



# Walkwood

Church of England  Middle School

## Handbook for parents and carers

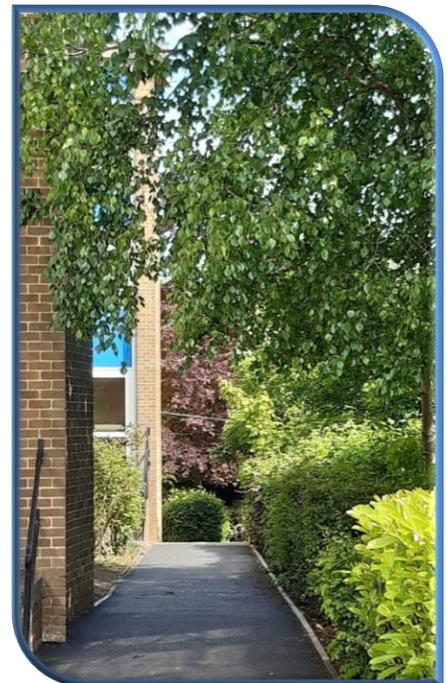
### 2023-24





**"I am God, your God, who teaches you how to live right and well. I show you what to do, where to go."**

Isaiah 48: 17



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# Welcome

- Values each individual as a unique creation in the image of God.

“God blesses those people who are like trees growing beside a stream, trees that produce fruit in season and always have leaves.”

Psalm 1: 3

- Allows each person to grow personally, socially and spiritually as they explore their God-given potentials.

“I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name.”

John 15: 16



- Delivers a broad curriculum that allows knowledge, learning skills and fruitful living to be intertwined.

We want all children attending the school will become life-long learners who are curious about the world around them and are creative in their exploits while caring for others and themselves. We seek to enable our pupils to make informed choices, becoming increasingly independent and playing their part in the community. We offer pupils a spiritual dimension that is distinctively Christian and also honours other faiths and those people who profess no faith.

## School Values

f	friendliness	We treat others as we would want to be treated.
	forgiveness	We accept an apology from someone, and offer one freely.
a	aspiration	We look to be our very best and make the most of life.
	achievement	We always try our best, so we can make the most of opportunities.
i	inquisitiveness	We think freely and in new ways, and explore new ideas.
	inclusiveness	We include other people, loving them even if we find liking them hard.
t	tolerance	We accept the ideas and beliefs of others, even if they are not our own.
	thankfulness	We give thanks for each other, and for what we learn together.
h	honesty	We tell the truth clearly and we are true to ourselves.
	honour	We show respect to others and know that all people are God’s creation.



## The school day

The gates open at 8.30 am, so your child is welcome in the school from then. Pupils will line up on the playground at **8.45 am** so they can enter the building for tutor time at 8.50 am.

The end of the school day is **3.30 pm**.

## Term dates

<b>2</b>	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> September	School closed for staff development
	Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> September	<b>First day of the new academic year</b>
<b>0</b>	Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> October – Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November	Half term
<b>2</b>	Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> December	End of term
<b>3</b>		
<b>2</b>	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> January	School closed for staff development
	Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> January	<b>First day of the Spring Term</b>
<b>0</b>	Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> – Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> February	Half term
<b>2</b>	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March	End of term
<b>4</b>	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> April	School closed for staff development
	Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> April	<b>First day of the Summer Term</b>
	Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> – Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> May	Half term
	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> July	End of term

## The four Colleges

On arrival to school every pupil is placed into one of four colleges. These are as follows:

- **Abberley**
- **Bredon**
- **Cleeve**
- **Malvern**



We aim to encourage and develop a joint sense of team spirit and belonging. Pupils will represent their college in a variety of academic, sporting and non-sporting competitions. Colleges also meet weekly for assembly including an act of worship, which involves celebration of achievements too.

We operate a vertical tutor system in which our youngest pupils are nurtured and supported by older pupils. These are known as Vertical Tutor groups. Your child will be in the following tutor.



## School contact information

Telephone number: 01527 543361  
School email: office@walkwoodms.worcs.sch.uk



We use Arbor as our school information system. It is best to log in to this, including to send us messages.

## The Insider

The weekly newsletter is emailed to each parent, carer or relative. The Insider is also available from the school website, as are back-issues for reference.

## Homework

Regular, structured homework supports and enriches the learning that goes on in the classroom. At the start of the year, your child will receive a homework timetable. Homework will be uploaded to ePraise.



