

# The GCA Way

December 2025

Godmanchester Community Academy



*Kindness and Hard Work*

## **Introduction**

At Godmanchester Community Academy, we believe that children learn best in a safe, consistent and inclusive environment where expectations are clear, explicitly taught and lived every day. Our behaviour curriculum, *The GCA Way*, sets out the routines, expectations and valued behaviours that enable all pupils to flourish academically, socially and emotionally. It is grounded in our school values of Kindness and Hard Work.

The GCA Way defines the behaviours and habits we expect every pupil to develop. These are not simply rules for compliance, but helpful, pro-social behaviours that allow individuals and communities to thrive. Some expectations—such as core routines for learning—are the same for all children from the moment they join the school. Others—our twelve valued behaviours—develop in depth and sophistication as pupils move from EYFS to Year 6. For example, what “listening” or “sharing” looks like in Reception will differ from what we expect of pupils in upper Key Stage 2, and our curriculum sets out this progression clearly.

By teaching, modelling and noticing these behaviours across all contexts, pupils build positive habits that shape their identity, strengthen their relationships and support emotional wellbeing. Over time, these habits develop character, promote self-regulation and prepare children to thrive both within school and beyond.

## **The Structure of The GCA Way**

The GCA Way has two strands:

### **1. Whole-School Routines**

These are the consistent, practical expectations that make learning calm, safe and predictable. All pupils learn these from the moment they join the school. Routines include transitions, lining up, responding to attention signals, classroom systems and shared expectations for conduct around school.

### **2. Valued Behaviours**

These are the character-based behaviours that support pupils' personal, social and academic development. While the behaviours are the same for every child, what they look like in practice is developmental. Our progression model outlines how each behaviour grows from EYFS to Year 6. This progression moves children from a focus on themselves to a focus on skills for growth and their future linked to independence, resilience and internal motivation.

The following summarises the main focuses throughout the progression:

In Self – Understanding and Managing Me (EYFS and Key Stage 1)

- Self-Control – Thinking before acting; regulating impulses.
- Emotional Regulation – Recognising, naming and managing emotions.
- Sense of Self – Feeling safe, valued and confident in one's identity and abilities.

With Others – Connecting with the People Around Me (Lower Key Stage 2)

- Empathy & Kindness – Listening, caring and acting with compassion.
- Respect – Valuing people, differences, beliefs and belongings.

- Inclusion & Diversity – Welcoming and celebrating everyone; ensuring all feel they belong.
- Teamwork & Relationships – Taking turns, cooperating, building trust and resolving conflict.

#### To Grow – Building Skills for the Future (Upper Key Stage 2)

- Independence – Thinking and acting responsibly for oneself.
- Problem-Solving – Working through challenges, ideas and disagreements constructively.
- Resilience – Learning from mistakes, persevering and bouncing back.
- Embracing Challenge – Being brave; seeing effort and challenge as paths to growth.
- Motivation – Working hard, taking pride and recognising success (our own and others').

## Whole-School Routines

Our whole-school routines create a calm, safe and predictable environment where every child can learn. They are taught explicitly from the moment pupils join the school and practised every day. These routines help us show Kindness and Hard Work in all parts of school life.

