

# WHITLEY BAY HIGH SCHOOL

## Year 8 Handbook

For Parents/Carers and  
Students

**2026/27**

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# Contents

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This handbook contains information about the school's ethos, expectations, routines, procedures and policies. You may wish to keep it in a safe place as it may be useful to refer to it from time to time.

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# SCHOOL AIMS AND ETHOS

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Our aim is to develop:

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- Happy, self-confident, life-long learners;
- Learners ready to embrace change;
- Learners who make a positive difference to the local and global community.

This will be achieved through our innovative and inclusive approach to Teaching and Learning alongside our supportive pastoral system.

Our purpose is to prepare our students for life in the 21st Century. In doing so they will become:

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- Flexible in their thinking;
- Independent in their learning;
- Effective in their communication skills;
- Inspired with enthusiasm for continued learning.

Our intent is to actively promote continuing learning throughout the whole school community, in which:

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- Happiness and high self esteem are developed by recognising success;
- Change is welcomed;
- All demonstrate the conviction that the school is infinitely improvable;
- The role of parents/carers in developing learning is explicit, recognised and valued;
- Technology is used to develop borderless thinking and to transcend the boundaries of time, place and subject content.

Our vision is that as a school community:

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- We will develop a passion for learning rather than an acquisition of knowledge;
- We will develop the desire and aptitude to be inquiring, willing to test and hypothesise, and take risks with our thinking;
- We will become creative problem solvers and effective decision makers;
- We will develop high levels of communication skills.

We will achieve this by:

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- Inspiring students with curiosity by our example;
- Developing in our students the capacity to ask questions rather than providing them with answers;
- Recognising and celebrating the achievement of students;
- Identifying and maximising the full potential of all students.

# KEY STAFF IN SCHOOL

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## Senior staff

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|                   |                                                 |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Steve Wilson      | Headteacher                                     |
| Sarah Fitzpatrick | Deputy Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead |
| Andy Sherlaw      | Deputy Headteacher                              |
| Jill Branch       | Assistant Headteacher                           |
| Sarah Lackenby    | Assistant Headteacher                           |
| James Mackenzie   | Assistant Headteacher/SENCO                     |
| Natalie Thorne    | Business Manager                                |
| Rachel Thurlow    | Assistant Headteacher                           |
| Steve Williams    | Assistant Headteacher/Director of Sixth Form    |

## Heads of departments

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|                    |                                       |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Kim Smith          | English                               |
| Chris Johnson      | Mathematics                           |
| Alan Keegan        | Science                               |
| Alice Robertson    | Art                                   |
| Ben Cox            | Business                              |
| Andrew Johnson     | Computing                             |
| Katherine Askham   | Design Technology                     |
| Annie Reith        | Drama                                 |
| James Branson      | Environmental Science                 |
| Justine Chapman    | Food & Textiles                       |
| Brin Reece         | French & German                       |
| Kirsty Cuthbert    | Geography                             |
| Lois Thompson      | Health & Social care                  |
| Deborah Britland   | History                               |
| Jane Bennetts      | Information Technology                |
| Scott Saunders     | Media                                 |
| Kieran Baldwin     | Music                                 |
| Jess Watson        | Psychology                            |
| Lisa Wrigglesworth | Physical Education                    |
| Billie Rainer      | Philosophy & Ethics/Religious Studies |
| James Rivett       | Spanish                               |

## Student support staff

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|                                              |                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Carl Cockburn                                | Head of Year 9                                      |
| Lois Thompson/Imogen Bolton                  | Assistant Heads of Year 9                           |
| Jonathan Okwe-Pearson                        | Head of Year 10                                     |
| Andrew Charlton/Ami Gascoigne/Sarah Blakeley | Assistant Heads of Year 10                          |
| Naomi Anderson                               | Head of Year 11                                     |
| Alex Dawson/Heledd Rimmer                    | Assistant Heads of Year 11                          |
| Ian Clark                                    | Head of Year 12                                     |
| Richard Chambers                             | Head of Year 13                                     |
| Nicolle Foulger/Helen Daglish                | Student Support Workers                             |
| Gareth Ellis                                 | Library Manager & Director of Whole School Literacy |
| Emma Crow                                    | Whole School Counsellor                             |
| Charlotte Clarke                             | Alternative Curriculum Co-ordinator/Assistant SENCO |
| Zoe Medhurst                                 | Personal Development Lead                           |
| Nina Livings                                 | Attendance Support Officer                          |
| Rachel Slee                                  | Pastoral Admin Support Officer                      |
| Caroline Burns                               | SEND & Pastoral Admin Support                       |
| Sarah Jones                                  | Deputy SENCO                                        |
| Kate Nixon                                   | Wellbeing Mentor                                    |

# THE SCHOOL DAY

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| Monday, Wednesday, Thursday |          | Tuesday  | Friday   |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Tutorial                    | 8:40 AM  | 8:40 AM  | 8:40 AM  |
| Period 1                    | 9:05 AM  | 9:05 AM  | 9:05 AM  |
| Period 2                    | 10:05 AM | 10:05 AM | 10:05 AM |
| Break                       | 11:05 AM | 11:05 AM | 11:05 AM |
| Period 3                    | 11:20 AM | 11:20 AM | 11:20 AM |
| Lunch                       | 12:20 PM | 12:20 PM | 12:20 PM |
| Period 4                    | 1:15 PM  | 1:15 PM  | 1:15 PM  |
| Period 5                    | 2:15 PM  |          | 2:10 PM  |
| Tutorial                    | 3:15 PM  | 2:10 PM  | 3:05 PM  |
| End of Day                  | 3:25 PM  | 2:20 PM  | 3:15 PM  |

## TERM DATES 2026-2027

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### Autumn term

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Induction for Year 9 and Year 12 students: Thursday 3rd September 2026

Staggered start for Year 10, Year 11 and Year 13: Thursday 3rd September 2026. All students start Friday 4th September

Half Term: Monday 26th October 2026 to Friday 30th October 2026

Term recommences for students: Monday 2nd November 2026

Last Day of term for students: Thursday 17th December 2026

Christmas Holidays: Monday 21st December to Friday 1st January 2027

### Spring term

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School commences for students: Monday 4th January 2027

Half Term: Monday 15th February 2027 to Friday 19th February 2027

Term recommences for students: Monday 22nd February 2027

Last day of term for students: Thursday 25th March 2027

Easter Holidays: Friday 26th March 2027 to Friday 9th April 2027

### Summer term

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School commences for students: Tuesday 13th April 2027

Half Term: Monday 31st May to Friday 4th June 2027

Term recommences for students: Monday 7th June 2027

Last day of term for students: Wednesday 21st July 2027

**Please note that there will be Training Days on the following days when school is closed to students:  
Tuesday 1st September 2026, Wednesday 2nd September 2026, Monday 12th April and Friday 2nd July 2027.**

# ATTENDANCE **AND** PUNCTUALITY

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As a school we strive to create an inclusive, calm, safe, supportive environment where all students are keen to learn and want to attend. However, we do acknowledge and understand that some students may find it more difficult than others to attend school. Our ethos is built on developing trusting relationships with students and their parents/carers and supporting student wellbeing, and so we endeavour to work with families to remove any barriers to attendance to ensure that the right support and provision is in place.

