

**WHICKHAM  
SCHOOL**

**BE THE BEST  
YOU CAN BE**

For September 2022 entry



# WELCOME



It gives me great pleasure to welcome you and your family to Whickham School. We are a school at the heart of our local community that ensures that every young person develops into a well-rounded citizen who is able to make the most of their unique talents and abilities. This has enabled us to build an excellent reputation locally, of which we are very proud.

Our school is a happy community where we have high expectations of each other and work hard to realise our potential. Students learn to embrace challenge and develop the confidence to approach problems and new situations with a positive mindset. Our curriculum and pastoral care is underpinned by a focus upon ensuring our students are aspirational, respectful, resilient and demonstrate empathy for others.

Standards are high and our students study a curriculum that enables them to develop knowledge and skills that prepare them well for higher education and employment. Academic achievement is important and we are proud of the success our students achieve, but we recognise success and happiness in life is much more than this. Whickham students access a range of exciting experiences that support personal development and develop the personal qualities that enable them to be people we are proud to know.

Behaviour is excellent and is a basic expectation of all our students. Our school community is built upon mutual respect and this ensures good relationships. This is crucial in effective learning and the creation of happy students and staff. All students are

expected to maintain high levels of attendance and meet homework requirements. This is fundamental to achieving a culture of success.

The relationship between school and parents and carers is important to us. We work closely with parents and carers to ensure that each young person is happy, safe and successful during their time at the school.

We look forward to meeting you when you visit our school.

**Mr F. Turnbull**  
**Headteacher**



*“The School enables you to pursue wonderful opportunities - the World Challenge trip to Borneo was one of the best experiences of my life. The trip and the fundraising activities helped me to build incredible friendships and gave me the confidence for my transition into sixth form.”*

# OUR AIM

**Whickham School; a school that ensures all students can be the best that they can be.**

**In achieving this aim we ensure all students develop into well rounded citizens who possess the skills, knowledge and qualifications that will enable them realise their full potential. Our curriculum and student support services focus upon developing the following qualities:**

- **ASPIRATION** - Whickham students set aspirational goals that are ambitious and without limitations.
- **RESPECT** - Without compromise, Whickham students demonstrate respect for themselves, others and their environment.
- **RESILIENCE** - Whickham students persevere with challenges, especially when faced with setbacks.
- **EMPATHY** - Whickham students strive to be kind, caring and understanding of each other's feelings and needs.

# AT THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

Whickham School places itself at the heart of the community. It opens its doors to parents, students and all the community through a variety of experiences, opportunities and events.

- Evening carol concert for the community
- Parents'/Carers' Evenings
- Leadership and sporting opportunities in primary schools
- Primary school transition awards evening
- Band/Drama/Dance Productions
- Student leadership awards
- Creative Arts exhibition
- After school classes
- Sports events
- Facility hire
- Fitness classes
- Food leaders
- Prizegiving
- Training and match venue for football, hockey, rugby and other community sports clubs
- Holiday Sports Camps
- Community Partnerships



AT THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

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www.whickhamschool.org

WHICKHAM  
SCHOOL & SP

**Whickham School is a happy community where students can learn and develop as they grow into successful young adults.**

*"I have been offered exciting opportunities that have improved my confidence"*

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# EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

**At Whickham School we have high expectations for all our students. We set stretching academic targets to create a climate of success that enables our students to thrive.**

Students are supported in their journey towards academic success with high quality teaching and learning and a rigorous monitoring and intervention programme that enables us to target support.

A-Level results are amongst the best in the region and GCSE standards are consistently strong, significantly above local and regional averages.

Strong educational outcomes enable our students to experience exciting opportunities. Around 89% of our Sixth Form students go onto Further or Higher Education, many of them attending Russell Group universities, including Oxford and Cambridge. Others follow apprenticeship or direct employment routes.

*"Pupils make good progress in a wide range of subjects including English and Mathematics."*

**Ofsted 2018**

# CHALLENGE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

**The change from a small school to a large one, to a wider curriculum, to the responsibility of forming relationships with new friends and new teachers, is sensitively and effectively managed through a continuous programme of support.**

We have developed an on-going transition programme from Year 6 onwards so that primary students are regular visitors to Whickham School. Students participate in a number of lessons and activities, including academic and summer schools which build confidence and familiarity.

Each year, students experience a range of transition activities. Students work with our Peer Support Mentors to get the student perspective on life at Whickham. Primary students lunch at school and meet their Form Tutor and fellow students.

Students who may find transition a little more difficult have additional sessions prior to joining the school to allow them extra time to familiarise themselves with staff and their new surroundings.

The school welcomes disabled students. Wheelchair access is available in all areas, our new building and toilets have been adapted to provide appropriate facilities for wheelchair users.

