

Whitchurch Combined School



School Handbook

Growing today, ready for tomorrow



The 'reserved area'

The school serves the villages of Whitchurch, Oving, Pitchcott, Weedon and Hardwick - and also the farming communities of Creslow, Hartwell Hill and Hurdlesgrove.

Many children from the outlying villages travel to school using the transport provided by the local education authority. Children living outside of the school's reserved area are regularly admitted, in accordance with County admission criteria, and subject to there being available space.

Every effort will always be made to accommodate children who live in our reserved area.



Our School

Whitchurch Combined School, which opened on its present site in 1974, is situated in a quiet area on the outskirts of the attractive Buckinghamshire village of Whitchurch, approximately five miles north of Aylesbury.

The school has seven classrooms, a library, a suite for delivering the Computing curriculum, multi-purpose hall with a large interactive whiteboard panel, a large playing field, a Multi-Use Games Area and an environmental studies area and an outdoor activity area for Early Years' pupils.

Joining the Whitchurch Team

We are a community school maintained by Buckinghamshire Council.

The area education office is located at:

Aylesbury Vale Education Office

County Hall

Aylesbury

Buckinghamshire

HP20 1UZ

Telephone: 01296 383333

Any parent wishing to apply for a place at the school is advised to speak to our school office who will provide you with details as to the procedure you should follow.



Achievement: Every child will aim to reach his or her full potential in all lessons and out-of-school activities. They will play their own part in making

Attitude: Every child will do their best and show enthusiasm at all times, in all areas of school life.

Values: Every child will show self confidence and be helpful towards others. They will look after their own belongings as well as things that belong to other people or the school.

Skills: Children will learn how to work well both on their own and as part of a team. They will use reasoning and imagination when solving problems and make use of electronic devices such as iPads, computers and interactive whiteboards.



Aims and Vision

Every child attending our school will have the opportunity to develop their full academic and personal potential in a caring, creative and stimulating environment in order for them to grow into citizens equipped for life in modern Britain.

To ensure we meet the needs of every child:

- we will provide work which will be suitable for children of all ages and abilities.
- we will expect high standards of behaviour and work. Children will be praised and supported whenever possible.
- we will encourage children to be helpful, have confidence in themselves, control their own behaviour and look after their school environment.
- we will make sure the children are happy, safe and are all treated equally and with respect.
- we will maintain communication with parents and get involved in village events.
- we will provide out-of-school activities which will give children the chance to improve their skills in a range of areas.

Keeping our children safe

At Whitchurch Combined School the health, safety and well-being of every child are our paramount concern. We listen to our pupils and take seriously what they tell us. Our aim is that children will enjoy their time as pupils here. We want to work in partnership with you to help your child to achieve their full potential and make a positive contribution.

On rare occasions our concern about a child may mean that we have to consult other agencies even before we contact you. The procedures which we follow have been laid down by the Buckinghamshire Area Child Protection Committee, and the school has adopted a Child Protection Policy in line with this for the safety of all.

If you want to know more about our procedures or the policy please speak to the Headteacher, who is the designated person for Safeguarding; or the Deputy Head in their absence.



School Aspirations

To ensure all children are safe, happy and valued in an environment that engages them in their learning and promotes positive values within the heart of each individual. A place where all the community contribute and everyone becomes part of the 'Whitchurch Family'.

Curriculum Aspirations

As a school, we aspire to have a curriculum that meets the need of every learner and adapts to meet the demands, interests and needs of the children, along with the requirements of the National Curriculum. One that evolves and changes to ensure that each child is challenged and learns through a variety of approaches and opportunities.

Our Whitchurch Values

Our five Whitchurch values, be kind, be respectful, be proud, be resilient and be curious, can be found, seen, heard or felt anywhere within the school.

We believe our values prepare all of our pupils to be their best self and for our learners to value themselves as individuals, as a team and as part of our school family.

We are proud of each and every one of our pupils. They are nurtured to develop their individual talents - academic; sporting; musical and creative. They are encouraged to aim high and become independent learners.

Our goal is that every child attending this school will be inspired to develop their full academic and personal potential in a caring and stimulating environment. The health, safety and well-being of every child are our paramount concern.

Committed staff, effective governors and supportive parents are what make our school the success it is for our pupils. We work closely with the wider community so that our pupils benefit from the richness and opportunities of being educated in a village school.

