



Aiming High Since 1927

West Hill School

Parent Handbook

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Headteacher's welcome

West Hill School first opened its doors to educate boys in 1927. Throughout our long history, we have established an ethos and set of values that are secure and have been shared through West Hill generations past, present and still to come. Our reputation in the community is one we value and strive to enhance.

We aim to develop confident and ambitious young men, equipped with the skills and qualifications to thrive in a changing world.

We have the highest expectations, where every boy, no matter his starting point, is expected to follow the school motto and Aim High, work as hard as he can, and behave as well as he can.

Alongside academic excellence, we are a school in which boys are exposed to, and encouraged to partake in, a wealth of extra-curricular activities—that not only broaden the mind, but support and protect it.

These opportunities will empower our young men to become fully engaged citizens in their community, becoming part of our West Hill family, and moving forward, will enrich their own lives as well as the lives of others.

Mr A Owens





The pastoral team

Pastoral care is at the heart of our ethos. Every boy is unique and they will all face different challenges at different times throughout their school career. The pastoral system ensures that we provide support for every boy as an individual so that they can thrive.

Your son will be placed in a form group that he will remain with throughout his school career. There are 7 forms in each year group, each with their own Form Tutor. Your son will also have a Head of Year who has overall responsibility for the progress and wellbeing of boys in the year group. They are supported by a member of the Senior Leadership Team, along with our team of learning, behaviour and emotional support staff.

If you have any concerns such as behaviour, attendance, punctuality or welfare you should contact your son's Form Tutor in the first instance. This can be done by emailing admin@westhillschool.co.uk

***“The school has helped me become more mature,
the teachers are very welcoming and positive”***

Ben, Class of 2025

Form Time

Every morning your son will attend a 20 minute form time before lessons start. This time is an essential part of the school day; boys are registered and prepared for learning. There are many activities that take place during Form Time, and a weekly schedule typically consists of:

- Uniform, equipment and planner checks
- Private reading and independent learning tasks
- Numeracy challenges
- World news discussions
- Whole Year group assemblies

Form Tutors build strong relationships with the boys in their form, and often remain with them for their whole school careers. Form Time is an opportunity for boys to build a sense of belonging with their peers, discuss issues as a group, or get help from their Form Tutor if needed.



The school day

The school day is set out as per the table below.

Registration	8.45am to 9.05am
Period 1	9.05am to 10.05am
Period 2	10.05am to 11.05am
Break	11.05am to 11.25am
Period 3	11.25am to 12.25pm
Period 4	12.25pm to 1.55pm (including lunch)
Period 5	1.55pm to 2.55pm
Extra curricular	3.15pm onwards

First lunch	12.25pm to 12.55pm (Years 7, 8 and 9B)
Second lunch	1.25pm to 1.55pm (Years 11, 10 and 9A)

At social times, each year group have dedicated space on the school yard, but your son is welcome to utilise other areas of the yard.

Please note that although the school day officially starts at 8.45am, boys are welcomed on site from 8.15am and can use the canteen facilities and their Form room for private study and reading.





Curriculum

We have an opportunity based curriculum, empowering our boys to become fully engaged citizens in their community. Our curriculum is built around timetabled teaching periods, as well as wider experiences that aim to embed our values and ethos.

Our curriculum aims to inspire a love of learning and personal development, equipping our boys with the skills, knowledge and values to help them progress on to the next stages of their learning journey post West Hill.

This is delivered by:

- Our staff: through programmes of study and wider curriculum engagement
- Our pastoral provision: engaging with external agencies and parents/carers
- Our boys themselves: taking ownership and driving their own development needs.

If parents and carers have any concerns about the progress of their son in a particular subject area, they should get in touch with their son's class teacher in the first instance. All staff can be contacted using admin@westhillschool.co.uk



“The sophisticated curriculum at West Hill is designed for students to advance and gain extensive knowledge no matter where pupils’ starting points are.”

***Senior Prefect Team
2021***



Extra curricular

We encourage all of our boys to take part in extra curricular activities as it provides an opportunity to meet new friends and learn new skills outside of the classroom. It is also incredibly important to maintain good mental health and wellbeing.

