



West Park

'A caring school where we put pupils and their achievement first'

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25th July 2025

Dear West Park Families

What a year!

It has been an incredible journey, from early September, navigating the dark and cold of the winter, through to the joys of spring and the excitement of the summer term.

School years are always busy but this one has been particularly action packed. Children get one shot at their secondary education; five years that shape them from being children into young adults, ready to contribute to society and to fulfil their dreams. I feel blessed to work in a school with staff and Trustees who are so committed to making everyday count and to giving that little bit extra to provide those memorable experiences which truly last a lifetime!

Reflecting on the fortitude and resilience of the Lionesses' amazing run to the Euros final (that was really, really difficult to write as a proud Scotsman). I hope that it is this approach to life that we instil in our pupils. None of us are perfect and we shouldn't aspire to be, but being the 'best' isn't always the end goal. Working hard, treating others with kindness and respect and believing that amazing things are possible, are far more important in today's society and certainly at West Park.

The last half term, (all 8 weeks of it!) has really emphasised this. An Ofsted inspection kicked us off and I have never been so proud of our school and our community. I was determined that Ofsted would see two 'authentic' days at West Park. There was no frantic preparation, no coaching of staff and pupils and no creation of a rhetoric to feed the inspection team. The team really 'got' our school and as always, the positive attitudes of our brilliant staff and amazing pupils really shone through.

Thank you to all of you who took the time to fill in the parental questionnaire and/or to speak to the inspection team. Our trustees play a huge part in this process and work diligently behind the scenes to support and guide myself and our school. I am truly grateful for the huge amount of time and commitment that they give to us all.

After the excitement of Ofsted, this half term has been crammed full of special events. I will attempt to name some of them but it is almost impossible to recall all of them due to the multitude of opportunities that have been offered to our pupils.

Year 11

Year 11 finished off their exam period admirably. Their behaviour and attitude were exemplary throughout their exams and I am very optimistic that their hard work and dedication will be rewarded on results day on Thursday 21st August. As always, you get out what you put in, and this is very evident when pupils open their exam results envelope.

The Year 11s time with us was rounded off with their leavers' assembly and Prom. The leavers' assembly was packed with emotions, highlights and photos from over the years. The staff leavers' video was Barbie themed and a few tortured souls who still yearn for a career on the stage took worrying pleasure in donning outfits and playing up to camera. This was led by the Head of Year and the Assistant Head of Year.... they're just Ken!

The Prom at Pride Park Stadium was another triumph; over 400 members of our community were on site to welcome the pupils to this landmark occasion. We managed to cause a traffic jam down onto Pride Park as the cavalcade of tractors, a princess carriage, sports cars, Harley Davidsons, limousines and jeeps arrived on the site. Pupils looked resplendent in their outfits and staff scrubbed up pretty well too. Prom night was amazing and we danced ourselves dizzy (or jumped up and down on the spot!) to a range of old school classics. Year 11s left with huge smiles and memories for life. Many also looked like they had done a 3-hour CV workout in a baker's oven. Sweating out through their shoes was a common occurrence.

Year 6

As one chapter closes, another one opens. Our new Year 7 cohort joined us for 3 days in early July. They had a full West Park experience, settled in exceptionally well and presented as a very positive bunch. We can't wait to welcome them in September. Thanks to all of the parents and carers who attended our transition evenings, working alongside us on the first steps of your child's West Park journey. Disappointingly, a number of the Year 6 pupils are taller than me. I am convinced that being a Headteacher is causing me to shrink!

West Park Life

The Maths department would like to say a huge thank you to pupils for the way they have engaged with the new homework process 'Sparx Maths' and to parents and carers for their continued support. Since Sparx Maths was introduced, our pupils have achieved the following incredible figures:

- ❖ Over 500,000 questions answered correctly
- ❖ 5,000 hours of learning completed
- ❖ Nearly 400 pupils in years 7-9 have improved their times tables
- ❖ As a school we have achieved 90% completion putting us in the top 100 schools in the world that use Sparx Maths

A cookbook has been professionally put together by our amazing young carers team. Staff and pupils have recommended quick and simple recipes that we can all use at home to enhance our culinary skills! We have a few copies left for the price of £5.00. If you would like to purchase a copy, please contact school.

Our Careers Team have just completed a Careers Newsletter, which captures some of the exciting things that have been taking place this term. Please see the attached newsletter for more information.

And so on to the rest of the half term:

- ❖ Rewards Trips and Rap Battles
- ❖ Dragon Puppets and Diversity Week
- ❖ Colour Runs and Careers Fairs
- ❖ Sports Day and Special Breakfasts
- ❖ Walks for Duke of Edinburgh and West Fest

The list goes on and I have absolutely loved sharing these experiences with your incredible children. Sadly, the rap performance was delivered by a professional, despite my offer of delivering some Robbie Burns to a 'sick' beat!

We finish the school year with West Fest, a two-day music festival that takes place at the bottom of our school site. Performances range from rock bands to vocal soloists and the talent of the pupils (and most of the staff!) is exceptional. What makes me proudest is how our pupils support their own with every artist receiving a raucous round of applause. I am now off to go in the staff stocks. Surely no pupils will spend their hard-earned money on soaking their headteacher.....

We continue to work with Dan Seaman from Drone Discovery www.dronediscovery.co.uk to capture some of these unique events mentioned above. We can't wait to share this with our local community in September.

So, thank you for everything, enjoy the summer and remember that life is what we make it. It isn't always perfect but there is something magical to find in every single day.

Take care and see you in the new school year.

Kind regards



Scott McGregor
Head