Regular school attendance enables students to get the most from their education as well as develop important personal and social skills. Furthermore, students with excellent attendance, (and who are punctual), are attractive to potential employers and colleges as they have been able to demonstrate that they are reliable.

We also know that there is a strong correlation between absence and exam results. We have analysed our own GCSE results data and were not surprised to find that students with high attendance perform exceptionally well when compared to students with poor attendance.

The table below shows these results:

| Attendance %  | 5+ 9-4 inc En & Ma % | 9-4 En & Ma % | 9-4 En/EI % | 9-4 Ma % | Average Grade |
|---------------|----------------------|---------------|-------------|----------|---------------|
| 100%          | 97%                  | 100%          | 100%        | 100%     | 6/7           |
| 98% and above | 94%                  | 95%           | 97%         | 96%      | 6             |
| 95% and above | 88%                  | 90%           | 94%         | 93%      | 6             |
| 90-95%        | 84%                  | 87%           | 91%         | 89%      | 5             |
| 90% and below | 50%                  | 59%           | 70%         | 63%      | 4/5           |

We appreciate that there may be genuine reasons why your child may miss school, but we ask that if your child is well enough that they come to school every day.

Recent DfE guidance asks that schools work more closely with parents/carers on improving their child's attendance and act when there is an attendance concern. As a result of this, we will be writing to you regularly about your child's attendance. This would either be to express our delight for excellent attendance in the form of a Headteacher postcard or to notify you if your child's attendance approaches 90% or below (which means they would be classed as persistently absent). We will also notify you of your child's attendance % in each progress check or report.

Below, is a summary of some key points from the DfE guidance and how it may impact on you and your child.

## Term-time Holidays:

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We are obligated to consider issuing a penalty notice (a fine) to parents/carers for taking their child out of school for 5 days over a rolling period of 10 school weeks. Therefore, a term-time holiday of one week would meet this threshold. We aim to work with parents/carers on attendance matters and will continue to look at term-time holidays on an individual basis before making the decision to fine a family. We will always look closely at your child's overall attendance and if we have concerns about this (for example if it is below 90% with no improvements) we may regretfully ask the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice. Also, if your child is taking more than one term-time holiday a year, we may again ask the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice. I want to stress this will be a case-by-case decision. Parents/carers should be aware that fines have increased to £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. Where there is more than one child, each parent/carer may be issued with a penalty notice in respect of each child. Holidays will only ever be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

## Medical and Other Appointments:

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We ask that you arrange medical or any other appointments for your child outside of the school day as it causes disruption and leads to lost learning. However, we do appreciate that in some instances this may be difficult. Guidance states that, if your child has a medical appointment and arrives late to school any time

after 9.15am when the register has formally closed, the school will authorise this absence and your child will be marked with the absence code M, however in line with Local Authority guidance this will still impact negatively on their overall attendance. We therefore urge you to try to arrange morning appointments so students can come to school for their mark in tutor time and then leave or ask that appointments are made later in the day.

If your child arrives late to school, after tutor time, without a valid reason, they must be marked with a U (unauthorised absence) for the morning. Students who are persistently very late to school are also eligible for a penalty notice as this will greatly impact their attendance and so is classed as an unauthorised absence. This is a government requirement for all schools so that attendance records are accurate and up to date.

We hope that this information is informative and helpful and that we can work together to help ensure your child feels happy about attending school. We will always work with students and their families where any support may be helpful if there is a need or issue preventing a student from attending school. We will also always seek to involve parents/carers of students who are anxious about attending school and look at ways we can help.

If you would like to discuss an attendance related issue, please contact your child's tutor or Head of Year in the first instance.

For further information about attendance or punctuality, our school attendance policy which can be found on the school website here:



In order that students can achieve their best with us and we can look after them, we ask students to do the following:

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- In the morning, be at school and in tutor rooms for 8.40am;
- In the afternoon, be at school by 1.10pm and in classrooms by 1.15pm to start lessons for 1.15pm;
- To report to the office if for any reason they need to leave the school site other than at lunch-time and home-time;
- Arrive at all lessons on time;
- Students who arrive to school late will be asked to hand their phone in at main reception and need to collect this after tutor time at the end of the day. We will notify you via text, letter or progress reports if your child is frequently late to school and/or lessons.

Parents/Carers can help us by:

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- Contacting the school office by phone or send an email if your child is ill;
- Trying to arrange, whenever possible, appointments with a doctor, dentist, etc. for after the end of the school day, at weekends, or in the holidays;
- Booking holidays in official school holiday periods and not in term time.