Sport

There are many opportunities for sporting engagement after school and at weekends. Our boys compete regularly in Inter School competitions including rugby, football and cross country. We also offer an extensive programme of after-school sport

Our athletes often go on to great things, and we have many boys who represent Great Britain or England in their age categories.



Music

There are lots of instruments to learn and ensembles to get involved with after school. Boys also have the opportunity to perform in the annual Carol Service and Spring Concert at the local church. Ensembles include jazz, brass, ukulele, samba, rock/ pop bands and choir.

Trips

All boys are given the opportunity to take part in exciting trips during the school holidays. Some examples of the trips on offer include:

Education and conservation projects in Kenya, Borneo, Uganda, Tanzania and Cambodia

Geography fieldtrip to Iceland

Ski and snowboard holidays in the USA and Canada

Languages study trips to Berlin and Cologne

Sporting tours of France, South Africa and the USA

Water sports adventures in Europe



The list goes on...

Boys are also offered reading clubs, study clubs, chess club, Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh awards, 3 Peaks challenge....there really is something for everyone.



Remote learning

Remote learning forms a key role in the curriculum provision at West Hill School . On starting, your son will be introduced to a number of online platforms that should be used at home to support the learning in classrooms.

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

Our school VLE is a platform for the digital aspects of subjects taught in school. Many departments will set homework using the VLE and your son will be expected to submit some of his work electronically. He will also find all of the subject content is covered on the VLE, so there is always help available at home. There are dedicated sections in each subject area for revision resources and additional work, to help boys become independent learners.

Digital Library

Reading is great way to improve understanding, vocabulary and develop skills that are needed in society. West Hill School actively encourages boys to read, and one of the ways this is available is through our digital library.

The digital library can be accessed on a computer, tablet or mobile device. We regularly update the titles included, so there is something to interest everyone. For more information see <https://www.westhillschool.co.uk/curriculum/curriculum-support/Digital-Library>

“From my overall experiences in school and through advanced remote learning, West Hill has ensured every student has strived for excellence at every stage and all pupils “Aim High” and go “above and beyond”, which develops them for their future ahead of them.”

Nathan, Head Boy 2020-2021



Expectations

At West Hill School our expectations follow the 3R's. We expect all boys to be ready, respectful and responsible:

Ready Boys are ready to learn

Respectful Boys are respectful of all members of the West Hill School community

Responsible Boys take responsibility for their actions

We have expectations and standards for every classroom in West Hill School. They are for the benefit of every pupil and are non negotiable.

Presentation

How boys present themselves is important. Many organisations, whether school or employment, have expected standards of dress. West Hill School must prepare our boys for that, as such, the following must be adhered to:

- School uniform must be worn smartly at all times; shirt tucked in, top button fastened, ties worn correctly and plain black belts only.
- Unusual hairstyles are not allowed. Long hair must be neatly tied back and jewellery should not be worn.
- When entering buildings, remove hoods or hats. On entering a classroom, remove coats.
- Refer to female teachers as Ma'am and male teachers as Sir.

Readiness for learning

Arriving to lessons in the frame of mind for learning is essential to ensure a prompt start and the ability to process information. To facilitate that, the following are essential:

- When moving about school boys keep to the left, move quietly and with purpose. Keep to paths and steps.
- Boys are punctual to registration and all lessons.
- Teachers will greet you son at their classroom door. Boys must follow the routines that teachers have established, to enable a prompt start to lessons.
- Planners should be placed on the desk at the start of the lesson and the correct equipment should be out.
- When leaving a classroom boys will be dismissed by the teacher. They should leave in a quiet and orderly manner.



Attendance

In order for your son to thrive at West Hill School, we expect him to attend school regularly to learn, to socialise with friends and prepare himself fully to take his place in society as well rounded and responsible citizen.

There is a clear link between students' achievement and their level of attendance at school. We want all boys to achieve the very best they can and for this they need to be in school regularly.

It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their children attend the school .

