



# WEST HILL SCHOOL

*Aiming High Since 1927*

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

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As we take steps closer to summer, it presents a natural opportunity to reflect on all that our school community has achieved. Before we commence, a reminder to our families that the spring term ends on **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March at 2:55pm**. Students return to school on **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April** for a normal school day.

## Upcoming Dates

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April marks the Spring Concert at 7:30pm, links to our ticket sales have been sent and are on our social media platforms. A reminder that Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May is a Bank Holiday and that May half-term is from Monday 27<sup>th</sup> May to Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May with all learners returning to school on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024. Year 10 mocks are scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> June and Year 10 work experience is the week of 8<sup>th</sup> July. The school closes for the summer on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July at 12pm. Our Year 11 team will be communicating details of the end point for Year 11 through separate communication.

## This Summer Term: Co-curricular Lunch

From listening to the views of our students and many families, we are excited to share that we are extending our co-curricular offer as of Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April. Throughout the summer term, students will have the opportunity, during their lunch break, to participate in music, art, sport, media, anime and many more. For students who may prefer a quieter lunch, we have included sessions on mindfulness too. To accommodate this, we have made minor adjustments to our school day - this will not impact on the start or end of the school day, but will elongate lunch to a 40-minute lunch (currently 30-minute) to enable time for a programme of activities. Our after school and Saturday programme will continue as normal. Please encourage your child to participate in as many activities as possible and follow us on social media or visit the 'Co-Curricular' page on our website for more details.

## Parent Consultation

From September 2024, we are looking to amend the official start time of the school day by 5-minutes in the morning. Our current model is at 8:40am the learners make their way to form with an official start time of 8:45am. At present, 95% of boys are already on site and in forms by 8:40am. From September 2024, we propose that 8:40am becomes the start time of form with an earlier 'warning bell' indicating that students should make their way to form. We are proposing this amendment to allow for extra co-curricular lunch time activities (moving permanently to 40-minutes) without compromising the impact on learning opportunities in school. Our learners have requested more co-curricular opportunities, as have many parents and carers, so we are proposing these changes to enable this to occur. This consultation is now open with parents and carers to express their views on this proposal either in writing to our admin email account detailed within our letterhead, FAO Ms Cronin, **or** by attending the school site on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 at 5pm or Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 5pm as I host the consultation within the school canteen. Parking on site is permitted. If you do not wish to enquire or question the start time amendment, no communication or attendance is necessary. Any feedback on the consultation should be shared before Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 3pm.

## Uniform Amendment

**From Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024** we will launch an amendment to our school uniform. The final half-term will become the time in the year whereby tailored, black shorts will be included within our uniform policy. This is reflective of your voice as parents/carers but also the voice of students and staff who are in favour of this change when temperatures increase. Many local supermarkets stock tailored black shorts, as do Top Marks Schoolwear in Ashton-under-Lyne with costing between £6-£9 in both slim fit or sturdy fit. **Shorts must be plain, black and tailored – not cargo shorts. Socks to be worn should either be black or white ankle or trainer socks.** Trousers may still be worn during this time too. Further communications and examples of appropriate shorts will follow after the Easter break ready for the 3<sup>rd</sup> June.

## Special Mentions

At West Hill we are trying to break national trends of boys as reluctant readers and reluctant linguists.



A huge well done to our Year 7 and Year 9 pupils who are our most active Duolingo competitors. There is still time for learners to join the competition and not only grow in their confidence in Spanish and German but also to be entered for our awarding of prizes. Ms Cronin is currently competing with staff in German, Spanish and French on Duolingo as staff are also competing alongside the boys!

