



**WHITEHILL JUNIOR SCHOOL
Handbook**



**'Pupils' behaviour is impeccable... Relationships are strong...
The school is a welcoming, positive and friendly place in which to learn'**

OFSTED 2017



‘Since we cannot know what is needed in the future we cannot teach it in advance. Schools need to turn out children who love learning so much they can learn whatever needs to be learnt.’

‘John Holt’

American author and educator (1923 – 1985)

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HEADTEACHER: Mr S Mills

Chair of Governors: Mrs W Ray

Age Range: 7 – 11 Years

Number on Roll 240

Whitehill Junior School is a County School within
the northern area of Hertfordshire County
Education Authority.

‘Working together for individual success’

Hertfordshire County Council
County Hall
Hertford
SG13 8DF

On behalf of the children and staff, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the Whitehill Junior School handbook. We hope our handbook will give you not only important and useful information but also a flavour of what inspires the children and staff who work here.

Whitehill Junior School is a county school, set in extensive grounds with large areas in which to play and enjoy outdoor learning, within the northern area of Hertfordshire County Education Authority. We passionately believe that high quality resources inspire and motivate children and staff to achieve their best and as a result have spent a great deal of effort creating exciting and stimulating spaces to learn both inside and out.

We believe that each child is an individual and take pride in providing for all aspects of our children's education, academic, emotional, physical, social and emotional. Children love learning and our aim is to nourish and maintain that natural curiosity and drive whilst striving to help them be the best that they can be.

We are extremely proud to be recognised by the community and a wider range of organisations for the passion and excitement we bring to the education of our children

There is no magic formula for a child's success. Success is earned by hard work involving many people – parents, teachers and of course the children themselves. It depends on this effort and your co-operation and help. We value your friendship and loyalty to the school and look forward to meeting you on many varied occasions.

A brochure cannot take the place of personal contact between staff and parents. If you would like to visit and see the school we are so proud of for yourself, our pupil ambassadors would be delighted to give you a guided tour, so please telephone the office to book.

If you have any queries we would be delighted to help so please don't hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely



Mr S Mills
Headteacher

WHITEHILL JUNIOR SCHOOL

GOVERNING BODY

Dear Parent

On behalf of the governing body I would like to welcome you and your child to Whitehill. We are extremely proud of our school and its ongoing achievements and are sure that you too will soon be able to share in that pride.

We have an amazing team of staff at Whitehill, both teaching and support. As well as meeting their needs academically all staff go above and beyond to offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These include very successful sports teams who have won competitions locally and nationally, opportunities to learn a variety of musical instruments and a number of popular clubs including Art, Science, Flying and French to name but a few. There is also our accomplished choir who as well as supporting many local community events, have sung at both the O2 Arena and The Royal Albert Hall.

We have a strong leadership team here at Whitehill, demonstrated in the clarity of our vision which permeates throughout the school. This desire to encourage a love of learning, and to support profound individual growth for everyone involved in the school underpins Whitehill's development plan and the actions that flow from this.

The governing body represents a broad cross-section of the local community and takes an active role in ensuring our children are safe, happy at school and reaching high standards of achievement. Should you wish to take a more active role in the school we welcome keen volunteers for the governing body as and when vacancies arise. This does not necessarily require specific skills as our main criteria is just a willingness to contribute.

If your child has come through Highbury you will be aware of The Friends of Whitehill & Highbury who work incredibly hard to raise additional funds to support our schools and are always looking for helpers for the many events they run throughout the year. Even if you are unable to help directly we would hope you are able to come along and support these events as your child will obviously benefit directly.

Should you have any general queries please feel free to speak to me directly. I would add, however, that for any specific issues you must discuss these with the class teacher concerned or Headteacher as the first point of contact.

Once again, welcome to Whitehill School.

Yours sincerely,

*Wendie Ray
Chair of Governors*

School Office

Hi, my name is Gill Cook and I, along with my colleague Claire Lanni, will be your first point of contact in the school.

Emergency Contacts

Before your child has started at Whitehill School you will receive a copy of the emergency information which has been given to us either by yourself or your child's previous school. Please amend any details and return to the school as soon as possible. This information is very important and you would be amazed at the number of times we have tried to contact a parent because their child is perhaps ill and we've not been given updated mobile numbers etc. which obviously upsets the child even more.

Absences

If your child is not going to be in school or is going to be late we have an answerphone system for you to leave a message.

Money

Most parents use the online school banking system and you will receive further details in a separate letter. However if you send any money or forms into the office please, please make sure it is clearly labelled with your child's name, class and what the money is for. Even if you have to fold it up in a bit of paper we know where it's come from. There is no need to bring the money in personally, unless you really feel you need to know it has arrived safely, because the teachers all have a wallet in their classroom and they collect any envelopes for the office when they call the register. It does get very congested in the front entrance and this will save you time.

School Gateway

Along with the online money system we also use the 'School Gateway' for contacting parents. Many of you will have used this system at your child's infant school but the information does not automatically transfer and you will need to add Whitehill to your account.

Dinners

We encourage children to have school meals but if they do bring in a packed lunch from home it must be in small containers which are stored on trolleys, not rucksacks. Please note we are a **NUT FREE** school and as part of our 'Healthy School' endeavours, chocolate and sweets are not permitted in packed lunches. You will receive a letter informing you of the weekly and half-termly payment for dinners at the start of each half-term. We cannot accept payment on a daily basis. Payment must be made in advance and we need a half term's notice for a child changing lunch arrangements. Again please make sure dinner money is in a clearly labelled envelope. Cheques are made payable to Hertfordshire Catering Ltd. Mrs Lanni is your contact for the dinner administration and she works Monday – Friday 8.30 -11.30.

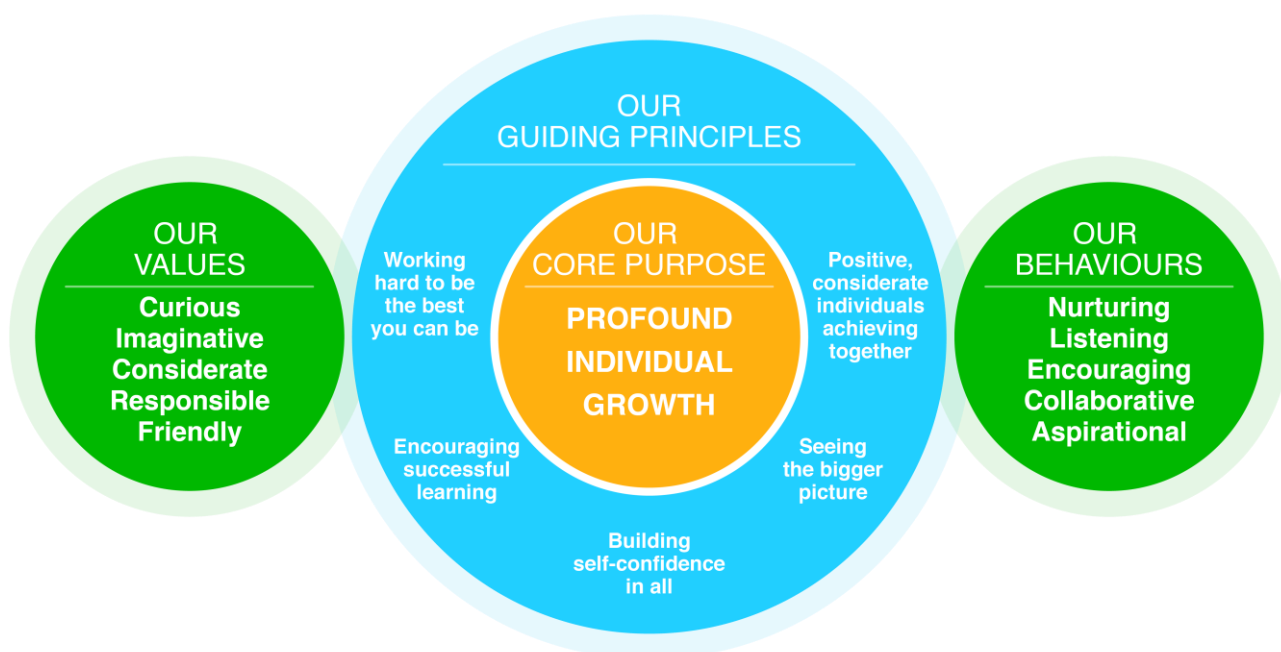
All of this makes it sound as though we don't want to see you which is not true at all, we are just trying to make the start of the school day run smoothly.

