



Whittingham
C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Early Years Information 2021



About us

Whittingham is a small traditional Northumbrian village close to the larger towns of Rothbury and Alnwick. The village lies just off the A697 and is situated within an easy distance of about 35 miles travel southwards to Newcastle upon Tyne. The village enjoys a beautiful rural setting with magnificent views of the Cheviot Hills.

Our school serves a wide rural community and catchment area. We pride ourselves that we are warm and welcoming to all. School sits at the heart of its community with active links the local village hall, church and wider community. We have a longstanding local history and our school population includes children of former pupils and grandchildren of staff.



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With 107 pupils on roll our pupil numbers have significantly risen over the past 3 years and continue to grow. A high proportion of children choose to come to our school live outside our catchment area.

We are extremely ambitious for our children, always striving for them to have the best opportunities we can provide and for them to reach their full potential. The dedication of our inspirational staff, the resources available and our broad and balanced curriculum have all been contributing factors in enabling us to have an excellent reputation in the local and wider community. The proportion of our Pupil Premium children and children with SEND are broadly in line with national averages.

We strive to make sure that the time the children spend as part of our school family, is happy and successful. We aim to provide a high standard of education in a supportive, secure and stimulating environment where all children can learn and develop to their full potential. We also seek to build a trusting and well-informed relationship with families.



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The school classes are organised into a Nursery/ Reception- Early Years Class, Year 1 and Year 2 Class, Year 3 and Year 4 Class and a Year 5 and Year 6 Class. Due to the variation in size of individual cohorts of children we review our class organisation every year.

Current staffing includes six teachers (including the Head teacher) and five teaching assistants. Like many small schools in Northumberland, we pride ourselves on the effective links maintained with other schools and we are part of the Alnwick Partnership of schools. This comprises of Primary Schools and our feeder Secondary School.

Staff meet on a regular basis to discuss local and national issues and to attend training. This enables us to ensure that we strive to develop a vibrant, forward-thinking school, whilst developing good relationships with the schools in the area. We work very hard to ensure the move to Secondary School is a smooth one for our pupils and that staff feel valued.

We highly value the importance of all our staff roles across the school and can offer excellent professional development within a fantastic school environment.



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About Early Years

Curriculum and learning

At Whittingham we are very proud of our Early Years Unit in which all of our children learn together from 3 – 5 years old. The children work in a mixed Nursery and Reception class and all of the children learn from the same curriculum.

The Early Years Curriculum is split into 7 areas of learning; we focus on the Prime Areas of learning to begin with but cover all areas of learning in Nursery and Reception.

Prime Areas of Learning:

- ☐ Communication and Language
- ☐ Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- ☐ Physical Development

Specific Areas of Learning:

- ☐ Mathematics
- ☐ Literacy
- ☐ Understanding of the world
- ☐ Expressive Art and Design.

The environment In Early Years plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. Our resources support child-initiated play; the children are encouraged to choose and access them independently.

We aim to provide an exciting, stimulating and challenging learning environment that offers high quality opportunities for the children to learn through play. Children can access a range of provision areas inside and also have continuous open access to our recently refurbished outdoor learning environment. These areas include our sand and water areas, mud kitchen, home corner, creative area, craft area, small world areas, reading areas, stage and gardening areas. Through exciting provision and carefully planned enhancements the highest quality Early Years experience is delivered. We aim to develop a firm foundation which will ignite the children's curiosity and desire to

learn and explore.



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citizens of our community and the wider world.'

We hope to develop independent, curious, resilient, confident and caring learners who are ready to leave Early Years and progress through our school with these vital life and learning skills from the earliest age.

We believe that play is vital in the way we learn in Early Years and we support children to progress across the curriculum through child led play. We believe children learn best by leading their own play and by taking part in play that is facilitated by adults. Adults skilfully play alongside children, ensuring progress through highly effective questioning related to individual next steps. For example, developing writing or number skills by encouraging children to write a shopping list in the role-play area, recipe in the mud kitchen or practises their number recognition by parking the cars in numbered bays.

Alongside child led play, Nursery children also take part in short, daily, adult led inputs which help them to secure skills across the areas of learning. Adults then support children to demonstrate these skills independently within the provision. These daily inputs can include listening activities, circle times, fine motor or gross motor skill practise, phonics and mathematics.

Outdoor learning

We like to learn outdoors at Whittingham! We spend lots of time in the EYFS outdoor area and also enjoy visiting forest school regularly. The children play an active role in looking after our school chickens and enjoy learning about the world around us through real life experiences.

