

The Berwick Middle School Governors are firmly of the opinion that the Berwick Partnership should remain 3 tier. We have set out our reasoning below:

- Schools in Berwick are part of a highly successful 3-tier partnership.
- Our children benefit from outstanding pastoral support in all our schools.
- Ofsted have rated almost all of our eighteen local schools 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. Two have been rated 'Requires Improvement'. They are improving quickly.
- When our children leave their First Schools at the end of Year 4 they are definitely ready for their next educational adventure in Middle Schools which they've been expecting and eagerly looking forward to.
- At Middle Schools our children benefit so much from the nurturing environment they enjoy there.
- At Middle Schools our children achieve success in their learning through an exciting, stimulating curriculum, and from all the extracurricular events and activities they are involved in, too.
- At Middle Schools the ethos is to give our children as many 'first-time' experiences as possible; to develop a love of learning all round; and a passion for the subjects that they find particularly personally engaging.
- Middle Schools have specialist subject staff with the expertise and experience to shape the curriculum for Year 5 and Year 6, guide class teaching, and target children's learning, ready for the Key Stage 2 SATs tests.
- Middle School subject specialists also have an overview of the GCSE curriculum in their area. So they are ideally placed to shape the curriculum for Year 7 and Year 8 as well. They guide class teaching, and target children's learning, towards GCSE, in readiness for when our children move on to start studying their GCSE subjects at High School.
- The Middle School curriculum, with its fantastic approaches to learning, makes the most of every opportunity to give all our children the very best educational experiences. This prepares them to be ready to make properly informed choices about the GCSE subjects they want to study.
- In the last round of Year 6 SATs tests (2019) our Middle School children in Berwick performed above both Northumberland and National averages.
- Data also shows that the attainment of pupils in 3-tier systems is above the national average - **Middle School pupils nationally go on to do better in their GCSEs at High School.**
- At Middle School age our children go through many social, emotional and physical changes where, in those crucial four years, they receive excellent pastoral support which ensures that they thrive.
- At the end of Middle School, in Year 8, our children are very well prepared, aged 13, to move to their High School.
- Under a 2-tier system, our children would switch straight to their High School at the age of 11 - ready or not!
- Under 2-tier, Primary Schools (from Reception to Year 6) put a very strong focus on achieving results in English and Maths in the Key Stage 2 SATs tests at the end of Year 6, and there can be less focus on the broad curriculum that pupils need.
- Then, when these pupils transfer to their 2-tier Secondary School, there can again be, right from the start, a very strong focus on achieving GCSE results even though that's five years away down the line. Again, pupils can be deprived of the rich curriculum they need to make informed GCSE option choices.
- This more forceful focus throughout a 2-tier system (first on SATs results, and then on GCSE results) comes at the expense of the more diverse educational experiences which Middle Schools currently provide.
- **A move to the 2-tier system in Berwick would mean:**
  - **our Middle School age children losing the diversity of educational experiences in their enriching curriculum.**
  - **a protracted changeover period of perhaps several years with new-builds, moves, restructuring etc.**
  - **disrupting the educational experience of very high numbers of our children during all that changeover**
  - **a reduction in parent choice for our children.**