



Whitby School  
Ad finem terrae

ISSUE 1 of 4  
**Welcome**  
to Whitby School  
Primary School Transition Newsletter





## WELCOME TO ISSUE 1

We understand the transition between primary and secondary school can be a daunting time for both pupils and parents; to that end, we are planning events to help make the transition as smooth as possible. We are looking forward to corresponding with our new pupils and parents over the coming months and we hope pupils are looking forward to beginning an exciting new chapter of their life with us in the next academic year.

There are four key values that define our community: **endeavour, courage, ambition** and **character**.

We will support our pupils in striving for excellence and success, encouraging determination and engagement in their learning. In this way we will secure **endeavour**.

We foster an environment, where pupils explore new opportunities, develop skills, and act with confidence and resilience. This will build their **courage**.

We will inspire our pupils to pursue their goals and provide pathways for them to be bold and successful in their future choices. We will ensure they have **ambition**.

Together we will make a caring and supportive community where kindness, integrity and individuality are valued. We will build their **character**.



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# WELCOME TO WHITBY SCHOOL

**At Whitby School, every pupil will be known, valued, and cared for as an individual. We will celebrate our pupils' talents, achievements, and successes, and understand and support pupils where they need help. We believe that every pupil has the ability, strength, talent, and determination to achieve their potential. As a school, we will therefore aim to provide our pupils with the very best education possible, by providing a wide and comprehensive curriculum and extra-curricular activities.**

We believe we can provide a unique education for our young people. As a school at the heart of the community it serves, we will work in partnership to ensure our children not only receive a broad and balanced education but also allow them to enjoy the area they live in and make a positive wider contribution to the area.

## Transition Arrangements

We want all our pupils to settle happily into life at Whitby School and we will achieve this for all our pupils by ensuring they receive the support they need. Our colleagues work with our local primary schools to ensure we understand each child's interests, talents, and strengths.

We ensure that all our new pupils receive the same level of support, whether they are from one of our local catchment primary schools, or from a school outside our catchment area. For these pupils, we are aware that they may not know as many children, and we ensure that they have plenty of opportunities to meet other pupils and to make friends before they start in September.





# OUR TRANSITION PROGRAMME



**We believe a successful transition programme should be comprehensive and our open evening in October was intended to be as interactive and welcoming as possible; allowing pupils to meet our staff as well as immerse themselves in a range of curriculum-based activities. Many of you will be used to visiting our sites for sporting activities and you will have met some staff and pupils already.**

At the forefront of all our transition activities is the desire to get to know each and every one of our new Year 7 cohort. During the spring term, Year 6 teachers begin discussing the move to secondary schools with pupils. Teachers will also complete a transfer form which indicates your child's interests, talents, and abilities, so that your child will make good progress from their first day in September. The spring term is also when Mrs Harrison (Head of Year 7) and Miss Clarkson (Care and Achievement Coordinator) begin their visits into primary schools to speak with teachers and pupils. These visits provide pupils with a chance to ask questions and also hear about life at Whitby School and what they can look forward to.

In the summer term we will post out welcome packs to all our new cohort. The welcome pack contains lots of important information, as well as our Getting to Know Me form which should be completed by your child. This form is your child's opportunity to directly tell us about themselves, their friends, interests, and hobbies.

They can also tell us of any concerns, so that we can begin putting support in place early. We are also looking forward to being able to host transition days here in school during the summer term. This will be an opportunity for pupils to familiarise themselves with staff here as well as the site itself.

Behind the scenes, we will also maintain close communication with Year 6 teachers to discuss how we can best support your child in the transition process. For pupils who require significant additional support, we will contact you and, with the support of your child's primary school, ensure that we provide personalised arrangements to aid a smooth transition for your child. With this in mind, Tuesday 10 and Wednesday 11 June will be enhanced transition days for identified pupils. These pupils have been identified by primary school teachers and will receive a personalised invite closer to the time. From previous experience these days really do help prepare pupils for the collective transition days that take place in early July.

We are currently finalising the full transition programme with our primary school colleagues and further details will be sent out in our next transition newsletter.



# SCHOOL ROUTINES



## Attendance

Regular attendance is critical in ensuring pupils make good progress in all their subjects each year. If your child is ill and unable to attend school, it is the responsibility of the parent or carer to inform the school office by telephone prior to 8:45am on the first day of absence, and any subsequent days. Whitby School operates a phone service on 01947 601901.

