



*“Providing every student  
with a caring, inclusive  
and safe learning  
environment where they  
can prepare and flourish.”*

Part of the:  
**Oak**   
Learning Partnership



**Crosshill**  
School

Prepare and flourish

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*“Pupils love coming to Crosshill. They smile as they arrive in the morning and they are eager to start their lessons.”*

**OFSTED**







# Welcome

Welcome to Crosshill School, a vibrant and forward-thinking special school based in Darwen.

All our students have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and our age-range is from 5-19. Our primary, key stage 3 and 4 students attend our site on Salisbury Road in Darwen and our post 16 students transition to our post 16 site at Shadsworth Business Park.

We are a diverse, happy community where students learn and develop in a nurturing and safe environment. We have a shared vision of **"Prepare and Flourish"** and we strive to ensure that all our students achieve their potential, regardless of their starting points. We are ambitious for all our students and are totally committed to overcoming any barriers to learning with which they may face. We are driven to ensure that our students develop into young adults who live settled, fulfilled and happy lives.

By utilising our highly personalised pathways we are able to partner creative and ambitious curriculum offers with expert teaching, pastoral care and multiagency support. This ensures that we can meet diverse needs. As Headteacher I am privileged to lead a team of dedicated, hard-working and passionate staff. Our students flourish in the classroom and beyond, with diverse opportunities, including facilitating a regular market stall at Blackburn Market, to operating a food bank, to participating in sports tournaments.

We are delighted to be part of a family of schools within Oak Learning Partnership. Oak Learning



Partnership is passionate about inclusion and improving the life chances of all children, both within the trust and beyond. As a school in the trust, we pride ourselves on the common ethos of "inclusion at the heart of the trust". We are a welcoming school with a strong emphasis on pastoral care, alongside ambitious education that is tailored to need.

If you have any further questions after reading this guide, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. Our contact details can be found on the back page.

**Miss Nicola Pemberton**  
Headteacher



# Our Values and Ethos

Crosshill offers a holistic provision. Our students' achievements and successes are celebrated widely. Through using our vision of 'prepare and flourish' as our guide, we focus on preparing our students by:

- **Delivering personalised learning through our pathway curriculum and structured learning through our seven-part lesson** that meets each student's individual needs and supports their academic, social, emotional and physical development.
- **Building independence and life skills**, ensuring students are ready for adulthood, further education, employment or supported living.
- **Fostering communication and self-advocacy**, helping students express themselves effectively and make informed choices.
- **Creating a safe and nurturing environment** where students can explore, make mistakes and grow.

We use innovative and **aspirational** strategies to increase students' **resilience** and confidence to overcome barriers, in order to ensure their lives are enriched both now and into adulthood. We believe that at the heart of a student's personalised success is exceptional teaching, learning and pastoral care. At Crosshill the staff share a **united** vision to ensure the best care and education is attended to by all.



We pride ourselves on our overwhelming sense of family and community; where every staff member leads with integrity and compassion to help all students achieve and '**prepare and flourish**'.

At Crosshill our ethos is to develop our students to become equipped to flourish and we work towards this by ensuring we are:

- **Empowering students to reach their full potential**, whatever that may look like for them, celebrating all achievements - big and small.
- **Promoting wellbeing, confidence and self-esteem** so learners feel valued, capable and proud of who they are.
- **Encouraging meaningful participation in society**, helping students form positive relationships and engage with their communities.
- **Supporting aspirational outcomes**, so students feel inspired and equipped to live fulfilling, purposeful lives.

# Meet our Senior Leadership Team

We have a dedicated team of talented staff who are committed to delivering the highest level of teaching for each and every student in the school. These staff are led by our senior leadership team (SLT), which has responsibility for strategic leadership, decision making and overseeing the overall functioning of the school.

You can find out more about our SLT by visiting our website at:  
[www.crosshillblackburn.co.uk/senior-leadership-team](http://www.crosshillblackburn.co.uk/senior-leadership-team).



