



WEST HILL SCHOOL

Aiming High since 1927

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Thursday 16th July 2026

Dear families,

In the usual manner, I wish to open the letter with thanks for another great year full of opportunity and learning in our school. We are always working with families, boys and staff to reflect on new ways of building character and bringing learning to life and I would like to take a moment to appreciate the work of our West Hill staff for their care and support for our boys. We have been working hard with our Student Leadership Cabinet (please encourage your son to get involved in this via our Senior Prefect Team) and are updating a charity section of our website, alongside our enrichment calendar, to signpost our regional and national charities whom we fundraise for throughout the academic year, including our student leaders in its organisation. In the past few weeks, our school has been very busy with fun runs, Sports Day, trips (including the Battlefields to France) and visits of guest speakers, artists, entrepreneurs, college visits all in addition to the usual daily opportunities. We have welcomed our student winners from awards evening into school, with their families and finished off in style with Activities Day. Next year marks our centenary of 100 years of West Hill School with community events planned on site on 26th June, advanced notice for the diary. Thank you for sending your son equipped to learn which helps their day run calmly and organised.

September Return

Tuesday 1st September and Wednesday 2nd September - Inset Days: no students on site for staff training days.

The Main Office, West Hill App and phonelines are open to receive communication.

Thursday 3rd September - students return to school at the following times:

Year 7s arrive at 8:20am for an 8:35am start.

Year 11s arrive from 9:50am for a 10am start in form groups.*

Years 8, 9 and 10 arrive during break time, 11am-11:20am for an 11:20am start in form groups.

**The focus of this day for Year 11s is distribution of summer mock results, careers and colleges to ensure a focused start to Year 11.*

Pastoral Team Messages

Year 7s – A message from Ms Largey, Head of Year

As Head of Year 7, I would like to say how incredibly proud I am of everything our Year 7 students have achieved during their first year with us. They have embraced every opportunity with enthusiasm, resilience and determination, throwing themselves into our interform competitions, from darts, chess and football to photography, kindness and attendance challenges. It has been wonderful to see so many students striving to do their very best, supporting their form teams and celebrating each other's successes. One of the highlights of the year was our off-timetable day, where students took part in the fun run with fantastic spirit. Some arrived in creative fancy dress, others challenged themselves to achieve personal bests, and throughout the event the overwhelming sense of encouragement and teamwork was inspiring, with students cheering one another on every step of the way. They have represented Year 7 with pride, kindness and positivity, and I look forward to seeing them continue to grow and thrive in Year 8.

Year 8s – A message from Mr Rothwell, Head of Year

As we reach the end of another fantastic school year, I would like to say a heartfelt thank you for your continued support. The positive partnership between home and school has made a real difference, and it has been a pleasure to work alongside you in supporting our Year 8 boys. Looking back over the year, it has been wonderful to see just how much the boys have grown since they first arrived in Year 7. They have become more mature, independent and resilient young men and I am incredibly proud of everything they have achieved, both inside and outside the classroom. The boys have consistently impressed with their positive attitudes and commitment, regularly earning early lunches as a year group as a reward for their excellent conduct and achievements collectively, as we aim to continue it into Year 9.

There have been many memorable moments this year. Our Year 8 basketball team made history by becoming Junior NBA North-West Champions - an outstanding achievement that reflects their hard work and dedication. Our cricket



team also had a superb season, reaching the semi-final of the State School Lancashire Schools Cup. As a year group, the boys also showed great compassion by raising money and awareness for Reuben's Retreat, helping to support families of children with life-limiting illnesses and those who have experienced the loss of a child.

As we look ahead, we are excited to continue supporting the boys as they begin the important journey towards choosing their GCSE options. Thank you once again for your encouragement and support throughout the year. I hope you and your families have a safe, relaxing and well-deserved summer.

Year 9s – A message from Mr Evans, Head of Year

As a year group, this year has been about galvanising and supporting each other with a loss of a peer. Our boys have shown kindness to each other, looking out for each other and have worked with us as a school to promote positivity and actions in memory of their friend. There have been a range of charity events and community initiatives instigated by many boys but a notable mention goes to Oliver T along with Tobie B for their efforts in raising funds in Haaris' memory outside of school- £10,054 was the total earlier this week- £5000 sent to build water wells in Pakistan to support local communities and the rest to Cancer Research charity. The character and resilience shown by our year group has made me incredibly proud as we find opportunities together, to bring good of bad. On top of that, we have had the boys completing their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh - a great opportunity to demonstrate their teamwork skills across a variety of areas.

