



# THE WHITSTABLE SCHOOL

Prospectus  
2020 – 2021



Learn Locally,  
Think Globally



# WELCOME

I am delighted to announce that The Whitstable School continues on its journey as a good to outstanding school as part of the successful Swale Academies Trust. We are excited about our next phase of development and invite you to see our new, purposeful open spaces. These include the Atrium Arts space, the Vox Pop debating chamber, our careers hub and pupil conference area.

As we begin this new academic year there are plenty of reasons for pupils and staff to feel proud of their school. In 2019, results showed that all pupils made good progress and we were the highest performing high school in the district. 100% of our grammar stream achieved grades 9-4.

The Whitstable School's mission statement of 'Learn Locally, Think Globally' is at the core of all we do, making sure it is the first secondary school of choice for parents in the area. We are delighted to join schools from around the world as an International Baccalaureate school providing a world-class education for our pupils who acquire the core knowledge and skills they need to be confident, useful members of society. We recognise that curiosity, creativity and hard work form building blocks for pupil progress and deep learning. We also uphold that:

- the arts are at the heart of the school's success,
- creativity is as tangible and vital in the science lab as it is in the dance studio,
- creativity is a key driver in raising wellbeing,
- we have a knowledge based curriculum with an oracy focus.



“Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and around the school.” Ofsted report

“Leaders ensure that pupils have opportunities to develop their leadership and self-presentation skills.”

Ofsted report,  
March 2018

The Whitstable School’s curriculum is designed to flexibly meet the needs of today’s pupils and help them thrive amidst the challenges and opportunities of tomorrow’s world. As a result, at the end of Year 8 pupils are given an element of choice in their curriculum, choosing from creative arts, performing arts, sports science, technology and ICT.

Achievement in all subjects is monitored closely, ensuring aspirational but realistic targets are set for each learner. The targets are shared and the journey towards achievement is celebrated throughout the school community. Pupils play a central role in shaping the school by leading focus groups, acting as mentor and giving feedback to staff on what works well.

We broaden horizons by competing in Trust wide events, such as, debating, art exhibitions, sports competitions, dance, Shakespeare Festival and STEM activities. Mutual respect permeates the school and relationships between staff and pupils are positive. A mentor meets your child every day and delivers a programme that supports their wellbeing.

I hope that this prospectus gives you a flavour of our strong and supportive community. I am confident that TWS has much to offer your child. This is, first and foremost, a place where every pupil is given the support they need to achieve beyond expectations.

The best way to discover what life is like at the school is to visit us and speak with both staff and pupils. I look forward to welcoming you here soon.



Mrs. Ana Gibson, Headteacher

Oli is a talented 'all-rounder' who has enjoyed the broad curriculum and the new challenges of Year 7. A member of the debating team, Oli took part in the Swale Academies Trust 'Big Debate', sparring with much older pupils about the violence in computer games, Brexit and the Kent Test. He has immersed himself in the arts and was a key member of the Buggy Malone summer play. A confident speaker, Oli introduced prospective parents to the school after being with us for just a term.

Working hard, Oli is a member of The Whitstable School's grammar stream and has been rewarded by becoming a Scholar. He feels the pace and challenge have helped him to focus and progress. He has enjoyed being in a science lab and finding out about the elements, especially the experiments which help him remember what he has learnt. He really enjoys creative writing and has taken part in one of the 'University Day Creative Writing Workshops.'



*"I believe that the school is suited for every student and you'll get lots of help. You have so much fun, even when you are learning."*



# LEARN LOCALLY, THINK GLOBALLY

The Whitstable School is a small school where we know our pupils very well. As the local choice in Whitstable, we pride ourselves on setting high standards for all our pupils and supporting them to achieve beyond expectation.

Knowledge is at the centre of our school pedagogy and practice. Knowledge organisers are used to give pupils the grounding they need as a foundation for deeper learning. These are shared in class, used as homework and can be found on our website. Once pupils have knowledge they are challenged to make connections, elaborate upon ideas and express eloquently their views and understanding. Using modern, research based teaching and learning techniques; pupils are guided through phases of learning to ensure that knowledge is secure.

“My child couldn't be happier at the school and is thriving both emotionally and academically.”

Parent of a child in Year 8

## WE OFFER

- A small school 'feel' where we know our pupils well,
- A challenging, academic support system monitored by Progress Leaders for each Key Stage,
- Innovative teaching across all subjects with a daily focus on the core subjects,
- A calm, orderly and well-structured learning environment during lessons and during breaks,
- Teachers and pupils display our 'On Track' values,
- Fantastic learning environments and new facilities to support a broad and balanced curriculum,
- Opportunities for student leadership, prefects, subject ambassadors, scholars and pupil parliament that make a real difference to the school.

