



# WEST HILL SCHOOL

*Aiming High since 1927*

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

<b>Address</b>	: Thompson Cross Stamford Street Stalybridge Cheshire SK15 1LX
<b>Tel</b>	: 0161 338 2193
<b>Sports Hall</b>	: 0161 338 9292
<b>E-mail</b>	: <a href="mailto:admin@westhillschool.co.uk">admin@westhillschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Website</b>	: <a href="http://www.westhillschool.co.uk">www.westhillschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Facebook</b>	: <a href="#">West Hill School</a>
<b>Instagram</b>	: <a href="#">@westhillschool</a>

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Dear families,

Spring term is always an interesting time of year with such dark weeks that turn to a lighter and busier summer term – and most importantly for the boys, the fields reopening at lunch times! Thank you to our families for your support as we continue to embed our West Hill app for communication, adjust to off-timetable days in school as well as the greater curriculum-based trips and opportunities that complement our vast co-curricular timetable. This year to date we have had our KS3 students at Warwick Castle within History, Chester Zoo within Geography and planned KS4 Manchester Museum trips alongside the launching of the USA Ski Trip and Iceland. Our careers team have been busily planning workplace encounters and safaris for boys to sample potential careers with clear steps of how to get there. As we reach the end of a shorter half-term, I am writing with few reminders and celebrations to ensure clear communication and advanced notice of any events they may include yourselves, or your son(s) over the next half-term.

#### **Key dates next half-term:**

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February:** return from half-term for a regular school day.

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February:** Year 9 option choices submission deadline.

**W/C 2<sup>nd</sup> March:** Year 11 mock exam results and academic reports issued.

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March:** World Book Day celebrations.

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March:** Year 8 progress evening, online, 3:30pm-6:30pm.

**W/C 16<sup>th</sup> March:** Year 10 academic reports issued.

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March:** Year 10 progress evening, online, 3:30pm-6:30pm.

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March:** 12:30pm dismissal for Easter holiday/end of spring term.\*

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April:** return from half-term for a regular school day.

\*Details of Year 11 Easter revision/ access to school during the holiday, will follow to Year 11 parents and students.

#### **Sporting Achievements from Mr Battarbee, Head of PE**

A number of boys represented Tameside at the Greater Manchester Cross Country Championships, with Alfie Taylor-W finishing in 11th place. After a long winter of competition and training, Year 11's Lucas R has been selected to represent Great Britain at the Youth and Junior World Biathlon Championships in Germany. The Year 7 and 8 rugby teams competed in the Lancashire schools' rugby tournament at Preston Grasshoppers RUFC and performed well at both ages. Year 11's Reuben T has been selected in the Greater Manchester Cricket League under 16 squad and Year 8's Jude S and Jack W in the under 13 squad. Our Year 9 football team have progressed to the Tameside cup semi-final. Finally, in Year 10 rugby Josh M has been playing in the Sale Sharks DPP squad and Ben S is going strong at Leigh Leopards. Huge achievements for all.

#### **A Message from Ms Largey, Head of Year 7**

Year 7 students have shown a fantastic attitude and real determination as we approach the February half-term. They have settled into secondary school routines with maturity, embraced new challenges across their subjects, and demonstrated kindness and respect within the school community. From positive behaviour in lessons to a growing confidence in their learning, their progress so far has been something to be proud of. This half-term has been a strong step in their journey, and they deserve recognition for the effort, resilience, and enthusiasm they bring to school each day.

