



WEST HILL SCHOOL

Aiming High since 1927

Headteacher: **Ms C Cronin (MA)**

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Subject: End of Year 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

What an incredible year it has been for West Hill School, one of continued growth and development. As my second year as Headteacher comes to a close, I am very grateful to have such supportive families, incredible boys and an army of staff united in our belief that responsibility, respect, being ready and aiming high bring success in life. Whilst being a wonderful year of growth, it has also been a tough year in many ways with numerous boys undergoing treatment for cancer, on their own journeys to better health alongside those who have managed to *ring the bell* as their journey with cancer ended. We also lost a colleague, a friend, a dent in the school community, but what has emerged from these difficult times is a school community coming together. From fun runs in Year 8, to support their friend, sponsored walks to remember our colleague and our Year 11 boys shaving their hair to stand in solidarity with Edward, a peer undergoing cancer treatment, it's been a true coming together as a community. Many boys have raised money for exceptional charities in their own time too, such as Kaison R scaling the Yorkshire Three Peaks for local mental health charities, Bradley B completing a sponsored climb of Ben Nevis over the summer and Jacob B for organising raffles at primary schools to raise money for Reuben's Retreat – work they are made aware of through our IDP curriculum. These are to name just a few of our excellent boys and their charitable and thoughtful exertions.

We finish school at 12pm on Tuesday 22nd July. Staff training days (inset) will be taking place on Monday 1st and Tuesday 2nd September, but if there is a need to relay information to us before your son's return then please do contact our admin@westhillschool.co.uk mailbox whereby our Admin Team will receive your message and pass on to relevant staff members during the inset days. As we anticipate lovely weather in September, we allow boys to continue wearing their tailored shorts until the weather begins to dip as we enter into October, when we ask for trousers to return.

Arrangements for Wednesday 3rd September 2025 – Student Return

We have a staggered first day back to enable our new Year 7s time to adapt to the site.

8:30am-8:40am: Year 7 students only are expected to arrive to the canteen whereby their Form Tutors will greet them and get them prepared for the weeks ahead.*

8:50am-9am: Year 11 only are expected to arrive to the canteen to check their form room location and make their way to collect Year 10 mock results and have a day of post-16 providers to set the tone of their final 34 weeks.

11:00am-11:20am: Years 8-10 will arrive on site during break, returning to form rooms after break ends.

Food will be available in the canteen across the morning.

**For new families, for site safety we do not allow for drop off within the school itself, unless we are aware of a student disability or there is a temporary injury with legs/arms in plaster etc.*

From Thursday 4th September, all students arrive from 8am-8:35am following their normal, timetabled school day.

Boys will be returning to our school with our site security work completed, renovated toilets in Main Block and Science Block and a few additional improvements across school.

If there are any injuries that students are returning with, or updates we should be made aware of from incidences over the summer, please contact your son's Head of Year or Form Tutor. As a reminder, Heads of Year are listed below:

Year 7: Ms Largey

Year 8: Mr Rothwell

Year 9: Mr Evans

Year 10: Ms Marshall

Year 11: Ms Ridgway



We have a large range of co-curricular clubs, teams, committees, cabinets, councils, mentors and ambassadors – there is a place for everyone. Educational research shows that young people who are connected to the wider school offer, enjoy school more and achieve higher. Over the summer, and in preparing for their return on Wednesday 3rd September, please discuss which wider activity your son will opt in to. My challenge to our boys is to be a part of a culture of 'opting in' to success. I ask for your support in challenging your son to do the same.

Curriculum Updates

Sporting Progress

Within our sporting achievements this year we have celebrated team, school and personal sporting accomplishments. This is testament to the hard work and responsibility many boys place into their training and the support from parents/carers but also from our PE staff. Some noteworthy team accomplishments have been:

- Tameside Badminton Champions: Year 7
- Tameside Basketball Champions: Year 7, 8-9 and 10-11
- Tameside Cross-Country Champions: Year 7, 8-9, and 10-11, **overall Champions for 28 consecutive years**
- Altrincham Cross-Country League Champions: Year 7, 8-9, 10-11
- Tameside Athletics Champions: Year 7, 8-9, 10-11 and overall champions
- Graeme Locke Athletics Champions: Year 7, 8 and 9
- Shrewsbury School Football Tour: Year 7
- Cricket Softball State School Cup winners: Year 7.

Noteworthy individual achievements have been:

- Calum P and Alfie T-W representing Greater Manchester in Athletics and Cross-Country respectively
- Ethan W representing Burnley FC
- Aidan M representing Everton FC
- Cameron S representing Liverpool FC
- Ben S selected to join Leigh Leopards Rugby League
- Lucas R representing the British Biathlon.

Thank you to those able to join us for our Sports Day, we hope to see you again next July too.

MFL

This year the Languages Department has had a special focus on speaking activities within lessons. Evaluation of the impact of this work shows that, for the vast majority of boys, they are feeling increasingly more confident in their ability to communicate in another language. We are very proud of their progress and enthusiasm. This enthusiasm was also evident throughout the two international trips that we ran this year as we look to increase the love of languages.

