



WEST HILL SCHOOL

Aiming High Since 1927

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

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Subject: End of Spring Term

1st April 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Once again, we thank our families for another largely positive spring term at West Hill. We look forward to resting over the Easter break and returning to school on **Tuesday 22nd April** for the start of the summer term. For those *sloping* off on the school ski trip next week, we hope that you have had an amazing experience. Thank you to our staff who are joining and supporting our students and for all their planning in making it happen. For our Year 11 students and families, this next term marks the final term with us and we hope that your separate correspondence had all the details that you required around the steps ahead for your son(s).

School Uniform

As summer term begins upon our return, it is a reminder that tailored, black shorts are allowed in this term. 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 plain black or white socks without logos (can be trainer or regular style socks).** Trousers may still be worn.



- Shorts must be black.
- Tailored shorts.
- Slim fit or sturdy fit.
- Mid-thigh to knee in length.



- No cargo-style shorts (with side pockets on the thigh).
- No denim.
- No sports shorts.
- No logos/branding.



Parental Questionnaires

Thank you to those who completed our spring term parent/carer questionnaire. We had a smaller response of 62 answers on this round so I would implore our families to help us in the summer term, by completing the final voice of the year. Largely, the results stated that:

- Overwhelmingly, you stated that your child was happy and felt safe at West Hill
- Overwhelmingly, you stated that we have high expectations of your child and they have a broad curriculum with co-curricular opportunities
- Overwhelmingly, you stated that any bullying experienced has been resolved or dealt with effectively
- Road and bike safety were raised as concerns, alongside a request for greater clarity on achievement points and how these are communicated home (both of these are outlined in the next part of the letter).



Road and Bike Safety

We fully agree with our parents who have raised concerns regarding road safety along Stamford Street notably, regarding the traffic lights adjacent to school. We have contacted Tameside and have already received one visit from them as they observed the end of day dismissal, agreeing that the size of the island and the timings of the lights pose risk. We are working together to try and reduce this risk to our boys, whilst also ensuring greater signage is put up to indicate a school is nearby (currently there is minimal signposting that a school is on a main road).

However, **bike safety** is an area that we need to work in partnership with you on. I appreciate that for many, your child sets off for school after you have left the house in the morning, however, despite previous correspondence with you we still have too many boys arriving to school without helmets. We have had two collisions from boys on their way to school this term. Therefore, I am seeking your support as we build their responsibility, one of our 3Rs. **From Tuesday 22nd April, any boy arriving to school by bike without a helmet will have their bike locked and stored away by us until they return the next day with a helmet, or if a parent/carer comes to collect the bike.** You will receive a notification if your son has chosen, despite our warnings, to cycle to school without a helmet. We will inform your son of this in form time on Thursday and Friday this week and are seeking your support in ensuring your son has a helmet if he rides to school. This is an added workload for us but we are doing so as safety must come first and like many in our community have commented, it is an accident waiting to happen. We have helmet lockers within our secure bike sheds that are being cleaned over Easter, with keys made available for safe storage during the day.

Communication Platform to and from School

As stated in previous correspondence, as a growing school, we know that our methods of parents/carers communicating with key staff and or messaging into school is cumbersome. We have officially chosen our new communication platform of 'Reach More Parents' who are currently making our school app that parents and students can download and use. This app will allow for attendance messages to be submitted via the app, alongside finding your child's home learning schedule, achievement and behaviour data as well as being able to contact teachers directly, via the app. Additionally, parents/carers can set the app to translate into a preferred language so that any parents with an alternate first language have the same clarity of messages and communication. We are currently in the designing process and will look to roll out the new platform in July, ready for full use in September 2025. We will be working with a small group of parents/carers as our trial group to offer their input as primary users.

Gates and Site Security

As you know, at present our site security is more open than an average school. We are in the planning stages of installing electronic gates at the front of school to make for a more secure school site. Additionally, we intend for the perimeter fencing to be increased to the standard 2m height found within schools. This is currently within the planning permission final stages so that we can ensure safeguarding and safety come first. More details will follow once work commences as we work with the council to ensure the designs are in-keeping with our grade II status.

Staff Leavers

At Easter, we have two members of staff leaving us for ventures new. We wish Mr Hill, our current Head of Geography the warmest of well wishes in his new role in Liverpool and we wish Mrs Smith, in our SEND Department the very best of luck in her new adventure. As a school, we are privileged to have worked with you over the years and truly thank you for your work on the continual journey to be the best that we can be.

Key Dates for Next Half-Term

Monday 21st April: Easter Monday, Bank Holiday, school closed.

Tuesday 22nd April: Return for normal school day.

From 22nd April: Year 8 academic reports sent and Year 11 MFL Speaking exams commence.

W/C 28th April: Year 7 and 9 academic reports sent.

W/C 4th May: Monday 5th May is Bank Holiday, school closed and Year 11 exams commence this week.

Thursday 8th May: Year 8 Progress Evening 3:30-6:30pm (online event).

W/C 12th May: Year 7 Assessment Week 2.

Friday 23rd May: End of school day marks the start of May half-term.

W/C 2nd June: Return for normal school day and Year 8 Assessment Week 2.

Tuesday 3rd June: Year 10 Form Tutor consultation 3:30-6:30pm (in-person).



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To end, we are incredibly proud of the hard work of our school staff and students, and wish you a restful break as we gear up for the summer term on our return. We had over 400 families choose West Hill as their school of choice in our upcoming Year 6 into 7 year group and know that by continuing to work together, we are crafting something excellent and exciting for our school community. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Kind regards,

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

Ms C. Cronin
Headteacher