## Medical Issues

If your child is ill, please do not send them to school. If your child becomes ill during the school day, they should inform their teacher who will ensure that they receive appropriate care and that parents are contacted. Some pupils require medicines to be given during the school day. If possible, please give your child any required medicine before school, after school and at bedtime. If your child does need to take medicine during the school day, please inform the school office and hand in any medicine to the school reception for safekeeping.

## What will your child study?

Moving from primary to secondary school can be a big change for pupils. Pupils will have a range of teachers, classrooms and subjects and we ensure that pupils are supported in getting used to these changes. Moving to secondary school is an exciting opportunity for pupils to learn a range of new subjects and skills.

The curriculum is therefore designed to provide our pupils with a broad range of subjects to grip their imagination and to develop the skills necessary to succeed as they grow. Throughout their time in Year 7 and beyond our pupils will also develop the confidence, resilience and thinking skills necessary to achieve their full potential.

## Will the work be different?

Most pupils notice a difference in work between Year 6 and Year 7, particularly with regards to the level of challenge and depth. The key differences are:

A range of teachers will teach your child. Each teacher is a specialist in their subject area. Your child will learn about each subject in far greater depth. Your child will be taught in a variety of different classrooms, studios, workshops, and science laboratories. Pupils move to different classrooms between lessons.

Pupils have the opportunity to regularly use specialist rooms and equipment, under expert guidance from subject specialists. For example, pupils will be using science equipment such as Bunsen Burners on a regular basis.

Our curriculum is designed to challenge our pupils, and to stretch and develop their understanding of a range of subjects in order for them to make an informed choice as to their future options and career paths.



## CATERING



### School Canteen

We use County Caterers at Whitby School which your child may be familiar with. They provide a healthy and varied menu, and our pupils can buy food at break or lunch. In the school canteen we pride ourselves on providing great-tasting, healthy food that encourages a well balanced diet that is good for both body and mind.

We aim to feed the imagination of pupils and staff alike, and believe that serving fresh, healthy food that tastes great can positively affect the wellbeing of our school community. The right nutrients can positively affect everyone's mood, behaviour, health, growth and even the ability to concentrate. Encouraging a well-balanced diet establishes healthy eating now and for the future.

The school canteen is open for breakfast from 8:30am each morning, at break and at lunchtimes.

### Packed Lunches

Your child is also welcome to bring a packed lunch to school. Pupils can eat their packed lunches together with our school meal pupils.

### Free School Meals

There is funding available for any parent/carer if you are receiving certain types of benefit. Please see the North Yorkshire Council website if you are unsure about eligibility: [Free school meals | North Yorkshire Council](#).

### Cashless Payments

Our school canteen operates a secure 'cashless' system that makes it quick and easy to pay and top-up. This promotes the purchase of healthy food in school and allows parents to monitor their child's canteen purchases.

Pupils are registered with our Biometric ID System and use machines around school to add cash to their account. They can then pay for their food and drink in the school canteen with a simple code or fingertip response. Parents and carers can also add credit to pupils' accounts online.

### Online Payments

Any payment over £5.00 can be made using our online payments system. This includes payments for educational visits, resources and topping-up your child's cashless catering account. We will send details of our online payment provider when your child starts.



## MAKING A SUCCESSFUL START



**Pupils should meet in the Main Hall on their first day. On your child's first day in September, colleagues will be present at the student entrance to welcome them and direct them to the Main Hall at the Airy Hill site, YO21 1QA, where they will be met by their tutor, Head of Year, Headteacher and other key staff.**

They will then be taken to their form room, where they will be given their pupil planner and timetable, together with a map of the school. The form tutor, who is the key member of staff for pupils, will remind them of school routines and expectations and organise team-building activities to help your child to get to know other pupils and make friends. Remembering of course, they will be familiar with many of their classmates after the transition programme.

Form tutors will then take your child on a tour of the school, pointing out the classrooms where they will be having lessons that day. Staff will be available throughout the day to help and guide any pupils on their way to lessons.

After time with their form tutor, pupils will then go to their timetabled lessons. Year 7 pupils will be taken for an earlier lunch to ensure they understand how to use the cashless payment system. Year 7 pupils will have early lunches throughout their first week to ensure they are confident in using this system.

After lunch, your child will go to their afternoon lessons. At the end of the day staff will be present to ensure your child gets on the correct bus (if applicable), or to answer any questions they may have about the day.