**Nicola Pemberton**  
Headteacher



**Rachel Kenworthy**  
Deputy Headteacher



**Safiya Balu**  
Assistant Headteacher



**Louise Cartledge**  
Assistant Headteacher



**Kay Naylor**  
Operations Manager

Our middle leaders can also be found on our website at:  
[www.crosshillblackburn.co.uk/our-teachers](http://www.crosshillblackburn.co.uk/our-teachers).

*“Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those in the sixth form. Leaders identify pupils’ needs well and have ensured that the curriculum meets those needs effectively.”*

**OFSTED**

# Our Approach to Learning

Students are assessed on entry and placed within one of our three highly personalised pathways: Inspire, Explore and Discover. Each pathway has a bespoke curriculum and particular learning approach that enables all our students to flourish.

Our curriculum is organised under four main themes: Core, Creative, Wellbeing and Life and Living Skills. This is slightly adapted within our Post 16 curriculum offer, whereby we organise our curriculum to include Education and Employment, Community Cohesion, Independent Living and Wellbeing.

Throughout all pathways we build the curriculum around six main outcomes to ensure our students will:

- **Know themselves**
- **Possess functional skills**
- **Be independent**
- **Be good communicators**
- **Be curious learners**
- **Be prepared for adulthood**

Students may transition into different pathways whilst they are at Crosshill School. We recognise that as our young people develop and grow, so does their need for different skills, learning approaches and experiences. We are a responsive provision and review individual student needs throughout their school career.



More detailed information about our pathways can be found on our website under the curriculum section:

[www.crosshillblackburn.co.uk/curriculum](http://www.crosshillblackburn.co.uk/curriculum).

# Reading at Crosshill

**At Crosshill, we understand the vital role reading plays in preparing our learners for adulthood and fostering skills which enable them to become communicative, independent, curious adults who know themselves and the world around them.**

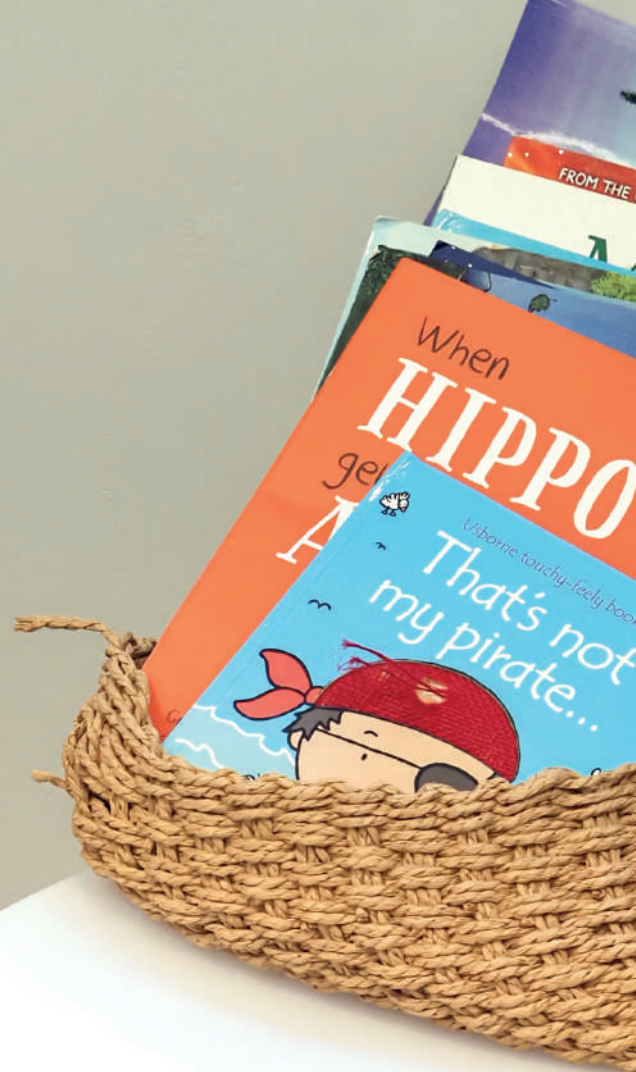
All learners across all pathways access reading sessions each day where they are explicitly taught the key phonics skills they need to be able to read. Staff are trained to deliver multi-sensory phonics sessions to enhance the learning of phonics for some of our learners. Students at Crosshill also have a dedicated session each day, which marries with our wellbeing curriculum, to foster a love of reading - something we feel extremely passionately about.