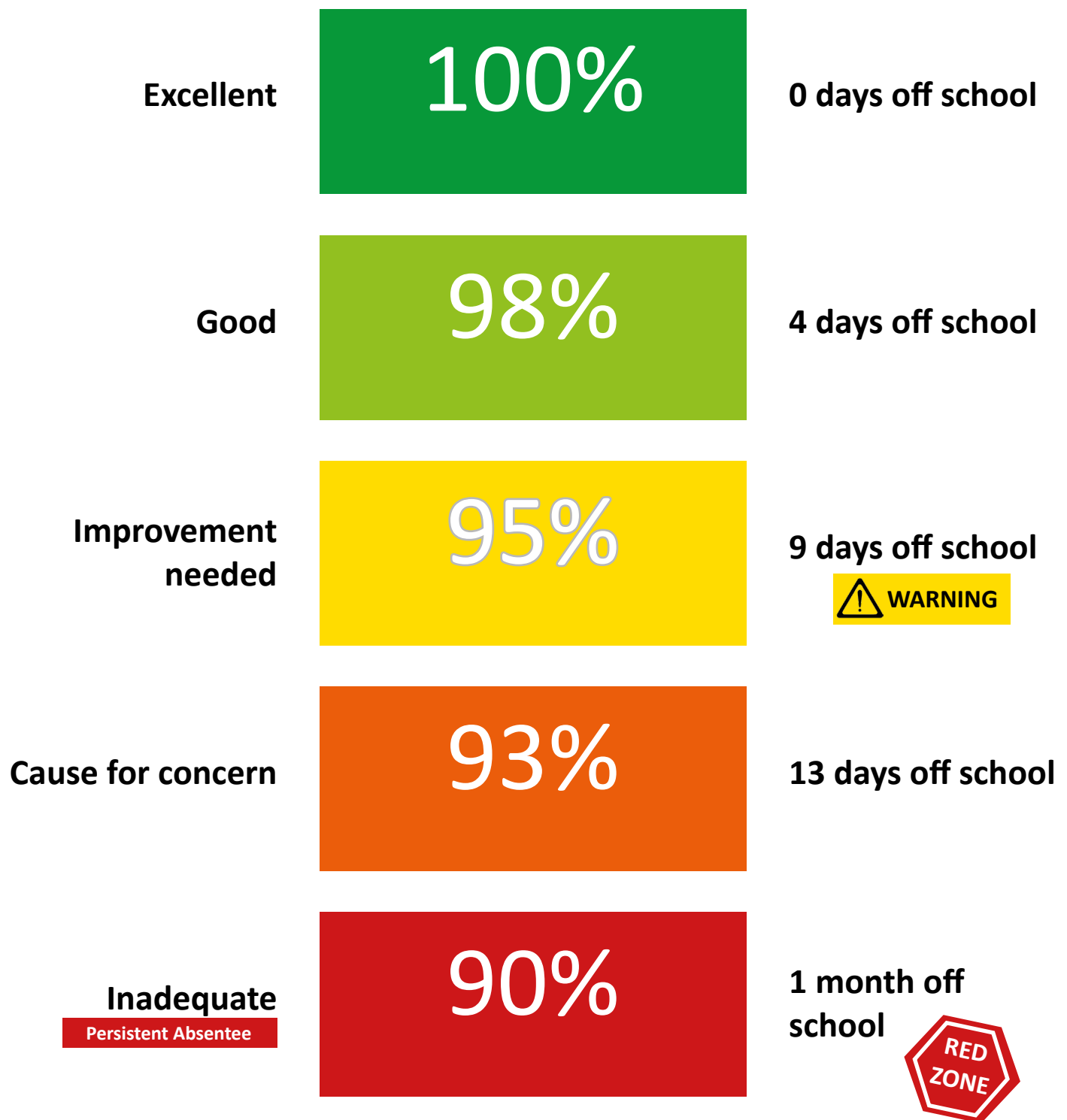
School will:

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- Telephone on the first day of absence if at all possible;
- Monitor punctuality and attendance carefully/closely.

# YOUR CHILD'S ATTENDANCE

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We understand and support students who need to be absent for legitimate reasons.

We take attendance very seriously and monitor your child's attendance regularly. Research tells us that students with poor attendance underachieve. We use the above 'attendance ladder' with students so students can track their own attendance and set targets to improve.

# EXPECTATIONS AGREED BY STAFF AND STUDENTS

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To allow everyone to learn:

## Student general expectations

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- This is a high school and there is an expectation that you will gain maturity in your relationships with others and learn from your mistakes;
- Treat everyone in your school community with respect;
- Value and support each other to be 'all different and all equal';
- Be kind and courteous to fellow students and staff;
- Stay safe and tell us if you ever have worries or concerns;
- Look after your health, including your emotional health and take care of others;
- Keep busy! Sign up for as many extra-curricular clubs or additional subject sessions as you can;
- Talk to us if you have a problem, are worried about something or someone or need help;
- Follow the uniform policy ensuring you are in the correct uniform each day which includes always having your ID card with you;
- Please hand in your phone to your tutor each morning (if you choose to bring one);
- Engage fully in lessons and work with your teachers to achieve your personal best results;
- Actively contribute to an inclusive and safe environment;
- Attend school unless you are unwell and be punctual to school and lessons. Once the school gate is closed on a morning, you will need to sign in at the main office (marked as late);
- Try to book routine medical appointments outside of the school day where possible;
- Let us know your intentions for lunch time and inform us if you change your mind
- Allow us to report your future destination to the Local Authority when you leave school as part of the Youth Support Services Agreement.

## Class expectations

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- Treat staff, both teachers and support staff, with respect;
- Respect the rights of others and other students' right to work;
- Attend and arrive on time with everything you need for the lesson including basic equipment such as a pen;
- Go in quietly, sit in your allocated seat, take off your coat and get ready to work;
- If you choose to bring a mobile phone into school, ensure it is switched off and placed in the locked cabinet in your tutor room at the start of the day;
- Listen to the teacher and follow instructions;
- Use Microsoft Office apps at home and/or use a diary when in school to keep up to date with homework
- Follow the Acceptable Use Agreement (found in E Safety Policy online) when using iPads or computers in school;
- Be responsible for transmitting information between school and home;
- Be aware of, and strive to meet the needs of others, where appropriate;
- Take care of equipment and the classroom;
- Treat staff, both teachers and support staff, with respect;
- Respect the rights of others and other students' right to work;
- Attend and arrive on time with everything you need for the lesson including basic equipment such as a pen;

# OUT OF CLASS EXPECTATIONS

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- Queue patiently in the dining hall and other food stations - do not push in;
- Put litter and chewing gum in the bins;
- Eat and drink hot food/drinks in A Block hall or in the outside courtyard area, unless given permission to eat in a designated area;
- Only eat and drink (except water) in designated areas;
- Remain on the ground floor only during break and lunch time;
- Co-operate with all school staff including support and kitchen staff;
- Respect the fabric of buildings;
- Look after the toilets to ensure they are always fit to use;
- Do not congregate in school toilets for social purposes. There should only be one student in a toilet cubicle at any one time;
- Do not bring cigarettes or vapes into the school building as smoking and vaping anywhere on site or near the site (including toilets) is not allowed;
- When the bell rings go straight to your lesson. Do not go to the toilet or wander on the corridors;
- Only visit the medical room if necessary and because you are unwell. If you do need to use the medical room, then please cooperate with staff;
- Do not visit the school office for a cup during lesson time. If you regularly need a drink during the school day, please bring in your own water bottle;
- If you arrive to school any time after registration/tutorial, please sign in at the main office;
- Respect other people's property, such as bicycles;
- Behave responsibly at all times when out in the community including putting your litter in a bin and being respectful in all interactions within the local community.

## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

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In all year groups, students follow a planned Personal Development programme designed to prepare them for their roles and responsibilities as an adult. This covers the personal development curriculum and will include citizenship, careers support, preparation for the world of work, health issues, study support and stress management, healthy relationships, wellbeing, e-safety, topical news events, revision etc. For these reasons punctual attendance is essential. Students are supported in exploring this range of diverse topics with their tutor groups and are expected to demonstrate respect and sensitivity to each others' views.

Also as part of the Personal Development programme, students will be encouraged to set targets and review their progress with their tutors. This is one of the reasons students do so well academically here.

Parent/Carers are asked to contact tutors whenever they feel it is appropriate either by phone or email.

Where it is agreed that a student needs even closer monitoring of their attendance, punctuality, performance or behaviour, they will be asked to keep a daily/weekly target report sheet.

## THE TUTOR

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The Tutor is at the centre of each student's education at the school. They will meet students daily, and will help their tutees make progress by:

- Ensuring good communication with home;
- Collecting phones in each day
- Ensuring good punctuality and attendance;
- Liaising closely with the Head and Assistant Heads of Year and Student Support Team;
- Encouraging academic and social progress;
- Teaching the Tutorial Programme;
- Helping students set realistic and achievable targets;
- Monitoring achievements of targets;
- Monitoring the reward system;
- Issuing information;
- Introducing discussion on the "Thought of the Week".

# INDEPENDENT WORKING

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At Whitley Bay High School, we aim to develop all students' abilities to work independently. We will be addressing this vital skill at the very beginning of Year 9 and thereafter with a carefully planned programme. This is designed to support students to develop those key skills and effective habits to see them become curious, reflective and resilient learners, which will result in success in examinations and beyond. Regular homework will form a part of our expectations of students.

All homework is recorded on Microsoft Teams and will appear in students' Outlook calendar. We encourage parents/carers to talk to their children regularly about homework. Students should check Teams daily at home with parents/carers.

From previous experience we have found that it is really important that parents discuss homework from the first week of Year 9; this will ensure a successful way of tracking work set and work completed.

## THE LIBRARY

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Reading is one of the most important and effective activities a young person can do to help improve their attainment. It's also something that has strong links with positive mental health and wellbeing, and reading the right book at the right time can be one of the most enjoyable and life-enhancing things we can do.

The Library stocks over 13,500 books carefully chosen to appeal to students of all ages and tastes. It is also staffed by three full-time librarians who are always on hand to help students make the most of the large, modern, welcoming resource. As well as an extensive book stock, the Library houses 30 networked computers and students are regularly taught in the space for a variety of subjects. The Library also runs a huge range of extra-curricular events, activities and clubs, as well as an annual Literature Festival which includes major, high-profile writers, poets and performers and a residency from a specialist Shakespeare theatre company. The Library is for everyone in school and all students will be involved in the teaching and extra-curricular activities it offers. The Library is also open before school, after school, and during breaks and lunchtime.

## E-SAFETY IN SCHOOL

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We have recently introduced a mobile phone-free school environment. Alongside this, we remain fully committed to educating students about how to use technology and personal devices safely, responsibly, and appropriately. As part of this commitment, our Personal Development curriculum includes a strong focus on e-safety.

We use industry-standard software, including Microsoft Office 365, to support students' learning and to help prepare them for future education and employment. Students will use these tools both in school and at home. We ask all students to download the Office 365 apps to their personal devices and to check them each day before and after school. Communication from teachers will take place via Outlook, and all homework will be set through Microsoft Teams. Deadlines will be clearly accessible in the Teams Assignments section and within students' Outlook calendars.

Within school, our network is supported by robust monitoring and filtering systems to help ensure that students are safe when using school devices and the school wi-fi. We expect all students to uphold high standards of behaviour online, both in and out of school.

As a mobile phone-free school, we do not permit access to social media during the school day. Matters relating to students' use of personal devices, including social media use outside of school hours, are primarily the responsibility of families. Where concerns arise, families may wish to seek support from appropriate external agencies, including the police where necessary. The school will always offer support where concerns affect students in school or arise within the school environment.

All students are expected to follow the Acceptable Use Agreement while in school and are strongly encouraged to apply these same principles when using technology at home. This consistent approach will help to ensure that students remain safe, respectful, and responsible digital users in all contexts.

## This acceptable use agreement is intended to ensure:

- That young people will be responsible users and stay safe while using the internet and other digital technologies for educational, personal and recreational use.
- That school systems and users are protected from accidental or deliberate misuse that could put the security of the systems and will have good access to digital technologies to enhance their learning and will, in return, expect the students to agree to be responsible users.

### **Acceptable Use Agreement**

I understand that I must use school systems in a responsible way, to ensure that there is no risk to my safety or to the safety and security of the systems and other users.

## Personal safety:

- The school will monitor my use of its digital systems, devices, and communications.
- I will keep my usernames and passwords secure and private. If compromised, I will report or change them immediately.
- I will only share personal information, like my name or address, when absolutely necessary and with permission.
- I will be cautious when meeting online contacts in person, only doing so with a trusted adult in a public place.
- I will take responsibility for my actions online, using tools like blocking or ending chats if needed.
- I will share images of myself or others only when it is safe and will ensure the images are appropriate and respectful.
- I will only take or share images of myself, or others, when fully dressed. I understand that sharing nude or semi-nude content can cause distress, may be illegal and could lead to prosecution / criminal records.
- I will report harmful or unpleasant material, messages, or anything that worries or upsets me to a trusted adult.

## Respecting others' work and information:

- I will seek permission before using or adapting someone else's work.
- I will verify information I find online, as it may not always be accurate or truthful.
- I will only use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools approved by the school and ensure my use is ethical, legal, and transparent.
- I will fact-check and critically evaluate AI-generated content for accuracy, bias, and discrimination before sharing or publishing.
- I will avoid downloading or using copyrighted or protected materials without proper permissions.