Classroom Routines							
I know that consistent routines help us feel safe, ready and organised.							
Entering the Classroom	Getting ready for my learning	Handing out books or specialised resources	Completing work in my books	Stopping when my teacher signals	Speaking and Contributing	Water Bottles	Going to the toilet
<p>Only bring into school the things I need for my learning*.</p> <p>Put my things in the right places.</p> <p>Calmly find my space.</p> <p>Follow the instructions on the board or at my learning space.</p>	<p>Learn and remember my learning space(s) and where things in my classroom are kept.</p> <p>Only collect what I need.</p> <p>Put my things in the correct space (sitting on them, on my table, under my table etc)</p> <p>Keep my space clear and tidy.</p> <p>Quietly and politely remove unneeded things.</p>	<p>Wait until my teacher has signalled to begin.</p> <p>Quickly and quietly play my part in the process.</p> <p>Understand sometimes my part will be waiting silently.</p>	<p>Write and underline date (short) and title (where necessary)</p> <p>Start my writing from the margin.</p> <p>Write one digit per square (in maths)</p> <p>Put a neat line through a mistake.</p>	<p>Stop what I am doing immediately.</p> <p>Be silent.</p> <p>Track the adult.</p> <p>Show I am ready.</p>	<p>Speak in full sentences.</p> <p>Pronounce words clearly.</p> <p>Project my voice so everyone can hear.</p> <p>Show politeness and look at the person speaking.</p> <p>Wait my turn.</p>	<p>Bring my named water bottle into school filled.</p> <p>Put my water bottle in the right place.</p> <p>Drink regularly to stay hydrated but not when my teacher is talking.</p>	<p>Remember to go to the toilet during playtime and lunchtime to avoid disturbing my learning.</p> <p>Quietly and politely signal that I am desperate to go to the toilet if I cannot wait until playtime or lunchtime.</p> <p>Wait till my teacher says I can go.</p>
Outside of the Classroom Routines							
I know that consistent routines help us feel safe, ready and organised.							
Lining Up and Moving Smoothly	Cloakrooms	Toilets	Playtime Behaviour	Indoor Lunchtime Behaviour	End of playtime or lunchtime	Assemblies and Visitors	School Trips
<p>Line up in register order unless told otherwise.</p> <p>Know who is in front and behind me.</p> <p>Wait without leaning on walls or furniture.</p>	<p>Only bring into school the things I need.</p> <p>Hang coats and bags correctly on my peg or place them in the boxes provided.</p>	<p>Remember to go to the toilet at playtime or lunchtime.</p> <p>Use the toilets closest to my classroom or as directed (playtime/ lunchtime/ intervention)</p>	<p>Play safely and kindly.</p> <p>Check my friends are enjoying the game.</p> <p>Agree rules before playing.</p>	<p>Walk into the hall.</p> <p>Sit down straight away.</p> <p>Use a knife and fork correctly.</p>	<p>Respond to the whistles: stop (1), line up (2), silent (3)</p> <p>Quickly and quietly line up in the correct space and order.</p>	<p>Enter the hall/room silently.</p> <p>Sit in the correct area for my year group/class.</p> <p>Wait for the person before me to have</p>	<p>Only bring the things needed for the trip.</p> <p>Stay with my partner and group.</p> <p>Listen to and follow the instructions given.</p>

<p>Walk calmly and safely.</p> <p>Face forwards and use a steady pace.</p> <p>Hold doors open for others.</p> <p>Look at displays with my eyes only.</p> <p>Step aside to give others space.</p> <p>Share a smile as we pass.</p> <p>*Some movement is silent whilst at other times it is quiet but it is always calm.</p> <p>**Wear a lanyard if I am leaving my classroom mid-lesson for a movement break.</p>	<p>Put my lunchbox away in the correct place.</p>	<p>Use an empty cubicle making sure I am the only person in there.</p> <p>Lock the door.</p> <p>Respect privacy.</p> <p>Use bins properly.</p> <p>Wash my hands without wasting water or soap.</p>	<p>Understand some games are not suitable for school.</p> <p>Invite others to join.</p> <p>Resolve small disagreements myself.</p> <p>Share equipment.</p> <p>Go to the first aid table immediately if I hurt myself.</p> <p>Keep the playground litter-free by using the bins.</p> <p>Stay in the classroom/space identified during wet play.</p> <p>Use the activities/games labelled wet play.</p>	<p>Eat with my mouth closed.</p> <p>Use a quiet talking voice.</p> <p>Stay in my seat while eating.</p> <p>Clean up my space.</p> <p>Use the correct bins.</p> <p>Walk sensibly from the hall to playground.</p>	<p>sat down before I sit down.</p> <p>Sit with my legs crossed, facing forward.</p> <p>Keep my hands to myself.</p> <p>Greet the person leading assembly/ talk and everyone in the hall when prompted.</p> <p>Track the person leading assembly/talk .</p> <p>Remain silent unless told otherwise.</p> <p>Put my hand up if I have an idea to share when asked.</p>	<p>Be quiet and calm.</p> <p>Remember that I am representing the school.</p>
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\*Resources to aid focus and attention e.g., fidget tools must be agreed with class teachers ahead of bringing them into school.

