



COUNTESS GYTHA
PRIMARY AND PRESCHOOL

PROSPECTUS 2024/25



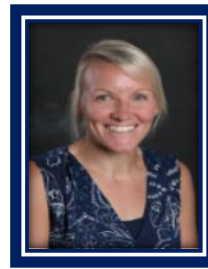
Head Teacher
Mr D Gordon

Countess Gytha Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young persons. We will ensure that the highest priority is given to following guidance and regulations to safeguard children and young people. The school expects all staff and all visitors to fulfil this expectation.





Co-Chair of Governors – Mr Paul Wilson & Mrs Sam Clifton



Our Contact Details

Address: West Camel Road
Queen Camel
Somerset
BA22 7FF

Telephone: 01935 850345

Email: office@countessgytha.ppat365.org

Website: countessgythaprimary.co.uk



Welcome to Countess Gytha Primary School

Our aim is to be a fair and harmonious school and community, where every one of us aims to achieve our highest standard in attainment, behaviour, self-esteem and our understanding of the world.

The exciting curriculum will broaden their horizons, giving them a greater sense of themselves and their role in the community.

Our children will feel cared for and secure in a happy learning environment, have good self-esteem and develop spiritually and morally throughout their time at school.

As such, we are committed to developing a strong partnership in education between home and school. Prospective parents are invited to visit the school, meet the staff and children and see the school in action.

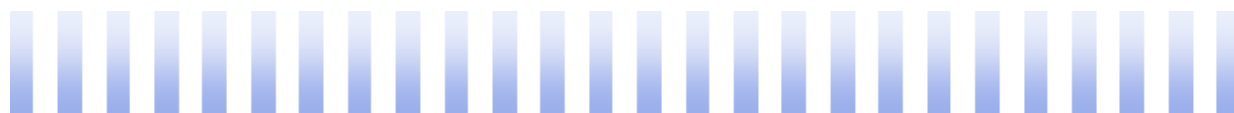
Our new purpose-built school was open to pupils in June 2016 and offers state of the art equipment and facilities. In November 2017, HRH Countess of Wessex GCVO visited to view the new school.

Please telephone the office if you would like to visit the school.

I look forward to welcoming you.

With very best wishes,

Mr David Gordon
Head Teacher



Our School Mission Statement:

‘Igniting Imagination; Enhancing Learning’

At Countess Gytha Primary we aim to:

Ensure excellent teaching and a culture of high expectations and high attainment where all of our children reach their full potential and take pride in their achievements.

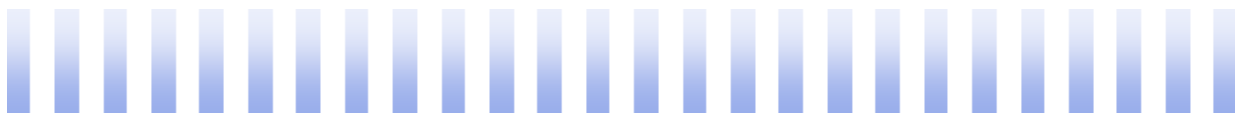
- Create a safe and stimulating environment, providing a learning experience which meets the needs of all;
- Enable children to develop as independent, motivated learners with creative enquiring minds;
- Promote and develop pupils’ spiritual, moral and cultural growth via the delivery of the agreed Somerset RE syllabus (representing all faiths).
- Provide good examples that children will use as a reference for positive behaviour;
- Encourage children to care for and respect themselves, the local community and others.

Our School will be recognised for:

- Its welcoming, positive ethos where all children are happy and thrive at school;
- High academic standards
- Artistic, sporting achievement and consideration towards others and their needs throughout the world.

Our children will:

- Feel cared for and secure in school;
- Be proud of their school and their personal contributions to its success and the wider community;
- Have good self-esteem and confidence in their individual strengths;
- Be aware of their role in the wider community.



Excellent behaviour and respect will be instilled in our children throughout the curriculum and through the role models set by all members of staff. We will apply our Behaviour Policy in a consistent manner.



Statement of Ethos and Values:

Countess Gytha is a happy school with a positive ethos. We take pride in our school community and believe that all children can be encouraged to do their best in a positive, hardworking, learning environment. We value each child as an individual and work hard to foster caring attitudes, thoughtfulness, mutual respect, self-discipline and self-confidence.