## Responsible online behaviour:

- I will be polite and responsible when I communicate with others. I will not use strong, aggressive or inappropriate language and I appreciate that others may have different opinions. I will not bully, harass, threaten, upset or make fun of others.
- I will only use platforms or software approved by the school and will not attempt to bypass the filtering/security systems in place. If I become aware of any such attempts, I will report this to a trusted adult.
- I understand cybersecurity poses a risk to both me, other learners and the school and will ensure I take precautions before accessing emails, messages or links. I will check with trusted adults if I have any such concerns.
- I will immediately report any damage, faults or failings involving equipment or software, however this may have happened.
- I will follow the age requirements for social media, apps, and tools.
- I will balance my online and offline activities to promote a healthy lifestyle.
- I will protect my online reputation and that of the school, its staff, and other learners.
- I understand that some online behaviours might be regarded, by some, as fun but can have serious consequences – this might include taking (or sharing) images/videos of staff, fights, learners in embarrassing situations or the setting up of fake accounts.
- I will ensure my behaviour reflects positively on the school, both in and out of school settings.

## Consequences of misuse:

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- I understand that failing to follow this agreement may lead to consequences outlined in the school Behaviour Policy including loss of access to the school's systems, detentions, suspensions, contacting parents/carers, or involvement of the police in serious cases.

By following these guidelines, I will contribute to a safe, respectful, and productive online environment.

I have read and understand the above and agree to follow these guidelines when:

- I use the school systems and devices (both in and out of school)
- I use my own devices in the school (when allowed) e.g. Ipads, laptops and cameras etc.
- I am out of school and involved in any online behaviour that might affect the school or other members of the school.

## WEBSITE SECURITY AND STUDENT SAFETY

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We like to publicise school events, celebrate achievement or participate in online activities such as the Carnegie Reading Award via our website or Instagram account. Students have agreed to the use of their photograph and other data as part of their GDPR consent. If this causes concern, please contact the Head of Year.

We also produce a monthly E-safety Newsletter and video in the ESafety section of our website. This helps to support parents/carers and students with a variety of esafety topics such as online apps, consent and cyber security.

The school's website can be visited at [www.whitleybayhighschool.org](http://www.whitleybayhighschool.org)  
Instagram @whitleybayhigh

## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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Our school's SEND policy follows the national SEND Code of Practice. We are committed to inclusive education and ensuring that students and parents/carers are actively involved in decisions about support. Our SEND Information Report and links to North Tyneside's Local Offer are available on the school website.

The Learning Support department offers a flexible range of support to meet student needs. This may include, as required:

- In-class support, with an emphasis on core subjects
- Access to a Learning Support keyworker
- Small group sessions to support literacy and numeracy skills
- Intervention programmes relevant to student need such as Key Fund or Independent Travel Training
- Homework support sessions
- Support from external agencies
- Access to technology to support learning in the classroom
- Support around preparing for adulthood, including additional careers support

As students progress through school, some may experience additional needs relating to learning, health, or social and emotional wellbeing. If you have any concerns about your child, please contact **James Mackenzie (SENDCo)**.

## GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

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The school is committed to helping all students, whatever their ability, achieve better than expected progress. To that end, students who are identified as exceptionally able or talented are closely monitored to try to ensure that the work they are given has the right level of challenge and stimulates higher order thinking. Many students benefit from special events and activities which are provided through the Gifted and Talented Programme for targeted groups.

# **KEEPING SAFE ONLINE - GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS**

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You should feel safe and happy at school.

If you feel threatened or have a concern it is important you share this with a teacher.

- Be careful who you share your personal details with. This includes mobile phone numbers and email addresses. This is particularly important if your email address contains part, or all, of your name.
- Ensure you have a strong password that is not shared with anybody. Be careful of phishing attacks when accessing your email. Never click a link from an email you were not expecting.
- Be aware people with whom you interact online may not be who they say they are. You are strongly advised not to share personal details and never meet anyone you know only online.
- Don't say things online that you would not say in person; think before you type.
- Remember that any mobile phone or webcam image that you share or allow to be taken of you can be passed on to the world via the internet. Be cautious.
- Mobile phones can play an important part in personal safety. However, avoid using mobiles and text messages in an insensitive and inappropriate manner. Mobile phones must never be used to take unpleasant photos or videos of staff or students.
- ID cards help the school to be a safer space. Make sure you always have yours with you.
- Do not use AI and social networking sites to post offensive material or to allow others to do so or to get yourself into any kind of difficult situation.
- Do not engage in personal conversation with people you don't know very well. Only befriend people you actually know.
- Tell your parents/carers and friends the details of the people you are communicating with. If they mean no harm, then they will not mind.
- When researching or using AI, ensure you use it carefully and acknowledge the sites or AI you use when producing your work to avoid plagiarism.

## **CHILD/CHILDREN IN CARE**

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Looked After students are carefully supported at our school. James Mackenzie or Helen Daglish attend the Care Team meetings and Looked After reviews, which are usually held in school.

## **SENSITIVE ISSUES AND SAFEGUARDING**

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If you wish to see a member of staff, please telephone to make an appointment. Do not simply turn up at the school. If you have an appointment you must enter the building by the visitor reception area and sign in. Please do not walk into the school without having done so. All visitors must sign in electronically and take a name badge before going beyond reception. After your appointment is finished, please sign out and leave the site directly via reception.

Sarah Fitzpatrick is our safeguarding lead if you need to speak to someone about a sensitive issue or safeguarding concern. Please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Fitzpatrick, Deputy Headteacher, if you need any help on these matters.

[sarah.fitzpatrick@whitleybayhighschool.org](mailto:sarah.fitzpatrick@whitleybayhighschool.org)

# MEDICAL INFORMATION

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For students with medical conditions, parents/carers are required to complete a Medical Care Plan or provide a copy of their NHS care plan. It is important to notify the school about any changes to a student's medical condition or health-care needs.

Whenever possible, students should take their medication at home. However, if a student needs to take prescribed medication during school hours or wishes to store medication in the school office, parents/carers must complete a Medical Care Plan. All medication kept in the school office must have a prescription label.

Students with serious medical conditions—including allergies, asthma, epilepsy, and diabetes—must carry their own medication at all times, including during PE lessons. Parents/carers of students with allergies or asthma may complete a consent form for use of emergency Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAIs) or salbutamol inhalers, which are available in the main office. If a student carries an AAI, guidance will be taken from their NHS Allergy Action Plan and parents/carers.

The school's First Aid Clerks are available daily in the school office to provide medical assistance and support.