Our school rewards system is designed to motivate pupils by recognising the great things they do. Pupils are awarded praise points online, making things a lot quicker and easier than the traditional school reward system. This system is jam packed with features such as leaderboards, achievements, milestones, certificates, clubs & activities. Pupils are able to access this feature.

The benefits are:

### For students

- Be awarded points for working hard at school
- Get badges for completing tasks set by your teachers
- Compare your achievements against your peers
- Receive certificates & reports showing your achievements
- Spend your points in the online shop

### For parents

- See how your child/children are doing
- Receive notifications when they reach milestones
- Check out what achievements & accolades they've received
- Find out what rewards are on offer at the school
- See overviews of how the whole school is doing

## Social Media

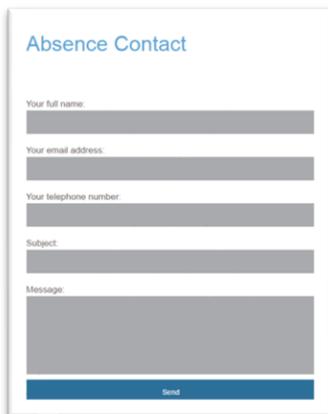
We have a Facebook page where you can keep up to date with what's happening at Walkwood. This can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/walkwoodmiddleschool>. Our twitter page can be found at @WalkwoodSchool



## Absence from school and illness

Pupils are expected to attend regularly (target 95%) and on time.

If your child is absent from school, please inform school before 9.30am on the first day to advise us why your child is absent. Please continue to notify us daily of your child's absence.



A screenshot of a web form titled 'Absence Contact'. The form has several input fields: 'Your full name', 'Your email address', 'Your telephone number', 'Subject', and 'Message'. A 'Send' button is located at the bottom right of the form.

**You can ring us on 01527 543361, pick option 1 and leave a message on the pupil absence line.**

Please provide us with specific information; if we receive a message that says that your child is 'unwell' we will request further information.

You may also use the 'Contact' page of the school website. As mentioned above, please provide specific information so as to assist us in processing the information.

If we do not hear from you, school will try to make direct contact.

Also please make medical/dental appointments outside of school hours if at all possible. You will be asked to provide proof of these appointments.

If your child needs to leave school during the school day for any reason, prior permission needs to be arranged. Children will not be allowed to leave unaccompanied.

## Leave of absence in term time



In the Autumn of 2013, the government amended key legislation relating to school attendance regulations. The government is insisting that schools across England and Wales take a much firmer stance against parents who remove their children from school and take a holiday during term time.

The relevant regulations were amended to remove the discretion school heads or principals previously had to grant leave for term time holidays in special circumstances.

The regulations now state that headteachers or principals may only grant any leave of absence if there are **exceptional circumstances**. Any families considering taking holiday will now come under these new regulations and must accept that it would have to be unauthorised.

We hope you will understand that the Governing Body and the school must follow these new regulations and that you will work with us.

## Adverse Weather Conditions



When the school needs to close due to poor weather, this will be circulated to the County Council, and details can be accessed from their website. Additionally, local radio will carry the announcement. Emails and or text messages will be sent via Arbor advising of the school closure.



## School uniform



A simple uniform is helpful in establishing good standards of appearance in school and by wearing it children quickly feel part of the community. We receive many compliments about the appearance of our pupils and are sure that you will wish to maintain this reputation.

colleges the pupils belong to.

To avoid any additional cost, we do not have a summer uniform.

The following items are not appropriate:

Blouses or fashion shirts, trousers - stretchy material, 'skinny leg' style, leggings, buckles, zipped pockets and rivets.

Training shoes, canvas pumps, sandals, boots and high heels, hoodies and sweatshirts.



## Kit required

At Walkwood Church of England Middle School the PE curriculum enables students to participate in a wide variety of activities which facilitates the learning of different skills and helps them to develop holistically; some of the skills promoted include teamwork, creativity, leadership and decision making.



The PE curriculum includes invasion games, dance and gymnastics, athletics, health related exercise and striking and fielding games. For all of these activities the school requires a PE kit to be worn to ensure safety of all pupils; even if physically unable to take part, pupils are expected to wear kit as they can develop other roles such as scorer, time keeper, coach or umpire.

The list below highlights all clothing required and recommended for all winter and summer activities:



T-shirt azure blue, with royal side panels and white piping and school badge\*

Shorts royal blue, with azure side panels and white piping and school badge

Zip jacket royal blue, with azure side panels and white piping (optional), school badge\*

Socks royal blue with near-top white band

Outdoor training shoes

Plain navy track suit bottoms (optional for winter)

Gum shield (for Years 7 / 8 rugby)

Shin Pads (recommended for football / hockey)

Football boots (recommended)



\* If these items are purchased from Orchard Clothing, then there is the option of having the pupil's name stitched onto the front in white lettering.