## Reading for Pleasure

Our reading for pleasure curriculum incorporates elements of communication through signed poetry recitals and provides opportunity for sensory exploration through story massage and sensory rhyme. It also models to students the skills they need to delve deep into diverse novels, non-fiction texts and plays during their 'share a story' and 'book club' sessions.







# Student Wellbeing

The wellbeing of our students is of utmost importance to us and as such, we have a dedicated wellbeing lead, who is responsible for rolling out the wellbeing curriculum across school and ensuring it is engrained into daily life.

Our wellbeing curriculum is based on five key themes that are taken from the New Economics Foundation 'Five ways to wellbeing' report:

**Take notice** – Staying in the present and being able to notice things around us can keep us grounded and calm. Being able to reflect on the things we have can support us to feel grateful and understand what is important to us.

**Connect** – Connecting to those around us is important to help us build meaningful relationships and feel valued. It supports our own self-esteem and helps us to create a network of support for when things get a little tough.



**Give** – Research tells us that when we give to others, it makes us feel happy. By giving to others we are supporting ourselves to make meaningful connections within our wider community.

**Keep learning** – Learning not only helps to keep the brain stimulated, but continuing learning throughout our life also supports us to continue to build relationships with others, promote our self-esteem and stay active.

**Be active** – Staying both physically and mentally active can help us to live a longer and more fulfilling life. Physical activity releases important 'happy' chemicals that improve our overall mood.

Using the above as guidance, daily wellbeing sessions are held for all students, where activities take place with an emphasis on one of the five themes.

# The School Day

Activity	Time
Day starts	8.50am
Morning greeting	8.50am-9.00am
Wellbeing	9.00am-9.20am
Reading	9.20am-9.30am
Period 1	9.30am-10.15am
Period 2	10.15am-11.00am
Break	11.00am-11.15am
Period 3	11.15am-12.00pm
Lunch	12.00pm-1.00pm
Reading for pleasure	1.00pm-1.15pm
Period 4	1.15pm- 2.00pm
Period 5	2.00pm-2.45pm
Wellbeing check	2.45pm-2.55pm
End of day	2.55pm

Term dates can be found on our website at [www.crosshillblackburn.co.uk/term-dates](http://www.crosshillblackburn.co.uk/term-dates).



## Weekly Assemblies

Our weekly assemblies are more than just a routine gathering - they are a cornerstone of our school community. They provide a space where students and staff come together to reflect, celebrate achievements and reinforce the values that shape our ethos. Through thought-provoking themes, student-led presentations and shared moments of recognition, assemblies foster a sense of belonging, responsibility and pride. They serve as a powerful platform to promote personal growth, cultural awareness and collective spirit - ensuring every voice is heard and every success is celebrated.



# Uniform



**High expectations of uniform and personal appearance help to create a greater sense of equality and personal high standards amongst our student body.**

## **SCHOOL UNIFORM**

- Blazer - Optional grey blazer. Crosshill logo on the left chest. Flaps on the pockets. (Secondary only)
- Jumper - Purple jumper with a cream stripe around the neck. Crosshill logo on the left chest.
- Trousers - Grey trousers. Fashion belts are not permitted.
- Shorts - Optional grey formal school shorts. (Primary only)
- Skirt - Purple and grey tartan knee length pleated skirt. Worn with either black or grey tights or plain black ankle socks.
- Shirt - Secondary students - long or short sleeve plain white formal school shirt with collar. Primary students - white polo shirt.
- Summer dress – Optional purple checked summer dress. (Primary only)
- Shoes – Plain black formal shoes. No boots or trainers allowed. Worn with plain black or grey socks.
- Hijab (head scarf) - Optional two-piece purple hijab.
- Bag – Sensible school bag.

## **PE KIT**

- PE t-shirt - Crew neck black t-shirt with Crosshill logo.
- Shorts - Plain black shorts.
- Tracksuit bottoms - Plain black tracksuit bottoms.

- Hooded track top - Plain black hooded tracksuit top, Crosshill logo. Can be personalised with first name on back (personalisation optional, £1.50 charge).
- Trainers - Trainers (not pumps).