Gill Cook
School Business Manager

Our Belief

Our core purpose of 'Profound Individual Growth' underpins all that we do at Whitehill as we prepare children for their future – a generation who learn how to learn and love doing it, who look back at their time at school and say, 'I remember when...' It is our belief that education should be seen as a process rather than an end product and that future success balances curiosity with understanding.

OUR BELIEF: Future success balances curiosity with understanding



'Working Together for Individual Success'

Our school day

Start and finish times

Children can come into the classroom from at 8.35am ready for the bell to be rung at 8.45am which is the official school start time. Pupils must not wait on the playgrounds. If a pupil is late, they should report to the office by the front door. Registers are called at 8.50am and 1.05pm. School finishes at 3.15pm. For the safety of all children, please do not allow them to play on the outdoor equipment unsupervised before and after school.

Access to School

There are two pedestrian access gates into school, one in Whitehill Road, one in Sunnyside Road. Children and parents should only use these gates and **not the vehicle gates** in Whitehill Road. For safety, this is a very important point to stress with children.

The car park is **only** for the use of school staff and deliveries. If driving into the school is unavoidable (ie emergencies) in the interests of safety, we do insist that the section outside the school office is kept clear as this may be needed for emergency vehicles. Even short pauses very quickly cause a dangerous backlog down Whitehill Road. Parking is possible on Whitehill Road, Broadmead or on Sunnyside Road. Where use of the school car park is unavoidable, we insist that children remain in the playground and parents come to the playground to accompany their children to the car. No unaccompanied children must cross the car park. We know that you will support us in keeping your child safe.

Most children will walk to school and there is a zebra crossing on Whitehill Road and traffic lights on Stevenage Road.

Assemblies

Our assemblies often involve children in various activities - speaking, reading, plays and music. Whilst these might have a Christian focus, there is recognition of other beliefs and cultures.

You are entitled to withdraw your child from Religious Education and Religious Services and parents wishing to do so should consult the Headteacher.

Class Assemblies to which parents are invited generally take place on a Tuesday afternoon at 1.30pm.

Lunch time

Lunchtime is from 12.00 – 1.00pm. Our school meals are excellent and a high proportion of children have school lunches. There is a cafeteria system and a choice of main course, including hot meals, fresh baguettes and salads. Children having school dinners choose their meals online from home for up to three weeks in advance thus ensuring they are always able to have their first choice. Mrs Stokes and her staff work hard to ensure that the children have nutritious food which they like.

Some children do bring a packed lunch which is eaten in the dining room. Whether you choose the packed lunch or dinner option, a half-term's notice is required before a change to the other choice can be made. Naturally, if there are problems (i.e. forgotten packed lunches) we will always ensure your child has a midday meal.

Meals **must** be paid for in advance and may be paid for half termly or weekly. School Gateway is our preferred method of payment. If paying by cheque please make payable to Herts Catering Ltd. Please send in all monies in with your child in a named envelope to give to their teacher.

After their meal, children either attend lunchtime clubs or socialise on the playground where they can join in some of the organised activities or have some free time to have a chat / play with their friends.

Useful Information about Whitehill School

School Uniform



All children at Whitehill wear school uniform. The school uniform is an electric blue sweatshirt and a gold polo shirt. Both items are embroidered with the school logo.

Light grey school trousers or skirts may be worn along with grey tights or grey/white socks. *Stretchy fabric or leggings are not permitted.*

Checked or striped dress in blue and white may be worn in the summer term.



We recommend the school coat as a practical garment. Should you not wish to purchase a school coat then we do insist on a plain sensible, appropriate navy or black coat with a hood.

P.E. Kit

The P.E. kit comprises of:

1 pair of electric blue shorts, 1 white polo shirt with school logo and 1 drawstring bag.

Trainers for outdoor P.E. or games.

Indoor P.E. will be carried out in bare feet, for agility and safety.

Jogging pants may be worn in winter but these must be electric blue.

Parents may also like to consider an additional school sweatshirt and spare white socks as part of their PE Kit.

There will be opportunities to play football throughout the school and at some stage the question of football boots will arise. Unless your child is playing regularly there is no need to buy expensive boots. In the early stages, a pair of trainers would be sufficient. Shin pads and long, thick socks are however essential.



Children will also need a good quality recorder which is available to purchase from the school office.

Long hair should be tied back. No dramatic hairstyles including shaved patterns or dramatic variance in layer length should be worn. Small, plain headbands may be worn.

Children need substantial footwear at all times and black shoes which have soles with a good safe grip are needed for outdoor wear. Each child should keep a change of shoes in school for indoor wear and we recommend black slip-on plimsolls, as they are cheap and easy to change in and out of. We do want to keep the inside environment as clean and safe as possible. Trainers are needed for outdoor games.

The school uniform is available from Beat School Uniforms in Hermitage Road or Churchgate (our preferred supplier). Alternatively uniform is available on-line from My Clothing.

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE MARK ALL ITEMS OF CLOTHING WITH A LAUNDRY PEN OR NAME TAPES.

Nut Free School

Whitehill is a nut free school supporting our pupils with allergies. Please bear this in mind when sending in your child's packed lunch or if you are baking for our many events.

Snacks in School

Whitehill is part of the 'Healthy Schools' programme: fruits or vegetables are the only thing children should be bringing to school for a snack at break-time.. Thank you for your cooperation.

Valuable Items

Jewellery should not be worn in school. We have to consider the safety aspect as well as the possibility of loss or theft. If children do have pierced ears, sleeper studs only may be worn for approximately six weeks after piercing during which time they will have to be taped for certain physical activities. Watches may be worn but children will be required to remove them prior to physical activities and the school accepts no responsibility for loss or damage.

Mobile phones **are not** allowed in school. All communication with children during school hours must be directed through the office.

Toys and Games from Home

Children are provided with a range of games and activities at break and lunchtimes so items of value should not be brought into school.

Confiscation

As part of the schools discipline policy it may be appropriate to confiscate a pupil's property. This is a rarely used sanction. Initially the property would be returned at the end of a school day. If school rules are repeatedly flouted property can be removed permanently. The power to confiscate is to be found in section 94 of the Education Inspections Act 2006.

The School Nurse



The School Nurse has responsibility for several schools in the area and makes regular visits to discuss the health, development and well-being of the children.

As part of the school health service she is able to liaise with doctors, health visitors and other professionals. She may be consulted by parents on matters relating to their child's needs at The Health Centre, Bedford Road, Hitchin.

Medicines

Herts County Council have specific guidelines on the giving of medicines to children in school. We would like to make sure that you are clear about these.

If your child needs to take regular medication, you should arrange for this to be done at home wherever possible. This could mean him/her returning home at lunchtime.

If this is not possible, we will only take responsibility for supervising the administering of the medicine if a consent form is signed by you. This form also contains a daily record of the dose required. If it is necessary for medicines to be brought into school, they must be named and brought in to the office and collected by an adult.