Our aim is to encourage children to work to the best of their abilities, especially in basic communication, literacy and numeracy skills, whilst also providing plenty of opportunity for using and applying and study, in a broader more in-depth sense. As well as encouraging intellectual growth, we will work with parents and guardians to develop the 'whole child'. By working together, we will ensure our pupils have the best possible opportunity to reach their personal best.

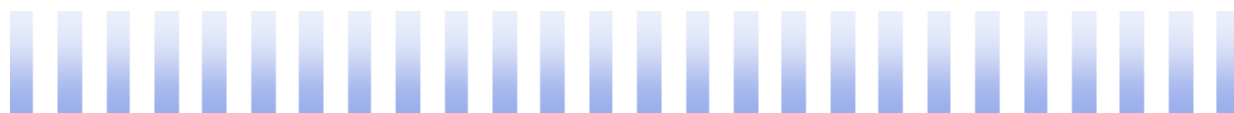
At Countess Gytha, we have an experienced and dedicated team of staff who are committed to your child achieving the highest standards of education and behaviour. We are extremely proud of our Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Provision (SMSC) and our commitment to the promotion of British Values.

Preschool

Our Preschool Unit, established in Queen Camel in 1982, now operates from purpose-built facilities, adjoining the primary school. We offer places to children from age 2 and most of our children transfer to Countess Gytha Primary School, although depending on locality, may move onto other primary schools in the area.



At Countess Gytha Preschool, we strive to create a warm and stimulating environment where learning is fun. Our primary focus is learning through play and exploration and we provide a range of activities that promote and extend children's curiosity and awareness of the world around them.



STARTING SCHOOL

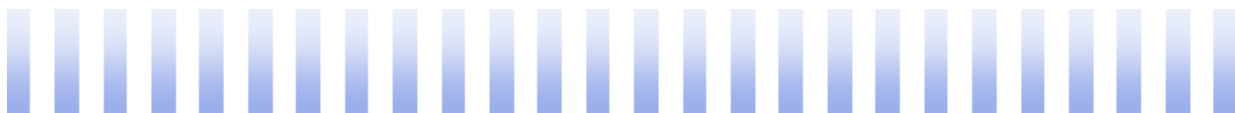
To help children settle smoothly into school a “staggered entry” is operated. This usually involves the children starting school for the first few weeks of the term on a half-day basis. By week 3 or 4, most of the children will be attending full time. There is some flexibility with our entry arrangements depending on the individual child(ren).

We invite parents to a meeting in the Summer Term before the children start in the September. Your child will also be invited into school during the second half of the Summer Term to enable him/her to meet their new teacher. These meetings provide an opportunity for you to tell us anything about your child that will help us to care for him/her. It is an anxious time for parents therefore we would like to reassure you of our desire to ensure a smooth entry to school. It would be helpful if all children, before starting school, were able to:

- Lace up/Velcro their shoes;
- zip up and undo an anorak or coat;
- button a shirt or blouse;
- handle a knife, fork and spoon;
- use the toilet without assistance;
- understand and follow simple verbal instructions.

Sometimes children join the school when the term has started or later on in their school life. We make every effort to make sure that they are welcomed, looked after and monitored so that they quickly make friends and can find their way around the school.

Teachers give pupils time to settle in before making an assessment of their academic ability. This assessment, together with records from the previous school, will enable your child to have the best start in our school.





THE SCHOOL DAY

School Session Times are staggered to ensure all children get the most out of the school day with the peers that are at a similar developmental stage to themselves.

Merlin and Pendragon

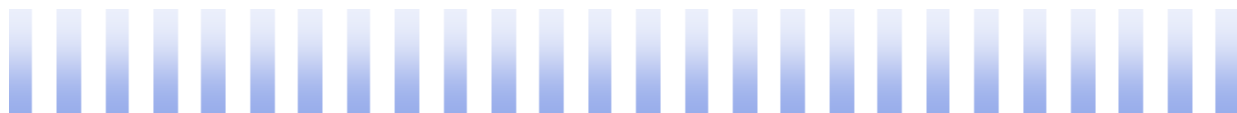
Start 8:50 am – 12 noon

Afternoons 1:00 pm - 3:20 pm

King Arthur, Excalibur and Lancelot

Start 8:50 am – 12:30pm

Afternoons 1:30pm – 3:30pm



The school has a Curriculum Framework. This document sets out our long-term planning including teaching time allocations for all areas of the curriculum.