Miss Dick is a Level 3 Forest School leader and enjoys taking the children to forest school where they learn about the environment, skills like whittling willow, play in our mud kitchen areas, make dens and enjoy campfires.

If you would like further information please do not hesitate to contact the school directly - 01665574222.

Best Wishes,

Toni Dick, Early Years Lead, Toni Marsden, Early Years Teacher and the EYFS Staff Team.



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Proud Of Our Awards & Achievements



We are really proud of our school and we believe we are "Wonderful Whittingham"

But don't take our word for it...

'The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have worked closely with your team and the wider school community in leading the school's successful transition from a first school to a primary school.' Ofsted February 2018.

"School is led positively and enthusiastically." – Parent

'Children thrive here, both academically and personally' – Parent

'You and your team have expanded pupils' horizons through wider links with universities, workplaces and the wider community to develop pupils' social skills and their awareness of possible next steps in life.' Ofsted February 2018.

'Teachers enhance pupils' learning through regular opportunities to enrich their experience through the wider curriculum. Pupils have numerous opportunities to work outdoors through programmes that develop their understanding of the environment and their local area.' Ofsted February 2018



'Parents and carers, as well as pupils, appreciate the benefits of the wider curriculum as it develops pupils' experience of the world and their personal self-confidence.' Ofsted February 2018.

2020

'You have worked and continue to work with external partners to raise pupils' understanding of equality and diversity to prepare them for life in modern Britain.' Ofsted February 2018.

'Wonderful school. The staff nurture and develop the children's academic skills as well as their social and emotional well-being.' Parent 2018

'You continue to encourage your team to be forward looking. Your school development plan has long-term goals as you explore how the curriculum and the experiences you provide will equip pupils with the skills, knowledge and personal attributes which will support them in later life...' Ofsted February 2018.

'Fun with great learning experience's' – Pupil

'A rich curriculum which enhances their knowledge and opportunities'. Parent .

'At the same time, visits to universities and involvement in science events expand their understanding of the wider world and future careers. Pupils have opportunities to develop their cultural awareness by experiencing and participating in theatrical and musical productions. As a result of accessing a comprehensive range of additional activities, pupils develop their self-confidence and their social skills' Ofsted February 2018.

'Whittingham fosters great health and well-being through a range of sports and outdoor learning.' Parent

'Staff strive to achieve the best for all pupils and enable the exceptional flourishing of individual talents. This is generated by inspirational leadership from the headteacher' – SIAMS July 2019

'The headteacher is a passionate advocate for supporting good mental health in both children and adults. She is a qualified 'Thrive' practitioner and has put effective strategies in place to support pupils' mental health'. SIAMS July 2019

'As a parent relatively new to school and the local area I am amazed by the opportunities that the children experience! From singing at The Sage in Gateshead, to cooking and using tools in your Forest School area, running on a Daily Mile Track with Laura Weightman and playing rugby with professional rugby players on your amazing MUGA. Keep up the good work everyone at Whittingham, we cannot wait to see what you have planned for the children next!' Parent 2019.

'Teachers enhance pupils' learning through regular opportunities to enrich their experience through the wider curriculum. Pupils have numerous opportunities to work outdoors through programmes that develop their understanding of the environment and their local area.' Ofsted February 2018



2020

'The family feel that prevailed when Whittingham was a First School has continued but as a Primary School things are even better. Teachers work hard to prepare our children for Secondary School and for life.' – Parent 2018

'The staff are an inspiration to the children and their hard work does not go un-noticed' - Parent 2019

'Pupils regard school as being a big family and as a result behaviour is exemplary and relationships between pupils are supportive and loving'. SIAMS July 2019

'Staff feel supported and listened to and appreciate how they are an intrinsic part of the school community.' SIAMS July 2019.

'Initiatives with Stonewall and Show Racism the Red Card are interwoven within the RE curriculum. This enhances pupils' understanding of injustice and what life can be like in the wider community, fostering a sense of aspiration and resilience'. SIAMS July 2019

'My children flourish at this school.' Parent 2019

'School leadership recognises both the benefits and challenges that living in a rural community can pose. The school works proactively with the local community to support the '#iwill' campaign designed to involve young people in social action to make a difference to their communities.' SIAMS July 2019

'With the strong and steady grounding that Whittingham gave my child, she is now able to step forwards and embrace new challenges with confidence'. Parent 2020