After a hugely successful World Book Day we are busy planning more activities and student opportunities for next year. A huge well done to our winning forms on their 'design a door' entries, our scavenger hunt winners, the treasure hunt participants in the library and the 'read a whole story' which allowed all staff and boys to read sections of a story read in chunks throughout each lesson of the day. Our social media platforms were updated with images throughout the day. Additionally, the library competition is finishing this week. We were awarding based on total books checked out and total number of active readers. The winners are as follows: 7T with 129 books checked out this term, 26 active readers. 8T and 8I (joint winners) - 8T have 88 books checked out (18 active readers), 8I 23 active readers (72 books checked out). 9I - 58 books checked out this term, 9 active readers. 10E - 71 books checked out this term, 16 active readers. 11H - 40 books checked out this term, 4 active readers. We can clearly see an eagerness to read but need parent and carer support with us to maintain this love of reading as our learners get older and the balance of academic study merges with the love of reading for pleasure.

To be a Spring term Sparx Maths winner takes some gusto with many boys heavily invested in completing their Maths learning. However, the following boys have gained the highest XP since Christmas, a huge feat. Well done to Yahya T in Year 7, Declan D in Year 8, Josh M in Year 9, Rishi M in Year 10 (best in school!) and Muslim R in Year 11. Additionally in Maths, a special recognition for Charlie G on his success in the UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge this term, automatically qualifying to the next round. Well done to all boys who achieved a silver or bronze certificate and to those other boys who participated. The Junior Challenge will happen in the summer where all of Year 7 will be entered.

### **Sports at West Hill**

Amongst a wealth of fixtures, we have some standout moments from PE this term. We are Tameside Basketball and Badminton Champions in Year 7, Year 8 -9, and Year 10-11 (3 separate age groups). The Year 10-11 team went on to represent Tameside in the Greater Manchester Badminton Championship and came third.

Calum P is now an under-17 National Champion in the Pole Vault.

Jack W was selected for Great Britain in Basketball and as a result was awarded the MVP in England for his age group.

Brandon K-B broke the under-17 park run record. He has won the event 8 out of the 16 times he has run.

Alfie T-W in Year 8 came first at park run this week, a younger winner.

Year 11 are into the Tameside football final, Year 7 in the semi-final, and Year 9 in the quarter-final.

Lastly, we are the Year 9 Tameside champions in Off the Blocks.

### **Heads of Year Messages**

-Our Year 7 learners are excelling in form time competitions and reading. We are hoping for some excellent engagement in the new co-curricular opportunities to learn new skills and make some new friends.

-Our Year 8 boys have raised over £1,000 so far through their IDP lessons with Miss Gunter. This incredible feat shows their respect and responsibility towards our community with all money raised going to Reuben's Retreat.

-Over the last term Year 9 have grown in confidence, maturity and resilience, and are to be congratulated. Year 9 have been making option choices for their GCSEs next year, all responses have shown a maturity in discussions.

-In Year 10 this term we have seen some fantastic examples of what it means to be a West Hill Boy. Some examples include our Year 10 role model students who have applied for the prestigious Prefect role. Alongside this, we would also like to recognise and praise a number of boys who have set themselves a challenge and are attending weekly evening seminars and workshops at Ashton Sixth Form College. Students have been attending in their own time, over several weeks. The programme offers a unique insight into post-16 education and equips them with confidence and skills to make a successful transition after they leave school. Additionally, we have had 31 geographers take part in their GCSE residential this week.

-Our Year 11 are on their final stretch towards exams and their Alton Towers end of school trip. We have seen excellent engagement in period 6s and Golden Ticket winners and entries. We are incredibly proud of many boys for their attendance and focus. It's now on for the last push to Alton Towers.



With the amendments to summer term mentioned, please check our co-curricular section of the website with our updated lunch time offer from Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April and encourage your son to learn something new or enjoy some active social time with peers and staff. Again, the wearing of tailored black shorts will not commence until Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June and additional information will follow on this, alongside the patterns and feedback from our mid-year parent/carer questionnaires which we appreciate your time in completing.

Many thanks for reading and we wish you a restful break.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'C. Cronin', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ms C. Cronin  
Headteacher