



Swale
ACADEMIES
TRUST

PROSPECTUS



The
Whitstable
School



MR A HOLMES
HEADTEACHER
BA (Hons), MA, NPQH

WARM WELCOME

Welcome to the Whitstable School, the highest performing non-selective school within the district recently graded Good in all areas by Ofsted in 2024.

The Whitstable School is a passionate, purposeful and progressive place to study: our pupils foster a deep love for learning and continually strive to reach their full potential.

As part of the highly successful Swale Academies Trust, we offer an excellent education for our pupils, promoting enjoyment of academic enquiry and debate. We recognise that curiosity, creativity and hard work form the building blocks for pupil progress.

We take immense pride in our outstanding academic achievements. Our students consistently excel across all subjects, setting new benchmarks for excellence and demonstrating the effectiveness of our comprehensive educational approach. Year after year, our students achieve top grades, with a significant number gaining the highest possible marks.

The majority of our students leave achieving the EBACC, having studied a language in addition to science and humanities and we have the highest GCSE results in the district for a non-selective school. Our students frequently win awards in various academic competitions such as science fairs, performance contests and maths challenges all showcasing their knowledge, creativity and problem-solving skills.

We believe every student has the potential to achieve greatness and we are committed to providing an environment that nurtures their talents and supports their academic journey.

Our proven track record of exceptional academic results and our unwavering commitment to student development ensures that every student not only meets their potential, but exceeds it.

“Academic excellence is not just a goal; it’s a standard.”
- Mr.Holmes, Headteacher





OUR VALUES

We intend for every student to leave as a confident, principled, respectful individual with exceptional exam results.

Our **TRACK** values of **Tolerance, Resilience, Achievement, Courtesy** and **Knowledge** are embedded throughout the school and embraced by pupils and staff. Pupils feel valued, safe and happy. They are supported pastorally by a **TRACK** mentor and a pastoral manager.

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 successful life.

We teach personal development by examining a range of different areas in order to enlighten students about the ever-changing world. This subject is designed to hone life skills which will support our students to become confident adults.

Our teaching pedagogy promotes adaptive teaching strategies in order to meet the needs of all learners, including any SEND support. We think it is important that pupils who work hard, try their best and are good citizens of the school are rewarded.

Teachers give **TRACK** points which can be used to purchase items in our reward shop and we celebrate achievement in weekly assemblies. Students are able to showcase their work to the headteacher for an entry into the book of excellence and to be invited to a special reward lunch.

Postcards and positive phone calls home are actively encouraged and we believe this positive feedback adds to the well-being of both staff and children.

Our excellent pastoral and safeguarding care is at the heart of our commitment to each student's well-being and success. Every student is assigned a dedicated pastoral manager who provides daily support, ensuring that students feel cared for and understood throughout their school experience. In addition, students meet weekly with their **TRACK** mentor, who offers personalised guidance and support, helping them navigate both academic and personal challenges. Overseeing this comprehensive support network is the Head of Year, who closely monitors each student's progress and overall well-being, ensuring that their needs are met both in and out of the classroom.

Our commitment to safeguarding extends beyond the school day, with a dedicated team focused on ensuring the safety and security of our students.

This includes our Community Liaison Support Worker, who helps bridge the gap between school and home, providing additional support and resources to students and their families.

Through this robust and attentive system, we ensure that every student is supported, safe, and empowered to thrive.

We have a dedicated Special Educational Needs & disabilities team consisting of a SEND coordinator and a small team of Teaching Assistants who support students. While we do not have a Specialist Resource Provision (SRP), we take great pride in the way our mainstream teachers are trained to support students with a variety of needs.

"As a parent, I am incredibly impressed by the strong values upheld at the school. The emphasis on respect, kindness, and responsibility is evident in everything they do."

-Year 8 Parent





TRANSITION

Our school provides an exceptional transition experience from primary to secondary education, designed to ensure that every student feels supported, confident and prepared for the next stage of their academic journey.