In the case of illness during the school day, students should:

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- Ask to be excused from the lesson
- Be taken by another student to the school office (students should not go to the First Aid Room without reporting to the main office)

The school First Aid Clerk will occasionally contact parents/carers if there is a health issue about which you should be notified. The First Aid Clerk will also be up to date with the special medical needs of identified students and you can contact the First Aid Clerk if you need to do so.

**If a student needs to be sent home, the office will contact you so please keep us up to date with your emergency contact phone numbers.**

## USE OF AEROSOLS ON THE SCHOOL SITE

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We have a number of students who are allergic to aerosols and would request that you support us in discouraging the use of aerosols anywhere on the school site.

## TEXT MESSAGING

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Please note that we will use our text messaging service from time to time when we need to contact you with reminders or important information.

## FREE SCHOOL MEALS

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Some information published about the school is linked to percentage of students **ELIGIBLE FOR** free school meals. Even if students do not intend to take free school meals, it is useful to have the application forms filled in. Parents/carers can apply for free schools meals if in receipt of:

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit (regardless of household earnings from September 2026)

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals. If your child is not in receipt of free school meals and you think he/she maybe eligible, please contact 0191 731 7070 for an application form (or visit: <https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/238/free-school-meals>).

# **STUDENTS JOINING THE SCHOOL DURING THE YEAR**

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From time to time, students will join the school during the academic year. We are aware that their induction and settling in period is an important time. Tutors and Heads of Year will monitor them closely to ensure a smooth integration. Parents/carers can help by making sure that new students have all the right equipment, and by contacting the school in the event of any problems.

## **NOTES OF CONCERN AND PURPLE CARD**

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Our aim is to build positive relationships with students and minimise any opportunities for poor behaviour through planning high quality, engaging lessons. However, we recognise that some students can get things wrong and so we have systems in place to support students and inform parents/carers about inappropriate behaviour or poor decisions.

Teachers may complete a '**Note of Concern**' about a student when they want to alert Heads of Department, tutors, and Heads of Year to a concern they may have around attitude to learning, homework or behaviour. This usually leads to a conversation with the Head of the Department, the student's tutor and potentially the Head of Year. If a student receives several Notes of Concern, the Head of Year will contact parents/carers to relay the concerns to them.

In some circumstances a teacher may use the 'purple card' system. This means that a student is immediately removed from a lesson because they are, for example, repeatedly affecting the learning of others or they are creating a dangerous situation. In this instance parents/carers are always notified that day. Students who accumulate a number of purple cards may be suspended from school and invited in to discuss their behaviour with the Headteacher.

## **DETENTION**

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A student may be kept behind briefly at the end of a lesson by a teacher. If this continues after 12.35pm (lunchtime) or after 3.40pm (2.35pm on a Tuesday, 3.30pm on a Friday), then it will be regarded as detention and the following guidelines will apply:

Parents/carers will be informed by phone, text, or in writing at least 24 hours in advance of the time, place and reason for the detention. This will allow you as a parent/carer enough time to contact us if you wish to bring any relevant points to our attention.

## **EXCLUSION (FIXED TERM SUSPENSIONS)**

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The Governing Body has an Exclusion Policy, which guides our response to serious breaches of behaviour. It emphasises that exclusion from school is a sanction used sparingly and normally as a last response following other strategies. A key factor is likely to be where behaviour constitutes a risk to the safety and well-being of other pupils or staff. In this context, issues such as possession of illegal substances, weapons capable of threatening or causing physical damage, inappropriate use of language, or actions which put others in danger will be regarded as serious breaches of behaviour. Repeated disruptive behaviour can also lead to a suspension.

Further information about suspensions and permanent exclusions can be found in the school exclusion policy on our website.

## **SUPPORTED SCHOOL MOVE/FAIR ACCESS**

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For students who, because of unacceptable behaviour, are regarded as being at risk of permanent exclusion, there is the possibility of a Supported School Move to another school. The procedure will be discussed in detail with parents/carers, should the situation arise.

# BULLYING

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We are aware that bullying may occur when groups of students are together, but we believe in trying to create a climate in which bullying behaviour is not accepted by any member of the school community.

We believe that students have the right to be happy and safe, to be themselves, and to enjoy peace of mind. We do not believe that any students should be frightened by the words, threats or actions of others. We do not condone any physical violence or verbal abuse, even when it is provoked by the behaviour of others. Our policy is intended to promote a situation where students, staff and parents/carers work together to eliminate any form of bullying at Whitley Bay High School.

We use questionnaires on bullying and talk to students to allow tutors and Heads of Year to monitor problems should they arise and to take appropriate steps to address issues. The Student Council was involved in writing our anti-bullying policy.

We aim:

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- To use all staff, parents/carers and outside agencies as a positive in countering bullying behaviour;
- To use the curriculum to develop the personal and social skills of students in preventing, handling and responding to bullying in a positive manner;
- To give help and ongoing support to victims and to bullies to change their behaviour;
- To use the students of the school as a positive resource against bullying behaviour.

Expectations of parents/carers and students on bullying:

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- We expect no bullying to be tolerated and that you will actively support the school's policy on bullying;
- We expect any students, parents/carers, or any third party, aware of or suspecting that bullying is taking place will talk to a relevant representative of the school;
- We expect you to work together with the adults in school to stop bullying; no parent/carer should become involved in exchanges on Snapchat, Facebook or other social media.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES - SINGLE EQUALITY

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A key priority in our work with students is to explain our single equality duty and what this means day to day in practice.

### i. **Racial Equality Policy**

The school has a Racial Equality Policy designed to secure the entitlement of students and staff from different ethnic groups on the school site. Racial harassment is rare and any incidents are treated very seriously and reported to the Governing Body and Local Authority. If your child witnesses any racist behaviours please encourage them to report these as a matter of urgency to help us keep the school safe and welcoming to all.

### ii. **Homophobia, Gender and Disability Issues**

The school treats all students equally, respecting and valuing all members of its community. Therefore, homophobic, disability or sexist harassment is treated with equal seriousness to other forms of bullying. Please support the school in encouraging tolerance and open-mindedness in your children. Any examples of prejudice or intolerance will be taken very seriously and parents will be notified.

# **SUBSTANCE USE AND MISUSE**

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The school is committed to the health and safety of its members, and will take action to safeguard their wellbeing. In this context, the misuse of tobacco, alcohol, solvents and drugs is unacceptable, as is the illegal supply of these substances. The Governors' adopted Policy below outlines how the school will tackle issues of substance use and misuse.

