



WHYTRIG MIDDLE SCHOOL

One of the Seaton Valley Federation of Schools

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Executive Headteacher: John Barnes

Head of School: Jonathan Souter

8th September 2023

Dear Parent / Carer,

Autumn Term 2023 - End of week one

Welcome back to another year at Whytrig! We have had a really positive first week back and the children have been excellent so far. We have really enjoyed having them back in school in what promises to be another year of challenge, hard work and opportunities! We are looking forward to sharing those opportunities over the course of the year.

We would like to take this opportunity to formally welcome children who have joined our school this week, whether it be the new Year 5 cohort or children in other year groups across the school. We are all very pleased and proud about the way they have adapted to school life at Whytrig. We would also like to welcome our new members of staff too, Miss Fairbrother who is a Year 6 form teacher based in Key Stage 2 and Miss Woods and the returning Miss Davis who will be supporting the children this year. Welcome to the Whytrig family!

Our returning children have also settled well in to their new year groups and classes and can look forward to taking the next steps on their journey here in school; for Year 6 there will be the challenge of SATs this year and for Year 7 the expectations that come with the move into Key Stage 3 and 'secondary' education. For Year 8, this is the start of their final year here. We hope they make the most of this year and take on roles of responsibility and the other opportunities that come their way as they prepare for the move to High School next year. For all our children the message is clear, make the most of each day and just do your very best. That is all we can ask.

There have been some small changes from last year and for our new starters everything is quite new at the moment. We have therefore been working hard to establish the routines that will make our school function in the best possible way, in order to provide your child with the best possible learning experience, in a safe and secure environment.

Uniform

Thank you again for your support with regard to school uniform. The children have arrived back to school looking extremely smart in their new clothes, ready for the new school year. If you haven't already done so, **please ensure all items of clothing and belongings are marked clearly with the name of the child.** We have already had some lost property handed in this week that we have so far been unable to return to their owner because this information was missing.



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Whytrig has a practical uniform in which our children can look smart and can be excellent ambassadors for our school. As is the case with all schools, we have a uniform policy which we expect the children who attend our school to follow. Our approach is one where the majority of items can be purchased at a reasonable cost from the likes of Asda, Tesco, Sainsburys and other shops, as opposed to some schools where each individual item like trousers, skirts and shirts must also be purchased from the uniform supplier increasing the outlay for parents. However, this means that parents must ensure that items purchased meet our school expectations and comply with our policy at the same time. Just because clothing items are available in the uniform section of a shop does not mean that they follow our school policy. We would therefore encourage all parents to familiarise themselves with the policy which can be found on the school website at <https://www.svf.org.uk/our-federation/uniform>. This is a Federation policy and applies to the three schools in the Federation.

The vast majority of our pupils have returned to school this week meeting expectations; where uniform has not followed school policy it has been in the footwear department and some interpretation around trousers and skirts. Contact will be made with home if this applies to your child. Our policy states:

Footwear should be 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.

Trousers should be 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.**

Skirts should be 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.**

If children have returned to school **wearing tight fitting lycra skirts, they are not permitted and must be changed to skirts as stated in the policy immediately.** If children have returned wearing branded leather trainer/shoes we ask that the next time shoes are purchased, when shoes are worn or feet have grown, they are in line with our policy. Regular trainers should not be worn for school. This year's Parent Information Pack, which includes examples of acceptable footwear can be viewed on the school website at <https://www.svf.org.uk/whytrig-middle-school/school-life/wms-parent-information-pack>. We do keep an amount of new/partly worn uniform stock in school to help, which can be loaned out if children do not have regulation uniform.

PE Uniform - For parents wishing to purchase PE leggings, they should be purchased from the uniform section of the Emblematic website at <https://emblematic.co.uk/longbenton-store/whms/>.

General Appearance

Our uniform policy also states that make up, false nails, fake tan and nail varnish should not be worn at all in school and only 'stud' earrings are allowed; **nose piercings and any other piercings are NOT permitted.** Children who do not follow the appearance guidelines will be asked to remove non permitted items and be subject to the consequences set out in the behaviour policy.



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Ready, Respectful, Safe

This year the Federation has reviewed the expectations for pupils in all of our school and there are three main elements of everyone when they attend schools in our Federation. They are to be **ready, respectful and safe**. For our school this means:

Ready - being ready and on time for school and each lesson and prepared for learning.

Respectful - showing respect to all members of the school community, self and environment.

Safe - being safe in the community, online, during lessons and around school.

As a result discussions around behaviour will centre on whether a child is ready for the situation, is being respectful at that time of whether their behaviour is safe, which will in turn help children to better understand how behaviour can be improved. You can find the expectations for life at Whytrig on page 8 of your child's planner, which also lists expectations to support the three elements of Ready, Respectful and Safe.

Merits and Demerits

Starting this week, staff have been issuing merits to children via the school electronic management system, meaning parents and carers will eventually get more regular updates on achievement through the My Child At School APP. The same is the case for demerits, which will also show on the APP. Where three demerits are issued in a single week resulting in an after school detention for the child, the detention date will be set and sent out automatically by the system.

Home School Planner

It is important for the children to see home and school working together for their benefit. To serve this purpose we provide every child with a Home School Planner, which they received at the start of the week. The planners are vital ingredients in the communication process; please use it as a communication tool if you have any concerns. However, for matters that you would not wish to leave overnight, please contact school by telephone or email.

Contact Information

Please keep school up to date with current contact telephone numbers and emails. Our default form of communication is electronically, however in the case of an emergency we will need to phone home. Please ensure we have been informed of any changes to these if that information has changed over the summer holidays or over the course of the year.

Still to come

Our after school club and homework timetables will be prepared over the next week. We will also be giving you regular updates on life at Whytrig in the form of weekly newsletters and Twitter 'tweets' over the year, as well as updates on our website.

Thank you in advance for the support that you will be giving us this year. By working together we can ensure that your child has the best possible year and will make the progress that we expect from them.

Yours sincerely,



Mr J Souter
Head of School



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