

Wheatley Hill

Community Primary School

'Don't forget your wellies'





Alan Scarr, Headteacher, Wheatley Hill Community Primary School, says...

Wheatley Hill is a caring, inclusive school at the heart of the local community, and this is our mission statement:



"Imagine a great, ocean-going sailing ship with a strong, wooden frame and masts covered in sails towering high above the waterline. A great ship of this nature does not reside in the safety of harbours and shallow waters but faces the trials and grand adventure of the high seas."

"Our school is this ship, our staff and pupils its dedicated crew. It does not belong in the forever calm, safe waters of shore but driving forward in the search for challenge, understanding and knowledge, taking calculated risks in our pursuit of the grand adventure ahead. Our teamwork, resilience and commitment to learning support us as we move forward on our incredible journey. They say a smooth sea never made a skilled sailor."

Joel and Katie are relishing the exciting opportunities for learning provided by caring staff at Wheatley Hill Community Primary School

Lee and Jeanette Bernard live in Durham with their children, Lewis, aged 13, Joel, aged ten, and Katie, aged three.

Enjoying school

Joel is now thriving in Year 6 at Wheatley Hill, achieving his full academic potential and enjoying the many opportunities to do sports at school. His mum, Jeanette, says: "We have been thrilled with the transformation we have seen since he joined the school in Year 3 and by how much he has grown in confidence."

Good move

Joel attended the nursery at Wheatley Hill but then started at another primary school attended by his older brother. Jeanette says: "Lewis had a positive experience at the school overall, but it soon became obvious to us that Joel was struggling there and eventually we took the hard decision to move him to Wheatley Hill. When we did the tour of the school and saw their marvellous outdoor learning facilities, we knew we had done the right thing."

Challenging work

"The staff couldn't have done more to make us feel welcome and at ease. Joel settled in quickly and became friends with some of the children he remembered from nursery. He relished all the opportunities offered to him by the school and soon began to thrive. We knew he was a bright child and couldn't understand why he had been struggling academically at his old school. He started at Wheatley Hill at a disadvantage because he was behind

for his age, but staff were confident he would catch up quickly. They challenged him constantly with more advanced work and he is now exceeding expectations in all his subjects."

Science success

"He particularly likes Maths and Science and is now excelling in both subjects. He was one of the children chosen to be a Science Ambassador and attend workshops at a secondary school. He has also enjoyed going on a camping trip with the school. We were pleased the staff provided us with updates to let us know how he was getting on because they understood how we were going to feel while he was away."

Approachable staff

"Staff are always available in the morning and afternoon if you need to ask them something and the Headteacher, Mr Scarr, also makes time to have a chat with us. Every class has both a teacher and a TA and we have been amazed at how much they do to help both children and parents. Joel enjoys the many opportunities to learn outdoors, taking part in battle re-enactments and learning archery as part of the history topics they are doing."

Sports encouragement

"Joel really enjoys sport and the teachers have encouraged him to play rugby as well as football. When the school heard we were struggling to find Joel's Under-12 weekend football team somewhere to play they offered us the use of the school field. We are confident Joel is now being well prepared for secondary school and although he will be sad to leave Wheatley Hill, he is looking forward to it."

Forest School fun

Jeanette says Katie started in the nursery in September 2020 and settled in really well. "She absolutely loves going to school and would like to be able to go at the weekends as well if she could. She particularly enjoys Forest School and her teacher told me she has never seen

any child quite so excited about getting out there. She particularly loves the rope swing from the tree. Katie's teacher was there when Joel was in the nursery and Joel still remembers some of the exciting lessons they had. We can't thank the Headteacher and staff enough for everything they have done to help Joel and Katie."



Children say

Joel says: "I love all the chances to do sport at Wheatley Hill."

Katie says: "I love all my friends at school and going on the tree swing."