If the medicine is Ventolin or a similar inhaler for asthma, then there is no reason why your child should not look after it personally and use as required. A spare inhaler can be kept in a labelled drawer in the medical room. Please label these clearly with your child's name.



Admissions

If you would like your child to join Whitehill School it is best to arrange an appointment with the Headteacher to visit the school. You may then make an application for admission if you wish. We have two types of admission. Planned admission is when the children are registered in advance and are entered as a whole class into Year 3. Casual admission is when parents/carers apply for entry to school at any time during the school year. Admission to the school is dependent on availability of places. You will need to apply for a school place through the Hertfordshire County Council admission process.

Equal Opportunities Policy

In our school we aim to offer excellence and choice to all of our pupils.

We have high expectations of all the children, and encourage a positive attitude to challenge. We aim to achieve this through enriching and extending the curriculum; setting suitable challenges; responding to different needs and the removal of barriers to learning.

We want all of our children to feel that they are a valued part of our community, to be happy, thrive and to make good progress.

Safeguarding

'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE 2019) requires all schools to follow the procedures for protecting children from abuse which are established by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Board. Schools are also expected to ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which they believe that a child has been abused or at risk of abuse.

The headteacher, Mr Steve Mills, is the Designated Senior Person (DSP) for child protection within the school.

Parent Consultations and Reports

Parent consultations are held in the Autumn and Spring Terms with appointments for private interviews. Parents of pupils on the SEND register will be offered an additional face-to-face meeting in the Summer Term. Parent consultations allow for 10 minute interviews which are sufficient for a focused discussion on your child's progress so far and targets for the future. Any concerns arising during the term should not be left for this time slot when they cannot be adequately addressed. Please get in touch promptly if there are queries in the interim, so that they can be dealt with before they become a problem.

Towards the end of the Summer Term a written report is provided, which is based on continuous teacher assessment during the year.

Secondary Transfer

When the time comes to make this important step, every effort is made to ensure that the transfer for each child is as smooth as possible.

Parents and children are invited to visit secondary schools for observation and discussion, to have all facts available to make informed choices. The times of these visits are published in the local press and the 'Moving On' information given to all Year 6 children.

Liaison between primary and secondary staff ensure that the best possible educational provision is made for each child in his or her new school.

Behaviour

'Pupils'
behaviour is
impeccable
Ofsted 2017

We pride ourselves on the high standards of behaviour at Whitehill both inside and outside of school, a feature we receive many favourable comments on. This is achieved through close partnership and open communication between children, parents and staff. Each class establishes their own classroom code at the beginning of the year. Expectations and boundaries are clearly outlined and understood and there is a common and consistent approach to sanctions. The school has a behaviour policy which we all subscribe to. This lays out a positive behaviour management strategy

which seeks to pre-empt anti-social behaviour. Single incidences of verbal or physical attack and behaviour which is hurtful but not intentional are taken seriously and dealt with by either the class teacher or the lunch supervisory staff (if the incident takes place at dinner time). Significant incidents are reported to the class teacher. If the incident is targeted, personal and prolonged, this constitutes bullying and will be recorded and parents informed (for further details see Behaviour Policy and Bullying Policy on pages 35 and 36).

School Council

Each year, classes elect one representative to represent them on the school council. School council takes a proactive role in shaping school life, suggesting things that could improve life at Whitehill, supporting the work of the Head and Deputy girl/boy, fundraising for charities and raising any issues they or their class might have.

House System

Upon arriving at Whitehill all pupils are placed in one of four Houses. They are: Fire, Water, Earth and Air.

Children can earn house points which enable them to win individual certificates from bronze to platinum, as well as helping their House win the weekly House cup.

Positions of Responsibility

The Head Boy and Girl and their deputies are democratically chosen by the pupils and staff and take the lead role as ambassadors for the school. There are also House and Sports Captains and Ambassadors selected from Year 6 to act as role models for their peers.

The school has a monitor system to support its work. These monitors are chosen from Year 6 and Year 5 with each class taking a turn. They undertake to be an example to the younger children and take responsibility for a variety of tasks around school during their term of office.

Aims and Values of the Curriculum

Aims

The curriculum is the whole planned experience pupils can expect when they come to Whitehill. Through our curriculum, we aim to provide pupils with the best possible chance of becoming:

- Successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve.
- Confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.
- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

We recognise the importance of **creativity**, **connectedness** and **rigour** in underpinning a successful curriculum. We define **creativity** as something that promotes original and independent thinking and develops pupils' ability to find innovative solutions (equipping them to answer the question 'What do you do when you don't know what to do?'). We have designed our curriculum to be **connected** – maximising the potential for links between subjects and concepts. A good example can be found in Y4, when pupils learn about the physical changes in continents since dinosaurs, before plotting tectonic plates on world maps and looking at where earthquakes and volcanoes are most likely to be found. At the same time they explore traditional Japanese stories and study the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. This approach provides a deeper and richer learning experience, allowing pupils to make connections and embed their understanding. The **rigour** of individual subjects is closely guarded, ensuring that subject-specific knowledge and skills are learned. Through a curriculum that is creative, connected and rigorous, we aim to develop learners who not only pass exams but develop enquiring minds.

Values

We value:

- Ourselves, as individuals capable of spiritual, moral, social, intellectual and physical growth and development.
- Our relationships, as fundamental to the development and fulfilment of happy and healthy lives and to the good of the community.
- Our society, which is shaped by the contributions of a diverse range of people, cultures and heritages.
- Our environment, as the basis of life and a source of wonder and inspiration that needs to be protected.



Whitehill's curriculum

We use the national curriculum as the basis for the core knowledge taught at Whitehill. Our topic-based approach allows us to provide a curriculum that is creative, connected and rigorous. By working thematically, we are able to connect learning in a way that makes it both more meaningful and more memorable. For example, in Rainforests (one of our year 3 topics) pupils will read and respond to stories, poems and information books on the subject in English; they will learn about physical features of rainforests and the causes and consequences of deforestation in Geography; they will explore Mayan civilisation in history; and design, make and evaluate packaging for chocolate in DT. As well as being efficient – avoiding the need to undertake the multiple pieces of research that would be necessary without a topic link – this immersive approach allows pupils time to build connections and embed understanding.

Wherever possible, we take an enquiry-based approach to learning, with the role of the teaching being more facilitative than didactic. Or, to put it another way, pupils are given activities that will allow them to find things out and make discoveries for themselves rather than listen passively to facts. It is our belief that this active way of learning is more enjoyable, more likely to lead to long term retention of information and equips pupils with skills that can be transferred in other contexts and later life. Many lessons will involve a 'big enquiry question' – often generated by the pupils themselves – which is then answered over that lesson or series of lessons.

We provide practical first-hand experiences to enable pupils to build their knowledge but do also explore theory when it is needed. These experiences include visits from authors and organisations, a range of visits to sites of cultural, natural or other educational significance. Examples of this include pupils in Year 4 visiting the Natural History Museum when learning about dinosaurs and those in Year 6 having a tour of Parliament and meeting their MP as part of their Rulers and Leaders topic.

As we view talent as something expandable rather than fixed, groups to support or challenge are flexible depending on pupils' particular needs for that particular area. For instance, we recognise that pupils might find some areas of maths challenging and require additional scaffolding to access the learning. However there is not the assumption that they will then find every aspect of maths difficult – indeed there might be some areas where they require additional challenge. We provide lots of opportunities for group work, peer-to-peer collaboration and peer-lead tasks because we know that pupils enjoy and achieve success from this way of working. There are also times when pupils will be expected to work independently.

To allow pupils to become immersed in particular fields of learning, we include subject-themed weeks and days. Visitors to the school frequently comment on the very broad range of extra-curricular clubs and activities offered, some of which have been started up as a direct result of pupils' requests.

