



# Parent Information Pack 2023-24 Academic Year

# WHYTRIG MIDDLE SCHOOL

One of the Seaton Valley Federation of Schools

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**Executive Headteacher:** John Barnes

**Head of School:** Jonathan Souter

10<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

We are delighted that your child will be joining Whytrig Middle School in the 2023-24 Academic Year.

We aim to make this period of transition as smooth and reassuring as possible and the purpose of this booklet is to ensure that all administrative details are in place for the first day of term and we are also well aware that you will want information on the key day-to-day issues that might affect your son or daughter when they are a member of our school community. Please read the information enclosed in this pack; more information is available on the school website at <https://svf.org.uk> if needed.

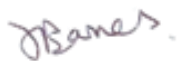


Please complete the electronic data collection form by clicking on the link at <https://tinyurl.com/whytrig-Sept23> at your earliest convenience, which will enable us to update our school records for your child ready for their arrival at Whytrig.

You can also use the QR code to open the form on your chosen device.

You will also need to click on the link to open and complete the electronic acknowledgement form at <https://forms.gle/oCCJh8cU6mz1uF23A> once you have read all the information in the pack.

Yours sincerely



John Barnes  
Executive Headteacher



Jon Souter  
Head of School



Proud to be a  
**Schools North East**  
Partner School



## **WMS Parent Induction Pack Contents**

Ethos and values	Pages 4 to 5
Term dates 2022 – 2023	Page 6
SVF Curriculum Vision and Intent	Page 7
Whytrig Middle School Staff List	Page 8
Contacting us	Page 9
Communication (MCAS)	Page 10
The home school planner	Page 11
School uniform and equipment	Pages 12 to 19
The merit award system	Page 20
WMS e-safety and responsible computer use	Page 21
A guide to the internet	Pages 22 to 23
E-safety and responsible computer use statement	Pages 24 to 25
Acceptable use of the school's ICT facilities	Page 26
School visits	Page 27
WMS sports fixtures	Page 27
Membership of the library	Page 28
Cycling to school	Page 28
Use of pupil images	Page 29
WMS – Home – School – Child Agreement	Page 30
Links to behaviour, attendance and anti-bullying policies	Page 31
Link to SVF complaints procedure	Page 31
<b>WMS Parent Induction Pack Acknowledgements</b>	<b>Page 32</b>

**Please take time to read the contents of this pack and any additional information in order to familiarise yourself with school routines, procedures and regulations in advance of your child joining Whytrig Middle School. Please then complete the electronic acknowledgement forms following the links on page 32.**

**Whilst it is necessary for all the relevant documentation to be acknowledged for our records, a parent or carer will implicitly agree to follow our school procedures and regulations by their child attending our school.**

## **Ethos and Values**

### **What is Whytrig Middle School about? Why come to Whytrig Middle School?**

As Executive Headteacher of Whytrig Middle School I believe we have an ethos and set of values which we pride ourselves on. There are 3 main elements to our ethos and values:

- 1. To be a school who knows your child really well both academically and pastorally as a complete young person.**
- 2. All within the school are treated with respect and we expect that respect to be mutual.**
- 3. We expect and strive for everyone associated with the school to be as good as they possibly can be in whatever area of school life. We do not accept not trying and we are never ashamed of doing well and being proud of doing well.**

As a school we put teaching and learning at the heart of every lesson and staff receive regular training to ensure they are always improving and this has an impact on the lessons they teach. We are a medium sized school and because of that we are far more able to respond to an individual's needs compared to bigger schools. The support you and your child receive will be second to none. We will do all we can to ensure your child settles into the school and then does as well as they possibly can.

On the academic front all of our students are closely monitored to identify if they are making the progress they should be. If they are not, interventions are put in place to rectify the situation.

In a sentence, Whytrig can be summed up as a school that is small enough to care but big enough to deliver a positive impact.

### **All three schools in the Seaton Valley Federation share a set of core values.**

**It is expected that all members of the school community will demonstrate the core values below including students, staff, volunteers, governors and parents.**

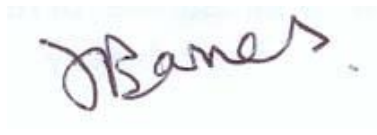
**We expect that all members of our community will:**

- 1. Develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.**
- 2. Respect the laws of England and will know right from wrong and ensure their actions reflect this.**
- 3. Accept responsibility for their behaviour.**
- 4. Show initiative and contribute in a positive way to the school community, the local community and society in general.**
- 5. Show respect for each other and all people.**

6. **Show tolerance and respect for different cultures and traditions and will never act in such a way that these cultures or traditions are abused or attacked.**
7. **Show respect for the rule of democracy and respect for the democratic principles of England.**

**Each school in our Federation will consider how best to communicate and embed these values for their pupils.**

I am immensely proud of this school, its students and staff and am more than willing to share the school experience with anyone. Please contact Angela Vintis or our reception at the school if you would like to arrange a visit.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

John Barnes  
Headteacher

## **Term Dates, 2023 – 2024**

### **Autumn Term 2023**

Monday, 4 September	Teacher day
Tuesday, 5 September	Term starts
Friday, 27 October	End of 1 <sup>st</sup> half term
Monday, 6 November	Start of 2 <sup>nd</sup> half term
Friday, 22 December	End of term