From the outset, we engage with both students and their families through an extensive orientation program that includes school tours, information sessions and meet-the-teacher events. These initiatives help students familiarise themselves with the new environment, meet key staff members and understand the academic expectations of secondary school.

Additionally, we offer taster days where students can participate in secondary-level classes and activities, helping to ease any anxieties and build excitement for the move. To further support a seamless transition, we place a strong emphasis on individual care and attention.

Each student is paired with a dedicated transition mentor who guides them through their first year, ensuring they receive personalised academic and pastoral support. We also establish strong links with primary schools to understand each student's strengths, needs, and learning styles, enabling us to tailor our approach and ensure continuity in their education. Through a combination of thoughtful preparation, personalised support and ongoing communication, we create an enriching and smooth transition experience that sets students up for success in their secondary education.

During October, we host our open events. Here, senior leaders and pupils are available to talk through the exciting and diverse learning opportunities that we offer. At our Open Evening, current pupils will be available to 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 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.

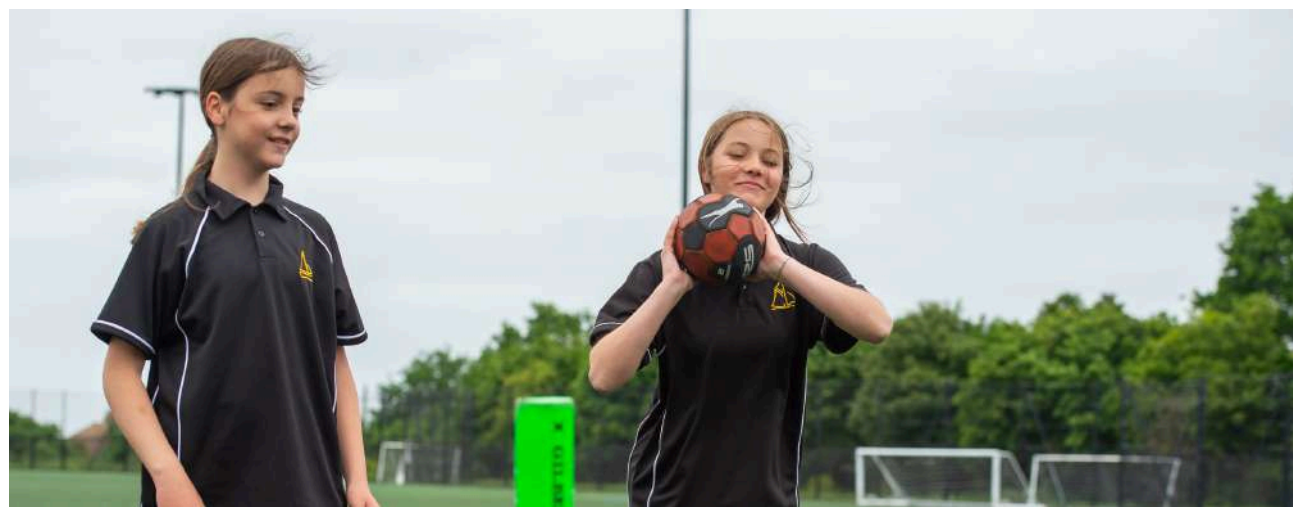
Early in Year 7 there is a settling in evening where you will have an opportunity to meet with mentors and the Year 7 Head of Year.

Choosing to become a part of our community at The Whitstable School is a significant step and we dedicate ourselves to ensuring this transition is as enriching and positive as possible.

"The transition to Year 7 was amazing- the teachers and older students made me feel welcome right away, and quickly felt like I belonged. "

-Year 7 Student





PATHWAYS

Unlock your full potential with the TWS Grammar Stream Pathway, program designed to challenge and inspire our most academically gifted students.

This pathway provides a rigorous and enriching educational experience, fostering intellectual growth and preparing students for success in higher education and beyond. The Pathway offers an accelerated curriculum that covers advanced topics and concepts. Students engage in a faster-paced learning environment that encourages deep understanding and critical thinking.