We recognise that some students and their parents/carers may need to be supported at times in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities, and our attendance officer and pastoral teams will be there to help on these occasions.

Good attendance

Our expectation is that boys attend school as regularly as possible, and as such the target attendance for all boys is at least 96%. To encourage good attendance we alert parents when your son falls below this threshold.

Reporting absence

Parents must inform school of any absence by telephone on the morning of absence. If we do not receive a reason you will receive a text message in the morning requesting that you contact school. In instances of planned absence, such as medical appointments, you should send the details of the appointment to your sons Form Tutor, or by contacting admin@westhillschool.co.uk

Punctuality

Late arrival disrupts the education not only of the student who is late but also of others in the class. All boys are expected to be on school site by 8.40am ready for form time at 8.45am. Boys who arrive after 8.45am are expected to sign in at the reception office. This is imperative, as the late book is used in the case of an emergency evacuation.

Alerts

Please note that any boy whose attendance falls below 90%, for whatever reason, is defined by the Department for Education as a persistent absentee.

As a school we will inform you when your son is not meeting attendance and punctuality expectations and put in place appropriate interventions to help your son make improvements.

In cases where attendance or punctuality does not improve following interventions, the Local Authority will be notified and parents/carers may be issued with a penalty notice.



Rewards

When boys meet our high expectations they will receive rewards. We recognise success through the following:

- Praise awards
- Achievement points on SIMS
- Letters or phone calls home to parents
- Postcards
- Awards assemblies

Praise Awards

We operate a system of Praise Awards that recognises boys' achievements both weekly, and at key milestones throughout his academic career. The system incorporates the key contributing factors that lead to success; attendance, punctuality and good behaviour.

Weekly	Form Tutor Praise Award <i>100% attendance, no behaviour points, no late marks</i>
Half termly	Head of Year Praise Award <i>At least 95% attendance, no behaviour points, no late marks</i>
Termly	Senior Leader Praise Award <i>At least 95% attendance, no behaviour points, no late marks</i>
Annually	Headteacher Praise Award <i>At least 95% attendance, no behaviour points, no late marks</i>
5 Years	Chair of Trustee's Praise Award <i>Received 5 Headteacher Praise Awards</i>

Commendation Badges

These badges are presented to boys during awards

Badge	Number of Form Tutor Praise Awards
Bronze	15
Silver	45
Gold	90
Platinum	150





Sanctions

In order to maintain our high expectations and standards we have a robust behaviour policy which we use to deal with any unacceptable behaviours.

Behaviour Scale

West Hill School has classified different type of unacceptable behaviour into groups related to their severity. They are classified as S1-S5. S1 behaviours are the least severe and S5 behaviours are the most severe. In most cases, S1 & S2 behaviour will be resolved by the member of staff initially dealing with the incident. Where a boy breaches the school behaviour expectation at S3 and above, a sanction will generally be applied by a Head of Year, Head of Department or Senior Leader.

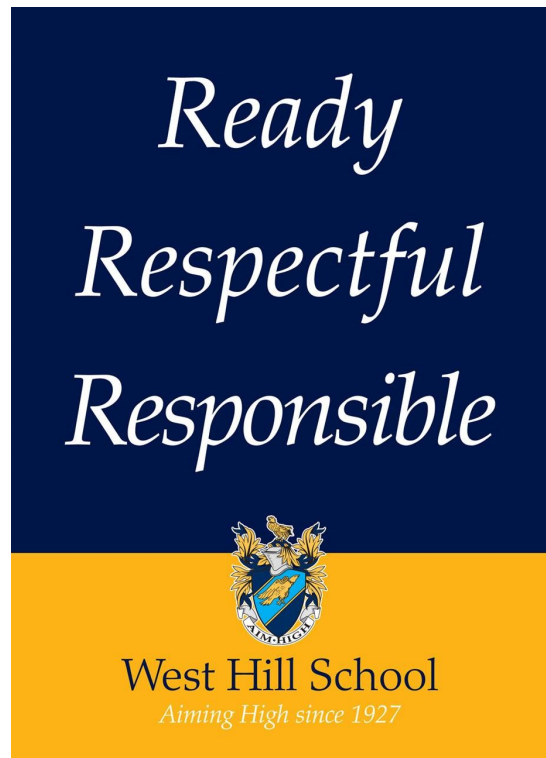
Sanctions

The school may use one or more of the following sanctions in response to unacceptable behaviour:

