



West Park

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

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Dear West Park Families

I hope that you are all keeping well and that your child/children have started the year positively. I am absolutely delighted with how our pupils have returned to school, embracing all of the rich opportunities that are evident across West Park.

There continues to be a real sense of community at West Park and it has been fantastic to see our pupils supporting each other through the start of the academic year. Please remember that the Eco-shop is open to all members of the West Park family. The shop is open at the following times:

- Thursday 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- Friday 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

The shop sits at the West Road entrance to the school and we stock food provided by Fareshare and Spondon Relief Charity. We continue to develop our Eco-shop as detailed below:

- Ten items are available for £2.40.
- Individual items are available for 24p.
- Large items e.g. trays of chicken may be classed as 2 – 5 items.
- A vast range of books are available free of charge.
- Sanitary products and toilet rolls are available free of charge (when available).
- Some school uniform and adult clothes are also available.

As we benefit from being part of a diverse and supportive community, it is important that we think of others around the world.

The tragedies in both Libya and Morocco have shocked us all with the monumental loss of life, hard to comprehend. Whole towns have been destroyed and the recovery from these events will take a huge amount of time. The challenges that both countries face are stark and it is important that we recognise this and that we do our best to support others during this difficult time. On Thursday 26th October we will hold our first non-uniform day of the year and we will utilise this to raise money towards the UNICEF appeal to support people in both countries.

Year 11 Leavers

Our Year 11 pupils left West Park for the final time on Thursday 24th August when they attended our annual results day. This is always a time for reflection and celebration with pupils considering how their results can facilitate their next step. Our Year 11 pupils matured impressively in their time with us and really committed to our unique revision model.

The Prom is always a highlight of the school year and this year's event was no exception. The football club proved to be an excellent venue and Derby County Football Club staff were quick to complement our pupils on their excellent attitudes and behaviour.

Post 16 Evening

On Thursday 28th September we hosted our Post 16 Evening. Over 31 providers were on site to talk to families about their organisations, next steps and the application process. As always, this event was exceptionally well attended with lots of powerful messages for our pupils. This event supports pupils in their applications for apprenticeships, college and sixth form places.

Transition

303 Year 7 pupils have successfully transitioned into being a member of the West Park family. A lot of work has gone in to prepare the pupils for this significant step in their educational journey and the new pupils have come in and settled very well. Year 7 form tutors are being very proactive in supporting individuals and building relationships with families and our online systems including Firefly, Epraise, Evolve and Parent Pay are working efficiently. A 'Settling in Evening' takes place at the school later this term which provides families with the opportunity to hear how their child has settled in at our school and to spend time with the form tutor.

Open Evening

Our annual Open Evening took place on Monday 18th September and, as always, we were absolutely inundated with visitors. Families who live in our catchment area, alongside those who live further afield visited the school and all had the opportunity to tour around the site with or without an expert pupil guide! The school looked absolutely fantastic with the site team and our brilliant team of cleaners ensuring that all areas were sparkling.

Subject teams put on a range of exciting experiences including electrocution, popcorn making, map reading, scrabble, food tasting and a whodunnit across the site. I always encourage prospective families to come in and see what we do during the school day and it has been fantastic to welcome a number of you to West Park.

Staffing

We worked tirelessly during the Summer term to ensure that we are fully staffed across all subjects with specialist teachers. Sadly, this is an unusual picture with schools both locally and nationally struggling to fill vacancies. We have also developed staffing structures to ensure that we have a robust leadership model in place. We are absolutely delighted with how new staff have settled in to life at our school.

Vaping/Toilets

Vaping continues to be an issue for a number of young people up and down the country. There is a misconception that vaping is 'not too bad' for children. Vaping is undoubtedly dangerous and the true effects of this are only likely to become more evident as the years go on. At West Park, vaping and smoking is not allowed and all pupils are aware of this. We utilise our sophisticated CCTV system to ensure that pupils' behaviour is appropriate across the site however, as with most schools, the toilet areas are the hardest to supervise. With this in mind and to ensure that all pupils have clean and accessible facilities, the following measures are being implemented:

- No more than 5 pupils to be in a toilet block at any one time
- Fixed CCTV cameras facing away from the toilets but picking up the entry point to the toilet block and wash basin area.

Pupils have been very positive when we have discussed this proposal with them.

Site Safety

We take great pride in ensuring that our site is secure and safe. Park Road car park is not accessible to parents and carers during any part of the school day. We value your support with this matter.

Covid Guidance

Most COVID guidance now sits under guidance for general respiratory infections. The advice is that anyone with a temperature and who feels unwell shouldn't be coming into school until they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend.

Where pupils have received a positive result from a COVID test, children should try to stay at home for 3 days.

We would still encourage all pupils to wash their hands regularly, and cover their nose/mouth when they sneeze/cough. As a setting we still maintain all of the measures such as increased ventilation, and regular thorough cleaning that we have had in place over the last couple of years.

The most up to date guidance is available here: [Health protection in children and young people settings, including education](#)

Finally, I am very happy with our return to school this year. Staff new and old have settled into really positive routines and some of the tweaks that we have made to school systems have bedded in well. We are a happy school where pupils want to attend because of the calm, productive atmosphere that has been created. Please continue to work positively to help our children thrive during this important phase in their lives.

Kind regards



Scott McGregor
Head