Together we:

- engage everyone in their learning - staff, pupils and the community
- create a curriculum that evolves to meet the needs of all learners
- prepare children ready for life in modern Britain
- work as a family
- problem solve and persevere as a team
- are safe
- communicate, to ensure everyone is involved



Wrap around Care

Sports 4 All (S4A) provide our after school provision until 5:30pm every day. Whitchurch Early Bird (WEB) club is provided by the school. The club starts at 7:45am. Further information can be found on the Wrap Around care section of the website.

Rising Fives admissions / other admissions

All parents seeking a place for their child at Whitchurch Combined School should do so via the admissions department at County Hall.

Contact website: www.buckscc.gov.uk. This is Buckinghamshire Council's preferred method of application. Any parents who do not have access to a computer can obtain a paper application form by calling Buckinghamshire Council on 01296 383250 and asking for the Admissions team.

It is now policy that a child may begin full time education at the beginning of the academic year in which they turn five. If however, you feel that your child would benefit from a part time start to mainstream school, please speak to the Headteacher.



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Our admission number for the Foundation Stage is 30 children. Our EYFS setting forms part of our team and the children are integrated into whole school life as soon as possible. Operating their curriculum through play, guided and independent learning our EYFS children make excellent progress.

Key Stage 1

We have one Year 1 class and one Year 2 class that share the same side of the school as our EYFS. Our maximum class size for each class is 30. Our Key Stage 1 children learn through a variety of informal and formal opportunities that help them to achieve and be successful, both academically and socially. A variety of enriched learning opportunities ensure our Key Stage 1 children engage in their learning and continue their journey to becoming independent learners.

Key Stage 2

There are four classes within Key Stage 2, each with a maximum of 30 children. Learning continues to be delivered in an exciting and engaging way to ensure all of our learners are captivated and develop a love for learning.

As the children move through the Key Stage a greater emphasis is put on independence to enable them to be prepared for the next stage in their education.

Curriculum Enrichment

We promote and seek opportunities to further enrich our curriculum to ensure we maximise learning opportunities for all our children.

We achieve this by providing opportunities such as:

- Themed Dress Up days
- School trips
- Author and Musician visits
- Arts Week
- Inter-house competitions
- Safety Week
- Parental Involvement: Male Mondays and Female Fridays
- Governors Day
- Residential Visits

Extra Curricular Activities

We provide a variety of after school clubs that range from Sport through to Cookery. A list of the clubs currently available can be found on the school's website.



Our Curriculum

Providing the right broad and balanced curriculum and enrichment opportunities for our pupils is an evolving process, one that is regularly reviewed by all stakeholders.

We have adopted a 'creative' approach to our curriculum so that we can offer the children a variety of learning opportunities and experiences that not only reward them for their hard work but also promotes challenge and independence.

Within our curriculum, we cover all the National Curriculum subjects and enhance these through Super Starters and Fab Finishers to maximize the children's engagement. English, Maths and Science are taught discretely but are linked, where possible, to the themes within each Key Stage phase.

Children are given opportunities within the whole curriculum and in assemblies to reflect on the wonders of the universe, the diversity of life and society in our world, and appropriate ways of conducting one's life. Examples of these include:

- Reflecting on the awesome power of a volcano seen in a video forming part of a geography lesson;
- Reflecting on the wonder of growth when studying seed germination in science;
- Developing an understanding of other cultures through reading an international selection of literature in English lessons.

More information on the school's curriculum, the themes we teach and when, can be found in the [Curriculum section](#) of our school's website.

What makes us different?

We **want** to be different to other schools. We recognise that by being different it sets us apart from other schools; it is what makes us special - it is what makes Whitchurch Combined an excellent school.

Our children think we are different because:

“we are respectful of our school and everyone in it” (Y2)

“we take pride in our work and we take pride in being part of the school” (Y5)

“We follow our Whitchurch values because it is the right way to live your life” (Y4)

“every teacher and our friends encourage us to grow our brain and push ourselves harder” (Y4)

“we are smart and our uniform represents us a school” (Y3)

“we have fun things and we have lots of things to help people” (Y3)

“of our outstanding behaviour” (Y2)

“everyone is there for you, we are all kind and helpful” (Y5)



Teaching and Learning at Whitchurch

As a school we firmly believe that learning should be fun, enjoyable and most importantly - worthwhile and memorable.

We recognise that children learn best when they are happy and engaged and this, along with a well promoted attitude to learning, is what makes Whitchurch Combined School so successful.