### **Spring Term 2024**

Monday, 8 January 2024	Teacher day
Tuesday, 9 January	Term starts
Friday, 16 February	End of 1 <sup>st</sup> half term
Monday, 26 February	Start of 2 <sup>nd</sup> half term
Thursday, 28 March	End of term

### **Summer Term 2024**

Monday, 15 April	Teacher day
Tuesday, 16 April	Term starts
Monday, 6 May	Bank holiday
Friday, 24 May	End of 1 <sup>st</sup> half term
Monday, 3 June	Start of 2 <sup>nd</sup> half term
Friday, 19 July	End of year

### **For your diary:**

#### **End of Key Stage 2 tests (Year 6 SATs)**

13 – 17 May 2024

2023 – 2024 Academic Year

## SVF Curriculum Vision and Intent



# SEATON VALLEY FEDERATION

SEATON SLUICE MIDDLE SCHOOL · WHYTRIG MIDDLE SCHOOL · ASTLEY COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

## OUR CURRICULUM VISION

Each school's broad and balanced curriculum will provide opportunities (both inside and outside the classroom) that ensure our young people:

- Have the skills and attributes to be successful members of society regardless of their starting point.
- Experience teaching and learning which is Interesting, Challenging and Engaging (ICE Curriculum)

## OUR CURRICULUM INTENT

### LINC

Through the ICE Curriculum that our pupils experience we aim for them to be:

**L**iterate  
**I**ndependent  
**N**umerate  
**C**ulturally Aware

### BEAM

To ensure that all pupils experience a positive learning environment which allows everyone to achieve their potential, we will support our pupils with their:

**B**ehaviour  
**E**motions  
**A**chievement  
**M**ental Health

**SMALL ENOUGH TO CARE;  
BIG ENOUGH TO DELIVER A POSITIVE IMPACT.**

## **Whytrig Middle School Staff List**

Mr J H Barnes	Executive Headteacher
Mr J K Souter	Head of School
Mrs H Campbell	Assistant Headteacher (Curriculum)
Mrs K Lennon	Assistant Headteacher (SEND & Disadvantaged)

### **Key Stage 2 Team**

<u>Year 5</u>	<b>Mrs E Chadwick</b>	<b>(Year 5 lead)</b>
	Mrs J Kelly	
	Mrs P Lowden	
<u>Year 6</u>	<b>Mr S Edwards</b>	<b>(Year 6 lead)</b>
	Mrs J Fairbrother	
	Mrs V Kerridge	(KS2 Maths lead)
	Mrs A Linney	(KS2 English lead)

### **Key Stage 3 Team**

<u>Year 7</u>	Mrs H Harland	
	Mrs C Lawton	
	Miss J Thompson	(SENDCo)
<u>Year 8</u>	Mrs D McClellan	
	Mr N Robinson	
	<b>Miss J Rutter</b>	<b>(KS3 lead)</b>

### **WMS Pastoral Team**

Mrs B Telfer	School Support Officer
Mrs L Culyer	School Counsellor

### **WMS SEND Team**

Mrs J Morris	SEND Support Officer
Miss O Ballantyne	Learning Support Assistant
Miss R Blacklock	Learning Support Assistant
Miss C Chicken	Learning Support Assistant
Miss S Eckert	Learning Support Assistant
Mrs S Gales	Learning Support Assistant
Ms J Hurst	Learning Support Assistant
Ms L Foster	Learning Support Assistant
Mrs T Ridley	Learning Support Assistant
Mrs S Robson	Learning Support Assistant
Miss M Ruler	Learning Support Assistant
Miss C Snowdon	Learning Support Assistant