We also offer a wide range of extra-curricular after school activities including: Sports, Crafts, Ukulele, Chess, Mindfulness and a Film Club to name but a few.

TERM TIME HOLIDAY

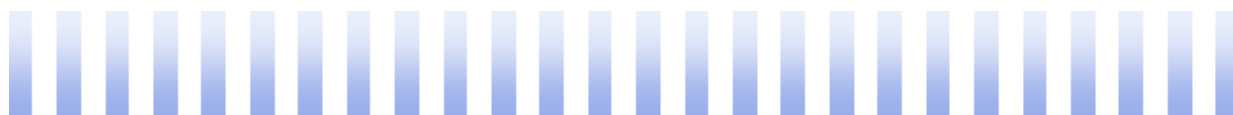
Since 1st September 2024, parents are no longer able to apply for leave of absence for any reason other than exceptional and unavoidable circumstances. We do not consider a term-time holiday to fall under these categories. Working Together to Improve School Attendance (August 2024), is the government guidance which helps schools and families work together to ensure the best attendance for all learners.

The Fixed Term Penalty Notice fees are currently set at £160 per parent, per child. Schools may notify the council to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice if a child has 10 or more session absences.

Further information can be found on the Somerset Council website here: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/school-life/school-attendance-and-children-missing-education/>

ABSENCE

If your child is ill and will not be attending school, parents are required to telephone us before 9.00 am and advise of the reason for absence. The school administrator will be checking the registers each morning and if an explanation for a child's absence has not been received by 9.15am, the office will telephone the parent to confirm the reason for the child's absence. To help us minimise the extra administrative time this involves, we would be grateful if you could ensure you telephone school by 9.00am.





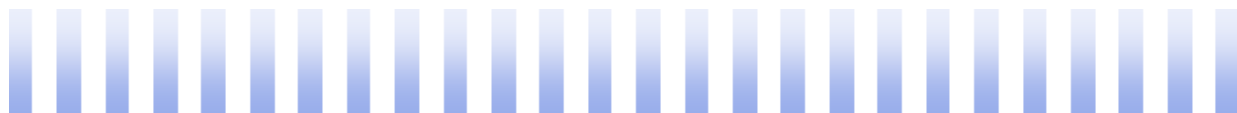
THE CURRICULUM

The Foundation Stage makes a crucial contribution to children's early development and learning. We provide children with a rich variety of teaching and learning experiences that are appropriate to their needs. The Foundation Stage is about developing key learning skills such as listening, speaking, concentrating, persistence and learning to work and co-operate with others. There are seven areas of learning and development in the Foundation Stage; they are all important and interconnected. There are three prime areas:

- Personal, social & emotional development
- Communication & language
- Physical development

There are 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts & Design

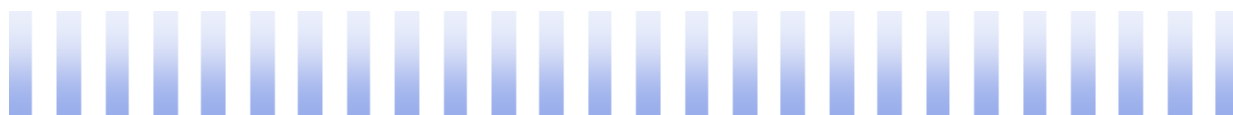


The outdoor environment is also a very special part of the Early Years curriculum. As such, it is carefully planned for and available each day. The reception class has its own specially curated outdoor area. The teaching to achieve these early learning goals will be through first-hand experience and structured play. The areas of experience will be linked to the National Curriculum. The teacher and teaching assistant will keep records on children's experiences and attainments with assessments of development and learning needs throughout the school year. We encourage children towards reading, communication and mathematical skills from the very beginning. Much of this earlier learning is achieved through carefully structured play.

