skills to develop. We believe that children should read anything that interests them and that reading is a really useful skill for everyone.



Suggestions to help your child with reading:

- Play I spy
- Read rhymes
- Listen to stories together on CD
- Talk about what you do
- Point at road signs
- Read signs in shops
- Read labels in the supermarket
- Become a member of the library where you will find lots of wonderful books to borrow

Parents and Friends of Parkside School Association (PFA)

The PFA was formed in 1983 and is now a busy Association. As the name suggests, it is a group of parents, teachers and friends of the school whose main aim is to enhance the education of the children at Parkside. This is done in the usual way by raising funds to purchase equipment which would not normally be available through the Local Education Authority. Equally important is the role the Association plays in helping parents and children and enabling them to support each other. Making parents aware of Further Education Courses available after 16 and discussion groups with teachers regarding educational issues in school.

The PFA are committed to fundraising for all the extra things that the wonderful Parkside pupils deserve and that bring them joy. Fundraising enables the PFA to continue putting on events for the pupils such as the Seasonal Shopping Experience at Christmas, providing refreshments at the Year 11 School Prom, School Disco's and contributing towards the cost of residential and day trips.

The PFA is currently a small group of parents, carers and teachers and it would be great to welcome some new members to the team. We know first hand how busy life can be, but just a few hours really would make a big difference!

If you are interested in joining the team or simply helping out at events sometimes, please do let the school office know and they will ask Claire, Chair of the PFA to contact you.



Claire Cumberlidge

Chair of the Parent and friends of Parkside School Association



Uniform

Parkside School has a school uniform which all pupils, except those in Year Eleven, are required to wear. Year Eleven pupils have the option to wear non-uniform clothes, but within the limitations of appropriateness for school. Upon entry to the school, all pupils will be given a team colour of red, blue or green, which they keep until they leave Parkside.

Uniform can be purchased online or in person from Birds of Dereham. Arrangements can be made to help families who need financial assistance with school uniform purchases.

<https://www.birdsofdereham.com/shop/category/specialist-schools-519/>



Uniform List

Sweatshirt: Team colour with school logo

Polo shirt: Team colour with school logo

T-Shirt: White with school logo in team colour (this is an optional summer item)

Trousers or skirt: Dark grey or black (no tracksuit bottoms please)

Footwear:

Dark sensible day shoes (no high heels or boots)

Plimsolls or trainers for PE

Swimwear:

Plain one-piece costume or trunks, swimming hat and towel.

ALL ITEMS SHOULD BE CLEARLY NAMED, AS UNCLAIMED LOST PROPERTY WILL BE DISPOSED OF AT THE END OF EACH TERM.

The following items are **not** allowed to be worn in school...

- Makeup
- Jewellery of any type including finger rings, ear-rings, nose rings, body piercings etc. Small ear studs can be worn but must be removed for PE and swimming.
- Heavy footwear/flimsy summer footwear
- Tracksuits
- Offensive designs on T-Shirts or clothing