### **WMS Support Staff**

Mrs L Watson	Technician
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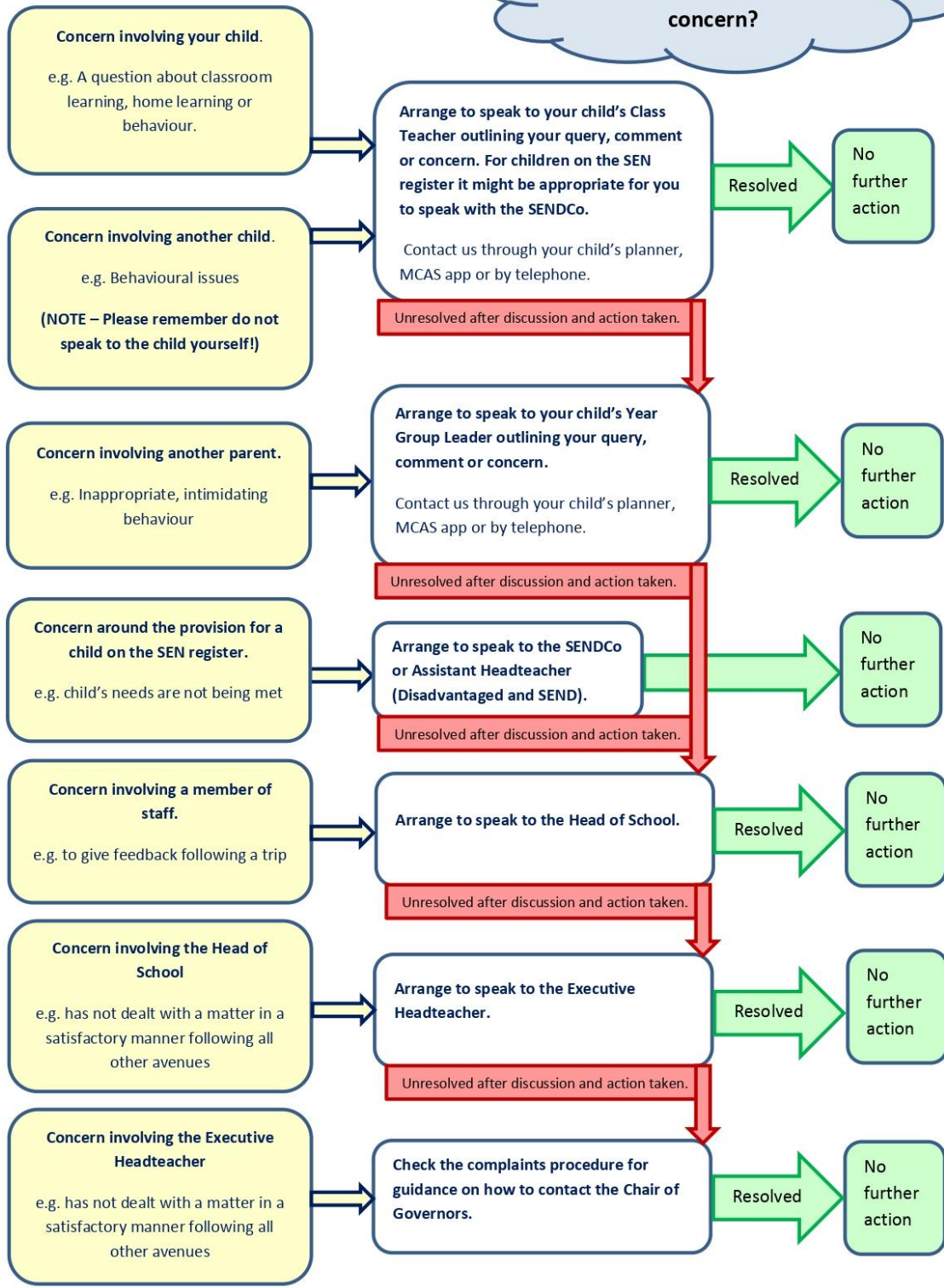


# Contacting Us



Whytrig Middle School

Who should I talk to if I have a question, comment or concern?



## **Communication (MCAS)**



Bromcom's MyChildAtSchool Parental Portal (MCAS)

MyChildAtSchool (MCAS) by Bromcom is an online portal for parents and carers that links directly to our school management information system. It provides you with real-time information about your child. You can access your child's timetable, classes, attendance record, behaviour record and reward points. You can also check and request updates to the data we hold for you. You will also receive your child's school reports and receive important communications from the school via the app.

MCAS can be accessed in the following ways:

Website: <https://www.mychildatschool.com>

Apple: <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/mychildatschool/id1394575255>

Google: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.bromcom.mcas&pli=1>

The MCAS app that looks like this:



School will provide you with a unique username and password. If you do not receive this information by 15<sup>th</sup> September, please contact our reception: [reception@svf.org.uk](mailto:reception@svf.org.uk)

For more information, please visit <https://svf.org.uk/my-child-at-school> where you can view a Parent/Carer Guide. We currently do not make use of all the features of the system.

If you forget your password, please click on the Forgotten Login Details button on the MCAS website or app. You will need the School ID number. It is as follows:

**Whytrig Community Middle School 12269**

## **The Home School Planner**

Each child will be given a planner to help them organise their year at Whytrig. It is a space in which to make note of all of the important information your child (and you!) will need:

- Your child's timetable – classwork and homework
- Your child's teachers
- Messages home
- Homework set and date due
- Times and dates to remember
- Merits gained
- Behaviour stamps which have been awarded

It also includes information about the school for your reference and reference information for pupils, such as maps, English, Maths and Science information.

It is important that pupils get into the habit of taking it to all lessons and home at the end of each day. They are also expected to take responsibility for ensuring that homework details are recorded clearly, including what needs to be done and the date it is due to be handed in. Teachers always give time for this during the lesson and will often write the instructions on the board, particularly for Key Stage 2 pupils.

Your child's Home School Planner is an important link in the partnership involving parents, teachers and pupils. Please support us by signing the planner at the end of each week and by making a note of any concerns you have to enable these to be followed up at school. Normally the class teacher will monitor the planner once a week, so if it is more urgent, please ensure that your child draws it to the attention of the teacher for a prompt reply.

We feel sure that we can count on your support and encouragement to ensure that your child makes the most of their time at Whytrig.

## **School uniform and equipment**

Whytrig has an attractive school uniform that is worn by all of the pupils. We are grateful to the parents for their support in this matter and hope it will continue. The uniform encourages the children to take pride in themselves and their school; this ultimately reflects in their work and behaviour. We need your help to maintain high standards. Please read this carefully to ensure that you are not buying expensive items of clothing for your child which will not be allowed in school. In the interests of clarity, we have enclosed a reminder of our full uniform list and details of equipment we expect pupils to bring to school with them. Please complete the online acknowledgement form (links at the end of pack) to show you have read and understood the information.