Welcome to the Explorers

A very warm welcome to our department. It is our privilege to start the very smallest children on their learning journey. Whether we welcome your child at age two, three or four, they are guaranteed to have a successful start to their school life. Our friendly team of staff will endeavour to make lasting bonds with the children and their families to ensure trust, open communication and that children are happy, safe and ready to learn.

An exciting curriculum

Once on their learning journey the children in our department thrive through a combination of child-initiated, adult-led and play-based learning. Children help to guide their learning experiences through sharing their interests with us. Highly trained adults use this as a stimulus for developing the children's knowledge and enhancing their learning experiences.

Play to learn

At two years old, our children join the Roseberry class, where we concentrate on developing early social skills and improving physical development. At age three, they move into the Catbells class, where we love to use language to communicate, use numbers in our play and learn much more about the wider world. At age four, they progress to Skiddaw, where we build on all of those important early skills as well as developing the ability to read, write and count.

Opportunities

The Explorers children can always be found immersed in fun and exciting learning opportunities. Through continuous provision we offer a wide range of challenges to all of our children. They really love to construct with different materials, build with real tools and bake cakes, measuring out and combining the ingredients to produce something they can be proud of.

Teaching and learning

Our three Explorers classes are taught by a highly dedicated team with a wealth of early years knowledge and experience. Our aim is to provide the children with an exciting, broad and balanced curriculum which ensures high quality talk and learning across a wide range of learning areas.

Quality first

To achieve this, we use a family group approach to provide inspiring, quality-first teaching during dedicated parts of the day where learning is engaging and active. As the children get a little older, we combine this with skill-based learning sessions, where staff scaffold early writing and number skills to ensure rapid progression and effective challenge for all our children.

Trips, visits and events

There is adventure and excitement every day when you are an Explorer. Outdoor Education is a central part of our learning offer and the children absolutely love their weekly trip to Forest School. We explore our local environment and embrace all of the wonders that nature has to show us. Autumn walks, journey sticks and muddy puddles are just some of our favourite things to do outside. There is nothing better than sitting round the fire in our warm outdoor clothing, drinking hot chocolate and toasting marshmallows. We always have an annual parents' Forest School day and it would be lovely if you could come and join us and share in our very special learning.

An extra special event that takes place each year is our wonderful family day trip to South Shields. It's a lovely day where parents, children and staff come together to enjoy quality time and celebrate the children's successful time in our department.

Family first

We are incredibly proud of our department and all of our little Explorers. We are honoured to be part of each child's unique journey and it is our privilege to share in every moment, from the first visit, the first mark making and every success thereafter.

And even more...

We have so many adventures that it is really important for us to share them with you. Throughout the year we offer a range of opportunities for you to come into school and celebrate your child. We have regular stay and play sessions where children and adults learn together. The children are always so excited to share their learning and always grow in confidence whilst you are here. It is a pleasure to watch their beaming faces as you arrive.





Welcome to the Pioneers

Within the Pioneers we have three classes:

- Scafell
- Snowdon
- Ben Nevis

These fantastic classes consist of children in Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) together with seven members of staff (highly qualified teachers and teaching assistants) to help support us during our time in school.

An exciting curriculum

During their time in Pioneers children will explore a vast array of exciting topics including Space, Our Natural World, Australia and The Extremes, just to name a few! In our amazing classrooms they will find extensive continuous provision areas including cookery, woodwork, science and art, as well as a block area filled with small world animals, which we love!

Sensory breaks

Our department is also equipped with a wonderful Sensory Room, allowing children to access sensory breaks, movement breaks, intervention groups and quiet breakout spaces.

The great outdoors

During our Challenge Days, which happen once a week, we pull on our wellies and coats to take part in fabulous Outdoor Education sessions. We learn how to use a range of tools, read maps, navigate and cook on an open fire. As well as learning these valuable skills we also have lots of fun taking part in fun-filled adventure activities such as grass sledging, tightrope walking and zooming down huge water slides!