- A verbal reprimand
- Sending a pupil to an exit room
- Expecting work to be completed at home, or at break or lunchtime
- Detention at break or lunchtime, or after school
- Referring the pupil to a senior member of staff
- Letters or phone calls home to parents
- Agreeing a behaviour contract
- Putting a pupil 'on monitoring report'
- Protecting Learning Detention
- Behaviour Support Unit (BSU)
- Fixed term exclusions
- Alternative provision
- Permanent Exclusion

Keeping you informed

Parents/carers are informed of behaviour points and achievement points through the School Gateway app. Make sure you activate this fully, see page 14 for full details.





Uniform

It is important that your son's uniform is correct at all times. Please note that there are restrictions to the types of trousers and shoes allowed in school. We reserve the right to determine when any part of a boy's uniform or appearance is not meeting our standards. Boys who choose not to abide by our high standards may be sent home or to the Behaviour Support Unit at the discretion of the Headteacher in order to fix the issue.

Uniform

- White shirt
- School tie
- Black V neck jumper (optional)
- Black trousers (denim, corduroy, canvas, combat, cargo or drainpipe are not allowed)
- School blazer
- Plain black polishable shoes (pumps, trainers or hybrids are not allowed)

School ties and blazers are only available from our recognised suppliers. A list of recognised suppliers and their contact details can be found on our website.

www.westhillschool.co.uk/school-life/uniform

PE Kit

Indoor kit:

- White T-shirt with school badge
- Royal blue shorts with school badge
- White sports socks
- Trainers with non-marking soles
- Towel

If you have queries regarding West Hill School uniform please contact school on 0161 338 2193 or admin@westhillschool.co.uk

Outdoor kit:

- Red and Gold/Blue reversible rugby shirt with school badge
- Royal blue rugby shorts with school badge
- Royal blue socks with school badge
- Trainers, football/rugby boots (no blades)
- Towel

All items of clothing must be clearly labelled with your son's Name and Form



Equipment

It is important that your son is equipped for every lesson. We recommend a bag check in the evening, ready for the next school day.

Essential Equipment

2 Pens (black/blue)
Green pen
2 pencils and a sharpener
Ruler
Eraser
Scientific calculator (Casio FX-85GTX recommended)
Private reading book
Protractor
Compass
Glue stick
Mask and hand sanitiser

Mobile phones

Personal mobile devices are not to be seen on school site unless they have been explicitly permitted for use by a member of staff. The sanction for unauthorised use of a mobile device is confiscation. It is at the member of staff's discretion whether the mobile device is returned at the end of the school day or placed in the school safe overnight. Mobile devices placed in the school safe will require written permission from parents/carers to be handed back to the pupil.

Personal Property

Whilst we will always do our best to assist your son in keeping his property safe, the school does not take any responsibility for the loss or damage to any personal possessions brought onto site. We recommend that parents/carers make their own arrangements for insurance of bags, clothing. Watches, bicycles etc (usually by extension of your home insurance).

Large amounts of money or items of value should not be brought into school.

Drinks

In our fight against single use plastics, bottled water can no longer be purchased in the canteen.

All boys are required to bring their own refillable water bottle to school. There are several water fountains in the canteen and at other key locations around school where boys can refill at break and lunch time.

Please note that certain drinks items are not permitted at school and will be confiscated by staff. These include fizzy drinks, energy drinks and cans.



Keeping in touch

In order for your son to thrive at West Hill there must be open communication between parents/carers and school. We use a variety of platforms to ensure parents/carers are kept will informed about their sons progress, behaviour and achievement.

Contact details

It is essential that parent/carers provide up to date contact details, including a telephone number and an email address for us to hold on your son's school profile. There may be occasions where we need to contact you urgently, so it is paramount that you inform us of any changes. We collect data electronically, and as such you will receive an invitation by email from noreply@sims.co.uk. Please make sure you follow the instructions in this email to ensure we have correct and up to date information on our records.