- 10 Teaching Assistants, with a range of subject and SEND specialisms, who, in addition to our Senior TAs, work across our faculties, providing a blend of one-to-one, small group and in-class support and intervention;
- A SEND Administrative Support Officer;
- 2 colleagues who provide support for dyslexia and exam concessions.

The SEND Team has a close working relationship with our primary schools, holding regular meetings with parents, students and teachers, as well a range of outside agencies, to ensure that students' needs are met. Students identified with SEND are assigned a SEND Key Worker, who will be the students' main point of contact and who will regularly liaise with parents and carers to ensure the best possible support is given.

The SEND Team (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) is strategically overseen by an Assistant Headteacher and a SENDCO (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator).



The specialist SEND Team comprises:

- 4 Senior Teaching Assistants who oversee intervention and support programmes for each of the four areas of the SEND Code of Practice: Cognition and Learning – Literacy; Cognition and Learning – Numeracy; Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and Communication and Interaction. One of these Senior teaching Assistants oversees our specialist provision for ASD (autistic spectrum disorder) students ;



# HIGH QUALITY LEARNING

## We actively provide a number of opportunities for students to extend their learning beyond the school day.

The School Resource Centre and ICT rooms are open from 8.00am to 4.30pm daily. Students are actively encouraged to attend the Learning Hub, which is there to support and enhance student learning.

Regular homework also helps to extend learning. Homework is at least 45 minutes at key stage 3 for every 3 hours of curriculum time. At key stage 4 this increases to 1 hour per subject per week and in the Sixth Form to 4 hours per subject per week.

### HIGH QUALITY CURRICULUM PROVISION

Students at Whickham access a broad and diverse curriculum that enables all students to make the best of their talents whilst acquiring the skills and knowledge to succeed in the wider world.

All students in Years 7, 8 and 9 follow a broad and balanced curriculum. This includes:

English including Drama, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Religious Education, Music, Physical Education, Modern Foreign Languages, Technology, Food Technology, Information Technology and Art. Students also follow a comprehensive PSHE/Citizenship programme as part of their preparation to become successful young adults.

In Key Stage 4 (Years 10 & 11) all students follow a core curriculum of English (Literature and Language), Mathematics, Science, IT, RE and PSHE/Citizenship. The majority of students choose a variety of GCSE subjects which include a language and humanities subject. Other students pursue a mixed pathway, involving both GCSEs and BTEC qualifications. Most of our students join our Sixth Form for advanced level study.

### TUTORIAL PROGRAMME

Students start every day with their form tutor. Students work with their tutor on their literacy and numeracy skills. In addition students will spend time with their tutor learning about key aspects of citizenship and personal, social and health education. Attendance and growth mindset are also addressed during tutor time activities.

### APPLIED LEARNING

Whickham School provides increased curriculum choice for students with the provision of a number of applied learning courses. These courses allow students to apply their knowledge and skills to more practical situations in real life contexts that can involve collaboration with providers beyond school.

### GIFTED AND TALENTED

Students are provided with opportunities and challenges within lessons and through specific educational experiences that foster and stimulate their abilities and interests.



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# WHICKHAM SIXTH FORM

## ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL SIXTH FORMS IN THE NORTH EAST



### **CURRICULUM**

We are extremely proud of the strong academic progress our students make and the excellent grades they achieve. We offer a diverse and broad curriculum, with a variety of courses at A-level and Level 3 BTEC. The curriculum is complimented by a range of additional study options including Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) and Core Maths, as well as an array of enrichment opportunities.

### **FACILITIES**

The Sixth Form is housed in a state-of-the-art sixth form centre which includes social space, computer suite, study area, conference rooms and also a Starbuck's Cafeteria. The sixth form





study block is accessible Monday - Friday 7am-7pm. It is also open Saturdays in the run up to examinations in order to provide a conducive work space.

## SUPPORT & GUIDANCE

There is a well-developed support system to prepare Year 11 students for post-sixteen life. Alongside this we invest a large amount of time in supporting students with their transition to university or employment after their sixth form studies.

## ENRICHMENT

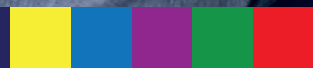
There is an extensive offer of enrichment activities designed to help develop students' wider interests and talents. This includes; Sports Leadership, Arts leadership, Duke of Edinburgh, World Challenge, Debating and Peer Mentoring. We also run an annual Charity Week where the charity is selected by the incoming Year 12 students. They are responsible for the organisation, planning and delivery of fundraising activities which develops their skills and aids their transition into sixth form.

*"The strong reputation of the sixth form is well deserved. Students make progress that is significantly higher than others nationally."*

## Ofsted 2018



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# AN ACTIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY

## Whickham School works in partnership with the local community

We believe by promoting active participation alongside health issues we can improve student achievement as well as physical, social and emotional well-being.