Teaching and learning

Within our department, all our lessons are taught in small family groups of around 12 children or less. This ensures that each child gets the support and challenge they need to build the strongest foundations in their learning across all areas of our curriculum.

Practical learning opportunities

In Pioneers, we believe that providing children with lots of practical opportunities to learn new skills is incredibly important, so half our weekly writing and maths sessions are carried out practically, using a wide range of hands-on resources. While our busy mornings consist of the quality-first teaching of reading, writing and maths, our

afternoons are much more relaxed and allow us to take part in a wide range of projects, geared around our current topics. The afternoons also enable us to partake in challenges we access independently through time in continuous provision, such as baking our own cakes or building our own models!

Trips, visits and events

The Pioneer department holds a Space Camp Sleepover within the school grounds to celebrate our Space topic. The children enjoy a range of space-themed activities before venturing out into the dark on the school field to look at the stars through a telescope. Our classes also go on a range of visits to settings outside the school including the beach, the woods, the Centre for Life and the Discovery museum, just to name a few.

Into the wild

Children in Year 2 even get the chance to visit the Lake District for an overnight camping experience in the wild.



And even more...

Every day we take part in Big Play at dinner time, pulling on wellies and waterproofs so that we can be outside come rain or shine. We choose from lots of different activities such as Forest School, mountain biking, grass sledging, team games, bouncing in the soft play tent and so much more.



Welcome to the Pathfinders

We have three classes in Pathfinders, forming the lower Key Stage 2 department:

- Mont Blanc
- Kilimanjaro
- Mount Vinson

Within the team we have a range of experienced teachers and teaching assistants who encourage our children to build their independent learning skills and show enthusiasm for the curriculum.

An exciting curriculum

The Pathfinders Team experience an exciting curriculum. We incorporate 'WOW' moments to inspire learning, such as a virtual tour of the Amazon Rainforest, boarding an in-class plane to visit Paris, and seeing erupting volcanos. We also explore and take part in many visits to our local area, such as to the Botanical Gardens and the Oriental Museum to enhance our knowledge and understanding of our topics.

Making music

We enjoy having weekly music lessons from the resident music teacher: as a class we are learning skills to play the drums and play together as a group.

Teaching and learning

Children in the Pathfinders Team are encouraged to develop themselves as independent learners. They use work systems to progress their skills and practical work to help consolidate more challenging concepts.

Hands-on fun

We enjoy hands-on learning whenever we can. In science, we share our ideas and work together in groups to explain our thinking. In the Autumn term we have fun baking in design technology, making some delicious biscuits, jam tarts and flavoured bread.

Trips, visits and events

Pathfinders children take part in regular off-site activities and residential experiences. We have Forest School sessions, Beach School and other outdoor adventure days, which have included survival Challenge Days and scaling the climbing wall. Our children also have the opportunity to go on a mini-residential to the Lake District where they work together on outdoor adventures and scale a mountain!

And even more...

In the Pathfinders Team we celebrate everyone's uniqueness. We always take time to share each other's interests and respect our differences. Every week we give out Star Awards which recognise qualities such as hard work, effort in lessons, improvements in learning, kindness to others and being a good friend. Our aim is to try our best and love our learning.





Welcome to the Trailblazers

Our Trailblazer department consists of three classes of Year 5 and Year 6 children, and we are Trailblazers because we are leaders of the school. We strive to be excellent role models to all other school departments through our positive attitudes to learning, hard work and exceptional behaviour. Our classes share their names with three high peaks across the world:

- Mount McKinley
- K2
- Mount Everest

An exciting curriculum

The Trailblazers curriculum represents the culmination of skills developed throughout our children's school journey. As a result, we are able to offer our children a wealth of exciting learning opportunities both in the classroom and in the wider world.