### How will they make friends?

They will know some children from their primary schools. The 'Welcome to Whitby School' transition programme over the spring/summer term starts this process, which form tutors will build upon by spending time working with their groups so that everyone quickly gets to know everyone else. The many extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities available at Whitby School will further broaden their circle of friends.

### What do they need on their first day?

- basic equipment (see below for the list)
- a strong bag – it does not need to be huge. A rucksack is preferable to one with a single strap
- a packed lunch or lunch can be purchased from our canteen (we will update you on the payment system in a later issue)
- bus fare or bus pass (if applicable).



## SCHOOL TRAVEL

**A large proportion of our pupils live in Whitby, and we encourage these pupils to walk or cycle to school whenever possible, and we provide cycle shelters where pupils can lock their bicycles or scooters securely. Pupils should wear cycling helmets for their safety.**

Many of our pupils are brought to school each day via school bus from surrounding towns and villages, and

these pupils disembark in the designated bus area, where they are welcomed by school staff.

If you bring your child to school by car, please note that the parent/visitor car park is located at the front of school, there are limited spaces. Particularly if you are picking up your child at the end of the day, we advise that it can get very busy and it may be best to come at 3.40pm. Pupils can wait in the canteen, until you arrive.

## EQUIPMENT

**All pupils need to bring the following equipment with them to school every day:**

- writing pens: black or blue, and green plus spares
- pencil and spares
- pencil sharpener
- ruler
- rubber
- scientific calculator
- protractor
- pair of compasses
- highlighter pens
- glue stick
- felt tips/coloured pencils
- exercise books for that day's lessons
- textbooks for that day's lessons
- pupil planner
- dictionaries – both English and Foreign Language
- hair bobble (to tie back long hair for practical lessons eg, science/technology/PE)

## PUPIL LOCKERS

**Pupils will be offered the opportunity to rent a locker for the duration of their time at Whitby School, and parents and carers will be given information about how they can reserve a locker for their child. Lockers are invaluable in helping pupils to keep themselves organised, and to ensure they always have the correct books and equipment with them every day. Lockers will be allocated in September, within the first few weeks of term.**





# HOME LEARNING (INDEPENDENT STUDY)

**Home learning is an essential part of learning. Home learning helps pupils to further consolidate the learning they have done in school, and to further develop their knowledge and skills. Home learning also helps pupils to develop their organisation and good study habits; these are vital as pupils move to Year 10 and begin studying for their external exams.**

In Year 7, we expect pupils to complete no more than 20 minutes of focused home learning per subject, per evening. Your child should receive a maximum of two home learning assignments each day. This means that Year 7 pupils should have no more than 40 minutes of home learning per evening. It is important that teachers understand what your child can complete in this time. Therefore, if your child has spent 20 minutes on their assignment for a particular subject,

please write a brief note to the teacher in their homework diary to that effect and initial it.

We understand that pupils from different primary schools will be used to different amounts of home learning. We therefore stagger the introduction to home learning for Year 7 over the first four weeks of September, gradually introducing home learning for different subjects each week until our Year 7 pupils are completing a full week of home learning by the start of week 5.

Pupils can access resources, including computers, printers and staff support in the library. The library is open before school, at break, lunch and after school. We also offer a Home Learning Support Club where staff are available to help with the completion and organisation of home learning.





# PUPIL TARGETS AND PROGRESS

**At Whitby School, we believe that pupils make the most progress when they are set challenging targets, coupled with encouragement and support from home and school.**

In September, our Year 7 pupils will take part in a range of assessments to help us ascertain their current understanding, strengths, and any areas where support

may be required. These assessments include Maths, English, and Science, as well as Cognitive Ability Tests. We also use these assessments to set our pupils' targets in each subject, and we will report on your child's progress towards these targets each term in 'progress reviews'.





# COMMUNICATION WITH SCHOOL

## School Letters

We will send electronic copies of letters and other important messages to parents via InTouch and the Bromcom Parent App. We are happy to communicate with parents and carers via email, and our school newsletter is emailed to parents and carers once per week. Please let the school Office know if you change your email address. You can also contact your child's tutor and/or Head of Year.

## Texting System

We operate a school texting system for school reminders and emergency communication. Please ensure you have provided us with an up-to-date mobile phone number when completing our Welcome Pack.

## School Newsletter

All parents and carers receive the Whitby School weekly newsletter via email. The newsletter contains news about events and pupil achievements, as well as important information for parents and carers together with useful reminders about upcoming events.