Whickham School has developed a national reputation for its accomplishments in this area. A wide range of sports-related programmes are offered in core PE, student leadership, vocational and academic qualifications.



*"I enjoy the variety of sports and challenges I take part in within PE lessons. The choice of after school activities is also excellent."*



*“Whickham School has given me lots of confidence and a lot of support with the subjects I struggle with.”*

### **REPRESENTATIVE SPORTS TEAMS IN SCHOOL TOTAL OVER 30 DIFFERENT SPORTS**

All students have the opportunity to take part in a range of sporting events at Whickham School throughout the year.

A range of Student Leadership courses are available at school. We produce confident leaders who organise and run events, coach other students, take on management roles and even deliver training to large audiences of students, teachers and the public. These leaders have accrued over 5,000 hours of volunteering and our school is rated as one of the top schools in England for student leadership.

Our sports technicians support our community lettings partner to enable the school facilities to be open and available for hire all evenings and at weekends.

Our very large PE department enables us to offer a vast range of sports and competitive opportunities. Success is celebrated at our annual sports presentation evening.

A specialist coach manages our very successful boys and girls trampoline teams. They regularly represent the North of England at the National Finals and have always won one or more age group competitions each year.

We have specialist dance teachers who manage the dance performers, support performing arts productions and train students as dance leaders.



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# DIVERSE AND ENGAGING OPPORTUNITIES

## EXTRA CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

Our students can express and develop their talents in a wide variety of ways, including: dance, drama, music, art, textiles, media studies, public speaking, reading clubs, creative writing and in a host of other ways.

In drama, students have the opportunity to join a weekly drama club where they can work with upper school students in developing their performance skills. We host three productions a year, from large scale musicals, Shakespeare productions and events showcasing our own students' scripts. We recently invested significant funds in a state-of-the-art lighting system that enables our more technical students to refine their skills.

In dance, students plan, rehearse and perform their own dance evenings and students have the opportunity to practise a range of styles, including work with professionals from Dance City and established street dance performers.

Our art department holds a prestigious annual exhibition of student work and arranges a series of visits to local and national galleries, as well as inviting artists to visit Whickham and work with students.



## SCHOOL BAND

Our band is made up of woodwind, brass and percussion players who rehearse together to perform classical and popular music to local audiences at school and in the community. This band has been in existence now for forty five years, a living part of the school tradition that continues to thrive.

A high proportion of students choose to take part in the rich extra-curricular opportunities provided by the school.





*"I have been given many opportunities at Whickham School through enrichment activities which have inspired me to reach my full potential"*

### **DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD**

Whickham School runs the acclaimed Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme at all three levels. This is open to students from years 9 to 13. As part of the rigorous programme they complete an expedition, carry out volunteering and for the Gold award, organise and participate in a residential trip.

### **INTERNATIONAL VISITS**

The school participates in a host of international visits each year. Students have visited Poland, Belgium, France, Germany, Iceland, Switzerland, Andorra, Tanzania, Uganda and the USA.

### **WORLD CHALLENGE**

The World Challenge trips are 3 to 4 week expeditions which take place every 2 years to remote locations in distant countries. They are open to students in year 11, 12 and 13. The venture is designed to let students develop their leadership qualities. Previous expeditions have been to Namibia, Ladakh in the Indian Himalayas, Mexico, Morocco, Bolivia, Southern Tanzania, Borneo, Eswatini and Mozambique. The next trip, delayed by Covid, will be to Nepal followed by Borneo in 2023.

What makes these trips unique is that the students decide on the itinerary and organise all aspects of the expedition. They are responsible for booking transport, controlling the finance, securing accommodation, buying food and organising guides for the trek. They have to purchase equipment and the resources required for the project, and liaise with the community leaders or the teachers who they are working with.

All students fundraise over a period of 15 months to help meet the cost of this expedition.

These can be life-changing trips and are special in that they give the students an opportunity to go to places very few tourists get to visit, to experience life in a foreign culture, living with people less fortunate than themselves whilst providing much needed help for these people.

The life skills the students learn will not only aid personal growth, but can help secure university places and impress future employers. They talk in interviews about erecting houses for the homeless in the Andes, swimming with turtles and collecting their eggs for hatching on remote pacific beaches, standing on top of the second highest road pass in the world, building classrooms in Africa or sleeping in hammocks whilst trekking through the Borneo Jungle.

### **PARENTS' FORUM**

Listening and responding to the voice of our parents is extremely important to us. A Parents' Forum exists to enable our parents to articulate any concerns on school matters. We seek the opinion of parents to gauge their opinions on key changes like school uniform, the school reporting system, and many other issues.

Parents' Forum meets once a half term on the second Monday of the term. An agenda and theme for each meeting is agreed and there is also time for parents to raise any whole school concerns they have. Any parent or guardian who wishes to be part of Parents' Forum should contact the school office.



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