



West Park

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

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Dear West Park Families

Summer looks like it may be finally making an appearance as we push through May towards the half-term break. It is also an absolute joy to see our amazing pupils across year groups interacting on the field and enjoying socialising together, it really is such a special time in our school. This is also an exceptionally busy period as we support our Year 11 and indeed all pupils through the summer exam period, welcome new members of the West Park family through our transition process, ensure that we have the best staff team possible for the next academic year and organise the wide range of events and opportunities that are unique to West Park.

Year 11

Our awesome Year 11 cohort are determinedly attacking their final GCSE and BTEC exams as their time at West Park slowly comes to an end. This group of pupils have really matured during their time with us and they are displaying epic exam behaviours as they support each other through their home straight. I am also delighted to see pupils engage so pro-actively with our bespoke revision programme. Facilitating this programme is a significant undertaking with staff going above and beyond to provide additional sessions to our pupils. I am aware that this approach is very different to other schools, with pupils often 'released' on study leave earlier in May. We are absolutely convinced that our approach works and allows our Year 11 pupils to fulfil their potential. Please continue to support us in doing everything we can to enable our Year 11 cohort to achieve their absolute best.

After the challenge of a long, arduous exam period, we can't wait to celebrate with our Year 11 pupils and acknowledge an incredible 5 years at West Park. On Wednesday 21st June, Year 11 will have their final leavers assembly at the school. Year 11 will continue to come into school at 9:15 a.m. on this day for a short assembly in the Main Hall followed by an opportunity to spill out onto the school field to take photographs, sign shirts and to listen to Mr Sanderson's questionable party playlist! The celebratory theme continues with the Year 11 Prom which takes place at Pride Park Stadium this year on Friday 14th July and promises to be another brilliant occasion. Staff continue to work on an array of 'creative' dance moves so that we can join the Year 11 pupils on the dance floor.

Exams

Alongside Year 11 exams, we have also facilitated full cohort exams for every year group. These exams are administered in exactly the same way as we administer GCSE and BTEC exams for Year

11. This annual experience for our pupils allows them to become accustomed to having exams in the Sports Hall and best prepares them for their terminal exams at the end of Year 11. As always, I am incredibly proud of how our pupils have responded to this process, demonstrating a mature and determined attitude throughout.

Year 6 Transition

At the other end of the spectrum, a new group of excited Year 6 pupils are ready to join us to commence their West Park journey. We have been out and about visiting local primary schools, welcoming pupils and providing information regarding events that will take place during this term.

Our transition days and evenings will be co-ordinated as follows:

- Tuesday 4th July Transition Day 1
- Wednesday 5th July Transition Day 2
- Wednesday 5th July Transition Evening 'X' Band (WESTP)
- Thursday 6th July Transition Day 3
- Thursday 6th July Transition Evening 'Y' Band (ARKCO)

Further details regarding the above days/evenings will be sent to families in due course.

Alongside this, pupils are completing their 'Who am I' booklets. This allows us to find out a little bit more about our new children and provides some key information as we begin to formulate form classes. This is a significant piece of work as we organise over 300 pupils into 10 form classes. Thankfully, somebody with a far more organised brain than me, will take on this challenge!

Communication

Team Reception at West Park are second to none and they are always a bright, approachable presence when visitors come into our school. Unfortunately, over the last few months, we have seen an increase in the number of visitors who are coming into school acting aggressively and talking inappropriately to our staff. This is still a significant minority of West Park families, most of our parents and carers work with us positively and productively to get the best for their child and realise that we all work hard everyday to do the best for everyone that attends West Park. Please keep the following in mind when communicating with the school:

- Team Reception are there to help and will be positive and professional in their interactions with you.
- Everybody is focussed on getting the best for our amazing children and we are all committed to building positive relationships.
- Schools are busy places and it is not always possible to locate a member of staff due to them being occupied, working with our children.
- Staff will respond to requests to get in touch as soon as this is feasible but this may take longer than a few hours.
- During a school day a member of staff may have a programme as follows:

8:00 a.m. Prepare for the day, organise resources; liaise with colleagues.