Uniform is able to be purchased from:



**Orchard Clothing Ltd**  
Unit 30 Hunt End Trading Estate  
Dunlop Road  
Redditch  
B97 5XP  
01527 545555

**Schooldays**  
13 Church Street  
Bromsgrove  
B61 8DD  
01527 757439



## Equipment

We ask that your child always has the following in a pencil case:

- ✓ Blue writing pen (and a spare) – ones children are comfortable writing with
- ✓ Sharp HB Pencil (and a spare)
- ✓ Pencil sharpener
- ✓ Eraser
- ✓ Ruler (with centimetres and millimetres)
- ✓ Protractor

A note book is also needed.



We also encourage the children to bring a bottle of water as this helps them to keep hydrated and helps their brains to work well. There are water dispensers around the school site. Please remember to name water bottles and lunch boxes so if your child loses them, we can get them back to your child in a timely fashion.

## Living and Learning Together



We aim to encourage children to be self-disciplined and show respect and consideration for others and for themselves.

Children are expected to be well behaved, well mannered, co-operate with adults and other children and be respectful of the property of others and the school.

There is a very constructive and pleasant working atmosphere in the school based on the understanding that children are treated fairly, albeit firmly, when necessary.

Rewards are central to our behaviour policy.

- Teachers praise readily.
- Teachers give written positive comments in pupils' work.
- Pupils' work is displayed as much as possible in the school.
- Self-assessment is in place within the school. The objectives are to encourage pupils to see themselves in a positive light, look for their successes and identify these strengths and talents.



Above all, individual praise and encouragement is to be given to pupils' regularly in lessons and about their conduct in and about the school. To reinforce this, points will be awarded to your child which will



also go towards their College's total. This system is called "ePraise". You will be able to register for this once your child has started in September following the process details that are included in the letter sent with this pack.



Praise and recognition are given in various ways but when behaviour is inconsistent with the standards and spirit of the school community, action is taken. When a child's behaviour gives cause for greater concern, parents are contacted and further action is discussed and agreed. Working closely with parents in the best interest of your child, is usually very effective and has the desired results.

## Equality, tolerance and inclusiveness

Walkwood Church of England Middle School actively opposes bullying, racism and discrimination. If you are concerned that your child is unhappy at school for whatever reason, please contact your child's tutor in the first instance. Also, there are members of the college pastoral staff who will be able to support any issues quickly and sensitively.



As a result, all pupils are provided with a safe and secure learning environment in which they are encouraged to speak about their concerns. There are many things we can do to make a difference.

## Safeguarding

At Walkwood Church of England Middle School, the health, safety and well-being of every child are our paramount concern. We listen to our pupils and take seriously what they communicate to us or tell us. Our aim is for children to enjoy their time as pupils in this school. We want to work in partnership with you to help your child achieve their full potential and make a positive contribution.



To promote a safe environment for pupils, our selection and recruitment policy includes all checks on staff and regular volunteers' suitability, including Criminal Records Bureau checks, as recommended by Worcestershire County Council in accordance with current legislation.

In accordance with our responsibilities under section 175/157 of the Education Act 2002, and in line with "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2023, our staff are:

Mr West	Assistant Principal	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs McKenna	Pastoral Coordinator	Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs Laszcz	Teacher	Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead
Reverend Leach	Principal	Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mr Hewitt	Business Leader	Alternate Designated Safeguarding Lead



Walkwood Church of England Middle School fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children. Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school.



We are committed to:

- establishing and maintaining an ethos where children feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and are encouraged to talk openly and are always listened to;
- ensuring that all children know there is an adult in school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty;
- including opportunities in the Spiritual Social and Emotional Education and the ICT curriculum, for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from harm.



There are occasions that our concern about a child may mean that we have to consult other agencies. Whilst we would always aim to work in partnership with parents, there may be exceptions to this when concerns are raised for the protection of a child.

Worcestershire's Safeguarding Children's Board has laid down the procedures, which we follow, and the school has adopted a Child Protection Policy in line with this for the safety of all. If you want to know more about our procedures, please speak to Mr West. A copy of our policy can be found on our website.

## Computing

Every pupil will be given a username and can decide on a password when logging in to the school intranet. The same login details can also be used for logging in to the six printers around the school.