School uniform can be ordered from **Emblematic**, our uniform suppliers. We believe this gives parents more flexible choices when ordering, whilst also standardising the uniform ordering process over the Seaton Valley Federation of Schools. An advantage of this system will make it easier to combine orders for parents who have pupils at middle school and high school. The option to have your child's name embroidered on to the sweatshirt is also available. This would certainly help teachers, pupils and parents with the identification of property, although the manufacturers would like to point out to parents of younger pupils the danger of strangers out of school being easily able to identify your child's name. You can place your uniform & PE Kit order using the following methods:-

- Place an on-line order on the Whytrig Middle School webpage on Emblematic's website at <http://emblematic.co.uk/longbenton-store/whms/>. This includes the option to have the pupil's name embroidered onto school jumpers and PE polo shirts. Orders will be delivered to your home (a charge for postage will be made);

OR

- In person at Emblematic's Longbenton shop at Unit 26, North Tyne Industrial Estate, Whitley Road, Benton NE12 9SZ (near Asda). Names cannot be embroidered if you buy in person.

**Please note that orders for Uniform and PE Kit cannot be placed at the school. A small stock of ties will be available for purchase from the finance office.** The school keeps a set of samples for pupils to try on as a guide and to aid the ordering process; they can be tried on at the Finance Office. Please take the opportunity to check sizes and ensure you order the correct size, particularly if you choose to place an on-line order which is personalised.

A copy of the Emblematic price list can be opened by going to the School website at the following address <https://www.svf.org.uk/whytrig-middle-school/school-life/uniform> or by going directly to the Emblematic online store at <https://emblematic.co.uk/>, selecting Longbenton Store and then Whytrig Middle School.

Orders for uniform and PE kit for the 2023-24 school year **must** be received by Emblematic by **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023** to ensure they are ready for the start of the school year. Any orders received after this date may not be processed and ready for the start of term.

## UNIFORM LIST

### Regulation Uniform

- School burgundy sweatshirt.
- White school shirt or blouse (**not polo shirt**).
- School tie.
- Black straight-legged, tailored trousers (standard length), worn with black or white socks. **Fitted or tight-legged trousers, jeans, leggings, jeggings, cords or tracksuit bottoms are NOT permitted.**
- Black mid or knee length, A-line, pleated or straight skirts (cotton or cotton mix) worn with black tights or black or white socks. **Mini-skirts or skirts made from stretch material are NOT permitted.**
- Black plain flat shoes or leather-look trainers that can be polished, or ankle boots only if they can be covered with trousers (**no obvious branding, designer trainers with Velcro fastening, Vans/Converse style trainers, canvas/leather plimsolls, UGG-style boots, sand shoes or platform shoes**). **If boots are worn in winter months or poor weather conditions, they should be leather with a sensible sole and tucked under trousers.**
- **No fashion belts**

Please note

- All clothing should be clearly named.
- KS2 children may choose to wear formal black school shorts in the first and last half terms of the school year.
- At a stated time in the Summer Term, the children will be permitted to wear the summer uniform of a plain white polo shirt with no tie.
- Trainers should not be worn in school (pupils are only permitted to change into trainers during lunchtimes and for PE lessons).
- Non school uniform jumpers/tops, if worn as coats, **should be removed before entering the school building** and put back on when leaving at the end of the school day.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

### Regulation PE Uniform

- White round necked Whytrig "T" shirt.
- Black shorts or PE skirt.
- Gym shoes/trainers/football boots.
- Black round neck 'Whytrig' sweatshirt or hoody.
- Black tracksuit bottoms (or black leggings purchased from school supplier).
- Black football socks.

**It is essential that alternative footwear is provided for these activities. Key Stage 3 children will also require football boots for their lessons. In Years 7 and 8, children are expected to change into their PE kit even if they are not taking part in the PE lesson (unless injuries dictate otherwise). If a child arrives at a PE lesson without any PE kit, we will loan them a kit, with the expectation that they can still take part in the lesson.**

### HAIRSTYLE AND JEWELLERY

The following guidelines apply. Please ensure that your child conforms with our expectations. If in any doubt, **please telephone the school before you agree to a proposed change of hairstyle.**

#### **We will accept**

Short hair which is neat, tidy – number 2 cut or above on top; number 1 cut or above on back and sides.  
Subdued, modified hair colouring which moderately changes the colour shade of hair.  
Highlights used moderately to enhance the natural hair colour and tone.  
Ethnic/cultural variations by agreement with a parent/carer.  
Hair tied back (from the crown or lower)/use of plain headbands.

#### **We will not accept**

Hair cut extremely short and close to the scalp – number 1 cut or below on top; no guard on back and sides.  
Coloured, or natural hair extensions.  
Tight plaited hairstyles or plaited hairstyles using different coloured plaits or adorned with coloured beads or other ornamentation.  
Bleached or dyed hair which is extreme in colouring (eg. red, purple, blue or green etc).  
Extreme highlights which completely change the colour and tone of hair.  
Extreme hairstyles(eg shaved tramlines or patterns).

Pupils who wear jewellery may expose themselves and others to risk of injury. In the interests of safety parents are advised not to send their child to school wearing jewellery. Pupils are permitted to wear a watch, one ring and 'stud'

earrings. All items of jewellery must be removed before Physical Education and Games activities. This is a requirement of Sports associations and Local Authority regulations.

