



WEST HILL SCHOOL

Aiming High Since 1927

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February 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope that I find you are well and that you have had a good start to 2019.

I am writing to you this February to provide you with some important information, some reminders in terms of school expectations and some dates for your diary.

Reminder about uniform and personal appearance

Hooded Tops

Can I remind parents that hooded tops are not appropriate for school and should not be worn either underneath or on top of the blazer. If the weather requires your son(s) to wear additional layers they can wear a suitable school coat over the top of their blazer and/or a plain black v neck jumper underneath the blazer.

Facial Hair

Inevitably as boys mature into young men they will begin to grow facial hair. The school policy states clearly that boys' faces should be cleanly shaven. A number of boys have required reminding repeatedly of this recently. We ask that parents support us and ensure boys are cleanly shaven before they leave home to come to school in a morning.

Shoes

As you are aware we have a very clear policy in terms of our school uniform and in particular the footwear we allow in school. See link below if you are unclear.

<https://www.westhillschool.co.uk/school-life/uniform>

Thank you to all of the vast majority of boys and parents who ensure that our expectations are adhered to.

However, there have been occasions over the last term when boys have for a variety of reasons arrived at school in unsuitable footwear.

If your son arrives in school in unacceptable footwear and it is believed that he has shoes at home, he will be sent home to get his shoes or we may contact you and ask that you bring his shoes into school. If your son is sent to get his shoes and arrives back in school before the close of the morning register this will be treated as a late mark, if he doesn't manage this, but returns to school in reasonable time, this will be treated as an authorised absence. If he does not return within reasonable time the absence will be treated as truancy.

If your son does not have appropriate shoes at home he will be offered a loan pair of school shoes for the day. At school we have a shoes in a variety of sizes which can be loaned by boys in the short term. These shoes are disinfected with the same spray they use in bowling alleys and are therefore completely hygienic. In the event that we do not have the correct size of shoe your son will not be allowed on the yard at break time and lunchtime until new shoes have been purchased. We would consider that 2 days is sufficient time to replace shoes.

Mobile Phones

School is NOT responsible for individuals' personal mobile devices being damaged, lost or stolen. Items are brought to school at the individuals' own risk.

All Personal Mobile Devices should be switched off at all times and stored in the pupil's bag or blazer pocket whilst on the school grounds or on a school organised activity off-site, except when explicit permission has been given by a member of staff.

If a member of staff has given permission for the use of Personal Mobile Devices, they **MUST** only be used as directed by the member of staff and their use **MUST** comply with the School's ICT Policies.



Sanctions for the unauthorised use of Personal Mobile Devices

In the first instance in most cases, if a boy is found using his mobile device he will be asked to turn it off and put it away. If the pupil fails to turn off the device and put it away, or questions the member of staff, or is a persistent offender, the device will be confiscated immediately and kept in the school safe and retained until the next day, it will only be returned when we receive written permission from the pupil's parents/carers.

Devices will not be returned before the end of the school day. Repeat occurrences will result in longer periods of confiscation and the pupil being referred to their Head of Year. In certain circumstances the device will be confiscated without a request to put the mobile device away. The senior management of the school will determine which circumstances will warrant such action.

Food and drinks in School

Approximately 2 and half years ago I wrote to you in my October letter 2016 regarding our policy on drinks and snacks that were high in sugar and/or caffeine and that we banned such food and drinks. I would like to thank all of the parents and carers who have supported us on this and we did see a significant drop in the number of boys bringing in such items.

However over the past few months it has been noticed that an increasing number of boys have started again to bring bottles of high sugar drinks, very large packets of crisps, sweets and biscuits. I would just like to remind all parents/carers and boys that these drinks and food types are not acceptable and will be confiscated if found.

Cycling to School

We would like to encourage as many pupils as possible to cycle to school, particularly during the lighter months of the year. We still have available spaces in our cycle shelters for pupils in all year groups to use. Further information can be found on page 12 of the pupil planner. Parents need to read and sign the agreement on this page and ensure that the school rules are followed. This includes bikes being well maintained and pupils wearing all necessary safety equipment.

Advanced information

Prefect Interviews

As part of preparing our students to become good citizens and be ready for the world of work we try to give them various levels of responsibility at different stages in their school lives, for example, peer mentors, school councillors, team captains etc. However, perhaps the most important opportunity is the process of becoming a prefect, one that all boys will have the chance to experience during their time at West Hill. This term, all year 10 pupils have been briefed on the role of the Prefect and the application procedure. Potential candidates are now busy preparing their application form and supporting letters for the selection process. The next step for each candidate will be an interview with current prefects, governors and members of staff.

In order to facilitate these interviews and make them as close as possible to a real life experience, school will close at 1.55 pm on Friday 5th April 2019 to allow them to take place. All interviews should be completed by 3.00pm.

Pupils in years 7, 8 and Year 9b will be dismissed for the day at the end of period 4 (1.55 pm).
Pupils in Years 9a, 10 and 11 will have lunch as normal between 1.25 pm and 1.55 pm.

If they are not involved in the interview process, they will be allowed to leave school once they have finished their lunch.

Dates

School closes for Easter on Friday 5th April 2019 (please see information above in relation to closing times)
School re-opens Tuesday 23rd April 2019 at 8:45am
School is closed for May Day on Monday 6th May 2019
School closes for half term Friday 24th May 2019
School reopens Monday 3rd June 2019 at 8:45am

Yours sincerely

Mr A F Harrison