**Vaping is not permitted on the school site. Students found to be vaping on school site will be at risk of suspension.**

**Note that there is a procedure to follow where students, who have been prescribed drugs for medical purposes, have to take these while in school. This procedure is outlined on Page 14.**

## **STATEMENT OF POLICY REGARDING SUBSTANCE USE AND MISUSE**

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- Drugs education is covered in LEV lessons and Personal Development which are designed to inform all students of the risks and potential consequences of the use and misuses of substances, including drugs, tobacco, alcohol and solvents.
- Students must not bring, use, or be under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol or solvents, or have in their possession illegal drugs, so-called legal highs, tobacco, vapes, E-cigarettes, alcohol or solvents, at any time on the school premises.
- The use or possession of illegal substances is a criminal activity. The school will inform parents and the police on all occasions when it suspects any use, possession or exchange of illegal substances on school premises.
- Because of the criminality of the offence, the school will also inform parents/carers and the police if it knows or suspects students of possession, selling or using illegal substances outside school premises.
- Teachers cannot offer any guarantee of confidentiality to students who reveal information related to illegal substances.
- The school will exercise the right to search bags, and to ask students to turn out their pockets, shoes etc. Two members of staff will usually be present in such situations. No physical search of students will take place.
- If a student is found to be using illegal substances, then the school will seek to make available to parents/carers, information about sources of advice and support. Continuation at school may be conditional on evidence that this support is being taken.
- To enforce this policy, the Headteacher will employ a range of sanctions, which could include suspension from school.

## **NO SMOKING/VAPING POLICY**

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In line with legislation banning smoking in all public places from 1st July 2007, and North Tyneside Council's Policy on no smoking on all council premises, Whitley Bay High School is a no smoking site. This means that no one is permitted to smoke on site at all. This smoking ban includes all members of staff, parents/carers, students, visitors, etc. In promoting this, we ask for the support of all parents/carers in ensuring that students do not bring cigarettes or lighters to school, or smoke on their way to or from school. Vaping is also similarly prohibited.

# OUR ADVICE/GUIDANCE TO STUDENTS ABOUT DRUGS

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Whitley Bay High School accepts and understands that drugs are a problem in society. However, we are absolutely committed to the position that school is a place of teaching and learning and that there is no place for drugs in such an environment.

Young people in particular are likely to be exposed to the issue of drugs and drug use and will be faced with choices. In order to help you make these choices, the school's response to the use, possession or supplying of drugs is outlined below. This is in addition to our drug education programme which is part of the RSHE curriculum (entitled LEV on timetables).

The school's response to drugs is based around a combination of support and sanction. We always consider individual circumstances and contexts. What follows is typical of our response and is the response which should be expected.

## If suspected to be in possession of drugs in school:

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- Parents/carers will be informed;
- The police will be called; students may be searched in the presence of an appropriate adult;
- Students may be referred to an agency for advice, coping strategies and support;
- Students may be suspended from school for a number of days and your parents/carers will be required to come in for a re-admission meeting.

## If discovered to have used drugs during the school day (on or off site):

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- Parents/carers will be informed and students will be taken home;
- The police may be informed and students may be searched in the presence of an appropriate adult;
- Students may be referred to an agency for appropriate advice, coping strategies and support;
- Students may be suspended from school for a number of days.

## Should students be discovered to have supplied drugs to others during the school day whether on or off site:

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- Parents/carers and the police will be informed;
- This is considered as a very serious breach of the schools behaviour policy and a Permanent Exclusion will be considered.

# EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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Outside the classroom we encourage students to participate in a wide range of activities to increase their happiness, improve emotional wellbeing and enjoyment of life, broaden their horizons and develop their social circle. Following on from the Covid-19 pandemic, this is a key priority of the school and we will be encouraging all students to take an extra curricular activity.

There are many sporting activities available and clubs and teams range across many physical activities. Departments offer activities to fit their expertise such as the UK School Mathematical Challenge and visits to theatres and art galleries. There are opportunities for all students to follow their interests. Further details such as times, dates and venues will be communicated via subject teachers, the school's daily bulletin, calendar, the website and Instagram.

Each year there are a variety of concerts and dramatic productions, which recently have ranged from musical spectacles through to 20th century classics. All students are welcome to participate by performing or assisting in the organisation of these productions.

## MOBILE PHONES

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In line with our commitment to maintaining a calm, focused and supportive learning environment, and in line with statutory legislation, mobile phones are classified as a 'prohibited item' during the school day, alongside other items such as vapes, cigarettes or any other inappropriate item for school. This applies to all students unless in clearly defined permitted areas or circumstances.

Students must hand in their mobile phone to their tutor at the start of the school day in tutor time. Their phone must be switched off. It is the student's responsibility to comply, including when arriving late or entering school after registration.

Students will collect their phone at the end of the school day, again during tutor time.

Students who choose not to bring in a phone will be spot checked from time to time using the phone tracker to identify any patterns or concerns.

Parents/carers will need to think carefully about this approach in relation to managing homework, their child knowing the time, communicating with their child about important things such as medical appointments before school, having a school bag for a paper timetable and so on.

Any issues that teachers might have with students and phones, teachers are asked to call for support using the 'purple card' team. A member of the purple card team will come to remove the phone swiftly so students can get back to learning in their lesson.

If a student is seen with a phone on school site, again this will be followed up by a member of pastoral or senior staff so the phone can be removed.

For students who have had their phone removed several times parents/carers will be notified and invited in to discuss this. In extreme cases of defiance, a student may be suspended.

If you would like your children/child to bring a phone so they have it before and after school, please buy a cheaper model and insure it separately. Students are strongly advised not to bring expensive mobile phones to school.

### Lunch time arrangements:

Students will **not have access to their phones over lunch**. Therefore, students will not be able to pay for food either in school or in the community with a phone.

Payment can be made in school using –

- Our biometric system, linked to the ParentPay top up system. If you have not already registered with the ParentPay System, you will receive details on how to register if you would like to.
- Bank cards, which are accepted at all catering points on site.

Outside of school, students will need to use cash or a debit card.

For more detailed information about our approach to mobile phones, please see the behaviour policy on the school website.