A well done to all the boys who competed in, and supported, the Year 9 World Cup tournament- seeing Senegal take home the trophy! Although it has not yet concluded, Archie G is running away with the World Cup Fantasy League on 498 points so far. Well done to our outstanding boys as we move into our GCSE years ahead.

Year 10s – A message from Ms Marshall, Head of Year

Our Year 10s have had a phenomenal year of leadership, enrichment opportunity and careers-related events. As the year has progressed, we have seen a growing commitment to learning, pride taken in the mock exams and the Senior Prefect Team voted for, to help lead the school community forward with our Year 10s at the helm of all the Student Council and Leadership Cabinets. As covered throughout this letter, Duke of Edinburgh Silver Awards have been a focus alongside fantastic individual sporting and music achievements. Our interform champions have been 10E this year alongside many of our Year 10s celebrating their Dukinfield Tigers league and cup winners this season. I have every confidence our boys will enjoy a well earned summer, ready for their final school year in September with just 31 school weeks before GCSE exams begin.

Curriculum Updates

As a school priority, we have been working at creating more opportunities for our boys to bring learning to life, more information from our Curriculum Leaders is below.

History

This year has marked an exciting new chapter for the History Department, we have worked hard to create a department where every student is challenged, supported and encouraged to achieve their very best. Learning has extended far beyond the classroom this year with our Year 7s at battle in Warwick Castle, where they explored medieval life and brought their learning to life through hands-on experiences. Meanwhile, Mr Wilkinson led an outstanding Battlefields Tour in France, giving students the opportunity to stand where history happened and develop a deeper understanding of the sacrifices made during the wars. Thank you to all our students for their enthusiasm, curiosity and commitment throughout the year. Finally, a huge well done must also go to our Year 10 students who have completed their first GCSE mock examinations. Sitting exams in a formal GCSE environment is a significant milestone, and every student should be proud of taking that important first step. Whatever the results, remember that they are not the finish line, they are a starting point. Every successful GCSE journey is built on resilience, determination and the willingness to keep improving. We have every confidence that, with continued hard work, you can achieve your goals.

Geography

It has been a fantastic term for Geography, with students embracing a range of classroom and enrichment opportunities. Our GCSE students enjoyed two successful fieldwork visits to Salford Quays and the Holderness Coast, whilst Year 7 were brilliantly engaged during an inspiring Forestry careers talk organised by Miss Largey, impressing staff with both their enthusiasm and exemplary behaviour. Year 8 have worked exceptionally hard throughout their Ecosystems and Cotton to Coffee units, and we are looking forward to taking a cohort to Magna Science Adventure



Centre in November to build on their learning. A notable mention is deserved by our Year 9s who achieved excellent end-of-year assessment results reflecting their hard work and engagement. We are excited to welcome all our students back next year, alongside our new GCSE cohort into Year 10.

English

This year, students have embraced a wide range of opportunities to develop as readers, writers and speakers. From Year 7's festive pantomime visit and Year 8's exploration of First World War poetry and transactional writing, to Year 9's imaginative study and creation of dystopian fiction, students have engaged thoughtfully with literature while developing their own voices. Year 10 have grown in confidence through preparing for their GCSE Spoken Language Endorsement, while our Year 11 students demonstrated real commitment through dedicated intervention sessions. It has been a pleasure to see students' creativity, confidence and love of English grow.

Computing

This year we have been lucky enough to be on the pilot for MEGA days at Ashton Sixth Form College. This has involved 10 students from each year group spending the day at college, working with students from other schools in Tameside on AI and robotics workshops. Adding to this experience, 60 students in Year 9 have completed a virtual work experience with BT held in school. 55 Year 10 students and 37 Year 11 students attended Ada College (the National College for Digital Skills) for problem solving and AI workshops. Both KS3 and KS4 coding clubs at lunchtime have grown in size, and KS4 students have managed to persuade it to be 4 days a week instead of 1! Finally, 6 students across Year 9 and 10 have competed in a minesweeping competition where they built a robot from scratch, brought the robot back to school and had 3 weeks to modify (with the help of our amazing DT team) before going back to compete. Although we did not win, we had compliments on our focus and design – more so, the teamwork and hands-on learning will not be forgotten.