Each school year has a reminder of online safety, and The Insider has a weekly help section from National Online Safety. Also, we have a section of the website that contains information about how to use social media safely: <https://www.walkwoodms.worcs.sch.uk/Safeguarding-and-Child-Protection>

## Accidents and Medical Care

The school has a small medical room and basic first aid equipment. When accidents are easily dealt with, they are treated in school. When treatment by a Doctor or Hospital is needed, parents are contacted. Occasionally, it is necessary to contact parents if their child becomes ill at school. Children who need to bring medicines to school must arrange to leave them in the school office for safe keeping. Parents are asked to complete a medical agreement form for us to be able to administer the medication.

*It is essential we have accurate details for contacting parents.*

## Playground

There are separate playgrounds for key stage 2 pupils and for years 7 and 8. The former use the front play area, accessed down the slope from the front gate. The toilets are just next to this playground.



Staff are on the playground in the morning from 8.30am and again at the day's end. Both breaktime and lunchtime are also supervised. Pupils who would prefer not to be running around are able to use the quiet area next to the woods.



## Lunchtime and food



Children are offered the option of hot meals at lunchtime. A cooked dinner is available for £1.80. The school also offers a 'meal deal' consisting of several varieties of food and a juice drink for £2.80. A vegetarian option is available daily. You are asked to put money on your account in advance.



## 'Packed' lunches



Walkwood currently has a high number of pupils with nut allergies. Airborne allergies can add to the risk of those who are allergic to nuts. Where possible Walkwood has provided a nut free environment to help ensure those pupils are kept safe. We kindly request that you honour our need for a nut free school by avoiding sending your child into school with nuts, either as snacks or in the lunch box.

## 'Free' School Meals

Free School lunch, to the value of £2.80, can be claimed by those pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain levels of allowances or benefits. If you feel you may be eligible for free school meals, you should contact the school office.

## Food Tasting

As part of the Food Technology course, pupils are given the opportunity to participate in food tasting activities, which form part of the Design and Technology curriculum. We hope your child will take part in such an activity. If there are allergy issues, we expect that you will have told us in the Data Booklet that we sent.



## Lockers

Your child will be allocated a locker. There is no charge for this. Bags are to be placed in the locker in the morning and collected at the day's end. Therefore, bags do not need to be carried around the school, except taking kit to PE.



The pupils do not use padlocks (they find it too much of an inconvenience, apparently!). Items for lessons are taken from the locker and returned at lunch time.

## Mobile phones

Mobile phones must be turned off at all times during the school day. Pupils must hand their phones into the vertical form group box for safe keeping, and this box is handed to the school office. The school will not accept any liability for the loss, theft or damage of a mobile phone. Pupils are solely responsible for the security of their mobile phones. Phones can be collected at 3:30pm from their tutor room. They should not be switched on until pupils have left the premises.



## Educational Visits

*Within the Local Environments of the school (including sporting activities, cross country, visits to the Parish Church, field work activities etc.)*

As part of the school's curriculum it is sometimes necessary to make visits within the locality of the school. These include short, low-risk visits that occur during the course of the school day, which are seen as part of the school's routine activities involving local excursions on foot during school time (including sporting activities, visits to the Parish Church and Geography fieldwork activities etc).

Such routine visits will, of course, be supervised.

## Photography

During the course of the school year there may be opportunities to publicise some of the activities that your child is involved in.

This may well involve filming or photographing children for use in the local media. As a school, we welcome these opportunities and hope that you do too. There may also be occasions when we arrange photography for our own purposes, such as displays and school brochures. It may also be used in lessons to enhance learning or to evaluate performance.



Photography or filming will only take place with the permission of the Principal, and under the supervision of a teacher. When filming or photography is carried out by the news media, pupils will only be named if there is a particular reason to do so (e.g. they have won a prize). Home addresses will never be given out.

Images may be taken of the children as follows:

- by the local media in covering school activities (such as Drama, and musical performances, sports, prize-giving's, etc.);
- by photographers acting on behalf of the school or school staff for use in displays;
- by photographers acting on behalf of the school or school staff for use in publicity material (such as this booklet, the school website);
- by school staff to aid learning.



