



**BE THE BEST  
YOU CAN BE**

**For September 2026 entry**





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Ofsted report

*"The school has high ambitions for all its pupils. The broad curriculum prepares pupils well for life beyond school."*

**Ofsted 2025**



# 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. Pupils learn to embrace challenges 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 pupils are aspirational, respectful, resilient and demonstrate empathy for others.

Standards are high and our pupils 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 pupils achieve, but we recognise success and happiness in life is much more than this. Whickham pupils 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 pupils. Our school community is built upon mutual respect and this ensures good relationships. This is crucial in effective learning and the creation of happy pupils and staff. All pupils 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**



# OUR VISION

**Whickham, a school to be proud of at the heart of the community. Where learning is cherished in a safe, caring and supportive environment. A school where everyone is valued and inspired to be the best they can be.**



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



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







# EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

**At Whickham School we have high expectations for all our pupils. We create an ambitious, but supportive academic environment which enables our pupils to thrive.**

Pupils are supported in their journey towards academic success with high quality teaching and learning. Right from the start of Year 7 we ensure that we have a keen focus on the core skills of literacy and numeracy which underpin success in the wider curriculum.

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 pupils to experience exciting opportunities. The vast majority of our Sixth Form pupils go onto Further or Higher Education, many of them attending Russell Group universities, including Oxford and Cambridge. Others follow apprenticeship or direct employment routes.

Scan for the exam results



# OUR CURRICULUM

**Our curriculum is well sequenced, purposeful, ambitious and rooted in the local community.**

Throughout Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9) pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum designed to develop deep knowledge and understanding in a wide variety of subjects.

Pupils study: English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Religious Studies, Music, Physical Education, a modern foreign language (French or German), Design and Food Technology, Computing and Art.

In addition to this formal academic curriculum we recognise the importance of ensuring our pupils develop into well rounded young adults and so we also focus on PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education).

In Key Stage 4 (Years 10 & 11) all pupils follow a core curriculum of English (Language and Literature), Mathematics, Science, Religious Studies and PSHCE. Pupils have some flexibility to start to specialise and choose a variety of GCSE and vocational subjects which include a language and humanities subject.

Most of our pupils continue their educational journey into our Sixth Form for two years of advanced level study. Pupils can choose from a wide variety of over 30 courses.

## TUTORIAL PROGRAMME

Pupils start every day with their form tutor who acts as a consistent point of contact and support. The form tutor helps to ensure pupils are ready for learning each day. Where possible pupils will keep the same tutor throughout Years 7 to 11. Our tutorial programme includes a weekly assembly and covers a wide variety of PSHCE topics.

## HOMEWORK

The regular completion of homework helps pupils to consolidate their learning. Research evidence shows that pupils who complete regular high-quality homework make substantially more progress each year than those who don't. We support pupils in developing their independent study skills by graduating our approach, and the amount of independent study gradually increases from Year 7 to 11.

Both our school library and homework hub run each day before school, at lunchtime and for an hour after school so that all pupils can get the support they need to complete their work. A late bus is available at 4.20pm for pupils who stay for homework club and other extra curricular activities. Our achievement team will also help any pupil finding homework difficult.

*"The school has designed an ambitious curriculum. It has thought carefully about the important knowledge pupils should learn."* **Ofsted 2025**





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YOU CAN BE**





*"Pupils behave very well,  
and lessons are calm and  
purposeful."* **Ofsted 2025**





## **FACILITIES**

We ensure that our pupils have access to the very best facilities to enhance their learning experience. We have invested heavily in IT so that pupils have the latest software and technology at their disposal. Every classroom is equipped with the latest touch screen panels as well as traditional whiteboards. Our new build has amazing sports facilities that include a fully equipped gymnasium, climbing wall, sports hall and numerous outdoor courts and pitches.

# TRANSITION

**The change from a small school to a large one, to a wider curriculum and 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 pupils are regular visitors to Whickham School. Pupils participate in a number of lessons and activities, including academic and summer schools which build confidence and familiarity. Each year,

pupils experience a range of transition activities. Pupils work with our Peer Support Mentors to get the pupil perspective on life at Whickham. Primary Pupils have lunch at school and meet their Form Tutor and fellow pupils.



*“Leaders are determined to provide the best opportunities for all pupils to be successful.”* **Ofsted 2025**



# PUPIL GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

## SEND

Pupils 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 pupils with disabilities.



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

The specialist SEND Team has 20 staff in total with a wide range of subject and SEND specialisms. They work across our faculties, providing in class support and intervention.

## MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

We have access to a range of specialist mental health support, both in-school and working with external agencies. We have a full-time psychotherapeutic counsellor, mental health support officers and we are a training hub for counselling, social work and occupational health professionals.

## ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND CAREERS

We have a dedicated achievement team who are responsible for supporting all pupils in making strong academic progress. We believe that every pupil can and should achieve their full potential. We realise that at times, pupils will need support and intervention to ensure they do so. The achievement team exists to remove academic barriers to learning so that pupils can achieve their full potential. We have a range of tutors available as well as mentoring programmes to help young people learn. The achievement team also runs homework hubs where pupils can get support during lunch time and after school. We give pupils

the opportunity to connect their in-school learning to the bigger picture through trips to universities, work sectors or guest speakers.

## CAREERS GUIDANCE

All pupils in year groups 7-13 receive comprehensive Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) to support their education and personal development so that by the time they are ready to leave Whickham School they have had the information and support necessary to move on to the next stage of their journey.

We have a dedicated careers advisor based in school who is available to offer personal one to one advice to your child at every step of their journey through school.



# DIVERSE AND ENGAGING OPPORTUNITIES

## EXTRA CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

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

In addition to our extensive extra-curricular sports programme, our pupils can express and develop their talents in a wide variety of ways, including: dance, drama, music, art, textiles, media studies, public speaking, reading club, creative writing and in a host of other ways.

In performing arts, pupils have the opportunity to join weekly drama and music clubs, where they can work with upper school pupils in developing their performance skills. We host two annual school production where pupils can be part of cast and backstage crews. Our school 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. We also have a rock band and school choir. In dance, pupils plan, rehearse and perform their own dance evenings and pupils have the opportunity to practise a range of styles, including work with professionals from external organisations.

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

We have a wide and ever-increasing range of lunchtime and after-school clubs, including: Philosophy and Ethics, Rainbow Society, Robotics, Boxing, Chess, Science, Gardening, Knitting, D&D and STEM Clubs. We invite guest authors into the Library to complement our Accelerated Reader programme.

Every year we run an ambitious Rich Experience programme where we work with a range of external agencies to provide new and exciting projects. We also have an extensive schedule of trips and visits, including Paris, Berlin, Krakow, Switzerland as well as adventurous activities such as watersports, and visits to theatres, galleries and museums.



*Footloose production 2025.*



*"Pupils benefit from a wide range of activities that help them to develop their talents and interests."*

**Ofsted 2025**

### DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD

Whickham School runs the acclaimed Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme at all three levels. This is open to pupils 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. Pupils have visited Poland, Belgium, France, Germany, Iceland, Switzerland, Andorra, Tanzania, Uganda, Mexico, Morocco and the USA.

### WORLD CHALLENGE

World Challenge trips are 3 to 4 week expeditions which take place approximately every 2 years to remote locations in distant countries. They are open to pupils in year 11, 12 and 13. The venture is designed to let pupils develop their leadership qualities. Previous expeditions have been to Namibia, The Indian Himalayas, Mexico, Morocco, Bolivia, Southern Tanzania, Borneo, Eswatini, Mozambique, Borneo. At the end of the academic year 2025 pupils travelled to Malaysia.

What makes these trips unique is that the pupils 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 pupils fundraise over a period of 15 months to help meet the cost of this expedition.

These are life-changing trips and are special in that they give the pupils 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 pupils learn will not only aid personal growth, but can help secure university places and impress future employers.



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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 Level 3 courses, including A-levels and vocational qualifications. The curriculum is complemented 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 a Starbucks cafeteria. The Sixth Form study block is accessible before and after school. In addition to during school holidays in the run-up to exams. This provides a quiet and purposeful work space for students and their peers.

### SUPPORT & GUIDANCE

There is a well-developed support system to prepare Year 11 pupils for post-sixteen life. All students in year 12 have access to a bespoke careers interview with our qualified adviser. 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

We have an extensive offer of enrichment activities designed to help develop students' wider interests and prepare them for adulthood. This includes; Sports Leadership, Duke of Edinburgh, World Challenge, Debating and First Aid. All year 12 students are expected to complete a one week work experience placement. 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.







*"Pupils learn to  
make a positive  
contribution to  
their community."*  
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Whickham School  
Burnthouse Lane, Whickham  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE16 5AR

T: 0191 4690026

[info@whickhamschool.org](mailto:info@whickhamschool.org)

 @WhickhamSchool

 @whickham

[www.whickhamschool.org](http://www.whickhamschool.org)