Students benefit from the expertise of academic mentors during their **TRACK** periods to provide individualised attention and mentorship to support each student's unique learning journey. Students participate in leadership workshops, community service projects, and extracurricular activities that cultivate confidence, responsibility, and teamwork designed to prepare students for admission to top-tier universities.

Joining our Grammar Stream Pathway, it's more than just a program; it's a journey of intellectual discovery and personal development.

Our **STAGE** and **STEM** Academy curriculum pathways offer an extraordinary opportunity for students to dive deeper into their passions, whether they are budding performers or future innovators. These pathways provide additional lessons and students stay after school once a week to work on exciting, hands-on projects that go beyond the standard curriculum. Whether your child is interested in the arts or in science and technology, these programs are designed to ignite their curiosity, creativity and ambition.

Students engage with real-world challenges, collaborating on projects that develop their skills and stretch their imaginations. They also have the unique chance to meet and learn from industry professionals. This includes outside business experts and performance artists, who share their knowledge and experience, inspiring students to pursue their dreams. Whether they are performing on stage or presenting a cutting-edge **STEM** project, your child will gain invaluable experience and a sense of accomplishment.

These pathways not only enhance their academic and creative skills but also help them develop critical life skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and effective communication. Choosing the **STAGE** or **STEM** pathway means giving your child the opportunity to thrive in an environment that nurtures their talents and prepares them for a bright future.

"The grammar stream has really challenged me academically, and I've seen huge progress in my learning since joining."

-Year 11 Student





STEM ACADEMY

- Engage in hands-on, project-based learning in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
- Develop critical problem-solving skills and explore future career opportunities.
- Participate in extra-curricular projects and competitions.

STAGE ACADEMY

- Immerse in performing arts with specialized lessons in drama, music, and dance.
- Perform in school productions and showcases.
- Collaborate with experienced professionals and peers to hone your craft.



OUR CURRICULUM

At The Whitstable School, we strive for academic excellence through a creative, dynamic and captivating 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 have a strong creative curriculum that fosters innovation and critical thinking by integrating artistic and academic disciplines, encouraging students to explore and express their ideas in diverse ways. It cultivates a love for learning by making education more engaging and relevant, allowing students to make connections across different subjects and develop a deeper understanding of the world around them.

At Key Stage 3 students can study subjects like Fine Art, Textiles, Photography, and Dance which are often only offered at GCSE for most schools. We want all students to have the chance to discover and develop their unique talents. These subjects provide creative outlets and help build important skills such as problem-solving, self-expression, and collaboration. Early exposure to a variety of disciplines also broadens students' perspectives and can guide them toward future passions and careers.

In Years 10 and 11, they continue to study core curriculum subjects: English literature and language, maths, statistics, science, Spanish and geography or history alongside their optional choices totaling 10 GCSEs. Pupils also have religious studies, physical education and personal development lesson each week. GCSE option subjects include visual arts (textiles, photography and fine art), music, drama, dance, construction, health and social care, sport, design technology, food technology, business, computer science, citizenship, ethics & philosophy and many more.

Our curriculum is designed to incorporate career education at every stage, helping your child make informed choices about their future. By connecting their learning to real-world opportunities, we equip students with the skills and confidence they need to thrive in today's ever-evolving job market. Give your child the advantage of a curriculum that not only educates but also inspires them to pursue their passions with purpose.

*“There are high expectations for what every pupil in this school can achieve.”
- Ofsted 2024*





SPECIAL APTITUDE

At The Whitstable School creativity is central to our school curriculum and extra curricular provision.

At the Whitstable we offer 10% of our admission places, each year, to children who demonstrate an aptitude for Music, Drama, Dance or Art & Design. Pupils will hone their skills under the tutelage of our excellent teachers, using our state of the art facilities and always learning and developing in a safe and supportive environment.