Young children who cannot read or write often express their ideas and feelings through play. It is an important way of developing new skills and building up relationships with other children both individually and in groups. Reading is taught through structured reading schemes supplemented with a wide range of other books. We follow a structured approach to the teaching of phonics. Books are organised in a structured, graded way to allow children many opportunities for consolidation of key vocabulary. We are always pleased to discuss ways in which parents can help their child at each stage of their reading development.

We aim to make all children feel secure and confident within the school environment and to develop a sense of achievement through learning, finding it to be a pleasurable and rewarding experience.

Throughout the school, children follow the National Curriculum, as in all state schools. This means that they follow nationally agreed programmes of study in Maths, English, Science, Computing, Art, Music, PE, History, Geography, Design Technology and the Somerset agreed syllabus for Religious Education. Much of the teaching and learning is cross curricular in nature. We aim to provide a stimulating, creative, broad and balanced, uninterrupted learning journey for all children as they progress through the school.





As well as working as a whole class children are encouraged to work both independently and collaboratively in groups of similar ability for differentiated tasks. Children progress through the levels of the National Curriculum at their own pace. Progress is assessed by the teachers and is also monitored by national assessment in the Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides for the academic, moral, physical, creative and personal and social development of every child. In our school we plan our curriculum so that all children become:

- Successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
- Confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society

In order for this to take place the children must:

- Become involved with things that interest them
- Be active in their learning



Information about curriculum content for the term will be sent to parents in order to support learning. Parents are invited to sign the Home/School Agreement when their children first come to our school. We believe it is important to treat children with consideration and respect and therefore the code of conduct at our school is intended to encourage them to develop a respect for others and for their books, equipment and the school as a whole. We expect the children to show politeness and good manners at all times.

GOVERNORS

The Governors of the school work as part of the School's Leadership Team on a four year term of office. The Governing Body of the school is made up of people from a variety of backgrounds, some of whom are parents. The school governors comprise a group of individuals, who are elected, nominated or co-opted and are representative of parents, staff and the local community.

The Head Teacher is responsible for the day-to-day educational direction of the school, whilst the Governors are involved with the Head teacher, in long term policy decisions. They also have specific responsibility for the financial management of the school.

Full Governing Body meetings are held at least once each term. If you would like to be a school Governor please contact the school office to find out about any vacancies.

A full list of current Governors will be found on our website.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Children are encouraged to report bullying. The school always acts swiftly with a process of investigation, communication and action. Bullies will not be tolerated.





SAFEGUARDING

As a school, we recognise that Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, we make sure our safeguarding approach is child centred. This means that we consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. Additionally, we have a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to prevent pupils from being drawn into terrorism or other radicalised groups. As a school, we promote a range British values and ethos.

Our aim at Countess Gytha Primary School is to:

- contribute significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- provide a worthwhile educational experience which takes account of pupils' age, aptitude and family background;

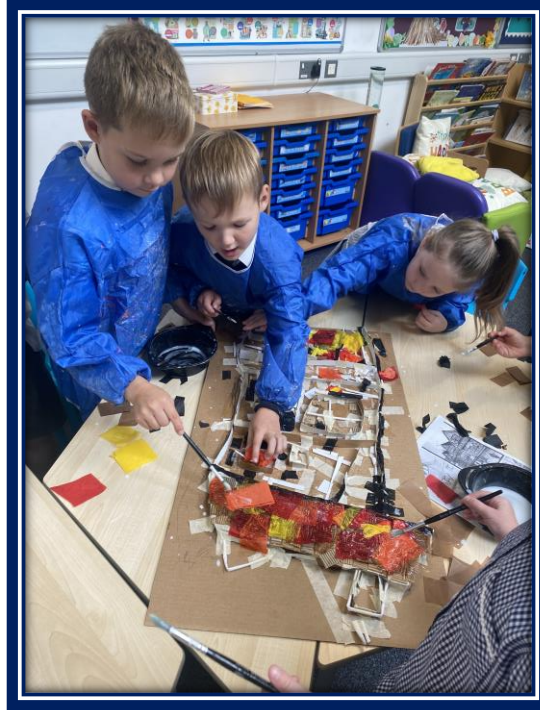


- provide opportunities for staff, pupils, and members of the wider community to contribute to the life of the school;
- provide opportunities for reverence, celebration and reflection;
- provide pupils with a broad spectrum of beliefs and practice
- provide a worship experience that does not offend the integrity of the non-religious or those of different faiths and at times it will incorporate material drawn from other faith traditions.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT

Your child's teacher is constantly assessing her/him throughout the whole school year. This enables teachers to know how to modify the learning activities to meet the individual needs of each child. Each term, the teacher is required to make a teacher assessment of the academic level achieved by your child. These Teacher Assessments give a broader view of your child in a less formal situation and plot your child's progress through the year.