When it comes to learning at Whitchurch Combined School, our children think:

“it’s interesting and you always get to find out things that you never knew before or even heard of before” (Y2)

“teachers make learning so that it’s fun” (Y4)

“everyone is very caring and wants to help you with your learning” (Y3)

“learning is challenging and we get to learn about different subjects and a huge range of things” (Y5)

“you’re inspired to do and try new things” (Y3)

“that every day we learn something new because we are pushed to our learning limits” (Y4)

“the teachers don’t just tell you things they tell you what you need to do to be your best and help you to do it” (Y4)

“it’s so much fun to learn here” (Y2)

For more information on Teaching and Learning at Whitchurch Combined School, please read our [policies linked to these areas](#).

Performance Data

Statistics and data regarding external assessments can be found on the [school’s website](#). These are updated annually to provide the most recent results.

School Uniform

We believe that our school uniform contributes to our standards and values.



A detailed explanation of our school uniform and PE kits can be found on the schools' website in the [school uniform section](#).



All those involved in the life of the school are expected to show a high degree of care and respect for other people, their property, their health and safety, and for the school environment. Where necessary, specific rules are established to underline this policy, and these are clearly explained to the children.

We make a special effort to praise children who are working to the best of their ability. Also, we are keen to recognise those who show thoughtfulness and helpfulness towards others. Children who do their best are awarded house-points, and these are recorded in personal award cards: bronze; silver; gold; headteacher. The house accumulating the most points annually is awarded a trophy.

If individuals act thoughtlessly or unkindly, they are helped to understand why their behaviour is not appropriate and they are given the chance to make a better decision. They may need to lose certain privileges such as playtime, or they may be required to do extra work in their own time. In the case of more serious misdemeanours, parents are involved in the procedure. Very rarely, in the cases of extremely bad behaviour, children may be temporarily excluded from attending school.

Children who feel that others are treating them unkindly are encouraged to confide in an adult. Where necessary, support and counselling for all parties concerned will be used to provide a long-term solution to any problem. Further information can be found in our [Behaviour Policy](#) which is available on the school website. A worry box is available for children to write their concerns and these will be dealt with sensitively by the staff.

Visits and Residential Journeys

As well as offering all pupils a wide range of day visits in connection with their classroom studies, we also offer our older pupils opportunities to go on residential visits of a week's duration. The residential visits are currently:

- Year 5 residential visit to Windmill Hill PGL (activity week)
- Year 3 residential visit to Hudnall Park



In order to sustain our excellent standards, we are continuously identifying ways to improve.

During the last few academic years, we have already made improvements to the school premises, adding a new kitchen. This has provided the school with a much improved lunchtime experience. In addition to this, we have added a new element to our existing trim trail, which runs alongside our nature area. Smart interactive panels in all teaching spaces including the hall and computing suite.

We believe that evolving and moving forward are critical elements of taking the school to the next level and we are always open to ideas and suggestions from the school community. Ideas shared between all of the schools' stakeholders make developing the school an exciting and engaging prospect.

As we continue on our journey to providing quality first learning opportunities and a complimentary environment to support this, we are now looking at different ways to improve the learning experiences for our children.

Achievements

We are proud of our excellent record of pupil achievement. Over the last few years, our results in the national Standard Assessment Tests at Key Stages 1 and 2 have been well above the County and National averages.

A large proportion of our pupils are regularly selected for grammar school places, and we receive many reports of our ex-pupils going on to achieve high levels of success in GCSE, A-levels and beyond. Similarly, we are very pleased to see the great progress made by many of our pupils with learning difficulties.

We are also proud of the achievements of our pupils in extra-curricular activities including football, netball, cross-country, athletics, music and chess.

School Times

8:35 - 8:45 Arrival

KS1

8:45 - 10:30 Learning time 1
10:30 - 10:45 Playtime
10:45 - 12:05 Learning time 2
12:05 - 1:00 Lunch
1:00 - 2:00 Learning time 3
2:00 - 2:15 Playtime
2:15 - 3:15 Learning time 4
3:15 School finishes

KS2

8:45 - 10:40 Learning time 1
10:40 - 10:55 Playtime (LKS2)
10:55 - 11:10 Playtime (UKS2)
10:45 - 12:25 Learning time 2
12:25 - 1:15 Lunch
1:15 - 2:15 Learning time 3
2:15 - 3:20 Learning time 4
3:20 School finishes

The School Year

Our school year is in line with Bucks Council, as agreed by the school Governors. The school will also choose an additional two staff training days and any extra bank holidays announced in due course by the Government.

School dates can be found on the Bucks Council website or in the calendar on our [school's website](#).