New skills, new opportunities

To master our use of six-figure grid references in geography we travel into the countryside so that we can navigate over the hills using maps and a compass. Being the oldest members of the school means that we are able to learn skills in rugby, netball, dance, cricket, tennis and skiing, to mention only a few. On our Challenge Days we fire up the ovens, set up our test tubes or prepare our paintbrushes when we become chefs, scientists or artists. Each of our classrooms has a set of the latest iPads which allow us to code and become the programmers of the future.

Teaching and learning

All our classes are taught by an extremely experienced team, which consists of a full-time teacher and teaching assistant. We strive to offer our children a high quality, broad and balanced learning experience. To achieve this our mornings are dedicated to fast-paced, quality-first teaching of reading, writing and maths.

Challenging children to achieve

All our lessons offer challenge and are expertly scaffolded to ensure all children can achieve. Our afternoons are given over to exploring all our foundation subjects in a relaxed and creative environment, which enables the children to immerse themselves in a technology project or a key period in history, for example.

Trips, visits and events

Outdoor Education is a pivotal part of our learning journey in Trailblazers and it takes us all over the North East to explore our beaches, carry out field work along our region's rivers, venture into the forests and mountain bike through a network of trails.

Sport and adventure

As a Trailblazer you have the opportunity to join our school football team and compete in the Peterlee District football league as well as joining our netball or cheerleading clubs. In the summer, we celebrate our annual Sports Day where you will be able to cheer on your classmates. We also offer our Adventure Activity Day, which includes activities such as rock climbing, archery and laser tag.

And even more...

Children in our Trailblazer Team have amazing residential learning experiences including the Lake District Summer Camp and annual France Ski Trip adventure. Raising aspirations for our children is paramount, so we offer the children in Trailblazers the chance to work alongside scientists from Durham University to become Science Ambassadors, join the Space Camp Team and visit other schools to promote science.



Welcome to the Climb Project

We have a specialist SEND inclusion approach that joins Special School and Mainstream teaching routes in a clear learning pathway for children with an EHCP (Education Health Care Plan). Children within the Climb Project are taught in specialist classrooms called Bases.

Special educational needs

Young people within the Climb Project receive the intensive specialist support you would expect in any quality Special School provision, whilst at the same time being offered the teaching approaches, peer integration and expansive curriculum associated with the mainstream primary experience. All young people, follow an individualised learning route that is specifically designed to meet their needs based on the outcomes of the EHCP.

Dedicated provision

The Climb Project is based at our wonderful school and we have six dedicated classrooms for pupils with more complex SEND needs. These rooms are based upon age and need, and are fully equipped with resources to meet the requirements of the children.

An exciting curriculum

The Climb Project curriculum is tailored not only to the children's needs but to their interests, too. We take into account their EHCP and SEND support plan outcomes and meet these in a vast range of ways. Forest School and Outdoor Education sessions take place in order to give our children real-life experiences in the open air.

A special learning environment

To further enhance the curriculum, the children have access to a number of learning environments including the Sensory Room, Soft Play area and Ball Pit, as well as our outdoor classroom and sensory garden.

Teaching and learning

Calming and welcoming

Each Base has a calm and welcoming atmosphere. Children have tools to support their learning such as a group table, workstations, visual timetables, task boxes and much more. Each Base has a teacher and a number of support staff, depending on individual need. This enables children who require 1-to-1 support to receive it at times during the day.

Targeted approach for every child

Teaching is delivered in several ways, in a range of environments, again to suit need. There is a huge emphasis on practical learning with a multi-sensory approach in order to get the best possible outcomes for each child. Movement breaks and sensory breaks are built into the day for those children who need it. Many therapies and interventions take place here at Wheatley Hill, such as Lego therapy, Social Stories, Socially Speaking groups, Circle of Friends, Getting Along groups, Zones of Regulation workshops and many more.

Trips, visits and events

Children in the Climb Project take part in weekly outdoor Forest School sessions, where the learning is tailored to suit our learners, and differentiated in order for them to take part. Children have been in canoes, gorge walking and hiking in the local areas. Visits and trips are planned around the topics the children are learning about. Every summer, children are invited to take part in a residential visit to the Lake District, and we also offer our annual skiing trip to France!