HOMEWORK

Countess Gytha Primary School has a policy of providing home learning opportunities that are enjoyable, manageable and interesting. We feel that children of primary school age should have time after school in which to pursue their own interests and hobbies and to play. However, we ask that parents regularly (at least 3x weekly) spend 10 minutes daily either listening or reading to their children. Children will also be set weekly multiplication and other basic maths skills to ensure their learning is best supported between home and school.

SPECIAL PROVISION/INCLUSION

The school has carried out an accessibility audit and is confident about meeting the needs of all children here. We will provide toilet facilities, a shower, wide corridors and easy access to all school rooms and to all aspects of school life, as far as is reasonable and practicable.

Countess Gytha Primary is a very inclusive school. We aim to provide the most appropriate and effective support for our pupils with Special Educational Needs, enabling them to reach their full potential. This may include extra support with



reading, spelling, language work, mathematics, co-ordination or developing their social skills.

Children's progress is constantly monitored and assessed and careful records are kept. Occasionally, we find that a child may not make the progress we expect. If this were to be the case, parents will be consulted and appropriate steps to support the child will be taken.

An Individual Education Plan may be made with individual targets, review dates and ideas to help parents to support their child at home. If targets continue not to be met, outside agencies such as Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists or Behaviour Specialists may be called upon for extra support.

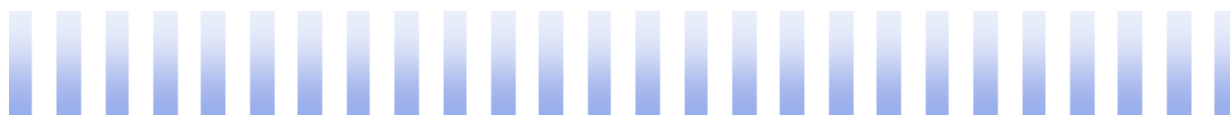
Gifted and Talented pupils can be defined as pupils who demonstrate a significantly higher level of ability than most pupils of the same age in one or more area of learning. Teaching staff are expected to provide a range of broadening and deepening activities to such children.

Children are identified through teacher assessment and judgements based on a variety of assessments. Our assessment procedures will identify children of very high ability and work will be planned to meet the learning requirements of these children. Children with particular abilities may also need special provision. At all times the needs of the children, whatever their ability, are catered for through careful differentiation and task. If a child takes part in an activity out of school in which they excel, we are delighted to hear about it.

MEALTIME PROVISION

We currently provide a choice of cold or hot meals to all infant children under the Universal Free School Meal provision. Menus are provided via the school office and on the school website; bookings should be made via ParentPay accounts.

Any children who have particular dietary requirements or allergies are catered for.





SCHOOL UNIFORM

Uniform is worn at Countess Gytha Primary School and children are encouraged to take pride in their appearance. It is important that all items are clearly labelled with the child's name. The school cannot be held responsible for any lost property. If however, your child loses any personal items she/he is requested to report it to their class teacher in the first instance. Enquiries about lost property not found in class can be made to the school office.

We do not wish your child to wear jewellery in school, however, any child who has pierced ears may wear sleepers or studs, but we strongly advise that these be removed for PE, games and swimming to avoid the possibility of the item becoming caught and causing an injury to the wearer or another child.

We ask that children wear the school uniform, as detailed below, and that their



dress, including hair styles, is appropriate to the school environment. Pattern or colour applied to hair is not appropriate.

The school uniform is as follows and is available at South West Schoolwear, in Wine Street, Yeovil:

Navy Logoed Sweat V Neck or Logoed Cardigan;

White Shirt/Blouse;

Grey Trousers/Shorts;

Grey Skirt/Pinafore;

Navy, grey or white socks or tights;

Navy/green striped tie.