Pupils are able to benefit from our extensive links with the performing arts industry both locally and nationally and are able to benefit from visiting artists, offering masterclasses and outstanding creative opportunities. Pupils are offered numerous opportunities to attend arts based performances, productions, educational visits, residential and international visits.

Any parents or carers who have a child in Year 6 can apply for a Special Aptitude place at The Whitstable School, providing that their child can demonstrate an aptitude for one of the four subjects.

Pupils who wish to be considered should fill out the Local Authority's 'Common Application Form', in addition to the 'Supplementary Information Form' which can be found on our website under Admissions.

Applicants are invited to an assessment event during November and take part in a workshop selection process in their chosen discipline

During our admissions process we encourage prospective pupils and parents to book a tour to explore our facilities and meet our faculty.

Open evenings and events take place in October and give the opportunity to hear from the Headteacher, meet staff and current pupils, tour the school facilities and visit subject classes.

To book a place on one of our open morning tours please contact main reception on 01227 931300 or email tw_admin@swale.at

"As a parent, I was so impressed with how smoothly the transition to Year 7 was handled—the school's support made my child feel confident and excited about starting secondary school."

- Year 7 Parent





OUR COMMUNITY

We celebrate the voices of our parents and students through a variety of initiatives, designed to foster active participation and collaboration.

Our Curriculum Evenings, open day tours and weekly newsletter keep families informed and engaged with our educational programs. The Parents' Forum and headteacher review evenings provide platforms for sharing feedback and suggestions, while our student parliament and community events ensure that everyone has a voice in shaping our school life. The Whitstable School values and incorporates the perspectives of our community to continuously enhance our educational experience.

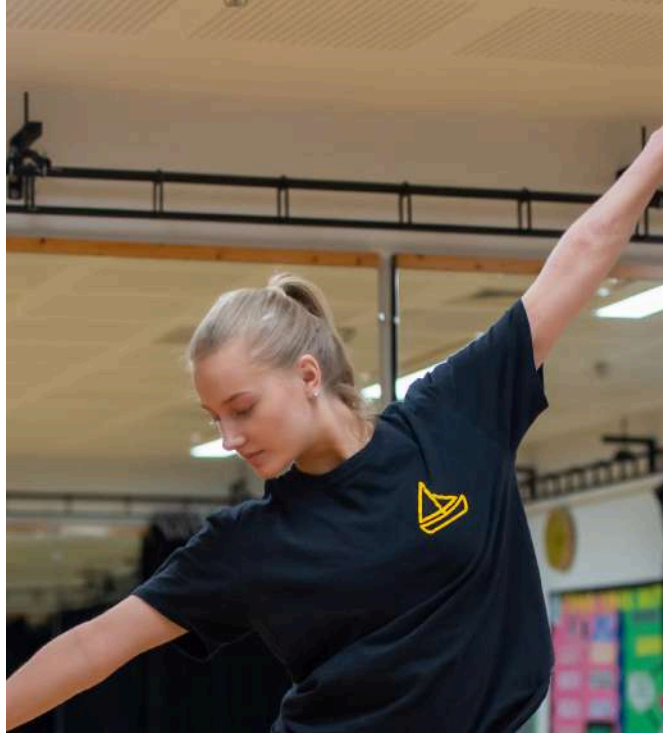
Each pupil is placed into one of our two houses. This house system provides the pastoral support, academic challenge and sense of belonging that are essential in developing our pupils into young adults. Pupils feel a sense of pride in their house and are given opportunities to represent them in competitions from sport, drama, music and academic work. This friendly rivalry provides a sense of belonging.

Within the house system, pupils are in small mentor groups and they will meet daily to follow a tailored programme which develops them beyond the classroom. 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.

Our house system fosters a sense of community, belonging, and healthy competition within the school. By organising students into one of two houses it encourages camaraderie, leadership, and teamwork across different age groups. House activities, such as sports, academic challenges, and charity events, enhance school spirit and provide students with opportunities to develop interpersonal skills and resilience.