#### **A Message from Mr Rothwell, Head of Year 8**

As we reach the end of this half-term, I would like to take the opportunity to reflect on what has been a fantastic first half of the year for our Year 8 boys. Now, no longer the youngest students in the school, they have stepped into their role with increasing maturity, confidence and resilience. Across this year, I have been consistently impressed by their



attitude to learning, their willingness to support one another and the pride they are beginning to take in their responsibilities within the school community. This term has seen some excellent participation in interform events, which have been a real highlight. The Year 8 interform darts competition was particularly well attended, with over 35 boys taking part. The standard of darts on display was impressive, but even more pleasing was the sportsmanship and positive atmosphere throughout the tournament. A special congratulations goes to Jake H and Atticus A, our deserving finalists, who demonstrated great skill and composure. The final was played in excellent spirits, with Atticus emerging victorious and securing valuable points for form 8S — well done, champion! Interform football has been another huge success with over 60 boys participated across multiple evenings, showing real commitment and enthusiasm. The boys demonstrated teamwork, communication, and determination, supporting each other and competing in the right spirit. Well done to all those who took part, and congratulations again to 8S, who ultimately triumphed.

I would also like to commend the boys for their efforts in raising money for Reuben's Retreat as part of their IDP project. Collectively, Year 8 have raised over £800 so far through a wide range of activities, including cake sales and household chores... would you believe? This is a wonderful achievement and reflects the boys' generosity, organisation, and commitment to supporting a very worthwhile cause.

Finally, I would like to thank you as parents and carers for your continued support. It has been a pleasure to get to know you further this year and to see the boys flourish on a daily basis. Your support at home plays a vital role in their success, and it is greatly appreciated. I look forward to continuing our work together as we move into the next part of the academic year.

#### **A Message from Mr Evans, Head of Year 9**

Year 9 have had some excellent progress at a key time whereby options are being chosen. We had a highly successful options pathways evening with purposeful discussions around their next steps into GCSEs. We have had particular achievements from Kean P, Harry D, Orlando W, Albie M, Zaine M, Oliver C, Daniel R, Max C, Aaron M and Charlie G for persistent demonstration of our 3Rs and recognition from multiple staff across the school. Well done Year 9 and I look forward to seeing our option choices and transition into getting GCSE-ready.

#### **A Message from Ms Marshall, Head of Year 10**

Year 10 have made a great start to their GCSEs and conducted themselves credibly during their recent assessment week. We have seen some excellent sporting success with regards to Cross Country, and we have had a number of successful careers trips where the boys have been able to explore the world of work and find out which professions may suit them, with exemplary conduct on these trips. We have had a number of assemblies run by our Year 10 boys on important topics such as bullying and internet safety. Interform football was a real hit, with 10W taking the title for the third year in a row with the next round commencing in March. Our Duke of Edinburgh boys are also working incredibly hard in the community to earn their silver awards with Max Y being recognised by local councillors for his cooking of meals for local residents. I am very proud of the growing maturity and culture of support and celebration between them.

#### **A Message from Ms Ridgway, Head of Year 11**

Well done to our Year 11 students for their excellent conduct this half-term. It has been an exceptionally busy period, with mock examinations alongside important preparation for college places, and the year group has risen to the challenge brilliantly. Our Examinations Officer, Mrs Hemmings, described it as "*the best exam rehearsal that West Hill has ever seen!*" I am incredibly proud of the whole year group, and parents should be equally proud of the amazing behaviour shown by their sons throughout this demanding term. Special mentions from our Careers Lead, Mrs Appleby, go to Omari A and Mohi U for their sustained commitment to completing their college applications, and to Stanley M for his diligent work on his CV.

Finally, as outlined in my last letter, we are in our Ofsted window for an inspection and the national picture is that the newer inspection framework is intensive and highly critical of schools with it being increasingly difficult to achieve 'expected standard' - your old money 'Good'. I believe in Ofsted, and the work that they do to ensure standards are upheld and that young people are supported, have a sense of belonging and are able to thrive in the environment that we create as school leaders. However, when they arrive all support from you would be greatly appreciated with many of my peers articulating the difficulty the new framework presents, notably when in a local authority with such a need



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for improvement and intermittent support to me as the Headteacher or delayed provision for our young people – and the impact this creates on students attending school. I am proud of our school community and we will fight to show the greatness that our school offers, and I know that the boys will reflect this too.

As ever, thank you for your continued support and working in partnership for your sons.

Kind regards,

Ms C. Cronin