Harvey joined the school in Year 9 and says he felt immediately welcomed here as staff and pupils were so friendly and approachable. He is a talented performer, taking the main part in the school's summer play, Buggy Malone. He enjoys playing football for the school team. Harvey recognises opportunities to practise leadership skills and has taken part in exhibitions, showcasing his acting talents.



*'There are so many opportunities outside of lessons and teachers go the extra mile to help you'.*



# TRANSITION

A pupil's life at The Whitstable School will be very different from their experience in primary school. We aim to offer a smooth and supportive transition for both the pupil and parent/carer.

“I spent a week at the school and enjoyed all the different lessons. I didn't want to go back to my primary school.”

Year 6 pupil

Open mornings offer an opportunity for parents and pupils to visit the school on a normal working day. These events give you the opportunity to see the school as it truly is and gain your first insight into the culture and ethos we offer. During October, we host our open evening. Here, senior leaders and pupils are on hand to guide you through the exciting and diverse learning opportunities that we offer. Current pupils will be available to discuss and share their experiences of The Whitstable School. There is nothing better than hearing it from the horse's mouth!

Near the end of the summer term, we will invite Year 6 pupils to spend four days with us at school. They will receive a full induction programme designed to familiarise them with the school and our expectations. We will challenge them to put learning first and know they will find the experience fun and stimulating. Pupils will meet their mentor group and be given time and opportunity to establish new friendships. They will follow a version of their timetable and experience a wide range of new subjects.

Early in Year 7 there is a settling in evening where you will have an opportunity to meet with your child's mentor and the Year 7 Progress Leader.



Faye is one of our gifted and talented pupils who has developed her technique and performance in GCSE dance. She has enjoyed school trips to see ballets at Covent Garden and is a regular performer in the school's exhibitions. Faye, who trains with The Royal Ballet School says *'My love of dance has been recognised by the school and my dance teacher has been really supportive of the training and work I do outside of school'*. Keen to support other pupils, Faye trained as a Year 10 reading buddy and has made a difference to a younger person's life by reading regularly with them.



# CURRICULUM

At The Whitstable School, we strive for academic excellence through an enquiry and knowledge-based curriculum. We work hard to ensure our curriculum meets the needs of our changing world. Pupils are given opportunities to be their best and we seek to give them the widest range of learning experiences. The essential core skills of literacy and numeracy are developed daily through English and maths lessons. We were praised by Ofsted, who said;

*'The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils also benefit from opportunities to develop their skills and interests outside lessons. Leaders are understandably proud of the school's provision for, and outcomes in, creative arts'* (Ofsted report, March 2018)

- we ensure all pupils feel confident and happy in school, finding their area of excellence.

Subject Leaders are responsible for each department and they are able to apply their specialist knowledge to provide a curriculum that supports progress and delivers challenge. Subject Leaders are also responsible for the progress and attainment of the pupils in their department. They will deploy a wide range of intervention strategies to embed learning and ensure progress.

In Years 7 and 8, we offer a wide curriculum. In Year 9, a further emphasis is placed upon the core subjects, complemented with Ebacc subject opportunities (languages, history or geography). Year 9 also introduces an element of curriculum choice for our pupils who can choose foundation subjects to provide engagement and broaden their horizons. These choices can be taken forward to Key Stage 4 giving pupils a head start on their examination subjects.

“In the last two years we have had much more confidence in the leadership of the school and my grandchildren have been more focussed, successful and content.”

Grandparent of  
Year 12 and  
Year 9 pupils

Millie chose to showcase her artistic talents in her successful application to the Da Vinci grammar stream. She has been able to develop her sporting skills, particularly athletics and netball. She is proud to have been awarded full colours and the Year 7 'Contribution to School Life' prize at the annual Awards Evening.

She believes the teachers are friendly and fun to be taught by. *'There are more opportunities to try new things outside of lessons as well as using the science equipment or the sewing machines in textiles.'*



# ACHIEVEMENT

The advantage of a small school is that we are able to focus on the individual. Through accurate setting in each subject area, pupils are given the best possible chance of success. Frequent teacher assessment and data analysis are used to identify a need and provide intervention to ensure progress for all pupils.

Progress Leaders make sure every child makes progress in their learning. Our aim, by putting learning first, is to ensure that all pupils make the best possible progress from their individual start points. We set challenging targets designed to raise aspirations and enhance ambition.

