



WEST HILL SCHOOL

Aiming High Since 1927

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

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Dear Parents and Carers,

What an incredible year it has been for West Hill School, one of growth and development. In my first year as Headteacher, the whole school community have remained warm, honest and welcoming to me, thank you for your role within that. We have reignited a dedicated and passionate Parent-Teacher Association known as 'Friends of West Hill' who have coordinated events, not only raising the profile of our school in the community but also fundraising to put more money back into the school, which goes straight to improving the school experience for all learners. Next academic year, we focus on the next stages of growing student leadership within the school, alongside introducing some new initiatives and whole school changes that recognise the feedback from our families as well as staff and the boys. Next year is an exciting year and I would encourage you to support your son in participating in school life as much as possible from September. We have a large range of co-curricular clubs, teams, committees, 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 4th September, please discuss which wider activity your son will opt in to. My challenge in the final assemblies was to have a culture of 'opting in' and upstander behaviours. I ask for your support in challenging your son to do the same.

Arrangements for Wednesday 4th September 2024

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.

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

As of Thursday 5th September, all students arrive from 8am-8:40am with Form Tutors beginning form time at 8:40am.

Staff training days will be taking place on Monday 2nd and Tuesday 3rd September, if there is a need to relay information, please do contact our admin@westhillschool.co.uk mailbox whereby our Admin Team will receive your message and pass on to relevant staff members before your son's return.

For September 2024, our revisited and updated school vision will be published. Thank you to the parents/carers that offered feedback on what should be included. Our school vision and ethos will also be updated on our website for September whereby some of the parent/carer feedback has been incorporated, as has the staff and student voice. For September, our school vision is below.

At West Hill, we have an uncompromised, aspirational vision that:

- Everybody will experience a rich curriculum that expands beyond the classroom, empowering them to feel successful and make ambitious future choices.
- Every lesson enables individual success through quality adaptive teaching and shared expectations.
- Everybody matters and has a right to be safe, valued and treated with kindness.
- Everybody will be supported to develop a healthy understanding of themselves and respect for others.
- Everybody will be ready and take responsibility for their own learning, choosing thoughtful behaviours that show empathy for others.
- Everybody in our West Hill family will collaborate and support each other to realise their aspirations and celebrate success.

This forms our West Hill Way.



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. Firstly, Miss Ellor who joined us in January 2024 leaves us as an LSA and returns to us in September as we support her through her training to become a Science Teacher. Miss Ellor's support and work with our boys has been impactful and her support within our SEND Team, noticeable. Miss Wood, one of our Modern Foreign Language teachers leaves us this summer to relocate closer to home. We thank Miss Wood for her support and dedicated planning for the boys. Mr O'Hanlon, one of our Science teachers, is also turning his hand to a new adventure outside of the classroom. We wish Mr O'Hanlon the very best and learners will miss the regular appearance of a violin in lessons. Finally, we say goodbye to Mr and Mrs Whiting. Both begin new adventures closer to home and we thank them for the years of service and foundations they have built for the school and amongst the students, staff and community.

Additionally, we have some movement within our staff leadership meaning that Mr Rothwell becomes our Head of Year for our incoming Year 7s and Ms Mason and Mr J Wilson become Head of Design Technology and Food and Nutrition. Mr Williams and Mrs Sykes step into an Assistant Head of Year role to reinforce our pastoral support as well as Miss Glaister who becomes our lead member of staff for Looked After Children. We welcome some new staff in Science, RE, Art maternity cover and Modern Foreign Languages as well as additional LSAs in the SEND Team. Again, it's an exciting year ahead as we prepare to step into excellence and ensure that we have a healthy investment in staff to maximise opportunities, experiences and support for all boys.

Sports 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. Some noteworthy accomplishments have been:

Year 7: Tameside champions in cross-country, badminton, basketball, athletics and Quad-kids.

Year 8: Tameside champions in cross-country, badminton, basketball, athletics and Quad-kids. A notable mention to Cameron S with his achievements with Liverpool FC.

Year 9: Tameside champions in cross-country, badminton, basketball, athletics, football, Quad-kids alongside being Lancashire Schools Cup quarter finalists. Notable mentions go to Lucas R represented GB in biathlon and Greater Manchester in athletics. Aidan M represented Greater Manchester at football and has been signed by Everton. Aaron G representing Derbyshire cricket.

Year 10: Tameside champions in cross-country, badminton, basketball and athletics. Lancashire Schools Cup semi-finalists. Calum P was the under-17 National Champion at Pole Vault.

Year 11: Tameside Champions in cross-country, badminton, basketball and football. Rian M representing Lancashire Cricket, Leighton G representing Derbyshire Cricket, Lawson Y representing Cheshire Golf, Harry S and Leon W representing Lancashire Rugby. Jack W for his Great British basketball representation and Dominic G representing England Basketball.