We recognise that a significant part of the curriculum takes place out of class; it could be described as the 'invisible curriculum'. It is what pupils learn from the systems, behaviours and responses of the school community. This includes what is learnt from having, or directly participating in, the many positions of responsibility within school, including the highly active Junior Leadership Team. It can also be seen in adhoc conversations and interactions between staff, pupils and pupils and staff. One of the things visitors repeatedly comment on is how clearly they can see our Core Purpose when interacting or observing staff and pupils.

Learning is assessed using a variety of strategies, including questioning, assessment tasks and tests. This information is used to inform the planning and teaching of individuals and groups, so that gaps in learning are addressed and an appropriate level of challenge is present.

Language and Communication

We regard literacy as every pupil's entitlement and recognise its impact on education as a whole and life chances. It is our aim for pupils at Whitehill to read as writers and write as readers. By this we mean that they have a writer's appreciation and understanding when reading and consider their readers when writing. We teach pupils to express their knowledge, thoughts and ideas in a range of contexts and do our best to foster a love of literature.

We ensure pupils are exposed to a varied diet of reading matter, reflecting our rich and varied literary heritage. We provide a huge range of experiences and opportunities for pupils to write, perform and discuss. Regular visits from actors, poets, authors and illustrators allow pupils to learn from experts.

Reading is, without doubt, one of the most important skills that pupils will be acquiring and honing over their time in Whitehill. The ability to read fluently provides access to the rest of the curriculum: it has an impact on success in every subject. We know that regular reading and book talk, at home, will be of enormous benefit to your child. We do all we can to encourage this. You will receive more detailed information about our expectations when your child starts with us.

Through our curriculum we aim for pupils to find their voice. We will provide them with the skills, opportunities and motivation to express themselves orally, dramatically, pictorially and in writing. We recognise the importance of acquiring the technical skills of writing – including accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation. Spellings are taught in an investigative way (exploring words, meanings and sounds) and learnt using a range of strategies at home. Pupils are taught to proof-read and edit their work, how to use appropriate resources (such as dictionaries and spell checks) and are encouraged to adopt a 'can do' attitude. Pupils at Whitehill will be taught grammar explicitly and within a meaningful context. For example, they will discuss not just what punctuation to use, but how different choices affect meaning.



Mathematical Understanding

We employ a mastery approach to teaching maths. We do not restrict the mathematics that 'weaker' children experience, whilst encouraging 'able' children to 'get ahead' through extension. Instead, our mastery approach exposes almost all pupils to the same curriculum content. It allows them all full access to the curriculum by focusing on developing deep understanding and secure fluency with facts and procedures.

Whitehill has embraced maths teaching for mastery; the essence of which is captured below:

- Maths teaching for mastery rejects the idea that a large proportion of people 'just can't do maths'.
- All pupils are encouraged by the belief that by working hard at maths they can succeed.
- Pupils are taught through whole-class interactive teaching, ensuring that all can master concepts before moving to the next part of the curriculum sequence, allowing no pupil to be left behind.
- If a pupil fails to grasp a concept or procedure, this is identified quickly and early intervention ensures the pupil is ready to move forward with the whole class in the next lesson.
- Lesson design identifies the new mathematics that is to be taught, the key points, the difficult points and a carefully sequenced journey through the learning. In a typical lesson the teacher leads back and forth interaction, including questioning, short tasks, explanation, demonstration and discussion.
- Procedural fluency and conceptual understanding are developed in tandem because each supports the development of the other.
- It is recognised that practice is a vital part of learning, but the practice used is intelligent practice that both reinforces pupils' procedural fluency and develops their conceptual understanding.
- Significant time is spent developing deep knowledge of the key ideas that are needed to underpin future learning. The structure and connections within the mathematics are emphasised, so that pupils develop deep learning that can be sustained.
- Key facts such as multiplication tables and addition facts are learnt to automaticity to avoid cognitive overload in the working memory and enable pupils to focus on new concepts.

Differentiation using the mastery approach is offered through questioning children at an appropriate level and by exploring the concept more deeply. Pupils are only moved on when they are conceptually secure. Even though the topic is the same, pupils access it at their own level. The idea of concrete examples, pictorial examples and abstract is key. Only when secure at the concrete stage should pupils be moved on to using pictorial examples. Depth of learning is achieved through reasoning and seeing different approaches to work out answers. Rather than accelerating pupils onto the 'next thing', they spend time applying their skills and knowledge in less familiar contexts.

Parental help is always welcome, in class and at home. In particular support is appreciated in practising concepts such as times tables which is invaluable to learning in maths.



Scientific and Technological Understanding

Science

The national curriculum for science aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics
- develop understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science through different types of science enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them
- are equipped with the scientific knowledge required to understand the uses and implications of science, today and for the future



At Whitehill, we teach science as a separate subject linked to our topics. Much of our science work is practical and hands on, and where possible linked to real life experiences. The children are encouraged to explore, to talk about their work, to reason, to question and to investigate through a range of 'working scientifically' skills.

Design and Technology

"Solving a problem, then solving it better"

Our aim is for pupils at Whitehill to become skilled and confident problem solvers through our Design and Technology curriculum. By harnessing their creativity and imagination, as well as drawing from existing knowledge, we help pupils look at problems logically and break them down into smaller manageable steps that they can explore and solve. Through designing, making and evaluating products, pupils gain a wide range of practical skills and subject knowledge. As part of DT, pupils are taught how to cook and apply the principles of nutrition and healthy eating. They learn about seasonality and sustainability, while acquiring skills that will be of practical use (and hopefully provide enjoyment) now and in the future. Pupils are encouraged to take risks, becoming resilient, resourceful and enterprising individuals. We evaluate past and present design and look at the impact it has on our wider world.



Computing



We place a strong emphasis on the potential of information and communication technology (ICT) to develop and enhance our children for the future. A high quality computing education equips pupils to computational thinking and creativity to understand and change the world.

To facilitate and improve our standards, we have invested in what we believe will give our pupils the best opportunities in the field of computing and ICT. Our Chromebooks, iPads,

tablets and laptops in conjunction with our computing suite, are frequently used and our state-of-the-art green screen film studio allows us to bring ICT to all areas of the curriculum. We are always on the hunt for new technologies and web-based platforms to support the curriculum both in school and at home.

The school works closely with Herts for Learning to implement a scheme of work which gives pupils opportunities across the curriculum in an innovative way. Throughout their time at Whitehill, pupils cover coding, communication, modelling, sound, graphics & animation, robotics, authoring, research and weaved throughout all of this is e-safety.



Modern Foreign Languages

Pupils in Whitehill learn French as their modern foreign language. Currently this is offered by a specialist language teacher who works with all classes. On Fridays, everyone has half an hour of French based on the 'Euro Stars' programme. The emphasis is on speaking and listening, with pupils acquiring sufficient vocabulary to be able to have simple conversations on common themes (such as families, hobbies and holidays). It is our aim to build confidence and enjoyment in the activity of conversing in another language. From time to time we will run clubs such as Spanish, Latin or German depending on available expertise.

Historical, Geographical and Social Understanding

History

Our aim is for pupils at Whitehill to gain an increasingly mature and informed historical perspective of their world. We achieve this by building pupils' historical knowledge (of Britain and the wider world), as well as developing their understanding of the big ideas and processes in history (such as continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity, difference and significance). As well as learning about dates and events, there is also emphasis placed upon how we learn about the past, what reasons people had for the way they acted, how to gather information from various sources and how to extract information from pictures, artefacts and museum visits. We learn about chronology and include a variety of historical periods in our studies. Our studies include in-depth and overview looks at areas of history (British and that of the wider world) with links made between periods.