In May, 30 Key Stage 3 students visited Madrid to practise their spoken Spanish and visit some significant landmarks. We visited the Reina Sofia and Prado art museums, where the boys were able to practise describing the paintings they have been learning about in Year 9 lessons. The visit was completed by a kick about in the El Retiro Park and a tour of the Bernabéu Stadium; a definite highlight for many!

In June, 54 students from Years 7-10 took part in a busy and fun-packed four-day trip to Munich. Again, this trip included elements of many different curriculum areas, such as Electronics and Engineering at BMW World and sporting history at the Olympic Stadium and Allianz arena. Our future Olympians were lucky enough to try out the running track at the stadium – with an injured Mr Williams! We learned about the many churches in the city and their historical significance and of course, we practised our language skills and sampled the local dishes.

RE

This term, Year 7 have been taking part in the *Spirited Arts Competition*, which is an annual art and writing competition organised by NATRE. It has encouraged students to explore big questions about religion, belief, spirituality and ethics all through creative means. This year, the boys have been challenged with themes such as 'making sense of life', 'living



in a diverse world', 'stories that change lives' and 'sacred spaces' and as expected, our boys' efforts have been spectacular! There have been some really thoughtful and reflective pieces created, and many students have shown great creativity and insight into these themes. Some notable mentions are Habib H 7H, Alex E 7I, Noah T 7W, James R 7H, Kai S 7E, Jack G 7T, Theo G 7W. Each student has shown great creativity and insight, using art to express personal ideas and interpretations linked to the competition themes. Well done Year 7!

Design and Technology

This year, we introduced an exciting new CAD (Computer-Aided Design) project, giving students hands-on experience with emerging technologies and inspiring them to explore creative career pathways in design and engineering. Our Year 9 students proudly secured 3rd place for West Hill in the Greenpower Challenge, demonstrating outstanding engineering skills and teamwork. To further celebrate student achievement, the department has also launched annual awards recognising excellence in three key areas: Graphic Design, Manufacturing, and CAD Design.

Music

Summer began with our Spring Concert, featuring our talented musicians and ensembles; the concert was a mixture of soloists together with our Jazz Orchestra, Jazz Collective, Guitar Ensemble and Samba Band. A lovely evening showcasing the excellent musicians in our school. In the classroom, our curriculum this term has included learning to play the Ukulele, learning how to DJ with our class set of mixing desks, learning a variety of modern hooks and riffs on the keyboard and composing a piece of music using traditional music notation. Outside of the classroom, many of our boys have achieved very successful grades in their external instrumental music exams. Exams taken were all in the range of Grade 2 to Grade 5 and all students achieved either a merit or distinction. Well done to all students who have been involved in music this year. Thank you for your dedication and commitment...keep practising!

Maths

We are delighted to share some outstanding achievements in Mathematics. This year, our learners have excelled in a variety of national competitions and enrichment programmes, reflecting both their dedication and our school's commitment to a rich, ambitious curriculum.

Axiom Maths Programme: 11 Year 7 students participated this year, with 3 more joining as the year progressed. The programme focused on our key values: being *Adventurous, Articulate, and Accepting*. We have seen significant growth in mathematical confidence and skill among participants. Next year, a new cohort of Year 7s will join, and the current group will advance into Year 8.

UKMT Junior Mathematics Challenge: All of our Year 7 students were entered, achieving 5 Silver and 17 Bronze awards, well done year 7! 70 Year 8 students were selected and entered and achieved 5 Gold, 6 Silver and 24 Bronze awards which is fantastic. A special mention goes to **Albie M in 8T**, who was invited to take part in the Junior Kangaroo round and achieved the highest-grade possible - a Gold. Congratulations, Albie!

UKMT Intermediate Mathematics Challenge: 63 Year 9 students were entered and achieved 6 Silver and 20 Bronze awards this year. In Year 10 a total of 97 students were entered and we achieved 1 Gold (best in school), 2 Silver and 14 Bronze awards.

Boys have been working hard all year on their SparxMaths, completing weekly home learning tasks, preparing for assessments, as well as completing independent tasks. The following boys are the *Star Students*, achieving the most XPs since September, and have received a badge and certificate to recognise their efforts and achievements. Year 7 - Rhiyan P, Year 8 - Albie M, Year 9 - Sam K, Year 10 - Nikhyl P and in Year 11 - Oliver W.

We recently celebrated Alan Turing Day, his birthday, June 23rd with inspiring Key Stage 3 assemblies led by Mr Lane-Super during the week following this date. The Maths continues into the summer holidays with Pythagoras' Theorem Day 24.07.25 because $24^2 + 7^2 = 25^2$ these days are quite unusual with the last one being 16.12.20 however there is one in 2026 which we will be celebrating. Thank you to everyone who has supported our Mathematics provision this year – your encouragement is vital to the success of our learners.

English

This year the English Department took our students out to the theatre with Year 7 visiting the Stockport Plaza in December to watch *Sleeping Beauty* - oh yes we did! Our Year 11s were lucky enough to get tickets to watch a



production of An Inspector Calls at the Lowry Theatre. This was part of their GCSE revision as well as a fantastic opportunity to watch a very successful production. We are busy planning next year's trips and visits - watch this space.