<p align="center"><b>**Silent Transitions</b></p> <p align="center"><b>We use <i>silent walking</i> during learning time and when walking as a whole class.</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>**Quiet Transitions</b></p> <p align="center"><b>We use <i>quiet walking</i> when noise will not disturb learning.</b></p>
<p>To and from assemblies</p> <p>To and from music, PE, library sessions and interventions</p> <p>To and from toilets during lessons</p> <p>From the playground on the third whistle</p>	<p>Into classrooms first thing in the morning</p> <p>To the playground</p> <p>To and from the dining hall</p> <p>To and from toilets during break and lunch</p> <p>To and from Kids Club</p>

\*\*\*Some children with identified needs may take brief movement breaks during lessons to help them regulate and return ready to learn. These pupils will wear a lanyard and will follow an agreed route to either the sensory pathway or another identified space in school. During these movement breaks, they are still expected to follow all other expectations for silent transitions and calm, safe movement around the school.

## Valued Behaviours

Our twelve valued behaviours describe the personal, social and learning behaviours that help every child thrive. They are grounded in our values of Kindness and Hard Work and reflect the habits we want all pupils to develop as they grow. These behaviours do not look the same at every age: what a Reception child can show will naturally differ from a Year 6 pupil.

Through a clear progression from EYFS to Year 6, we teach, model and notice these behaviours so that pupils gradually build independence, emotional strength, empathy and resilience. Over time, they learn how to manage themselves, interact respectfully with others and embrace the challenges that help them grow as learners and as people.

Curriculum Focus	Early Years Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1		Key Stage 2			
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
	<b>Understanding and Managing Me (Self)</b>			<b>Connecting with the People Around Me (Others)</b>		<b>Building Skills for the Future (Growth)</b>	
<b>Our Values: Kindness and Hard Work</b>	Learn what kindness and hard work look like.	Recognise and describe kindness and hard work.	Begin to take responsibility for my behaviour.	Understand how my behaviour affects others.	Model valued behaviours in the school community.	Take ownership and encouraging others.	Lead through role modelling, resilience and internal motivation.
<b>Valued Behaviours:</b>	<b>Understanding and Managing Me (Self)</b>			<b>Connecting with the People Around Me (Others)</b>		<b>Building Skills for the Future (Growth)</b>	
<b>Being polite</b>	Use simple polite words ("please", "thank you"). Greet adults and peers when prompted.	Remember to use manners independently in class routines.	Show politeness during simple transitions (lining up, handing out resources).	Use polite language with everyone, including during disagreements.	Model politeness across school spaces (corridors, lunch hall).	Show maturity by being polite even when frustrated or challenged.	Demonstrate leadership-level courtesy; set the standard for younger pupils.
<b>Being caring</b>	Show care for their own belongings and simple tasks.	Notice when others may need help.	Show care for themselves by organising belongings and work tools.	Show care for others' feelings and respond supportively.	Take responsibility for caring actions in teams or group tasks.	Sustain caring actions through challenges or disagreements.	Lead by example in creating a caring community across the school.
<b>Sharing</b>	Start to share toys and equipment with support.	Share classroom resources when asked.	Begin to share fairly and recognise others' needs.	Share ideas in group work and listen to contributions.	Support group success by sharing responsibilities.	Share leadership roles and allow others to succeed.	Model inclusive sharing behaviours in all school situations.