Archaeological Dig

Victorian Day



Geography

Our aim is to start pupils down the road of 'thinking geographically'. By this we mean understanding how the world we live in has been shaped by human and physical factors whilst forming factually-based opinions about the future of our planet.

Our curriculum allows pupils to make links between places, spaces and the environment. Learning is contextualised through our topic-based approach. Studying Geography, pupils explore and explain the world we live in, building locational knowledge and their understanding of human and physical processes. Pupils are encouraged to scrutinise the relationship between humans and the environment whilst making links with other subjects. Pupils are taught the technical skills needed for geography, such as map reading, data collection and field work. There is at least one geography-based field trip in each year, providing an opportunity for the practical application of these skills.



Religious Education



"Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development"

During their Religious Education children will learn both from and about religion, develop their knowledge and understanding of sources of wisdom and their impact whilst exploring personal and critical responses. Lessons aid in their social, cultural, moral and spiritual development. By the end of Y6 your child will have learnt about six religions which are prominent across Hertfordshire.

Our school assemblies involve children in various activities which include speaking, reading and music. These tend to have a mainly Christian focus, however there is much recognition of other cultures and beliefs.

Relationships and Health Education (RHE)

From September 2020 the teaching of Relationships and Health Education is statutory in primary schools.

Children are growing up in an increasingly complex world and live their lives seamlessly on and offline. Children need to know how to be safe and healthy and manage their personal and social lives in a positive way. (DfE Guidance on RSHE 2019)

Relationships education in primary schools includes five key themes: families and people who care for me; caring friendships; respectful relationships; online relationships and being safe.

The expectations for primary health education are that pupils are taught about mental wellbeing; internet safety and harms; physical health and fitness; healthy eating; drugs alcohol and tobacco; health and prevention; basic first aid and the changing adolescent body.

There is no requirement to teach sex education at primary school but the Department for Education recommends that schools should have a programme tailored to the age and maturity of the pupils, drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the National Curriculum for Science. Parents are welcome to withdraw their children from sex education lessons which fall outside of the statutory science curriculum.

At Whitehill, we will teach RHE through the 'Jigsaw' Scheme of Work. This is a tailor-made, whole-school approach which breaks down the statutory requirements into six strands which are revisited in each of the four years. The strands are: Being Me in My World; Celebrating Difference; Dreams and Goals; Healthy Me; relationships and Changing Me.

Understanding the Arts

Art

Artists at Whitehill display curiosity, creativity and proficiency in a range of skills and techniques. These skills enable them to express their ideas, thoughts and feelings visually. Pupils are taught to use a range of materials and explore the effects that these can produce. They become increasingly independent in their choices of material. Pupils are given the opportunity to evaluate their work and discuss the work of known artists. They engage with diverse activities and artists' work and understand the historical context of works of art.



We include visits from professional artists, usually linked to our work in English or topic, so that pupils can learn from experts and be inspired.

The school invites pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of the subject by encouraging them to enter art competitions throughout the year. In addition to classroom teaching, art and craft clubs are offered as extra curricular activities.

Visit from author illustrator, Will Grill

Recycled Fashion Show



Performing Arts

Drama is viewed as an integral tool for capturing, exploring and expressing creativity. This expression can be channelled into enhancing the children's understanding of topic areas. Opportunities are planned within the school curriculum and through external professional organisations to enrich their experiences.

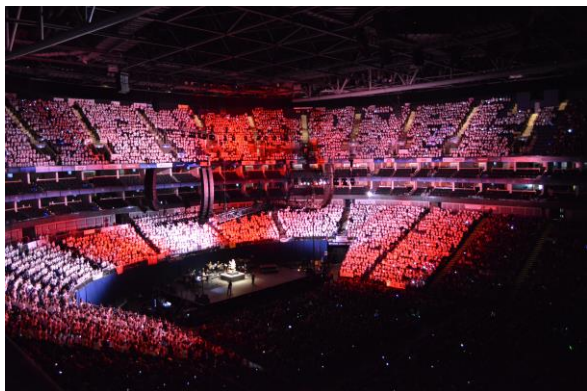


Music

Music is an important feature of school life at Whitehill. Teachers provide music sessions for the children in their class, covering the areas of listening, appreciation, composition and performing. We also have music clubs, including a choir and a school orchestra. Often music is also linked to other areas of the curriculum. In Years 3 and 4 all children learn to play the recorder. In Year 5 children learn to play either the flute or clarinet which is funded by the school and delivered by the Herts Music Service. In Year 6 children learn to play the ukulele.

Children throughout the school are encouraged to take part in various extra-curricular musical activities. Our choir, as well as performing at school concerts, has also taken part in musical activities in the wider community including singing at bigger venues such as the Royal Albert Hall and the O2 Arena.

The school also benefits from the services of visiting instrumental teachers. Tuition is offered in piano, strings, brass, woodwind, guitar and drums. Some tuition is on an individual basis, whilst other tutors use a group approach. Although there is a charge for such tuition, many parents feel that it is important to enhance their children's education in this way. Children who learn a musical instrument may be invited to play in the school orchestra.



Physical Development and Well Being

At Whitehill, we view PE as a very important aspect of a healthy life and place great emphasis on providing a wide variety of opportunities for the children to engage in. We have an enthusiastic P.E. department who encourage all pupils to take part in activities to develop their skills and enjoy the social aspect of sport; promoting team work and peer support.



Children take part in sport, games, dance and gymnastics as part of the everyday curriculum. We aim to provide a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum that offers a range of activities. In addition to class PE slots, we offer a wealth of lunch and after school clubs throughout the year. We are proud to say that 100% of our children participate in a sports club within the academic year, both internally and externally in the hope that they will take their love of PE and sport throughout their lives.

We encourage our students to compete both through intra-school competitions and inter-school competitions. As a school, we are proud of our performers for their high achievements and their continuous enthusiasm. We liaise with local Secondary schools and Schools Sports Partnership who provide and support with many sporting events.

We currently organise weekly activity afternoons (lower school Thursdays, upper school Fridays) to ensure all children receive two hours per week of quality sports tuition and improve overall fitness levels in a vast range of sports to develop their teamwork skills, coordination and critical thinking. This is in addition to an hour of gymnastics/dance at other times during the week.

In addition to this, lower school children visit Hitchin Swimming Centre during the school year. We aim to reach the National Curriculum Standard for all children; but achievements vary from those who learn to swim to those who gain advanced awards.



Educational Visits



Day visits are made from time to time in conjunction with class topics. These might be as simple as a local walk, a visit to Hudnall Park or going to the Houses of Parliament.

Years 4 and 6 are offered a residential school journey every year. An extended journey of five days is undertaken in Year 6 and a shorter trip of three days for the Year 4s. This gives pupils the chance to experience life away from home in a safe environment. The destination will vary depending on the educational experience we hope the children will gain. As French is taught throughout the school, going to France gives Year

6 children the opportunity to enrich their language skills and experience French culture. We feel that these visits are valuable both in curriculum terms and for the social experience.



School and Home Working Together

We are keen to maintain our standards in all areas of the school and very much appreciate the positive and constructive suggestions you make. Staff at the school welcome contact with parents. We are pleased to welcome you in when your child is involved a class assembly. Not only does this give you the chance to glimpse the range of work going on in their class, but it also enables you to see the high standard of displays from other classes which may be found around the school.

Parents are very welcome to help with activities in school eg. with reading, artwork etc. Volunteers are always extremely welcome and enable us to enrich the provision we can make for the children. This may be a commitment over a year but could mean just a small input of expertise for a limited time. If you feel you have some expertise to share, please do not be shy - we need your help!