Art

The Art Department continues to be a busy and creative hub with students working hard in lessons and taking advantage of the countless hours of co-curricular time. After school art clubs, lunch clubs, and break time drop-ins were attended by many boys throughout the year. Our Year 7 students produced some amazing Aboriginal inspired prints, Year 8 became experts in Cubism while Year 9 students created powerful Pop Art inspired paintings and Surreal collages. Our KS4 students have once again shown incredible talent and creativity, and look like achieving our best ever results for Art this year.

Staffing

This summer we say goodbye to some staff who leave us to move on to their new adventures. We thank each member of staff for their dedication in improving the school experience for our learners over their time here, and wish them the very best in their next adventures. Speaking of adventures, we wish Mr Allen well on his planned travels and Mrs Robinson for her travels once they begin. Mr Garcia leaves us as a Cover Supervisor to begin his teacher training, as a Spanish Teacher. Mr Butterworth leaves our Senior Leadership Team this year to begin his new role. Ms Corrigan leaves us for a role focused within Science leadership. Mr Lawton leaves our Maths team to begin his role focused within Maths leadership. Mrs Meager leaves our English Department to enter into the world of business, a loss for the profession. We have two retirees within school too, Mrs Gillespie who has been the friendly voice in our Main Office for many a year and Deb, the former canteen manager, both begin their well-earned retirement. We would also like to thank Mrs Shaw, who has been our maternity cover within Art this year, for her work and dedication with our boys. As we step into September, we are fully staffed with many experienced, excited and passionate staff joining our team as we continue on the journey to true excellence.

Communication App

Later this week you will receive an email notification to enrol into our new communication platform which is made by an educational company called Reach More Parents, an app many primary settings use and some families may be familiar with. The Reach More Parents platform can be accessed via a web browser or for ease, can be downloaded as a secure West Hill School app from the Android or App Store, it is free to parents/carers and students. The platform enables communication to school and messages to named staff, your son's timetable and attendance, can register daily absence (instead of calling the office), stores letters and communication to re-access whenever you need, whilst also storing your son's achievements, sanctions, academic reports, SEN-related learning plans, home learning timetable and holds a newsfeed around their learning in the day. It also enables any updating and sending of medical needs or to issue consent for trips. It is currently a work in progress and therefore will grow as we learn more about its scope. In order to familiarise yourself with the platform, before we begin full use of it in September, you will receive enrolment information via your registered email account with us. Within the platform there are parent guides and documents to view, but largely it is an easy and intuitive system to use and should help us make communication easier. Details about this are all contained within the impending email from West Hill School. This system does require us having a registered email account, thus a School Gateway text message will be sent to any split correspondence homes whereby we may have one parent email, and not the other, offering them the steps to take in order to ensure that all parents/carers can access the platform about their child. For families whose primary language is not English, there is the ability to select an alternative language which translates posts and information into the home language.

When students return in September, we will offer them the opportunity to download the West Hill app and log in using their school email account. This platform holds their timetable, home learning schedule, summary of attendance, behaviour and rewards alongside SEN information about them such as their ILPs, developing their responsibility.

Within our autumnal welcome back letter, a 'you said, we did' will feature from the parent/carer summer survey reflecting that we take on board views and suggestions, triangulating with our staff feedback and student feedback. A parent/carer has already flagged their continued concern about road safety on Stamford Street. I am, weekly, chasing this from Tameside, for their support/action, with little progress or avail. I have escalated the concerns, and the lack of



communication received, to Jonathan Reynolds MP. Please feel free to write to his office to support our chasing of action as I cannot move it any faster, when it sits within the local authority to respond and act.

Lastly, our Friends of West Hill have been incredible at raising money for our school, leading to the installation of new outdoor equipment for our boys in Autumn, we thank them for their unwavering support and dedication.

To end, below there is a notice from Intrahealth to our families which we have been asked to communicate in case it is of use.

Thank you for your continued support on our journey to excellence.

Ms C. Cronin



THE SCHOOL AGED IMMUNISATION TEAM IN TAMESIDE ARE HOLDING OPEN CLINICS IN THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE. IF YOU FEEL YOUR CHILD MAY BE OUTSTANDING ANY IMMUNISATIONS, PLEASE GIVE US A RING

0333 3583397

OPT 1, OPT 6, OPT 1.

UK Health Security Agency

Children and young people need their:

Teenage booster to protect against tetanus, polio, and diphtheria)	MMR vaccine to protect against measles, mumps and rubella
MenACWY vaccine to protect against meningitis and septaemia	HPV vaccine to protect against types of cancer

Most young people have their vaccines at school, but if you have missed yours speak to your school nurse. If you have left school, speak to your GP practice and make an appointment to catch up.

Visit nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them/
#VaccinesWork to protect us from infectious disease

Immunisation
Helping to protect everyone at every age

Vaccines save lives. They prevent around three million deaths worldwide every year and the World Health Organization states that after clean water, vaccination has the greatest impact on health globally.