Please note

- Make up, false nails, fake tan and nail varnish should not be worn at all in school.
- Only 'stud' earrings are allowed. **Nose piercings and any other piercings are NOT permitted.**

**Children who do not follow the uniform and appearance guidelines will be subject to the consequences set out in the School behaviour policy. In this way we hope to maintain our high standards.**

## **CARE OF PROPERTY**

Please ensure that all items of clothing and personal belongings are named making them much easier to trace if lost, **including packed lunch boxes**. Each child in Year 5 will be provided with a named peg to hang their bag and coat outside the Year 5 classrooms; from Year 6 to Year 8 each child will be provided with a locker in which they will keep their coats, bags and other belongings in the main building. There is an initial cost of £5 for each locker at the start of Year 6, which is for the upkeep of lockers during their time at Whytrig. Children who are new starters in years 6 to 8 will need to make this purchase. Please return in an envelope, stating 'locker money' with your child's name and class marked clearly. If your child loses their key during the course of the year, a replacement can be ordered from the finance office at a cost of £2.50.

Because of the size of classrooms and the nature of the desks, in order to prevent a tripping hazard, pupils are not allowed to take large bags into the classroom. They should be kept in the Year 5 cloak area or in their lockers in the main building.

Children are able to have and carry with them folders or plastic wallets which are capable of storing books and equipment securely (approximately A4 size). We ask that pupils return their belongings to their classroom at lunchtime and do not leave them lying around in public areas. **Packed lunch boxes should be named and taken home at the end of every school day.**

**The school or Local Education Authority cannot accept responsibility for the loss or theft of pupils' personal property. Expensive items of property should not be brought into school.**

Examples of shoes we **WILL** accept



Boy's school shoes should be black and formal.

These types of shoes can be bought at a wide variety of shoe shops and supermarkets such as:



- Clarks
- Wynsors
- Asda
- Sainsbury's
- Tesco





Examples of shoes we **WILL** accept



Girl's school shoes should be black and formal.

These types of shoes can be bought at a wide variety of shoe shops and supermarkets such as:



- Clarks
- Wynsors
- Asda
- Sainsbury's
- Tesco



Examples of shoes **we WILL NOT accept:**



We will not accept either boys or girls wearing shoes, whether branded or not which resemble trainer styles as shown in the pictures opposite. Canvas plimsolls, Vans/converse style trainers, UGG style boots or platform shoes are not allowed to be worn as school shoes.

If boots are worn in winter months or poor weather conditions, they should be tucked under trousers.

## MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phone use by children is NOT allowed on our school site. If any parent or carer would like their child to bring a mobile phone to school (for instance if they are attending an after school club) they are very welcome to do so but it is done at their own risk. All children MUST however follow our school expectations if they have a mobile phone on site:

- All phones MUST be switched off when children enter our site.
- Phones should NOT be switched back on again until children have left the site at the end of the school day.
- Phones are NOT allowed to be kept or accessed by the child during the school day and MUST be stored securely in lockers (and in the case of Year 5 pupils, handed in to their teacher to be stored securely in the mobile classrooms).

A one day isolation will result if a child **uses** a mobile phone in school without permission.

## WHAT DO I NEED TO BRING TO SCHOOL?

All children are expected to come to lessons with a basic set of equipment. In Year 5 this is provided by the School. This consists of:

- a black pen and a blue pen, (biro, roller ball or handwriting). We do not recommend fountain pens as they tend to leak.
- a pencil for drawings, plans, diagrams and maps.
- an eraser.
- a ruler.
- a pencil sharpener.
- their Home/School planner.

A calculator and a set of coloured pencils would also be useful items. Tippex is not allowed in school. Pens are sold in school at reduced prices to the children. Replacement sketch books, exercise books and Home School Planners are also available for the children to buy.

## **The merit award system**

Our Merit reward system takes the form of both House Merit and Individual Merit Awards.

### **How can merits be gained?**

Merits can be gained for any of the following:

- outstanding work
- exceptional effort or a job well done
- helpfulness
- representing the school
- improvement in work
- homework

### **How are merits awarded?**

Teaching staff will award merits verbally or by noting them on the corresponding piece of work in the child's exercise book. Merits are recorded each term on the appropriate page of the pupil's home school planner and are also shared on the MCAS app. Merits count towards the pupil's individual achievements and towards the house merit competition. Non-teaching members of staff will also award merits in school to recognise effort and achievement.

### **House Competition**

Merit totals are collected half termly and collated for the house competition. The cumulative total is then recorded on a notice board in the Key Stage 3 area, informing all pupils of the current scores in the house competition.

The house gaining the most merits will be awarded the "Merit Shield" for that term, which will also include a record of previous winners. Each house will then begin from zero again in the ensuing term.

### **Individual Merit System**

As the merits are accumulated in the diary, the pupil can achieve the following awards:

- As recognition for receiving five merit stamps, the pupil will receive a silver sticker in year group assembly and will be a 'Silver Pupil'. This sticker will be stuck in their planner.
- When a pupil has received five silver stickers in one term, they then become a 'Gold Pupil'. For this achievement they will receive a gold sticker and a gold pupil badge, presented in a school assembly. This gold pupil badge can be worn for the ensuing term.
- Any pupil who reaches 50 merits in one term is awarded an 'Excellence' badge .
- A child who reaches 75 merits in a term will receive their 'Superstar' badge.
- A child who reaches 100 merits in a term will receive an 'owl' badge.
- A child who reaches 125 merits in a term will receive an enamel 'smiley face' badge.
- A child who reaches 150 merits in a term will receive a gold 5 point star badge.

Badges are handed out at the first time they are achieved in the school year and stickers are given on subsequent occasions. At the end of each term, all pupils revert back to a zero count of merits and have to start again, collecting merits and aiming for their first silver sticker.