OUR WIDER CURRICULUM - (Extra Curricular Activities)

One of the key features of Whitehill's philosophy is to be able to offer all children activities which are extra to the National Curriculum. Both children and teachers gain enormously from these as they offer an opportunity to widen the children's experiences outside the normal constraints of formal lessons but within familiar surroundings and with friends.

We are very fortunate to have staff who volunteer to run most of these activities in addition to their other school commitments. However there are a few areas where we are not able to offer expertise so we have arranged partnerships with professional organisations for these activities.

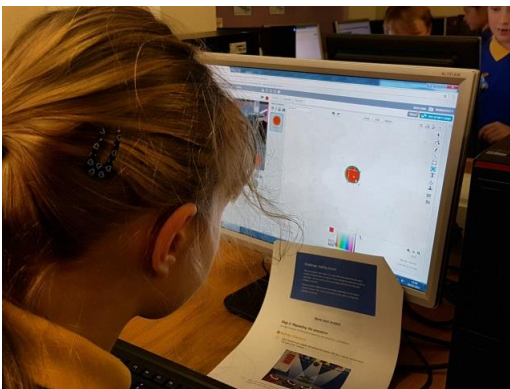
At this stage it is vital that we emphasise that after school activities ***must never*** be used as an alternative to after school care as sometimes clubs have to be cancelled at short notice. After school arrangements must be made to allow for such eventualities. We do advise parents that where cancellation of a club would present significant difficulties it would be better for their child not to join. There is after-school child care at Whitehill. Bookings can be made by contacting the Cookie Club via www.cookieclubhitchin.com

When are the Clubs held?

Clubs for Years 3 and 4 are held mainly in break and lunchtimes during the school day. There are some activities which run after school and it is essential that these year groups have suitable after-school care arrangements to allow for unexpected cancellations.

Clubs for Years 5 and 6 mostly take place after school as there is an expectation that the children will be able to make their own way home independently if a club is cancelled at short notice.

Clubs do vary from term to term as they run thanks to the goodwill of the staff. Whitehill prides itself on the range and variety of activities offered and like to remain flexible so that we can cater for new opportunities as they arise. Also the commitments of staff can vary from term to term so that some clubs can become no longer viable.



Clubs and Activities - Who can join?

There are clubs and activities available to all ages within the school.

Most clubs and activities are available for all abilities but there are a few exceptions. Later in the year, in the netball and football clubs, pupils may be chosen for their ability to play for the school teams.

It is an expectation that if a child joins a club then they will attend for the whole term and if they are unable to attend that either the adult running the club or the office is notified.

How much will it cost?

Clubs run in school by staff members are free of charge. The clubs and activities run by outside organisations are chargeable. The charges for these are substantially less than commercial fees because the school offers the site free of charge. The children benefit from these reciprocal arrangements. These clubs may have different start and finish dates to those organised in school. These need a termly commitment payable in advance to the organiser.

What to do next

With so many activities available it can be difficult to decide which to choose. For children who are just starting at the school there are many new experiences and unfamiliar faces to get used to. The clubs do not begin until the third week back in September and the second week back in the spring and summer terms so there is time for the children to consider what they would like to do and to discuss their choices with parents.

Announcements are made in assembly about how and when to sign up for a club. Should permission be required (for instance for afterschool clubs), you will receive a letter. We do encourage children to sign up for the clubs themselves as this is all part of gaining independence in school.

If there are too many children wishing to join a club, places may be awarded on a first come, first served basis and a waiting list is created. Children do drop out of clubs and very few children are prevented from joining if they wish to. Alternatively names may be drawn out of a hat.

Don't Panic! If a child misses an announcement but would still like to join, providing there are places, they can join most clubs at any time by seeing the adult running the club. If there are no places their name will be added to the waiting list.

Different clubs may run during the school year. Children must listen out for announcements of new activities or ones that may have to be withdrawn and look on the club noticeboard. Sometimes new clubs cannot start if too few people show an interest.

Individual Music Provision

Whilst music clubs are run in school, the main source of music tuition is provided by the Hertfordshire Music Service which is a paid by parents service.

Your child will receive 33 lessons over the course of the year and this will normally be 11 lessons per term. If for any reason the teacher is not able to come into school and unable to deliver all 33 lessons, we will issue a refund at the end of the year. There are no refunds given if your child is absent or if a school trip is scheduled however the music teacher will try to make up the lesson but has no obligation to do so. They try their best to make up the time by giving their pupils an extra five minutes on their lessons over the course of the year. You will be invoiced (via School Gateway) in equal payments however the lessons may not be equal each term due to either the music teacher or school's commitments.

Please note that fees may increase each year, at the start of the autumn term. **A term's notice is required** if your child does not wish to continue lessons.

If you are in receipt of free school meals or on a low income you may qualify for a remission of fees however you will need to contribute £20 per term. Please telephone 0300 123 4048 for more information.

Instrument tuition currently available

Piano, Guitar, Violin, Flute, Clarinet, Drums and Brass.

How to register an interest in a musical instrument

You will receive a letter towards the end of the summer term whereby you can request music lessons for a September start if spaces are available. The lessons run termly so children may start an instrument at the beginning of any term subject to the teacher having a vacancy.

Whitehill Needs You!



We are always hoping to be able to offer more opportunities to the children at Whitehill and believe that children with wide and various interests will benefit throughout their lives. If you have a particular skill and have time to spare, then we would love you to run a club, even if you could only offer half a term.

Please contact the school if you can help.

Breakfast / After School Clubs

There is a breakfast club which is run at Highbury Infant School. Children are escorted to Whitehill in time for the morning registration bell. There is also an after school club at Whitehill provided by the Cookie Club. It is very important that parents contact the clubs directly if arrangements change.

Highbury Fun Club: 01462 450925

Cookie Club: <mailto:thecookieclub@hotmail.co.uk>

Behaviour Policy
(To be read in conjunction with the
School's Anti-Bullying Policy)

Our Values

At Whitehill Junior School, we believe that a child's time with us is an important part of their preparation for the society in which they live.

We encourage a secure, caring environment with a calm atmosphere. We aim to achieve this by supporting children in assuming responsibility for their belongings, behaviour and working and playing with others. We encourage our Year 5 and Year 6 pupils to support the aims of the school through taking on a range of positions of responsibility including monitors for each class who take office for one term.

Within this environment and through our Core Purpose of Profound Individual Growth, we also assist each child in striving to reach their potential in all areas. This includes moral, spiritual, intellectual, physical and social development. Achievements in these areas are celebrated as often as possible.

It is important to develop mutual respect and foster positive relationships throughout the school, with due regard to equal opportunities in all aspects of school life and recognising the importance of different cultures. We aim for children to show self-confidence, self-control, sensitivity and consideration for others, to take pride in themselves and their school and show a persistent approach to tasks.

Within the school community, it is important to recognise that staff as well as children develop and, to this end, there is commitment to staff development.

When children experience success, it is usually down to strong, supportive and positive links between home and school, therefore, we encourage parental involvement and support.

Our Guiding Principles

At the beginning of each school year we remind the pupils to think carefully about the guiding principles which underpin our Core Purpose. These are:

- Working hard to be the best you can be
- Encouraging successful learning
- Building self-confidence in all
- Seeing the bigger picture
- Positive, considerate individuals achieving together.

We ask the children to think about what rules would be appropriate to help us all live and work together successfully and these are then included in our own **class codes of conduct**.

These might include, aiming to:

- ☺ Respect other people and their property
- ☺ Be kind to one another
- ☺ Work quietly and move safely and sensibly around the school
- ☺ Take care of our school environment
- ☺ Listen when others are speaking
- ☺ Always try to do our best

These rules apply when we are in school on the playground and out of school.