School Gateway

The School Gateway enables us to share information with parents and carers quickly via email, text, online and a smartphone app (for Android and iPhones). Parents and carers are automatically enrolled onto the School Gateway. To enable access you will need your current mobile number and email address. A PIN number will then be sent to your phone. Contact details must match the information that we hold for you on your son's school profile. Please see <https://login.schoolgateway.com/0/auth/login> for more details.

Social Media

West Hill School has a very active Twitter page [@westhillschool](https://twitter.com/westhillschool) which parents/carers are warmly encouraged to follow. Many subjects also have their own pages so you can receive updates on a daily basis with current stories, pictures, events and notices.

School Website

This is a key part of our communication system. On here you can find links to different subject areas, events, and school policies. You can also view the main twitter feed and keep up to date with school news. <https://www.westhillschool.co.uk/>

Parent Pay

We operate a cashless catering system in school. Parents can load credit onto their son's individual ParentPay account either online via the ParentPay website or at any local store where the PayPoint logo is displayed. Please see <https://www.westhillschool.co.uk/catering/Cashless> for more details.



Parent/Carer questions

Below is a list of frequently asked questions for parents and carers. If you can't find the answer to your query below, please get in touch via admin@westhillschool.co.uk

Who do I contact if I have questions about my son joining West Hill?

We know that starting at a new school can be worrying. If you have any questions you should email admin@westhillschool.co.uk in the first instance. Your query will be passed on to a member of staff that will be able to help. This is most likely to be your son's Form Tutor, Head of Year or SLT link.

How do I claim free school meals?

Free school meals must be applied for via the Department for Education. The easiest way to do this is via the online application form. Full details can be found via the link on our website: <https://www.westhillschool.co.uk/school-life/catering/free-school-meals>

How will I know if my son is making progress?

At key points in the year you will be issued with your son's progress report. This will give you an insight into how he is performing in each individual subject. You will also be invited to attend a Parents consultation evening where you can meet with individual subject teachers to discuss progress.

How can I help my son with his school work?

On starting at West Hill School your son will be issued with a pupil planner. This will act as his academic diary where he should record key information and homework. Please make sure you go through the planner at home and check it weekly to help your son with his school work expectations.

Why do I need to give consent for biometric data?

We use biometric data for two systems in school; cashless catering and building access. Your son will not be able to use either of these systems which are an essential to the normal operation of school without this data.

On starting a scan of your son's fingerprint will be taken so that he can access these systems. When a finger is scanned the entire fingerprint is never stored, only parts, meaning that a fingerprint cannot be recreated.



Pupil questions

Below is a list of questions we are often asked by boys starting at West Hill School. Although the answers are here, we know that boys can still worry. If your son has any further questions he should speak with his Form Tutor.

Where do I keep my school bag and PE kit?

There are no locker facilities on the school site which means your bag should contain everything you need for the day, including your PE kit, and yes—you will have to carry it with you!

When can I use the toilets?

Toilets can only be used at break and lunch time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Boys are not allowed out of lessons to go to the toilet.

What kind of food is there in the canteen?

The canteen serve a wide variety of food to suit everyone, and the menus are changed regularly throughout the year. Check out the catering page on the school website for more information: <https://www.westhillschool.co.uk/catering>

What if I get lost?

Most boys moving to West Hill School worry about this, but you will be amazed at how quickly you get to know your way around. If you do have a problem there are always prefects and staff around the school who will help you.

What if I lose something?

Things get forgotten all the time, and it is normal. If you have lost items of PE kit or clothing you should check in the main reception office and in the sports hall. Equipment can get lost too, so you should always make sure you look after your things, pack your bag carefully after each lesson and have plenty of spare equipment with you.

How much homework will I get?

All of your subject teachers will set homework, and usually you will be expected to spend around 30 minutes on each subject. These will be spread across the week, and you will use your planner to record and keep track of where you are up to.