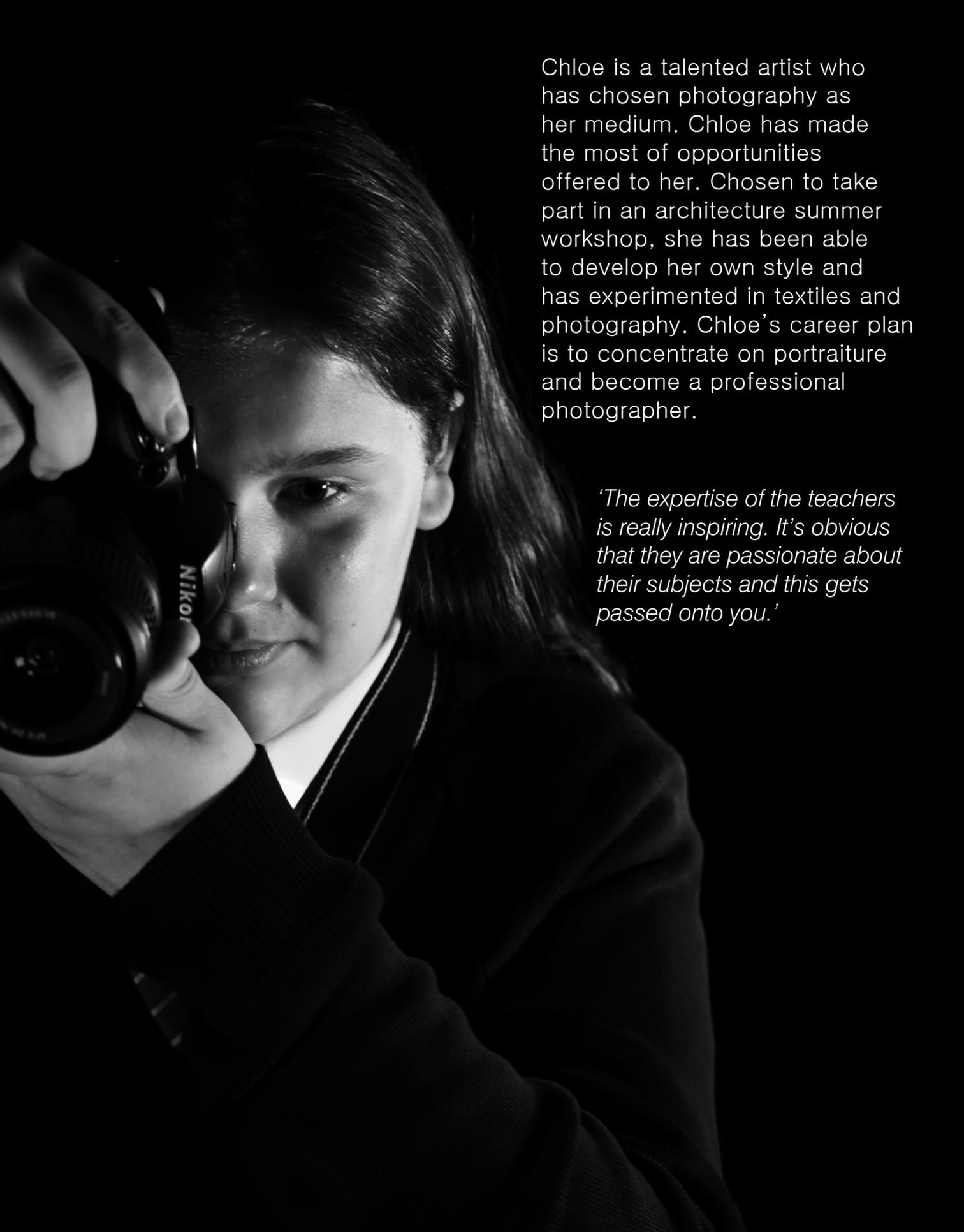
Frequent assessment of class work leads to improvements that enhance literacy and numeracy, sets high standards and removes misconceptions. Pupils use 'green ink' to evidence their crafting and redrafting of written work.

The Progress Leaders, responsible for pupil progress, identify additional opportunities for pupils to achieve. These may be out of hours learning before or after school, support sessions during mentor time or additional Saturday school sessions.

# SIXTH FORM

The Whitstable School is proud to be recognised as an IB World School. This allows us to be able to offer the IB Career Programme (IBCP), which is an internationally recognised qualification that provides an innovative educational framework for pupils. It incorporates the vision and educational principles of the IB into a unique programme specifically tailored for pupils who wish to engage in career-related learning. IBCP pupils will be able to engage with a challenging programme of study that genuinely interests them while gaining transferable and lifelong skills in applied knowledge, critical thinking, communication, and cross-cultural engagement. They are well prepared to succeed at institutions of higher learning and employment.

The IBCP is a two-year qualification package designed for students aged 16–19. This is available to all pupils in the sixth form to study on the IBCP which offers an exciting package of Level 3 courses that will develop well rounded, confident and capable individuals ready to move on to Higher Education, Further Education or employment with training. The IBCP allows students to combine a Level 3 vocational BTEC qualification with two academic IB diploma subjects. A 'core' programme that builds a broad skill set and provides opportunities for community projects underpins this. In addition to the IBCP we also offer A levels and BTEC in a variety of subjects.