<b>Tidying up</b>	Join in tidying their play area.	Tidy their desk and learning space with reminders.	Take responsibility for packing away independently.	Help maintain tidy shared spaces (cloakroom, group table).	Take initiative to tidy communal areas (library shelves, art stations).	Manage personal organisation and resources without adult reminders.	Model high expectations of organisation and help younger pupils learn routines.
<b>Including others</b>	Play with different children with encouragement.	Notice when someone is left out.	Invite others to join in simple games or activities.	Ensure groups are fair and everyone has a role.	Actively support inclusion in teams and problem-solving tasks.	Resolve friendship issues with fairness; show leadership in peer inclusion.	Model an inclusive culture throughout school.
<b>Looking after the planet</b>	Put rubbish in the bin; basic recycling.	Begin to understand caring for nature and school grounds.	Show responsibility by using resources (paper, water) carefully.	Encourage classmates to recycle; support keeping the school tidy.	Join or help lead initiatives like Eco-teams.	Make choices that positively impact the environment across school life.	Take ownership of environmental projects and inspire others to join.
<b>Listening</b>	Listen during carpet time for short periods.	Follow simple instructions after listening.	Listen without interrupting and respond appropriately.	Listen to peers respectfully in group work.	Show active listening during assemblies, lessons and movement around school.	Sustain focused listening in longer, more complex situations.	Demonstrate outstanding listening that supports leadership and teamwork.
<b>Aiming High</b>	Try new activities with encouragement.	Show they want to improve at simple tasks.	Begin setting small personal goals ("I want to...").	Support classmates in achieving shared goals.	Challenge themselves and their team to improve together.	Set ambitious personal targets and track progress.	Demonstrate high standards and internal ambition across all learning.
<b>Appropriate volume</b>	Use quiet voices indoors and moving around the school with support.	Recognise when voices should be quiet.	Adjust volume independently with reminders.	Maintain appropriate noise in group tasks to help everyone learn.	Show leadership in modelling calm movement around school.	Self-regulate volume in all settings without prompting.	Influence whole-school calm by modelling excellent volume control.
<b>Focusing</b>	Focus for short periods with adult support.	Stay on task during simple independent tasks.	Choose strategies (quiet space, asking for help) to stay focused.	Maintain focus in group work to help the whole team succeed.	Support peers in staying focused during transitions and routines.	Manage distractions and maintain focus through challenging tasks.	Demonstrate exam-ready focus: sustained, independent, resilient.
<b>Asking for support</b>	Ask an adult for help when stuck.	Identify when they need help and ask appropriately.	Explain clearly what they need help with.	Seek help to support group success (e.g., clarifying instructions).	Encourage peers to ask for support appropriately.	Use strategies before asking for help; identify the <i>right</i> kind of support.	Seek challenge-level support that promotes independence, not reliance.
<b>Trying your best</b>	Have a go, even if unsure.	Finish simple tasks and show pride in effort.	Keep going when tasks are a little tricky.	Show consistent effort that supports group tasks and partnerships.	Demonstrate perseverance and encourage others when learning is difficult.	Sustain effort over longer tasks; respond positively to feedback.	Show resilience: embrace challenge, bounce back from mistakes, strive for personal excellence.

## **How We Teach The GCA Way**

The behaviour curriculum is taught explicitly throughout Autumn One in weekly sessions referred to as 'The GCA Way'. Where necessary, additional sessions will be timetabled during the remainder of the Autumn term and during the Spring and Summer terms either as a whole school or for individual classes. The content is also taught and revisited throughout the whole year during whole school assemblies. In addition to this, teaching is woven into daily practice through every interaction, lesson and transition.

Our teaching approach includes:

- Direct, clear explanation of each routine and valued behaviour
- Repeated modelling by all adults
- Guided practice through structured discussion, partner talk and reflection
- Role play and scenario-based teaching to support understanding, empathy and application
- Regular low-stakes checking (quizzing, retrieval, quick reflections)
- Immediate, purposeful practice in real school contexts
- Opportunities for responsibility (e.g., monitors, librarians, buddies, ambassadors) that give pupils meaningful ways to apply and deepen the valued behaviours as they mature

As pupils move through the school, they experience increasing independence, responsibility and leadership opportunities. These allow them to demonstrate and refine the valued behaviours in authentic, age-appropriate ways.

## **The GCA Way for All**

The GCA Way is for every pupil, every day. It is the foundation of a calm, kind and productive learning culture and supports all children to become better learners who develop habits for success in school and in life. While expectations remain high for every child, we recognise that some pupils—particularly those with SEND or who are disadvantaged—may need reasonable adaptations, additional teaching or tailored support to help them meet the expectations for their year group. For some pupils, this scaffolding will enable full access to their current year's expectations; for others, it may be more appropriate to focus on securing the expectations from previous year groups first, depending on their individual needs. We believe that every child can access, practise and succeed within The GCA Way.