Specialist support

A young person working within the Climb Project will have access to:

- Occupational therapists
- Speech and language therapists
- Educational psychologists
- Outdoor Education
- Forest and Beach School
- PECS
- Makaton
- Pastoral support
- Hydrotherapy
- Rebound therapy
- Social and emotional wellbeing support
- Many other learning and support mechanisms

Our promise to your child

We are dedicated to ensuring the correct support is in place for each individual child. When children first join the Climb Project a series of assessments are carried out around the four broad areas of need: Cognition and Learning, Communication and Interaction, Physical and Sensory, and Social, Emotional and Mental Health. Following these careful assessments, a package of support is devised for each child, and the curriculum devised to suit their needs.





Outdoor Education at Wheatley Hill Community Primary School

At Wheatley Hill Community Primary School, we believe that giving pupils the opportunity to access Outdoor Education is essential in supporting the development of pupils who are ready for the challenges of real life. Every child in our school, from the two-year-olds through to Year 6, access regular outdoor learning activities. These activities are not only fun but they also encourage the children to develop communication and teamwork skills, as well as the ability to look after themselves and manage their own risks.

Less technology means greater experience

Too many children in our modern, technological age lack the opportunities to explore and thrive in the outdoor environment, whether that be in the forest, at the beach or on the side of a mountain in the French Alps.

Here at Wheatley Hill, we have a progressive Outdoor Education Curriculum that supports and develops pupils' abilities to interact with a variety of tools and challenging environments, and take part in a range of adventures under the guidance of our specialist outdoor instructors and tutors.

Key Stage 1 – Early Years Foundation Stage

Outdoor Education in the Explorer department takes place on our school site, where the children access weekly Forest School sessions in our dedicated Forest School area. This amazing site contains an enormous outdoor classroom, fire pits, rope swings and mud slides.

Embrace the elements!

At these sessions, pupils put on their waterproof suits and wellies and head out to take part in activities and tasks in all weathers. Pupils learn to use basic tools like saws, hammers and branch snips as well as learning fire safety and outdoor cookery.

Further afield

In the Pioneers department, pupils begin to explore a little further afield when they board our school mini bus each week and head to the coast for Beach School. Upon arrival at the beach, children spend time erecting our massive tipi to use as our beach classroom. The children then take part in a range of all-weather sessions exploring the coast, sea life, habitats and the local geography.

Key Stage 2

Learning in action

As the children move into the Pathfinders and Trailblazer departments, they begin to take part in weekly outdoor adventure activities such as canoeing, rock climbing and hillwalking. The children use these activities to explore science and geography in action as they learn about the Water Cycle while they canoe down the River Tees, or discover the history of the bridges of the River Tyne as they cycle along the Quayside. These real-life learning opportunities allow the children to make links between traditional classroom learning with the real experiences.

Special educational needs

Children within the Climb department are supported by their staff team to access all of the activities alongside their mainstream friends. No child with SEND is excluded from the opportunities, adventures and wonderful experiences enjoyed by their peers.