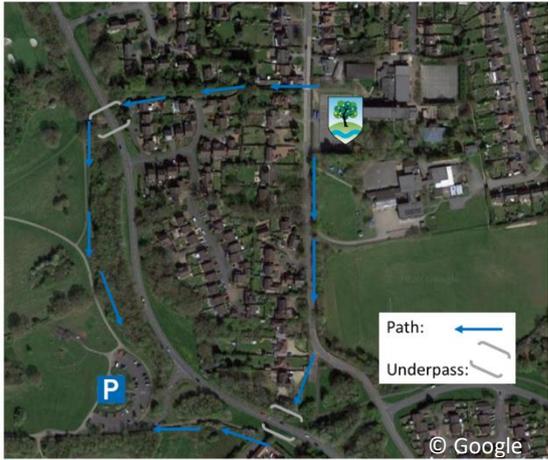
We believe that positive publicity benefits all involved with the school. Nevertheless, we will not involve your child without your consent. You may withdraw consent at any time. Images of your child held by the school can be viewed upon request.

**NB** There may be other circumstances, falling outside the normal day to day activities of the school, in which pictures of children are requested. The school recognises that in such circumstances specific consent from parent or guardian will be required before the school can permit photography or filming of children.



## Getting to school

Parents or carers who are bringing or collecting their children to and from school by car at the beginning and end of the school day are asked to park **on one of the public roads**. Please keep the front entrance by the schools clear.



However, it is preferable to use Morten Stanley Park. Pupils can walk from Walkwood to the parking area there using footpaths and the underpasses. The road crossing outside school is under the direction of one of the senior staff.

## Library

Your child has automatically become a member of our Library. As a member they will have access to more than 3,500 books, including fiction, non-fiction and information books to help with school work and homework.

Classes have regular fortnightly library based lessons allowing ample time for book exchange and research.

As these books represent a significant investment for the school, the following do apply:

- No weekly charge will be made for overdue books
- Pupils are notified weekly of overdue books and after a period of one month a letter will be sent to you informing you of the overdue loan/s.
- A replacement charge will be made for lost books – alternatively a lost book can be replaced with the same book and handed to the Librarian.
- Charges for damage to a book will be reviewed upon its return to the library.

If a problem arises with a book, then please ask your child to see the librarian on duty.

## Relationships Education

As part of Spiritual and Social Education, all pupils in Years 5 and 6 follow a programme which includes Relationships Education. Pupils in the upper two years follow Relationships and Sex Education.



As a parent, you have the right to withdraw your child from Sex and Relationship lessons whose content falls outside the compulsory elements of sex education contained in the Science National Curriculum. If you wish to exercise this right and **remove** your child from Sex and Relationships Education sessions, please ensure you complete the permission box in the 'Reply Booklet', and we will arrange a meeting to discuss this with you further. Once a child has been withdrawn they **cannot** take part in sex education until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

**Please ensure we know your views about whether your child can access these lessons** (there is a section on the data booklet that we sent out to you). You are free to amend your choice at a later stage.



# Supporting the pupil at home

## Helpful Tips for Parents and Carers

- ✓ Know your child's target level for English and Maths.
- ✓ Try to be aware of what your child needs to do in order to achieve their targets. If you are unsure, ask your child's Maths and English teacher(s).
- ✓ Be aware of the dates of the SATs.
- ✓ Provide a quiet and comfortable place for your child to study at home. Internet access is useful but not essential. Many of the websites have fun sections and Maths and English games.
- ✓ Encourage your child to use their study guides and revision materials regularly. Set some time aside over the holidays to look at some English and Maths. Having a break is important though too.
- ✓ Ensure your child gets regular meals and plenty of sleep.

Have good routines for regular practice of skills. This includes the following:

- Listening to your child read regularly (at least 3 times a week). If they are fluent readers and no longer want to read to you at home, use your reading time to discuss the books that they have read. Ask about what has happened in the book and what you expect to happen before the end. A good discussion about a book is well worth a signature in your child's reading record.
- Practising key skills like times tables.
- Talking about what your child is learning at school. If you show an interest in what they have been learning, they may also be motivated to learn more.
- Have a look through your child's homework. Talk about what they have done and the decisions that they made whilst doing it. Look at their targets for English and see if they can explain how they have shown that they are meeting them in their written work.



Here are some question types that can help children to understand the texts they read even better.

### Children need to picture what they read

Can you describe the room to me?  
Where do you think the characters are? What is it like?

### Children need to hear what they read

Who is narrating this part of the story?  
Did the author describe sounds to help you imagine the place?

### Making predictions

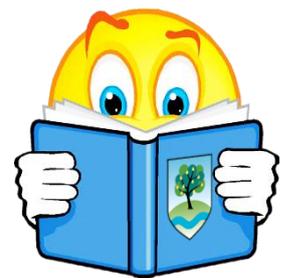
Can you guess what will happen next? How will the story end?  
Are there any questions that need to be answered?