## **WMS E-Safety and Responsible Computer Use**

As part of the school's ICT programme we offer pupils supervised access to the Internet. Before being allowed to use the Internet, all pupils must obtain parent/carer permission and both they, and you, must sign and return the permission form at the back of this information pack as evidence of your approval and acceptance of the Schools E-safety and Responsible Computer Use policy.

Access to the Internet enables pupils to explore thousands of libraries & databases and emails allow them to exchange messages with other email users throughout the world. Whilst every endeavour is made to ensure that suitable restrictions are in place on the ability of pupils to access inappropriate material, the school cannot be held responsible for the nature or content of materials accessed through the internet.

If your son/daughter accidentally comes across an unsuitable website then they should report it to a teacher or the network manager so that the site can be blocked. The School will not be liable for any damages arising from your child's use of the internet facilities.

Whilst our aim for Internet use is to further educational goals and objectives, pupils may find ways to access other materials as well. We believe that the benefits to pupils from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages, but ultimately, parents/carers are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. To that end, the school supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for Internet access.

During school, teachers will guide pupils toward appropriate materials. Outside of school, families bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, videos, radio and other potentially offensive media.

As part of their induction into ICT at Whytrig pupils are taken through what is acceptable use and what is not acceptable use of the ICT system in school as well as suggestions as to what is and isn't acceptable on any other systems or devices.

All of our computer usage in school is monitored and any inappropriate or unacceptable usage will be followed up in school with appropriate sanctions being put in place. Any serious or illegal activity may also be reported to the relevant authorities e.g. Police if necessary.

## **A guide to the internet**

### *Why do parents need a guide to internet safety?*

The internet is a huge technological achievement, promising great benefits to society in general and to children and young people in particular, especially in education and entertainment. However, as well as all the benefits to education and businesses, the internet has brought unfamiliar problems. Some of these can create potential dangers for children, and while we do not want to exaggerate dangers, they do exist. Parents and carers need to know about possible hazards to children on the internet – such as child abuse – and how to deal with them.

### *There isn't an older generation to learn from*

It has long been taken for granted that we must ensure our older children are streetwise before we let them go off on their own in our modern towns and cities, and when younger children go into the city they should be accompanied by an adult at all times. We teach children to be wary of strangers, not to go with, or accept gifts or lifts from, people they do not know, and so on.

In many ways the Internet is just like a big modern city. It has all sorts of people in it and there are all sorts of places within its boundaries. The great majority of the people are perfectly decent and respectful of others, and the great majority of places are entirely safe for anyone. But sadly that is not true of everyone or everywhere.

### *Take an interest in what your children do online*

The Internet is truly a medium which adults and children can share to the great advantage of both. It is already being widely used in our schools and across the educational system. Not just to do their homework, but also for all kinds of fun and games and to communicate with their friends. Young people by and large seem to have had no difficulty adapting to the Internet with Social media and gaming being intricately woven into their lives.

Children and young people all need a certain amount of privacy but they also need parental involvement in their daily lives. You need to become engaged with how your child uses the Internet and familiarise yourself with the places they go on the Web and ask them how else they use the Internet. You should know who they are sending messages to and who they are receiving them from. You should know what social spaces they frequent and the type of communication possible in those social spaces.

### *The possible pitfalls to watch out for*

The problems your child might encounter on the Internet fall into three broad categories:

- Excessive use leading to a neglect of homework, outdoor or other social activities.

- Deliberately or unwittingly accessing inappropriate material: pictures & videos which are either dangerous, pornographic, offensive or unacceptable in some other way
- Making inappropriate contact with individuals who may wish to cause them harm.

### *Should I stop my child from spending too much time on the computer?*

Excessive time online can lead to children neglecting homework, and outdoor or other social activities. There are no hard and fast rules about what is and is not excessive. It will vary from child to child and on the circumstances from week to week. If a child has a lot of research to do for some homework, they might need to make more use of the computer and the internet on some days than others. Each family or class needs to have its own understanding and approach. Computers can be used for so many different things it is quite easy for a child to switch rapidly from one activity to another, making it hard for parents to know if their child is really doing homework or just playing games.

### *Is my child at risk?*

Children and young people will take part in all sorts of chat and activities online, some of which may well be of a sexual nature. This is a normal part of growing up. However these kinds of adolescent activities are very different from the kind of grooming that paedophiles can initiate.

You may need to make judgements about the sorts of material you might come across on your child's computer.

If you find any record of worrying pornographic pictures or inappropriate conversations, don't panic - but do talk to your child about your concerns, as you would about any others, and do seek help and advice if you remain worried. NSPCC (call free on 0808 800 5000) or Child Line (call free on 0800 1111) can

help or you can use the report abuse link  on many websites including the schools.

## **E-safety and responsible computer use statement**

During your child's time at Whytrig Middle School (WMS), they will be given a user name and password that will allow them access to the ICT facilities on the Elsdon Avenue site, which includes the computer rooms at Astley Community High School (ACHS).

At WMS and ACHS students and teachers work in partnership within a learning community. Mutual respect and responsible attitudes to each other, to work and to property are the foundation of our culture of achievement by all.