*"It's reassuring to know that my child is part of a community that truly cares about character development as much as academic success."
- Year 10 Parent*





PROGRESS AND OPPORTUNITIES

At our school, we are committed to challenging all pupils and ensuring they make exceptional progress by providing a tailored, high-quality education that meets individual needs.

We use data-driven assessments to identify each student's strengths and areas for development, allowing us to set ambitious yet achievable targets. Our differentiated teaching strategies and personalised learning plans ensure that every pupil is engaged and stretched, regardless of their starting point. Students benefit from the expertise of academic mentors during their **TRACK** periods to provide individualised attention and mentorship to support each student's unique learning journey. Furthermore, we foster a growth mindset by encouraging students to embrace challenges and view setbacks as opportunities for learning. Regular feedback and targeted interventions support continuous progress, while enrichment programs and extracurricular activities provide additional avenues for students to excel academically and personally. We want our pupils to look beyond the classroom and engage with the community and all it has to offer.

Located in Whitstable, a flourishing artistic town with good links to London ensures we can offer experiences and opportunities that develop our pupils' resilience and creativity, opening their minds to opportunities around them.

Swale Academies Trust provides an extensive range of cross-school activities for pupils, from the literary 'Shakesfest' to the dance competition 'Swale Dance Fever' and many more. Representing the school at these events gives pupils a sense of achievement and pride.

We are proud of our Artsmark status and have a strong creative arts department, we offer many opportunities to showcase pupils' work including exhibitions and local performances.

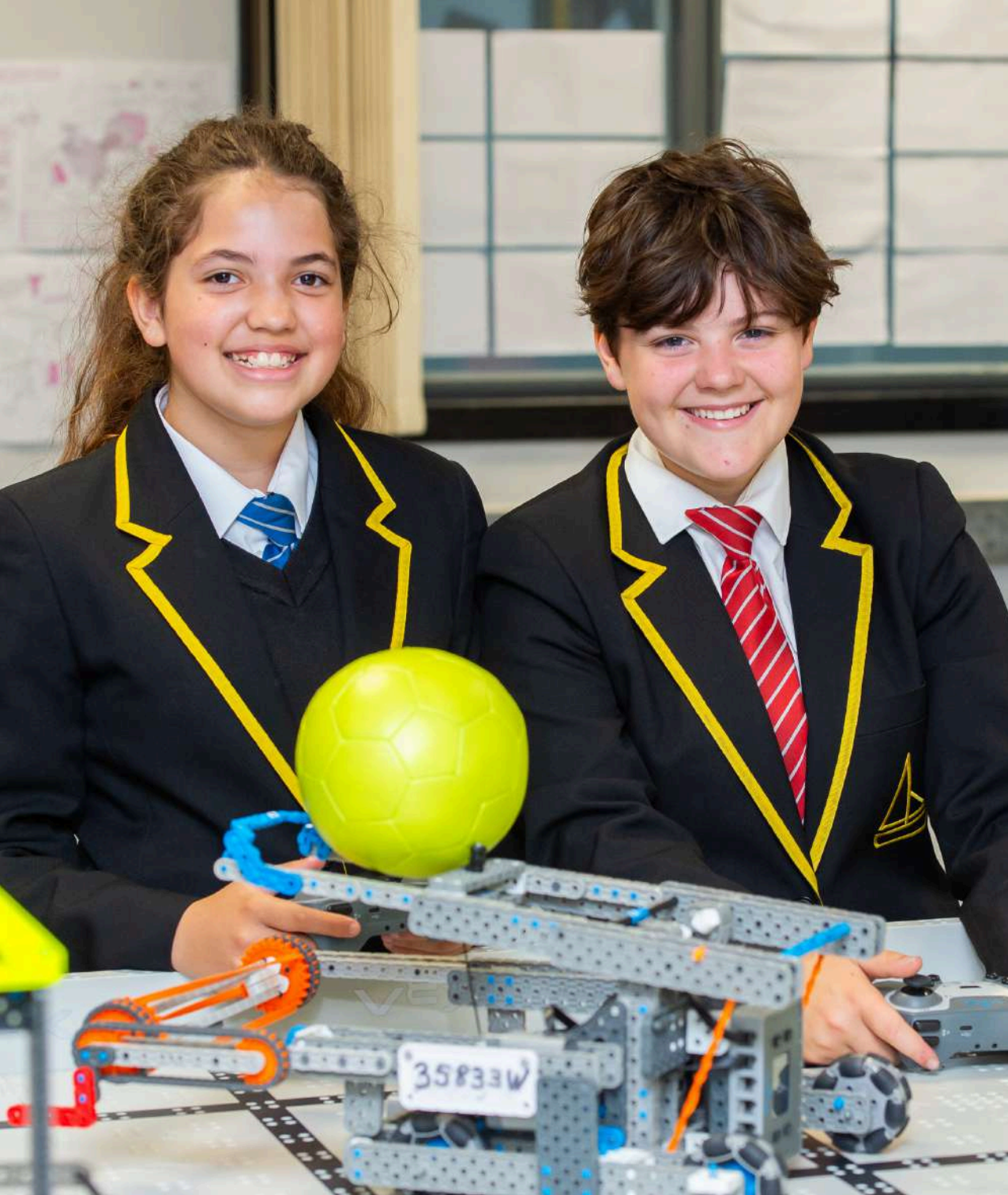
We have a really exciting programme called 'Audience with . . .' that invites interesting people to speak to our pupils. We have had Hollywood actors, World War II veterans, Ice Maiden explorers and famous authors.