Rewarding Good Behaviour

These are some of the ways in which good behaviour is rewarded in our school:

- ☺ Verbal praise
- ☺ Stickers
- ☺ House points
- ☺ Certificates
- ☺ Special mentions in assembly
- ☺ Communication with parents
- ☺ Sending children to a senior member of staff
- ☺ Sending children to the Headteacher
- ☺ Whole class rewards

These are some of the ways in which we deal with challenging behaviour:

- ☹ Verbal or non-verbal warning
- ☹ Time out (a separate area in the class or with another member of staff)
- ☹ Loss of privileges
- ☹ Communication with parents
- ☹ Being sent to senior member of staff
- ☹ Being sent to Headteacher
- ☹ Behaviour support plan

How Parents Can Help

Parents have a vital role in promoting good behaviour in school and good links between home and school are imperative.

The school has a right to expect that parents will give full support in dealing with challenging behaviour.

We expect parents to let us know if there are any special behaviour difficulties at home, such as a trauma which may affect a child's performance or if there is ill health which may result in absence.

The school will endeavour to provide a welcoming environment, involve parents at an early stage if there are disciplinary problems, and encourage an active involvement in the school through a wide range of activities and projects.

Definition of Bullying

"Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. name calling, racist remarks) or indirect (e.g. spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups). [DfEE Circular 10/95]"

Bullying is not tolerated at Whitehill. The Anti-Bullying Policy explains in detail our procedures and response to bullying. Children and parents can be assured that having drawn attention to their concerns, they will be carefully investigated and if substantiated, acted upon.

There will always be an emphasis on improving behaviour, however, eventually, if a child cannot improve, other agencies and strategies (including exclusion) will be employed. All instances of verbal or physical attack whether intentional or otherwise are taken seriously and dealt with. Serious or repeated incidents will involve the Headteacher and parents.

Exclusion from School

On very rare occasions, and after dialogue with parents, teachers and the child, it may be necessary for the Headteacher to exclude a child from school either on a temporary basis (up to fifteen days a term) or, in exceptional cases, permanently.

Exclusions would be carried out as a last resort, and would involve the school's governing body.

And Finally...

Other ways of supporting children's positive behaviour at home and at school include:

- ✓ Frequent praise and rewards
- ✓ Consistent good attendance at school
- ✓ Involvement of parents as often as possible

School rules are there to improve and protect everybody's right to a secure and happy environment.

A positive approach and attitude to behaviour improvement is more effective than severe punishments.

POSITIVE ATTITUDES CREATE POSITIVE PEOPLE

Anti-Bullying Policy

At Whitehill Junior School we have high expectations of behaviour. Behaviour that falls below our expectations will be challenged. Bullying will not be tolerated. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported. We aim to work together to ensure that school is a safe place for everyone. .

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. In other words, bullying at Whitehill Junior School is considered to be:

deliberately hurtful behaviour which occurs **several times on purpose (S.T.O.P.)**

Bullying can be:

Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
Physical	Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
Racial	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual	Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive behaviours
Homophobic	Because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality
Direct or Indirect Verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Cyber bullying	All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology.

Bullying may be related to:

- Race
- Religion
- Culture
- SEN or disability
- Appearance or health condition
- Home circumstances
- Sexual orientation, sexism, or sexual bullying

Bullying can take place anywhere; this might include the classroom, playground, toilets, on the journey to and from school, on residential trips, cyberspace and in the home.

Signs of Bullying

Certain behaviours or signs *might* be an indication that a child is being bullied:

- Reluctance to attend school (e.g. feels ill in the mornings)
- Increased anxiety (e.g. loss of appetite)
- Atypical behaviours (e.g. withdrawn, short-tempered)
- Self-harm
- Change in standard of work
- Displaying bullying behaviours themselves

Clearly these signs and behaviours could be due to a variety of other causes.

Some of the ways we help to prevent bullying at Whitehill Junior School are by embedding a Core Purpose that has friendliness and consideration as fundamental values, allocating positions of responsibility to pupils and explicitly teaching pupils about acceptable behaviour and how to respond when behaviour is not acceptable. Staff reinforce a general message that children do not have to be friends with everyone else but they must be friendly and respectful to all.

If a child feels that they are being bullied, they are encouraged to (list is not hierarchical):

- Consider their 'network hand' (as encouraged through our protective behaviours work)
- Tell a friend
- Tell a member of the Junior Leadership Team
- Tell a teacher or adult whom they feel they can trust
- Tell a parent or adult at home whom they feel they can trust
- Discuss it as part of their RSE lesson
- Use the Whitehill Worry Box
- Ring Childline and follow the advice given

Children may not be aware or find it hard to articulate that they are being bullied. They may be too young or have other vulnerabilities such as Special Educational Needs that create a communication barrier. Staff will take a proactive role in addressing any behaviour that is, or could lead to, bullying.

As part of our Relationships Education Curriculum children learn to understand, respect and celebrate the many ways in which we are all different.

What Can You Do?

In the first instance, you should discuss your concerns with the class teacher either in person or via email. Encourage your child to be open with you.

Do not attempt to sort the problem out yourself by speaking to the other child(ren) whom you think may be involved or by speaking to their parents. Equally, you should not encourage your child to bully back. Both of these will only make the problem much harder to solve.

What Will We Do?

1. If bullying is suspected, it will be investigated by the class teacher or a senior member of staff.
2. If it is established that bullying has taken place, parents (of the bully and victim) will be informed.
3. A consequence will be decided by a member of the SLT.
 - In some cases, outside agencies may be requested to support the school or family in dealing with bullying e.g. police, counsellor, Family Support Worker, etc.
 - In serious cases, fixed-term or even permanent exclusion will be considered.
4. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
5. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be recorded by the Headteacher and monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Helpful Organisations:

Childline	0800 1111
Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0300 0115142
Children's Legal Centre	0845 345 4345
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222
Bullying Online	www.bullying.co.uk

HOW TO COMMENT OR COMPLAIN

Information for Parents - Quick Summary

We will always be pleased to hear from you. If you have reason to praise us, we will be reassured that we are doing certain things in the right way. If you have a reason to complain, you can be sure we will do our best to put it right, and look upon it as an opportunity to improve what we do.

We care about what you think

Each day this school makes many decisions and tries hard to do the best for all the children. Your comments - either positive or negative - are helpful for future planning. You may want to talk to us about a particular aspect of this school, though not actually make a complaint - you just want to get something 'off your chest'.

If you are dissatisfied about the way your child is being treated, or any actions or lack of action by us, please feel able to contact us:

Our promise to you

- Your complaint will be dealt with honestly, politely and in confidence
- Your complaint will be looked into thoroughly and fairly
- If your complaint is urgent we will deal with it more quickly
- We will keep you up to date with progress at each stage
- You will get an apology if we have made a mistake
- You will be told what we are going to do to put things right

A copy of our complaints policy is available from the office and on the school website.

Homework Policy

Updated February 2018

Introduction

The school policy for homework was developed by the whole staff in conjunction with the pupils and parents and has the full agreement of the governing body.

Aims

- To ensure that parents are clear about what their child is expected to do
- To ensure consistency of approach throughout the school, whilst leaving scope for flexibility between classes
- To use homework as a tool to help continue to raise standards of achievement
- To extend the learning experience beyond the classroom
- To provide opportunities for parents, pupils and the school to work together in partnership in relation to the pupils' learning
- To encourage pupils and their parents to share and enjoy learning experiences
- To reinforce work covered in class by providing further opportunities for the individual pupil
- To practise or consolidate basic skills and knowledge especially in Maths and English
- To encourage children to develop the responsibility, confidence and self-discipline needed to study independently
- To prepare Year 6 pupils for the transfer to secondary school
- To provide timely feedback to pupils against the homework they have submitted

The Nature of Homework

Homework should support ideas and skills learned in class. The tasks should extend, enrich, accelerate, consolidate and practise those ideas and skills. It should not be given just to fill a 20 minute slot and can take many different forms.