Maths Progress

In the Maths department this year, boys have been working diligently on their Sparx Maths home learning each week, as well as completing independent tasks to boost their scores. The summer term winners for most XPs were: Temo R (Y7); Bradley B (Y8); Josh M (Y9); Arik K (Y10). We have, again, entered 216 boys for the UKMT challenge at junior or intermediate level. Between them these boys achieved 2 gold certificates (both in Year 7) putting them in the top 10% in the country, 19 silver certificates and 52 bronze certificates, all in the top 50% of entrants. We had celebrated success at both levels with boys being invited to participate in the following kangaroo rounds putting them up there with the best mathematicians in the country! We are confident that there is more success to follow next year.

Our co-curricular offer in maths was well supported this year with lots of boys attending the weekly Puzzle Club, as well as the Sparx Maths drop-in sessions, both of which will return next year.

Many of our Year 11s had the chance to experience some higher-level maths, visiting the University of Manchester to have an A-Level taster, culminating in them sitting the Level 2 Further Maths qualification in the summer, in addition to their Maths GCSE.

**Reading Progress**

Our library has had a tremendous second, full year in action. Our aim is to ensure the love of reading remains at the heart of the curriculum and opportunities to showcase reading are fully integrated into the school life.

In 2022 - 2023, we loaned 3,928 to 443 students. In 2023 - 2024, to date we have loaned 4,931 books to 560 students.

An increase of 1,003 books and 117 students. This compares very favourably to other schools in the area.

After reading the requests from our boys through Student Voice, we are adding a further 200 books to the shelves in September. Please encourage your son's use of the library before, during and after school where homework can be completed on the PCs and items printed too.

Pastorally, it has been an excellent year for building relationships between Heads of Years and their year groups. Please find our summaries from each Head of Year below.

Year 7s – Mr Evans

A huge well done to all of Year 7 for a wonderful first year. It really has flown by and it has been wonderful to see our boys grow in confidence and meet new friends - all of them have come a long way since that first day back in September. A special thanks goes to all of our Form Tutors and also to you, the families and for your support and clear communication. So many have achieved their bronze commendation or SLA awards with various praise award certificates, the numbers have been staggering.

The interform competitions and sports teams have been great to see and there has always been a strong team spirit in all of these events. A well done to all the boys who have started a new club or activity and to those getting involved in things like our MasterChef competition which ended with Year 7s in first and second place. I hope all boys have a wonderful summer and can look forward to another fantastic year as they progress into Year 8.

Year 8 – Mr Lawton

There has been real growth in our Year 8s both in stature and character, pushing themselves both in and out of lesson. They have visited the University of Manchester to get a taste of higher education, learned first aid, have taken part in a salsa lesson at a Spanish Institute, engaged with World Book Day competitions, supported the community litter pick and held exotic animals during Science week. The standout for the year has to be the boys who have raised over £1300 for Reuben's Retreat as part of their IDP lessons - the most that has ever been raised! This sums up the selflessness and empathy they have, going above and beyond to support those who may be in different situations to themselves.

Year 9 – Mrs Corrigan

As my first year as Head of Year 9 comes to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to thank both our families and Form Tutors for their invaluable support. It has been a year of significant growth and achievements. Students have demonstrated their maturity and team work, especially through the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh award, with 42 boys participating in a practice day and then completing their final expedition with an overnight stay in Tintwistle, showcasing their resilience and innovative spirits and thankfully, excellent navigation skills. A number of students participated in the Greenpower Challenge, despite not winning the race, their teamwork skills and fastest pit changes impressed the judges enough for them to contact the school. There have been a whole host of sporting achievements, too many to mention, but worthy of recognition and praise. The process of selecting options has allowed everyone to explore their interests and sets a solid foundation for their future studies. I am excited for our next chapter in Year 10 for the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

Year 10 – Miss Largey

Over this past half-term, we have seen our Year 10 cohort rise to each and every opportunity. Within the last few weeks, we have seen a select group of Year 10 Students aim high and push their skill-set forward by applying for roles such as Senior Prefect and Head Boy. This process involved writing a fierce application and completing a well-practiced speech to the Prefect and staff body. Each applicant demonstrated the ability and drive to successfully lead our student body. More recently, our Year 10s embarked on their work experience placements. These placements have seen our students venture into the wider world to develop the necessary skills needed for employment and the experience has shown the ability for our students to be resilient when new situations arise. Additionally, students have also taken part in two college taster days. Our students demonstrated a real strive for excellence and continued to aim high, reminding our local partners of what it means to be a West Hill Boy.



In addition to this, we have had 11 Year 10 students complete their Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award. This involved completing a two-night expedition in both Saddleworth and Edale. Each student also dedicating their own time to volunteering within our community, as well as learning new skills. It has been an excellent year for living our 3Rs.

Our introduction to tailored shorts has been a huge success. Boys will be allowed to wear these into the Autumn Term with September weather often being nicer than July! We thank you for the support in ensuring correct tailored shorts are worn and unbranded black/white socks. I believe the boys look very smart alongside ensuring that they remain cool in the heat.

Within Autumn's welcome back letter, a 'you said, we did' will feature from the parent/carer summer survey showing you how we take on board views and suggestions, triangulating with our staff feedback and student feedback, to reflect and plan sensible change.

We have some renovation works planned over the summer so there will be some surprise improvements for the boys as they return. Again, this is to better the daily experience of our school community.

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

Ms C. Cronin
Headteacher