Chloe is a talented artist who has chosen photography as her medium. Chloe has made the most of opportunities offered to her. Chosen to take part in an architecture summer workshop, she has been able to develop her own style and has experimented in textiles and photography. Chloe's career plan is to concentrate on portraiture and become a professional photographer.

*'The expertise of the teachers is really inspiring. It's obvious that they are passionate about their subjects and this gets passed onto you.'*

# EXTRA-CURRICULAR

Although our focus will always be on putting learning first, we endeavour to develop the full academic, creative and sporting talents of our pupils. We provide a wide range of opportunities beyond the classroom that enrich pupils' lives and their enjoyment of school. There are frequent opportunities to participate in performing arts, debating and science clubs as examples. We are passionate in ensuring a pupil's entitlement to a wealth of enriching experiences such as participating in an exhibition, listening to an outside speaker as part of our 'An Audience With' series, taking on a leadership role, participating in an architecture workshop with Kent Institute of Art and Design or an animation day with a Marvel professional, visiting our local theatre or going to the West End to see Matilda, taking part in a Royal Shakespeare play in Stratford upon Avon or a dance show at The Marlowe. Recent productions have included Cinderella, Romeo and Juliet, Holst's Planets Dance Show, Julius Caesar and Bugsy Malone.

Pupils' work is celebrated throughout the school, particularly in our Atrium arts space. The Whitstable School has worked alongside the Turner Contemporary and The Marlowe Theatre as part of our Artsmark Gold Award.

At The Whitstable School, we have outstanding, modern facilities. Whether your child wishes to be centre stage in our theatre, creative in the arts, ascending the climbing wall or scoring the winning goal on the all-weather pitch we have the facilities to match their ambitions. Being at school is not all about the classroom. Here we are able to offer a vast range of clubs, activities, trips and challenges. We are a Duke of Edinburgh Award centre and encourage all of year 9 to participate. Whatever your child's skill, talent or passion they are bound to find something that helps them get the best out of their time at The Whitstable School.

# EXHIBITIONS

At The Whitstable School, we are unique in offering termly exhibitions. Exhibitions are pupil led showcases of the learning achieved across the subject areas. Pupils are invited to develop and demonstrate their oracy skills in front of parents and invited special guests. The termly exhibitions are an outstanding way of sharing, celebrating and articulating pupils' work.

“Ever since I came here my grades have soared and so have my hopes for my future achievement.”  
Year 11 pupil





Ellis embodies all that we value at The Whitstable School. He feels that his achievement this year is that he has been the best he can be. With excellent attendance and punctuality, Ellis always completes homework and strives to do his best in lessons. Ellis has loved doing 'real' science in the lab, saying:

*"The science labs are amazing. Sometimes I have felt like I am at Hogwarts doing amazing demos and experiments."*

“Pupils also benefit from opportunities to develop their skills and interests outside lessons.”

Ofsted report



## PASTORAL

Our strong pastoral ethos ensures that every pupil is well cared for and develops as an individual. We actively encourage self-discipline, respect and confidence in our pupils as we believe these qualities are essential for a fully successful life.

Each pupil is placed into one of our two houses, Victory or Endeavour (both named after famous ships to reflect our location). This house system provides pupils with the pastoral support, academic challenge and sense of belonging that are essential in developing our pupils into young adults. Pupils feel a sense of pride in their house and are given opportunities to represent them in competitions from sport, drama, music and academic work. Within the house system, pupils are in small mentor groups and meet daily to follow a tailored programme which develops them beyond the classroom. All members of staff (including the Senior Leadership Team and Headteacher) are mentors.

Consistently high expectations are embedded throughout the school and pupils are encouraged to assume positions of leadership and responsibility during their time with us. Ofsted noted that ‘pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and around the school. They are polite to their teachers and to visitors. Pupils are punctual to lessons and they keep their site free of litter. They wear their uniforms smartly and are proud of their school’. We actively encourage positive behaviour for learning through our ‘On Track’ systems.

## REWARDS

We think it is important that pupils who work hard, try their best and are good citizens of the school are rewarded. Teachers give academic and effort points which are celebrated regularly in assemblies. Postcards home and positive ‘phone calls are actively encouraged and we believe this positive feedback adds to the well-being of both staff and child.



Amelia is a subject ambassador and has made the most of this leadership opportunity by liaising with visitors and supporting her department during open evening. She is proud of her progress in the school, saying *'The school has given me opportunities to be open minded and creative so I have grown as a person from primary school'*.

Performing as Banquo at Dover Castle and as The Nurse in Romeo and Juliet in Stratford, Amelia is a talented actor who has found performing Shakespeare a challenge which has allowed her to build her confidence.



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