## School Website

The Whitby School website contains a wealth of information about our school community, events, achievements, links, and resources as well as key information, policies, and dates.

## Parents' Evenings and Meetings

We hold a range of events and evenings throughout the year for pupils, parents, and carers to come into school, meet staff and discuss their child's progress and wellbeing. We hold annual Parents' Evenings for each Year Group; these are important opportunities for pupils, parents, and carers to meet with subject teachers and discuss your child's progress.

## YEAR 7 TEAM

The Year 7 team is:

- Mrs Harrison - Head of Year 7
- Miss Clarkson - Care and Achievement Co-ordinator

The team can be emailed using the following address:

[HOY7@whitbyschool.co.uk](mailto:HOY7@whitbyschool.co.uk)

They will aim to reply within 2 working days.



# HEAD OF YEAR 7 - MRS HARRISON



**Hello Year 6. My name is Mrs Harrison, and I am very much looking forward to being your Head of Year. I have worked with Year 7 pupils for a number of years now, and every year I feel extremely fortunate to be involved in transition work and doing everything I can to make sure you feel supported and equipped to make the best start possible at secondary school.**

The journey that you are about to embark on is an exciting one. This new chapter gives you the chance to meet new friends, explore a wide range of subjects and discover your unique passions and talents. And while it may feel a little strange at first, remember that you will have lots of support from your new teachers, as well as from myself and Miss Clarkson. I can remember my own transition from primary to secondary school, many, many years ago, and do so with fondness, but I also had to push myself out of my comfort zone to make sure I had the best possible experience.

You will see me most days, sometimes in your tutor group or in assemblies, or perhaps in the playground at breaktime, and occasionally I like to pop into your lessons to see how you are getting on. You may also see me in your PE lessons; a subject that I am very passionate about!

If you are struggling with your learning in any way I will also be the person that communicates with you and your parents/carers, and the thing I like doing most of all is celebrating all of your successes with you, be that in Rewards Assemblies or by letting your family know how fantastic you are!

I can't wait to meet all of you in your primary schools very soon, and in six months time I look forward to helping you settle into our community and being a friendly face that you can always turn to.

See you soon Year 6!

**Have a go at the word search and find all the words associated with your transition journey!**





# TRANSITION



Find the following words in the puzzle.

Words are hidden and .

FRIENDSHIPS  
COMFORT ZONE  
TRANSITION  
FORM TUTOR  
CHARACTER

ENDEAVOUR  
SECONDARY  
SEPTEMBER  
AMBITION  
COURAGE

PLANNER  
CHANGE  
CLUBS



# CARE AND ACHIEVEMENT COORDINATOR - MISS CLARKSON

**Hi Year 6 pupils. I am Miss Clarkson and I work in the Airy Hill site pastoral office and I am the Care and Achievement Coordinator for Year 7.**

I work in partnership with Mrs Harrison (Head of Year 7) to look after all things Year 7! I am not a teaching member of staff, which means I am primarily based in the pastoral office - I am around to help you with your worries, attendance, learning, emotional support and behaviour, I am also your go-to if you feel unwell and/or need to contact home, or if your parents need to contact school. I went to university and completed an Education and Teaching studies degree and my passion has always been pastoral care. I enjoy working with pupils and families on a daily basis and offering support in any way I can in order for you to get the best out of your Year 7 experience. We are beginning our primary school transition visits very soon and I am really looking forward to meeting you and learning all about you!

I am really passionate about improving mental health and wellbeing and completely understand how the transition up to a new big school can be daunting, worrying and make you feel nervous. To help with some of your worries, I would like you to have a go at the following 'Reframing' activity.

Change can feel overwhelming and you might find yourself thinking negatively about a situation that hasn't even happened yet. This can land you in a cycle of negative thinking which can make things feel worse. Sometimes, reframing a situation and thinking about it in a different way can help you feel more positive and boost your self-esteem and confidence.





Complete the activity below to change negative thoughts into positive ones. I have completed one for you to give you an idea of how it works, I have then

given you a few examples of some common worries for Year 6 pupils, and also left a couple of boxes blank for you to put your own thoughts down to reframe them.

## NEGATIVE THOUGHTS

## POSITIVE THOUGHTS

I won't know as many people at Whitby School as I did at primary school.



Some of the people I already know will be going to Whitby School. It will also be a chance to make new friends.

I don't want to leave my teachers at primary school.