It should enable parents to become positively involved in their child's work in school.

It should encourage children to develop and nurture independence, self-direction and organisational skills.

It should be matched to children's abilities and needs.

Glossary

- **Practice and consolidate** – typically spelling lists, reading or handwriting.
- **Acceleration** – when a child is given work which would typically be for older pupils.
- **Enrichment** – tasks that will broaden and deepen your child's understanding.
- **Extension** – tasks where your child is encouraged to develop deep and more sophisticated thinking. If they are being asked to think of ways to recycle waste, why not consider the reasons why?

Role of the School

- Children should ask the class teacher for help if they have not understood or remembered instructions or are finding the work difficult. **To develop their independence as learners it is important that they do this for themselves.**
- Your child's teacher will know whether what has been produced is of appropriate quantity and quality and will give feedback to the child.
- The class teacher may from time to time give feedback to parents as a note in a child's homework diary.
- All work set will have been previously taught or introduced in class. You are not expected to teach your child new work although from time to time a teacher may ask you to go over an idea with which a child has been struggling.

Role of the Parents / Carers

- Encourage your child to check their homework diary to remind them of what needs to be done.
- Agree on a time for homework to be done, preferably well before it is due to be handed in.
- Provide a suitable place for your child to work and encourage working without close supervision, in order to help them develop independence.
- Tell them how long they have got to spend on the work when they start and invite them to show you what they have done at the end of the task.
- Read to your child and encourage them to read widely.

In all tasks quality matters more than quantity

Timing of Homework

Homework should never be too onerous nor should it create stress within the pupil's family. If parents have any concerns they should not hesitate to contact the school. Longer tasks will have more than one day set aside between the work being given and the date for completion, however there are times when tasks will need to be completed for the following day, for example, practice and consolidation of a lesson's objectives.

Homework will be given on a flexible basis according to the need of your child's class or individual children. Over the course of a week this should not exceed 1½ hours in total.

At Whitehill Junior School we are very keen for parents to support and help their children with homework. We take a view that children are likely to get more out of an activity if parents get involved as long as they do not take over too much. However, there are times when we will want to see what pupils can do on their own. It is particularly important, as they get older, for pupils to become increasingly independent in their learning. If a parent is unsure about what their role should be, they should discuss it with their child's teacher.

Parents / carers who have queries about homework should not hesitate to make an appointment to see their child's class teacher or target group teacher.

Attendance Policy

Initial Statement

Whitehill School aims to encourage excellent levels of attendance and punctuality to enable all pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Expectations

The responsibility for good attendance is shared between school, parents and pupils.

The expectations for school are that:

- The school will ensure that records of attendance are maintained according to Government legislation and guidance on a daily basis
- The school will follow up all instances of poor attendance and punctuality
- The school is committed to working with parents to encourage regular and punctual attendance
- The Governing Body will provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensuring it is placed as an agenda item at each full governing body meeting.

The expectations for parents are:

- Parents are expected to and have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn
- Parents will inform school on the first day of absence, of the reason for their child's absence from school
- Parents will maintain regular communication with school staff where necessary
- Parents will ensure that school are informed of any changes of contact details.

The expectations for pupils are:

- All pupils are expected to attend school regularly and punctually
- Pupils must remember to hand any note giving reasons for absence to the relevant person
- Pupils are expected to be ready to learn.

Start and finish times

Children can come into the classroom from at 8.35am ready for the bell to be rung at 8.45am which is the official school start time. Pupils must not wait on the playgrounds. If a pupil is late they should report to the office by the front door. Registers are called at 8.50am and 1.05pm. School finishes at 3.15pm. For the safety of all children please do not allow them to play on the outdoor equipment unsupervised before and after school.

Registration

Registers are called at 8.50am and 1.05pm.

Lateness

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time.

Any pupil arriving after 8.50am should report to the School Office.

Any pupil reporting to the School Office, should be signed into the Late Book by their Parent or member of School Office Staff.

Anyone signing the Late Book, is asked for a reason why they are late for school.

Absences

Every absence from school has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Notification will be accepted from parents / carers or close family adult friend.

Notification should be provided by telephone message or email to the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence.

Notification should be given to a member of the School Office Staff.
School may decide not to authorise absence, even when a reason is provided.
Absences may only be authorised by the Headteacher.

Leaving and returning to School during School Day

When pupils leave or return to school during the school day school office staff must be notified.
The parents of any pupils leaving school during the school day are requested to inform the school in writing or by phone of the reason for this absence.
All pupils leaving the school during the school day will leave only with their parents / carers and via the main entrance.
All pupils leaving the school are required to be signed out and signed in on their return to school.

Following up Absence

Whitehill School follows up all absences from school. Any unexplained absences are followed up on the day, usually by way of an automated text message, although in some circumstances a phone call may be deemed more appropriate.

Any pupil with regular or prolonged absence is followed up initially by the Attendance Co-ordinator, with the support of the Headteacher. This is usually by letter or telephone call, or a meeting in school with parents where necessary. If the situation does not improve, then this is discussed with the Attendance Improvement Officer.

Term Time Holidays

Whitehill School actively discourages parents from taking family holidays during Term Time.
Parents are informed of the school ethos regarding holidays during term time, through the New Parents Meeting and through information in the School Brochure.
The school uses the Hertfordshire County Council Absence during Term time Request Form.
Parents are requested to submit the Request Form, no less than three weeks prior to the absence.
All requests for absence during term time are considered individually by the Headteacher and are only approved for exceptional circumstances.

Penalty Notices

At Whitehill School we expect parents to work with us to address attendance problems. If a pupil has at least 21 sessions (half day= 1 session) unauthorised absence in a term (including unauthorised holidays) the head teacher may ask the LEA to issue a Penalty Notice.

The penalty is £50 if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £100 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days. If the penalty is not paid the LEA may prosecute the parents for their child's irregular attendance

Charging and Refund Policy

The charging and remissions policy of Herts County Council (copy to be found in Primary Policy Guidance) has been adopted by the members of the governing body.

The governors wish to ensure that all pupils have access to all areas of the life of the school, regardless of the parents' ability to pay.

When there are activities organised by the school during school hours involving the need for payment to be made, voluntary contributions are sought from the parents to cover the cost of these activities. No child is excluded from participating in the activities because of non-payment of the contribution. Pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then the event will be cancelled.

In the case of activities partly during the school day, and partly out of school hours, charges will be made for the time outside school hours, and for board and lodging on a residential school journey. The head teacher and governors will consider sympathetically cases of genuine financial need and remit charges where appropriate.

Children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of the charge for board and lodging:

- **Income Support**
- **Income-based Jobseekers Allowance**
- **Income-related Employment and Support Allowance**
- **Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999**
- **The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit**
- **Child Tax Credit** (as long as you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and you don't get more than £16,190 a year)
- **Working Tax Credit run-on** (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- **Universal Credit** (with annual earned income of no more than **£7,400** after tax and not including any benefits you get).

Inability or unwillingness to pay

We are committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all pupils, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that child are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it will be cancelled.

The identity of the child or parents who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

Instrumental Music Lessons

A charge is permitted for instrumental music tuition undertaken in school hours. If a pupil is in receipt of 100% remission of music fees a charge of £20 per term will be made.

Refunds

In the event of a surplus of £10 per pupil or more on a school journey a refund to parents will be made. If the surplus is lower the funds will be re-invested in future learning opportunities.

November 2019. This policy is subject to annual review.

'Working together for individual success'

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