Our School Day

Parents can drop off between 8.35 and 8.45am. Children should not arrive before this time, unless they are in our Whitchurch Early Bird (WEB) breakfast club. In the Autumn and Spring term, Reception class children may go straight into the classroom between 8.35-8.45am.

At the end of the day, R/KS1 teachers escort the children to meet their parents at the Reception Class door at 3:15pm. KS2 parents pick up from the KS2 school playground at 3.20pm. Children who go home on the bus will be escorted to the bus by a member of staff at the end of the day.

During registration in the morning, bus registers are completed and children are checked onto the bus or taxi at the end of the school day by a member of staff. Parents or carers must inform us of any changes in collection arrangements. We will always seek your permission for children to stay beyond the end of the normal school day for any extra-curricular activities.

All children have a 15 minute mid-morning break. They may bring a piece of fresh fruit from home to eat at this time. The younger pupils also have a short afternoon break. At lunchtime, children either eat a packed lunch or freshly cooked school lunch in the school hall. Please do not send large cans or cartons of drink, which cannot be finished at one sitting, or hot food, or drink in thermos flasks. Lunch and break periods are supervised by teachers and ancillary staff.

The school has achieved a level 3 Travel Plan. As part of this plan we encourage parents and children wherever possible to walk to

Absence

Parents should telephone the school before 9.00 a.m. on the first day of absence and send a note to their child's class teacher specifying the reason for any absence on the day the child returns to school. If parents do not send a note, or if the absence is for an unsatisfactory reason, we are required to record the absence as unauthorised.

Special Educational Needs

When a teacher becomes concerned about a child's progress, they will liaise with our senior member of staff who has responsibility for special educational needs throughout the school.

A SEN Support Plan will be developed, and suitably differentiated activities will be provided for the child. Also, advice may be sought from the Council's learning support service, and parents will be kept fully briefed. If progress is not satisfactory, parents will be involved in moves towards receiving further advice and support from other specialists such as educational psychologists.

Children with a formal Educational Healthcare Plan attending this school are provided for within the normal school environment using additional resources made available by the local education authority.

Most support will be within the normal classroom, but some individual and small group work may be provided.

As a school, we recognise that every child matters and that each child has their own educational needs, regardless of race or gender, and we aim to meet the needs of all of our children.



Parents' Information and Involvement

We firmly believe in strong links between school and home, and you and your child will be invited to sign our 'home school agreement' which summarises this partnership. In addition, we offer you the following opportunities to keep in touch with us and to become fully involved in your children's education:

- In line with our open door policy, you are always welcome in school to discuss any concern you may have about your child - either for just a quick word with the class teacher or the headteacher before or after school, or by appointment if a lengthier discussion is necessary. In addition, there are formal Parents' Evenings in the autumn and spring terms and an informal open evening in the summer. Also, there are many other occasions when parents are able to visit the school.
- A newsletter containing information about forthcoming events and the life of the school is sent home half termly. Also, teachers send home class letters outlining the main areas of study for the term.
- Information about all aspects of school is available on our website – www.whitchurchcombined.co.uk. Please take time to familiarise yourself with the content.
- We greatly value the support of parents who are able to join our team of regular 'school helpers', assisting with art and craft activities, hearing children read, library supervision, accompanying school visits, etc. Please contact your child's class teacher or the headteacher if you are able to offer time – however little – on a regular basis.
- The [Whitchurch PTA](#) runs many social and fund-raising activities each year for children and their parents. All parents are warmly invited to these events, and to participate in their organisation.

Accessibility

The school has an access plan meeting the requirements of the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act. Certain work has been completed such as handrails and visibility tape being sited. Specific learning resources have been purchased. Further work to modify the building will be done as appropriate whilst the curriculum is also modified to meet the needs of children as required. At present there is no wheelchair access but this would be provided if the school was asked to admit a child requiring such access. An active Equalities Policy operates which tries to ensure that all the children are treated equally, enjoy equal access to the curriculum and to any opportunities available at the school.

Growing today, ready for tomorrow

There is so much more to Whitchurch Combined School than academic, sporting or musical success and we would be pleased to welcome you to our school to experience our exciting, vibrant and happy environment for yourself.

To arrange a visit or for more information on our school, please visit the school's website or alternatively contact us directly:

Tel: 01296 641418

Email: office@whitchurch.bucks.sch.uk



The information in this prospectus was accurate when published in the Summer Term 2024. However, subsequent changes in government legislation or local policy may affect certain details. The headteacher will be pleased to provide you with the latest information.

Whitchurch Combined School

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Whitchurch, HP22 4JG
01296 641418