Black school shoes

Footwear: Shoes should be comfortable and give support. No trainers are allowed except for outside games.

The PE kit is as follows:

Navy shorts, white logoed polo shirt and black cotton gym shoes – plimsolls, preferably with elastic fronts.

There is no expectation to wear logoed items – please see our Uniform Policy, available on the school website, for further details.



BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Our Behaviour Policy:

- Positively promotes socially acceptable behaviour; ensures a safe, calm and caring atmosphere in school;
- Ensures consistency and fairness and sets high expectations;
- Enables pupils to develop social skills and the ability to choose between right and wrong;
- Creates an ethos where all members of the school community, children and adults, feel valued and supported.

When children start school, they are made aware of a few basic rules and are expected to act within these rules at all times, to ensure the smooth running of the school. If children do not act as we expect, a variety of sanctions may be used. These will range from a verbal reminder or reprimand to, in extreme cases, exclusion from school.

A copy of our behaviour policy (as well as other school policies) is available on our school website.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS

The broad, balanced and creative curriculum will stimulate your child to acquire knowledge and develop individual skills. Children's achievements are celebrated and everyone enjoys success and praise regularly during their time in school. We encourage children to become independent and confident in both their work and social development. The children are taught by their own class teacher in mixed ability classes with children of the same age. The staffing complement for each class is a fully qualified teacher and wherever possible, at least one trained teaching assistant.

The classroom is fully furnished and equipped with the highest quality learning resources.



The class teacher will get to know your child very well and will be pleased to involve you in their life at school. Children make progress at their own rates and in their own ways. It is important to value them as individuals and to provide learning opportunities that will build on their strengths and overcome their areas for development.



EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Countess Gytha Primary School is committed to offering a rich source of learning and an essential part of our pupils learning at school are the day visits, residential visits and visitors to school. However, there are times when the cost cannot be borne solely by the school and voluntary contributions will be requested to ensure that the activity takes place.

These might include excursions or educational visits.

Parents will be informed by letter if contributions are requested.



WRAP AROUND CARE

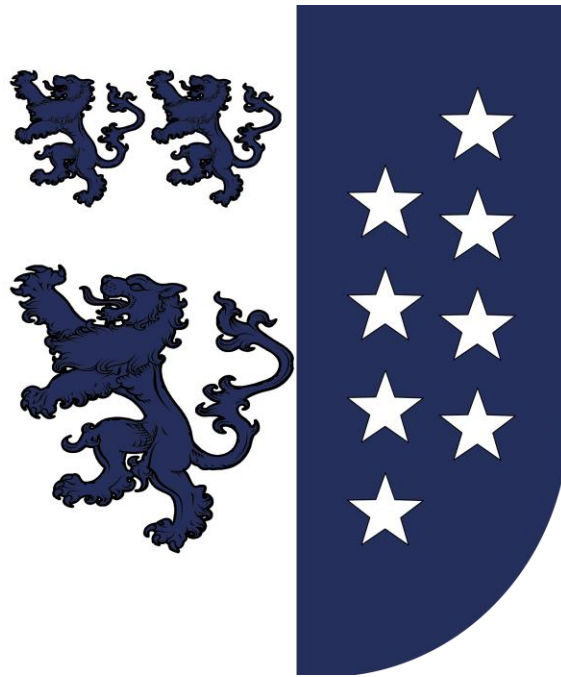
Gytha Group provides a safe and stimulating indoor and outdoor environment for children aged 2 to 11-years-old. We are open from 8am and after school Monday to Thursday until 5:30pm, booking is essential. More information can be found on our website or by phoning the Preschool office on 01935 850564 as the Preschool manage Wrap Around Care for all children.

YOUR CHILD'S NEXT SCHOOL

At the age of eleven, all children transfer to secondary school. The local authority will send to parent's particulars of all the options open to them before they move.

In order to ease the transfer to secondary school, each child's abilities and progress are discussed with staff at the chosen school. Secondary School teachers visit our school and the children before they transfer.





Our Contact Details

Address: West Camel Road
Queen Camel
Somerset
BA22 7FF

Telephone: 01935 850345

Email: office@countessgytha.ppat365.org

Website: www.countessgythaprimary.co.uk



COUNTESS GYTHA
PRIMARY SCHOOL