**The computer facilities at WMS and ACHS are the property of the Schools and are a resource shared by students and staff. This e-Safety and Responsible Computer Use Statement has been drawn up to protect all parties – students and staff (the users), the equipment and the School.**

**This Statement is explained to all users as part of the induction process at WMS. A full copy of the e-Safety and Responsible Computer Use policy is available from the Executive Headteacher's Personal Assistant/Support Officer.**

- Access to the network should only be made via the user's authorised account. It is the user's responsibility to ensure that access to their account is not made available to any other user.
- Users will only look at, edit and delete their own files.
- The school reserves the right to examine or delete any files, including emails, that may be held on its computer system and to monitor or restrict access to any programme, file or Internet sites visited.
- Activity that threatens the integrity of the school's ICT systems or activity that enters, modifies, attacks or corrupts other accounts and/or systems is illegal and is forbidden.
- Users are responsible for all email sent and for contacts made that may result in email being received. It is the Schools requirement that all emails sent should be polite, sensible and free from unsuitable language and be carefully written.
- Users will not send emails or any attachments which are hurtful, abusive or offensive.
- Users will not play games on the network unless they have been approved as being educationally beneficial.
- If a user receives anything, sees anything, or comes across a website which is unsuitable then they must report it to their teacher or the network manager immediately.
- As a school we block access to certain websites for the safety of our users. We also support the blocking of unsuitable sites by Northumberland County Council and our ISP. Any attempts to bypass these safety measures including the use of proxy avoidance sites are tantamount to rejection of this statement and of the e-Safety and Responsible Computer Use policy and will result in an immediate ban from the network. Appropriate sanctions will then be instigated in accordance with our Sanctions Policy.
- To maintain the speed and integrity of our internet connection and also to ensure our user's safety, access to social networking sites is not allowed.



Should users wish to use such sites from their own home computer we would encourage them to think very carefully before they use social networking sites, what information they post on these sites and that they are age appropriate.

- As part of e-safety, users should be aware that to give your home address or phone number or to arrange to meet someone who contacts them via the internet can be dangerous. Any such approaches of this nature should be reported using the  icon located on the School's internet/intranet site. You should also speak to a trusted adult if you receive such a request.
- Use of any internet chat or instant messaging programs is not permitted.
- Copyright of materials must be respected by all users.
- Use of School facilities for personal gain, gambling or political purposes is forbidden.
- Use of the network to access, create, store or send inappropriate material is forbidden.
- All users must sign the agreement of the e-Safety and Responsible Computer Use Statement.

## **Acceptable use of the school's ICT facilities and internet Agreement**

When I use the school's ICT facilities (like computers and equipment) and go on the internet in school, I will not:

- use them without asking a teacher first, or without a teacher in the room with me
- use them to break school rules
- go on any inappropriate websites
- go on any social networking sites (unless my teacher said I could as part of a lesson)
- use chat rooms
- open any attachments in emails, or click any links in emails, without checking with a teacher first
- use mean or rude language when talking to other people online or in emails
- share my password with others or log in using someone else's name or password
- bully other people

I understand that the school will check the websites I visit and how I use the school's computers and equipment. This is so that they can help keep me safe and make sure I am following the rules.

I will tell a teacher or a member of staff I know immediately if I find anything on a school computer or online that upsets me, or that I know is mean or wrong.

I will always be responsible when I use the school's ICT systems and internet.

I understand that the school can discipline me if I do certain unacceptable things online, even if I am not in school when I do them.

The full policy is available on request.

## **School visits**

During the year your child will be going on various visits with his/her class or year group. In the past some children have been prevented from going on outings because they have not brought their permission slip back and we have been unable to contact parents. To try to prevent this happening we are asking you to sign the slip below giving permission for your child to go on these visits.

Of course you will still be informed of the time and destination of the visits. The form is to save having to ask your permission every time your child goes out of school. Obviously, if for some reason, you object to your child going on a particular visit, you can inform the school when you receive information about the visits.

## **WMS sports fixtures**

During this academic year your son/daughter may be selected to represent Whytrig in competitive sports fixtures against other schools. As well as these matches taking place at our school there may be some 'away' fixtures at schools within the local authorities of Northumberland, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Newcastle, Gateshead and Durham.

If an away fixture is scheduled the teacher taking the team will book transport and provide verbal notification to the students taking part. They will be told where the match is taking place and given an approximate time of return to school. As responsible learners they will be asked to share this information with you as we will not be providing separate written notification for every match.

To register permission for your son/daughter to participate in an away match please complete the online acknowledgement form (links at the end of pack). We require the emergency contact information and the medical details so that this is to hand when we are at away venues.

In providing an approximate return time prior to each match please note that instances of a delayed start, extra time or traffic congestion can result in a later than anticipated return time but in all cases students will be allowed to make use of a school mobile phone on the return journey. They will always be returned to the safety of the school premises after an away fixture from where they can continue their onward journey home as usual or wait to be collected depending upon your own individual arrangements. Thank you once again for your support.

## **Membership of the library**

Whytrig can rightly boast having access to one of the very best school libraries in the County. Based on two floors at the main Astley entrance to the school, the Library is run in partnership with the local public library service. The arrangement means that our pupils are allowed direct access to a wider range of age appropriate resources than other local schools.

As well as having over 15,000 books on the shelves ranging from fiction to non-fiction. Based on animals, sports, hobbies, Science, the Arts, History and Geography, action, romantic, fantasy and mystery to name but a few genres to read. ICT provision is also made through internet- linked computers that are based in the upstairs library.