### Encourage your child to ask their own questions

Why do the characters do that?  
Why did the writer include that part of the story?

### Say how you feel

What do you want to happen to each character?  
What does the author want you to feel about the characters?



### Develop Empathy

What would you do if you were this character?  
How would that make you feel?

### Enjoy the book

Which part did you most enjoy? Why? Try reading it again.

### Change your mind

Has anything happened that made you change your mind?  
About the characters? About the place?

### Talk about what you know

Is this like anything you have done?  
Does this remind you of anything else you have read?

### Summarise

Can you explain what has happened in this section?  
Has anything happened which answers your questions?  
Do you have any new questions?

Encourage reading of a range of texts - for purpose and pleasure: guide books, novels, manuals, information books, recipe books, annuals, magazines, newspapers, instruction leaflets, familiar stories...

## Communicating with school: guidance to parents and carers

We recognise that there exists for each of the year groups a Facebook group. Our school is not a member of these groups, although we are able to communicate with the moderators. If you are going to be a moderator of such a group, please contact us so we can cooperate effectively for the benefit of group members. We expect that the ground rules of groups that use the school's name, logo and/or emblem are in contact with school leaders.



Our [home-school communications protocol](#) sets clear expectations for staff and parents about how we can communicate directly. This is available from the school's website under the 'Policies' page.

It is our sincere hope that parents and carers are able to abide by these guidelines so that you can help us model safe, responsible and appropriate social media use for our pupils. This includes voicing opinions about the school in a way that respects the hard work, dedication and professionalism of our staff, and speaking to or about other parents and children in a way that is respectful and appropriate.

The following is offered as a summary and in the spirit of mutual cooperative working.

### Complaints and concerns

There may be times where, as a parent or carer, you do not agree with something the school is doing, or where you may have specific concerns. We welcome your feedback, and the opportunity to address any concerns you may have.





The most appropriate way to [raise concerns](#) is [directly with our school](#). Airing complaints or negative opinions on social media does not help us to address the issue in the most constructive way. You can telephone and speak to a member of staff, or book an appointment to speak with a member of the pastoral team face-to-face.

### Posting about other parents and pupils

We know that social media is an important way for many in our community to share their day-to-day lives and special events with others. However, we ask that parents and carers think carefully before posting things on social media that contain the names or images of other parents and children.

The school has a responsibility to keep pupils safe online, and posting information about children other than your own (including pictures or videos), without the consent of their parents, can present a safeguarding concern.

### Behaviour incidents

We also ask that, if you become aware of a behaviour incident, or have any concerns about the behaviour of groups of pupils or specific pupils, you please [raise these with us directly](#). Posting about incidents or behaviour concerns on social media limits the school's ability to conduct a full and fair investigation.

**We appreciate your help in providing a supportive, respectful environment for all of our pupils, parents and staff.**



## Instrumental Music Tuition

Learning a musical instrument can be a rewarding and exciting experience!

At Walkwood Church of England Middle School instrument lessons are taught by a team of specialist instrument teachers provided by Severn Arts, the Music Hub for Worcestershire. Instrumental tuition is offered in the following instruments:

- Strings: Violin, Cello
- Woodwind: Flute, Saxophone, Clarinet
- Brass: Trumpet, Trombone, Tenor Horn
- Acoustic/Electric Guitar
- Piano and Keyboard
- Voice
- Drum Kit

When allocating places for instrumental lessons we give priority to incoming Year 5 pupils who have already been having tuition in their first school and wish to continue. Thereafter, we will accommodate new learners where places allow. In the event of instrument places being



oversubscribed, your child's name will be put on a waiting list and you will be contacted when a space arises.



The cost of lessons is per 20-minute paired lesson. This cost is very competitive with private tuition in the local area. Lessons are paid for termly using Parentpay.

In addition, please use the QR Code to access our Parents Guide to Instrument Lessons for further details and answers to many frequently asked questions.



Pupils learning to play piano, keyboard or guitar will need their own instrument for practice at home. Other orchestral instruments may be hired from Severn Arts at a chargeable rate per term. Further information can be found via Severn Arts' website below.

Website: [www.severnarts.org.uk/instrument-hire](http://www.severnarts.org.uk/instrument-hire)







# Walkwood

Church of England  Middle School

**Love to Learn,  
Learn to Live,  
Live to Love.**

**The LORD says, “I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you.”**

Psalm 32:8