IDP

We are incredibly proud of the excellent effort shown by our Year 8 IDP students this year through their fundraising and awareness projects in support of Reuben's Retreat. Their commitment and teamwork have made a meaningful impact. A special mention goes to Jack W, who raised an impressive £600. We have also been inspired by the creativity and innovation shown by students such as Harry C, Nathan M, and Lewis B, who organised a World Cup sweepstake, and Ryan W and Thomas M, who ran a "guess the sweets in the jar" competition. These projects not only raised valuable funds but also highlighted the students' ability to work collaboratively and contribute positively to the wider community.

RE

In RE we have been impressed by the excellent effort shown by our Year 7 students in this year's Spirited Arts competition, a national event which invites pupils to explore spiritual, moral, and religious themes through creative artwork. Following last year's success, where one of our students was a national winner in this highly competitive competition, we are hopeful for further success this year. Regardless of the outcome, we are extremely proud of the creativity, care, and effort shown by all Year 7 students.

Business Studies and Young Enterprise Club

Our Business Department has had a brilliant year, packed with hands-on learning from the Young Enterprise stall at the Winter Fair to invaluable classroom talks from visiting entrepreneurs. The excitement continues into next term with business trips on the horizon, so we encourage all Business and Enterprise students to check the school app regularly for details and updates.

Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)

In German and Spanish, we are growing! Growing in option numbers of students engaged and enjoying the learning of a new language but also, growing in opportunities for boys to fall in love with language. We have been amending our curriculum for two years to include more interactive learning and the boys are thriving, including a buzzing atmosphere every Friday in our Languages Club. We also hosted a Brian Clarke Languages Roadshow careers talk with Year 9 -in January 2026 with more detail found here to help us encourage more linguists! [Home - MFL Insights for Students](#)

**Music**

Following on from our successful Christmas concert, our summer term concert took place with many soloists and groups performing, including our jazz orchestra, guitar ensemble, handbells, jazz collective and brass quintet. We are always grateful to our Year 11 leavers and many of them performed solos or in small groups. Co-curricular rehearsals have continued for the remainder of this term in preparation for our Autumn term engagements. A congratulations is due to our four students took external Trinity music exams. Three drummers and one saxophonist, all of whom passed with either merits or distinctions.

PE and Sporting Achievements

As ever, we have lots of celebrations within both individual students but also team achievements. Within our Athletics competition, we came second overall in Tameside. Amongst outstanding athletes, our top performers were:

- M. Walton who came 1st in the junior boys' triple jump.
- B. Sykes came 1st in the inter boys' javelin.
- Z. Sajid came 1st in the inter boys' triple jump.

We are proudly the Under 13s Basketball Junior MBA Northwest Champions. A huge congratulations to K. Daunt, J. Kershaw, J. Catherall, M. Walton, J. Toop, D. Towey, C. Okafor, L. Bingham on their team success at such a high level. Another team achievement from our Year 9 footballers who were crowned as Tameside Schools' Football Champions. Finally, our Under 13s cricket team got to the semi-final of the Lancashire Schools State Cup. Our teams progressing and winning such events in a range of year groups is testament to their sportsmanship and teamwork. Well done.

We have some individuals to celebrate too. Two Year 11s, J. Hill and J. Walker-Jones qualified to represent Greater Manchester in the English Schools Athletics 100m. As previously celebrated, L. Rhodes continues on his GB representations. Our Head Boy and Year 10, T. Jones, achieved Bronze in the GB Under 16s open karate, which got him a place in the English National squad and gold medal in the Irish Under 16s open. Also, our Year 8 J. Kershaw came 5th in the Lancashire schools golf Stableford competition. As parents/carers, please let us know when sporting achievements are secured outside of school so that we, too, can celebrate and champion sporting success.

Art

It has been an incredibly busy few months in the Art Department. Our Year 9 students had a great opportunity to work with a talented street artist during the recent off timetable day; the graffiti style results looked amazing and will be displayed in the classrooms and around school very soon. Also, Year 10 Art students had a fantastic workshop day with award winning artist Peter Davis who showed off his amazing portrait painting skills. The students then produced their own self-portraits in acrylic paint on canvas boards, working all day, and producing some fabulous results. Last week, our GCSE cohort enjoyed a gallery trip to Aviva Studios to see the work of internationally renowned artist Ai Weiwei. Our students were mesmerized by his incredible and thought-provoking art and are now looking forward to spending a day in school with artists, and support staff, from the gallery where they will focus on some of the themes and topics from the exhibition. Throughout this year we have seen a huge number of boys who have taken advantage of our co-curricular offerings, competitions, and creative opportunities!