To enjoy the full benefit of this excellent facility, all pupils will automatically be signed up to the school account and become a member of the school library. If you wish to be a member of the Seaton Valley Community Library (public library) you need to fill in a form and have it signed by a parent/career. This will give you access to libraries across the county.

## **Cycling to school**

We are able to offer pupils the option of cycling to school. To ensure the safety of our pupils, we ask parents to apply for a pass for their child to use the school cycle racks by reading and signing the agreement below. Passes will then be given firstly to pupils who have a current Bikeability Certificate.

Pupils who do not comply with the agreement will have their cycle passes removed.

We hope that we will continue to work with the police and cycle safety organisations to provide more Bikeability training for those pupils who have not already been trained.

If you wish your child to cycle to school, please read and complete the online acknowledgement form (links at the end of pack).

## **Use of pupil images**

During the time that your child attends Whytrig Middle School there will be opportunities to celebrate their hard work and success. In order to do this we regularly take photographs or videos of pupils at work or celebrating success. These images are then used for display around school or in school assemblies and remain the property of the School.

On occasion photographs taken are used in newsletters, on the school website, in the School Twitter feed, in the school prospectus, to send to local newspapers, in open evenings and amongst the many other opportunities that give us the chance to celebrate the success of our children.

Activities that are likely to have photographs or videos include: - pupils at work in lessons, around the school in dining areas, on school organised activities and trips away from the site, sports activities, awards presentations and school performances. No images would be used of pupils in and around the swimming pool area unless with specified consent.

Please also note that, for Child Protection reasons, it is against school rules for pupils to take photographs of other pupils in school without specific permission from a teacher. For this reason as well as others, mobile phones are not allowed in school.

It is important we protect your child/young person's interests, respect your wishes and theirs and comply with the Data Protection Act 1998. The school confirms that it shall only use photographic images of your child /young person in line with its safer images checklist and in order to demonstrate or promote activities relating to the schools' curricula and extra-curricular provision.

Under various Acts of Parliament and to safeguard your child we are only able to carry out such activities with your child's and your knowledge and co-operation. Thank you for your support.

## **WMS – Home – School – Child Agreement**

***In the partnership of parent, teacher and pupil, each of us has special responsibilities in order to gain the greatest benefit from the time spent in school with the child. In consultation with parents, pupils and governors, we have developed our Home -School – Child Agreement. Another copy is available for reference in your child's home school planner and in the school booklet.***

### **The School - We will:**

- Ensure that all pupils follow the ready, respectful, safe expectations.
- Treat pupils and parents/carers with respect as professionals of the school.
- Be open and welcoming at all times and involve you in problems encountered at school.
- Look after your child in a caring, sensitive and fair manner, ensuring their safety and well-being, in line with professional codes of practice.
- Provide an interesting and stimulating environment for your child.
- Plan lessons carefully to meet the needs of your child, within the guidelines of the National Curriculum.
- Ensure your child is given every opportunity to achieve their full potential as a valued member of the school community.
- Set homework for an appropriate amount of time on a weekly basis.
- Report progress to you regularly in the form of written reports and parents' evenings.
- Liaise with first and high schools to ensure your child's continuity of education.
- Provide a fair, well understood code of discipline.

### **The pupil - I will:**

- Follow the ready, respectful, safe expectations.
- Treat staff, pupils and property with respect.
- Take responsibility for myself and my belongings.
- Come to school fully equipped for the lessons of that day.
- Wear the correct school uniform.
- Arrive to school and to each of my lessons on time.
- Complete and hand in homework to the best of my ability.
- Look after the school building and its equipment.
- Tell a member of staff if I have any worries or concerns.

### **The parent - I will:**

- Encourage my child to follow the ready, respectful, safe expectations.
- Treat staff and stakeholders of the school with respect.
- See that my child goes to school regularly, on time, properly dressed and properly equipped.
- Inform the school by phone before 9.00am if my child is absent.
- Ensure that the school is fully informed of any medical/family information or concerns which may affect my child at school.
- Support my child with his/her homework and home learning opportunities and ensure my child completes his/her homework on time.
- Attend parents' evenings, target setting evening and discussions about my child's progress.
- Support my child in responding positively to the expectations and regulations of the school.
- Keep up to date with what is going on at school through newsletters, social media, the report system and my child.

## **Links to policies**

Please visit the Seaton Valley Federation website at <https://www.svf.org.uk/our-federation/policies> and read the following essential policies and documents:

- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Attendance policy
- SVF Complaints procedure

## **WMS Parent Information Pack Acknowledgements**

**The induction pack is for your information. We have taken a sustainable approach this year and have produced it as an electronic version (paper copies are available on request) so that you can refer back to it conveniently when required.**

Parents or carers should click on the following links to complete the electronic acknowledgement forms so that we can update our records. **Whilst it is important that these forms are completed as soon as possible, we will consider an agreement to follow our procedures and regulations is implied and in place if a child attends our school.**

Please click on the following link at <https://tinyurl.com/whytrig-Sept23> to complete:

- Pupil personal information
- Medical information
- Contacts information
- Photograph and video consent
- Final declaration

Please click on the following link at <https://forms.gle/oCCJh8cU6mz1uF23A> to acknowledge receiving and reading:

- Ethos and values
- Home School Planner
- School uniform and equipment
- School visits
- WMS sports fixtures
- WMS cycling agreement
- Home – School – Child Agreement
- Acceptable IT use agreement for pupils and parents
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Attendance policy
- SVF Complaints procedure