Trips, visits and events

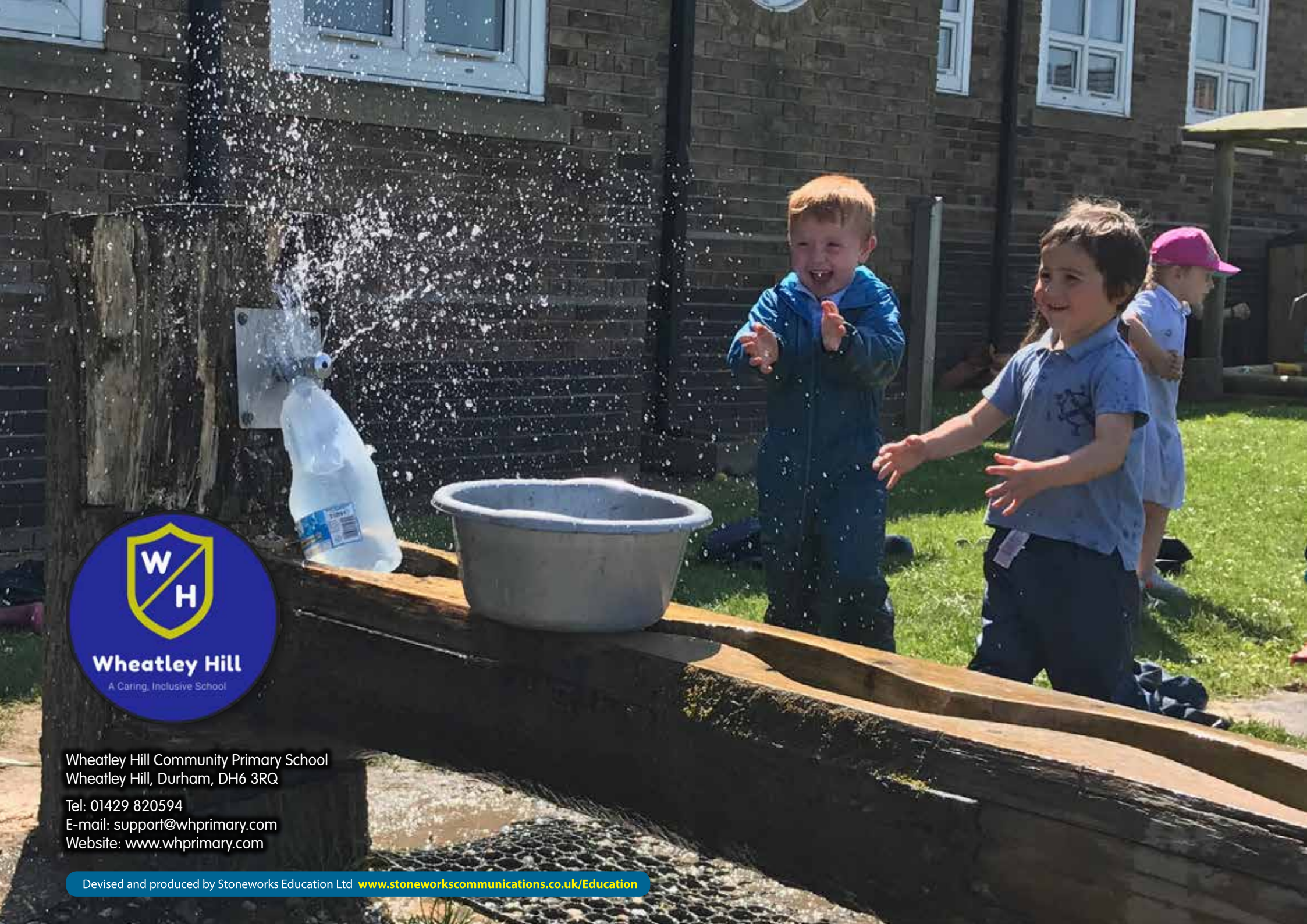
Going wild

Every year we operate a Summer Camp in Ullswater in the Lake District, where children in the Pioneers can come for an overnight experience. Those in Pathfinders can stay for three nights and take part in a range of outdoor activities including canoeing, swimming and mountain climbing. Finally, those in Trailblazers are given the opportunity to pack their rucksacks and wild camp on the mountain.

All aboard

We also have our annual ski trip to Chamonix, France, where children in the Trailblazers department can board a flight from Newcastle and jet off for a week of ski training in the French Alps.





Wheatley Hill Community Primary School
Wheatley Hill, Durham, DH6 3RQ
Tel: 01429 820594
E-mail: support@whprimary.com
Website: www.whprimary.com