Design and Technology

It has been another fantastic year in the Design and Technology Department, with students producing an incredible range of high-quality practical outcomes that they should be extremely proud of – we are! This year, we introduced a new curriculum designed to bring theory to life through engaging, hands-on projects, helping students develop practical skills alongside creativity, problem-solving and resilience. Students have also had the opportunity to work on exciting real-world projects, including the Tameside Tracks initiative, where they collaborated with the local community to design and manufacture products that make a positive impact notably in Stalybridge train station. Alongside this, our extra-curricular activities have continued to thrive, with students creating our annual Remembrance Poppy Display, sustainability-focused projects and taking part in a range of enrichment opportunities that showcase the importance of Design and Technology beyond the classroom. Our workshops are always full of boys at social times who give extra time and commitment to their projects whilst having the joy of our music choices to work to – a reason to keep them coming back in itself! It has been wonderful to see students grow in confidence, develop valuable technical skills and produce work of such an impressive standard. We look forward to another exciting year of designing, making and inspiring the next generation of designers, engineers and innovators.

**Food and Nutrition**

This summer saw our KS3 MasterChef Competition take place with fantastic participation and a range of delicious recipes being produced (and eaten). Congratulations to all who competed but notable to our runners up of H. Limb and C. Makepeace, and this year's winner A. Nelson. Within KS4, our students took part in a skilful 'Chef Demonstration' in school with Tameside College's Chef Gavin attending to help our boys with skills such as filleting salmon and plaice, alongside precision teaching of presentation skills in service. Our Year 10 students got really stuck into this challenge, particular skills from Abdi M and Riley T who tackled the salmon with great confidence! Although not food related, we have also launched the initial interest and fundraising for Cambodia Expedition with Years 8 and 9 with great interest for the summer 2028 departure. More fundraising opportunities will be shared with our school community to help our boys raise the funds needed to attend and *earn* a standout opportunity in their lifetime.

Staff

Miss Broadbent leaves our Science Department to move into new adventures in industry. We thank Miss Broadbent for being a kind Form Tutor to 8S and for bringing her love of Science to our boys. Mr Curley will be joining our Scientists from September as a keen STEM leader for our curriculum too. Form 8T and Computing Department welcome back Mr C Wilson who rejoins our teaching team. Finally, we say a goodbye to Mrs Sumner in our RE Department as she moves to a promoted post as Head of RE closer to home. Mrs Sumner (Gunter to many) has brought passion, enthusiasm and opportunity to our boys and we wish her every success in her new role. Miss Kay will be joining our RE Team in September with her love and enthusiasm for RE a great addition to our team.

Our Trustees (Governors) are integral to our school, as volunteers who give their time across the year to come to school and help leaders drive improvement further, as members of our local community. Mr Tilbrook, whom has been on the Trustee Board for many years, who stepped in to become Chair in recent years, moves into a role as Member on our Board. Mr Tilbrook has given so much time, energy, support and challenge to us and I wanted to take the time to thank him for this support. In addition, Mrs Mirtorabi has also given numerous years to volunteer as a Trustee and as her son left school last year, is stepping away from the role. Again, a huge thanks to Julie for her challenge and support. Finally, thanks to Mrs Ritchie for her support over the course of this year in helping our school. We have successfully recruited three Trustees to join us on our journey. I encourage any parents to join our Trustee Board when opportunities arise, to help use your viewpoint and experience as a parent/carer to help positively challenge and champion our school, to better the experience for our boys and community.

Parent/Carer Survey

A huge thank you to those families who completed the summer survey for us. Our Senior Leaders are processing feedback, reviewing our working practice and within September's return to school letter, we will outline our responses to feedback in our usual manner. We appreciate the time and feedback shared.

In closing, a reminder on restocking the equipment for September, with bags as an essential part of uniform and helmets essential for any bikes cycled to school. My usual reminder that school drop-off or collection is not on our school site unless for medical grounds or temporary injuries - we have a lot of sport-related injuries every September! This is simply to protect the safety of our boys on site with narrow driveways and limited space at points when masses are entering or leaving site. From everyone here at West Hill School, we hope you have a lovely summer, and we look forward to warmly welcoming students back on **Thursday 3rd September 2026**.

Kind regards,

Ms C. Cronin