8:30 a.m. Welcome pupils and deliver form time/interventions.

9:00 a.m.	Deliver/support lesson 1.
10:00 a.m.	Deliver/support lesson 2.
11:00 a.m.	Break – this often involves talking to individual pupils and accessing toilets!
11:30 a.m.	Deliver lesson 3.
12:30 a.m.	Lunch, liaise with colleagues, prepare, grab a quick bite to eat.
1:00 p.m.	Deliver lesson 4.
2:00 p.m.	Deliver lesson 5.
3:00 p.m.	Deliver catch-up, revision sessions, detentions.
4:00 p.m.	Finish pupil sessions, plan for the next day. Complete marking/feedback.

This comprehensive programme does not include our intensive extra-curricular programme which stretches through from our early morning breakfast club, to break and lunchtime activities and a wide range of afterschool clubs and experiences. All of these extras rely on the good will and commitment of our incredible staff team.

Please also be mindful that we have a new, modern phone system in place and that calls are recorded to ensure that we offer the best service to West Park families and deal with any issues that may arise promptly and appropriately.

Afterschool Catch-ups and Detentions

We are very privileged to be involved with a school which is populated with staff who are willing to go the extra mile. This is the bedrock of our systems at West Park, ensuring that high expectations are underpinned by a culture of learning and progress. Prior to pupils attending West Park I talk to West Park families about supporting our systems to ensure that their/your child can be educated in an environment away from disruption and conflict. If a detention or catch-up session is booked, please ensure that your child attends it. Our most successful pupils at West Park always benefit from this positive collaboration between school and home.

Epraise

Epraise is now utilised consistently across the school and it has been brilliant to see the impact that it has had on our hard-working pupils. This links to our form and house competitions and another set of pupils are enjoying a VIP breakfast with their form tutor at the end of this half-term. It is amazing how the smell of breakfast items attracts certain members of the pastoral team to 'join in' with the celebrations. Alongside the VIP breakfast the termly opening of the Epraise shop has been a real hit and hundreds of pupils have purchased a range of gifts so far. The Epraise shop will open for a final time this academic year towards the end of this term. This will be supplemented by a 'West Park Superdraw' with pupils being able to utilise any remaining tickets to have the chance of winning a range of prizes. Prizes will include a bike, laptop and two iPads, I think I may be throwing in multiple entries for myself!

End of Term Events

As we move through the exam season we also have our eye on a number of exciting events that are being organised to celebrate another fantastic year at West Park. We can facilitate these events because your children are amazing and always astound us with their ability to balance having fun and being appropriate. Even 800 pupils experiencing Scottish 'country dancing' to Free from Desire just about held it together!

Summer events are planned as follows:

Friday 26 th May	End of Half-Term
Monday 5 th June	Return to school
Wednesday 21 st June	Year 11 Leavers Assembly
Thursday 29 th June	Sports Day
Tuesday 4 th July	Year 6 Transition Day
Wednesday 5 th July	Year 6 Transition Day Year 6 Transition Evening
Thursday 6 th July	Year 6 Transition Day Year 6 Transition Evening
Friday 7 th July	Careers Fair
Friday 14 th July	INSET Day Year 11 Prom – Pride Park Stadium
Tuesday 18 th July	West Fest Epraise Rewards Trip
Wednesday 19 th July	West Fest
Thursday 20 th July	West Park Superdraw
Friday 21 st July	End of Term

The vast array of opportunities on offer really does enhance the West Park experience and provides memories that will stay with our pupils for years to come. As we continue to recover from the pandemic and deal with the on-going cost of living crisis it is important for all of us to grasp these significant moments and reflect on the journey that we have been on over the last few years. No school is perfect but I can guarantee that myself and the West Park team do everything, every day to ensure that your child gets an education that they can enjoy and allows them to develop into a fantastic new team of remarkable individuals.

Take care and enjoy the onset of Summer!

Kind regards



Scott McGregor
Head