There is a wide range of opportunities beyond the classroom with our extra curricular programme. There are clubs offered like climbing, art club, STEM club, dance companies, chess club, drama rehearsals, music bands, debating and history club.

We also compete in district competitions in all the mainstream sports. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is well established and starts from Year 9. 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. Outside of school we have visits to theatres, museums, exhibitions and universities to help pupils to expand their knowledge of the wider world.

*"The school ensures all pupils feel confident and happy in school, finding their area of excellence."
- Ofsted 2024*





MOVING UP AND MOVING ON

Our younger years aspire to join our highly successful sixth form where we encourage academic excellence and personal growth to shape the leaders of tomorrow.

We prepare our students for employment and further study by having initiative, confidence and compassion.

We offer a unique approach in that we build our curriculum around our students. We provide a full range of both vocational and academic courses, including traditional A-levels and Level 3 vocational qualifications. We have the highest expectations for our students, and place the utmost importance on supporting them to meet their full potential.

We have a clear commitment to the personal development and well-being of each student led through experiential learning supported by a dedicated pastoral team. There is a real sense of camaraderie and community in sixth form with a dedicated study space and area of the school. Students are excellent role models for younger pupils and support the lower school in many leadership roles.

Our students have gone on to study at Universities across the country, gain employment in a range of industries including the public services and secure coveted apprenticeships.

Our sixth form also offers The Whitstable Town Football Academy in partnership with Football Futures. This is a full time educational programme which provides students with the opportunity to access professional standard football training alongside a structured educational route to meet their needs.

Students have the opportunity to complete qualifications, A Levels, L3 vocational and GCSE resits, as well as the opportunity to access football coaching with UEFA qualified coaches who have both professional and semi professional club connections.

Students on the programme will train around 8 hours a week at the Whitstable Town Football Club and then will be based at The Whitstable School for all studies.

This pathway equips students with the confidence and qualifications needed to progress into Level 3 educational, apprenticeship or employment pathways.

This exciting one year pathway aims to:

- Equip students with English and Maths skills required for Level 3 study, apprenticeships and employability
- Build resilience, team work skills and communication through our enrichment programme
- Boost students digital skills ready for the world of work or further study

Students will also be able to complete the Duke of Edinburgh Award and a work experience placement.

*“The school has produced an ambitious and broad curriculum that runs right through to the sixth form.”
- Ofsted 2024*







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