## **FOREST SCHOOL**

- Warm outdoor clothing, wellies or suitable outdoor shoes.

## **FASHION**

- Hairstyles – Should be sensible and a natural colour. No lines shaved in hair or eyebrows.
- Makeup – Makeup and nail varnish are not permitted, nor are false nails.
- Jewellery – Students may wear one small pair of earrings – studs or sleepers. Students may also wear a wristwatch. No other piercings or jewellery allowed.

## **POST 16 UNIFORM**

- Jumper – Grey branded hoodie or jacket (will be provided by the post 16 provision).
- T-shirt – Plain white polo shirt.
- Trousers - Plain black trousers or leggings - fashion belts are not permitted.
- Shoes – Plain black flat shoes or trainers, worn with plain black socks.
- Hijab (head scarf) – Optional two-piece, purple hijab.
- Bag – Sensible school bag.
- Joggers - Plain black joggers for community-based activities.



# Home Learning

**Children in all year groups will receive a half termly grid with a range of activities linked to their EHCP targets and promoting:**

- Independence
- Knowing themselves
- Communication
- Being curious
- Preparing for adulthood
- Functional skills

Great examples of homework tasks will be celebrated in assemblies.

## **How to use the homework grids:**

- Each grid lasts for a half term.
- New grids will be issued each half term in students' homework books.
- Children will need to complete at least one task per week.
- Children will need to submit their homework on a set day every week.

All homework will be acknowledged by the class teacher and/or teaching assistant. This may be verbally, a written comment, remark or sticker. Please don't feel work has not been appreciated or noticed if comments are not written; we always look at everything that is sent in. Extra special pieces of homework may earn reward points.

# School Meals

**Our new catering kitchen opened in September 2025, offering an exciting and diverse three-week rotating menu that celebrates a range of cuisines from around the world. Our carefully planned meals are nutritious, balanced and designed to encourage students to explore new tastes and healthy choices. To support this, we also offer "tester pots" - small samples that give students the chance to try something new before committing to a full portion.**

Students can enjoy a delicious hot meal each day for just £2.50, or they are welcome to bring their own healthy packed lunch from home.

We actively promote nutritious eating habits and kindly ask that fizzy drinks and high-sugar snacks are not brought into school. Our aim is to create a food environment that supports student wellbeing, concentration and long-term health - making lunchtimes something to look forward to every day.



# Attendance

Regular school attendance is crucial to a student's success in school, so we do all we can to maximise their attendance. We provide yearly targets for each student, based on their previous year's attendance and the government expectation. We also track attendance and inform students and their parents of their current attendance every term.

If a student's attendance falls below 93% they are closely monitored for the following term and offered support to help improve their attendance. As a special school we are aware that some of our learners have lower attendance due to medical needs or ill health, so the type of support offered varies based on the individual student's needs.

We praise students whose attendance is consistently good or excellent during assemblies.

## What if my child is ill?

On the first day of absence please contact the school before 8.30am on 01254 667713 to let us know if your child is ill and will be absent from school. You should then call school each day thereafter before 8.30am to update school until your child returns.



# Keeping in Touch

Parents and carers play a crucial role in ensuring their child achieves at the highest level and makes the most of their time at Crosshill. We provide regular communication with parents to ensure they are up to date with their child's progress. Communication is done through the central system of Arbor, where parent letters are often shared. Weekly updates are also shared by the form teacher to inform you as parents/carers of any updates during the week. Please ensure you download the Arbor app when your child joins Crosshill.

# Social Media

We regularly post on our social media channels so would urge you to follow us to keep up to date with the latest achievements and developments at school. You can find us on Facebook and Instagram. Just search for Crosshill School Blackburn to find us and make sure to hit that follow button. We also send out termly newsletters at the end of each term. Please ensure you are registered on Arbor to receive the links to the newsletters.



For general enquiries please contact:

**T 01254 667713**

**E [info@crosshill.blackburn.sch.uk](mailto:info@crosshill.blackburn.sch.uk)**

**[www.crosshillblackburn.co.uk](http://www.crosshillblackburn.co.uk)**

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