# **SCHOOL UNIFORM: YEAR 9, 10 AND 11**

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We are a school that places a positive relationship at the heart of everything we do. We are entirely committed to inclusion and creating a climate without bullying, or students being the subject of value judgments. For this reason, we have “non-negotiables” regarding key aspects of appearance and expect that students and parents/carers respect and do not challenge these.

Below outlines our non-negotiable requirements in relation to school uniform:

## **Trousers/Skirts**

Students must wear one of the following:

- Plain black, full length school trousers (straight leg, regular fit or bootleg)
- Plain black jeans (straight leg, regular fit or bootleg)
- Plain black skirt of an appropriate length worn with black tights

Not permitted:

- Leggings
- Faded or grey trousers/jeans
- Casual trousers in any colour or fabric
- Joggers, tracksuit bottoms or sportswear
- Combat style trousers or trousers with leg pockets
- Trousers with visible sports labels/logos
- Cuffed bottom trousers
- Ripped, frayed or distressed jeans

## **Polo Shirts**

Students must wear:

- Plain white polo shirts with the WBHS logo (this must be worn each day underneath their sweatshirt)

Not permitted:

- Polo shirts without the school logo
- Polo Shirts in any other colour
- Sports tops or aertex tops

## **Sweatshirts and Hoodies**

Students must wear:

- Navy blue sweatshirt with the WBHS logo (this can be removed if needed throughout the day)
- Navy blue hoodie with the WBHS logo (being phased out but still permitted)

Not permitted:

- Any non-school hoodie or sweatshirt
- Cardigans or jumpers
- Wearing a sweatshirt without a school polo shirt underneath

## **Shoes and Socks**

Students must wear:

- Plain black shoes or plain black trainers
- Footwear with no coloured logos or markings

Not permitted:

- Casual footwear
- Trainers in any colour other than black

## **Coats**

- Outdoor coats may be worn to and from school but must be removed in lessons.
- Coats must not display large graphics or writing.

### **School Bag**

- All students are required to have a school bag with them each day.
- Bags should be practical and suitable for carrying books, equipment and PE kit.
- Designer bags are discouraged for safety reasons, as advised by local police.

Parents/carers are advised to ensure that all items of clothing worn to school are clearly marked with the student's name. Our school does not have insurance cover against loss, theft or damage to students' property, and for this reason, students are advised to keep coats, bags, and other belongings with them at all times. For the same reason, expensive items of clothing and jewellery should not be worn or brought to school. Police advise naming all personal property (including coats.)

**ID cards must be carried at all times.**

**At Whitley Bay High School, our priority is a high quality education for all our students. For this reason we intend to ensure that tutorial and lesson time is used effectively for the benefit of students. It is unacceptable for teachers to have to use valuable teaching and learning time debating with students whether or not they are wearing correct school uniform. To avoid such situations, which disrupt effective teaching and learning and can damage relationships, parents are expected to ensure that students wear the correct school uniform.**

## **PE KIT**

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### **Students must wear:**

- Navy/red PE top with the school logo
- Navy full length leggings, jogging bottoms, football shorts or skort (this does not need to be branded with the school logo)
- Training shoes with secure laces and cushioned soles

### **Not permitted:**

- Three quarter length leggings
- Cycling shorts (any length)
- Navy full length leggings, jogging bottoms, football shorts or skort with visible large logos (e.g. Nike Pro)
- Black (or any other colour other than navy) leggings, jogging bottoms, football shorts or skort

### **Optional PE Items**

- Navy football socks
- Gum shields for hockey or rugby
- Personal rackets for badminton, table tennis or tennis (labelled and stored in the PE office)
- Sport specific footwear (e.g., football boots, rugby boots, hockey trainers)

### **Additional PE Guidance**

- All PE kit should be clearly labelled
- Kit should not be left around school or loaned to others
- Students should wear PE kit even when injured or unwell, as they remain part of the lesson
- Jewellery and body piercings must be removed or securely taped for PE

## **BASIC SCHOOL EQUIPMENT**

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To maximise learning in every lesson it is important that students bring in a **school bag** with basic equipment which could include:

- A pen
- A pencil
- Geometry set
- Pencil case
- Scientific calculator (recommended model: Fx-83GT or Fx-85GT)

# CONTACT WITH SCHOOL

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Any communication with the school will be handled with respect and sensitivity by the staff here. Our ethos and success is built upon the positive and collaborative relationships between ourselves, students and their families. We have developed a comprehensive Personal Development curriculum to educate students on the importance of respectful relationships and tolerance, so that students can feel safe to be who they are whilst they are here. Our role at school is to educate students, which we do within the context of our ethos, however there is an increasing expectation that schools have to solve incredibly complex problems that occur in society and out of school. These issues are often unclear and can cause disagreements and different viewpoints, consuming large amounts of school leaders' time and effort.

In all cases, we will do our best to help you as quickly as possible, but this is a busy school, with many interactions at any one time and where all teaching staff have a timetabled teaching commitment. We ask that you appreciate that we are a school that takes a reasoned and measured approach to solving issues within the context of our ethos. Therefore, the school may come to a conclusion that differs to your point of view. We ask, if this situation occurs, that we both move forward in a mutually respectful way.

We value our partnership with families and will always listen and respond to any concerns or issues that may arise. However, we respectfully ask you to appreciate that it is important that:

- You do not let your feelings override normal courtesy.
- You speak calmly to our office staff, our teachers or the Leadership Team who are responding to you.
- You remain calm, patient and polite as this will help us to respond appropriately and quickly.
- You understand that we aim to solve all issues within a reasonable time frame.
- You do not use aggressive language, threats and hostility. Such dialogue has no place in communications between home and school.
- You note that it is not reasonable to expect office staff to give detailed information or access teaching staff during the school holidays.
- If you disagree with the outcome of our investigation, please understand that the school's decision reflects a careful and considered process which is based on the evidence collected. We are not able to repeatedly revisit or explore alternative outcomes solely because there is disagreement.

If you speak discourteously or aggressively, then we may choose to terminate the conversation and reschedule later when you are calmer and more composed. It is important that all adults in a child's life model respect and consideration.

## TEACHER TRAINING

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Whitley Bay High School offers placements to teacher trainees in partnership with Newcastle University. We have extensive experience in supporting trainees to become exceptional teachers.

## THE GOVERNING BODY

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For information about the school's Governing Body, please contact:

Chair of Governors  
Naomi Oosman-Watts  
c/o Whitley Bay High School  
Denholm  
Whitley Bay  
NE25 9AS  
Telephone number: (0191) 731 7070



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