



West Park

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

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Dear West Park Families

We have had a very positive return to school this year and I am delighted with the purposeful and calm atmosphere that is evident across our site. Pupils are well prepared for learning and look very smart in their uniform. Attendance to school, in general, has been good so far and this is a significant push for us this year. Please ensure that your child is in school every day to benefit from the vast array of learning opportunities that we have at our school.

New Arrivals

A number of new staff have joined the West Park team this year and they have really impressed me with their immediate positivity and ability to hit the ground running. We are hugely fortunate to be one of very few secondary schools, both locally and nationally, who are fully staffed with subject specialists and highly trained associate staff. I am hugely proud of our school and I am delighted that so many talented professionals want to work with us.

A different bunch of exceptional individuals have joined us this year, with 303 bright eyed and bushy tailed Year 7 pupils joining the West Park family. The Year 7s have been brilliant during their first few weeks with us and have settled quickly into their new lessons and ways of working. Numerous Year 7 pupils stop to have a chat with me as I tour around the site and they are always eager to feedback on their experiences and tell me how much they enjoy the school. A particular group always greet me with a coordinated hello and frantic hand waving. Although this is a complete delight, I worry that they may be working in a similar way to the penguins in Madagascar and a school domination plan is being hatched!

Starting at a secondary school is no small thing and it has been a real partnership between Year 7 families and school staff to make this transition so successful. Thank you for your active involvement; this bodes very well for the months and years to come.

On this topic, it would be very remiss of me to fail to mention the vast majority of our older pupils. They really have stepped up at the start of this term and have role modelled appropriate behaviours to our younger cohorts.

Site Development

Alongside building our excellent staff team, we have continued to enhance the school site. Over the summer months we have created a new bespoke Reset Room, a Pupil Reception, a quiet

outside social area, linked to the Pastoral Hub and developed the Woodland carpark and W-Block playground. I use 'we' in the widest term, as I am incapable of wiring a plug so tend to leave site developments to the experts! Our 4-person site team is second to none and we are very fortunate to have their vast array of skills on site. Visitors from far and wide always comment positively on our creative site development and exceptional standard of upkeep.

Va Va Voom!

We hit the ground running at West Park and although we have only been back at school for a few weeks, there have been endless activities and opportunities across the site. Some of these include:

- A terrific Open Evening attended by families from across Derby.
- A Post-16 Evening with over 600 stakeholders on site.
- A City Cross Country event with 84 athletes representing West Park.
- Positive Social talks for Year 7.
- Walking, talking exam preparation for Year 10.
- The start of Inktober
- The rehearsals for the school production of 'Grease' are underway.

And lots more besides!

In the coming weeks we have:

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| • Thursday 24 th October | Year 7 Settling in Evening. |
| • Thursday 21 st November | Prize Presentation Evening |
| • Friday 15 th November | Children in Need |
| • Friday 22 nd November | INSET Day |
| • Friday 13 th December | Christmas House Karaoke |

As a reminder I have attached a list of the Terms and Holiday dates for 2024-2025 at the end of this letter.

Please remember that the Eco-shop is open and accessible to all from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. every Thursday and Friday.

Epraise

It has been brilliant to see so many of our pupils being inspired by the West Park Epraise system. Pupils can gain Epraise points both in and out of lesson by exhibiting our core values:

- ❖ Hardwork
- ❖ Kindness
- ❖ Resilience
- ❖ Achievement

Pupils also receive 3 bonus Epraise points every week, for arriving on time. We have a half termly Epraise competition for each Year group and the winning form class benefits from a VIP breakfast with their form tutor. As you can imagine, the form tutors are often more competitive than our pupils!

The Epraise shop opens termly, enabling pupils to 'spend' their current points total on a range of items. This term the Epraise shop will open on Monday 2nd December and will close on Wednesday 11th December.

Traffic Awareness

West Road and Park Road are always exceptionally busy at the start and end of the school day. Please drop your child/children off in the village or at the turning circle to ease congestion and to increase safety for all of our pupils and their families. Please also remind children to watch where they are going when crossing the road. After a long day, without access to their mobile phone, some pupils are so anxious to catch up on the latest TikTok or Snapchat, that they forget that cars and bikes can cause untold damage. The onset of E-cars, E-bikes and E-scooters makes this even more important, as I found out to my own detriment this weekend, as an E-scooter ploughed into me as I ran around a corner in Borrowash. Apparently, this was my fault for having the audacity to be running on a pavement!

Could I also politely remind all of our stakeholders to avoid parking in the disabled spaces in the school car parks, unless they are in possession of a blue badge.

Attendance and Punctuality

Being present is key to being successful in any school, college or workplace. Although 95% is an impressive score in a test, 95% attendance over a year still means that a child misses 9 ½ days of learning compared to their peers. Over 5 years at school, this equates to 47 ½ days (9 ½ weeks) of school!

This Year

At some point this year we are likely to have an Ofsted inspection, and I am really looking forward to showing the inspection team around the school. We can be proud of what we do at West Park and I love working and living in this community. Our amazing children are our best assets and their warmth, engagement and positivity always shines through when I tour around the school.

Despite the commitment and loyalty of our staff team, we don't always get things right, but we always have a burning desire to do the best that we can for every child in our care. Recently, one of our Year 7 pupils proudly announced that my school was the GOAT (or he possibly called me an old goat... let's go for the former, rather than the latter!).

This is in no way my school, but it is our school, a school that cares and aims to look after all in our community. Take care and I look forward to seeing you all at different events across the year.

Kind regards



Scott McGregor
Head

Terms and Holidays

2024-2025

AUTUMN TERM

Thursday 5 th September 2024	INSET DAY
Friday 6 th September 2024	INSET DAY
Monday 9 th September 2024	Return to school
Monday 23 rd September 2024	INSET DAY/Open Evening
Friday 25 th October 2024	Break-up for half-term holiday
Monday 4 th November 2024	Return to school
Friday 22 nd November 2024	INSET DAY
Friday 20 th December 2024	Break-up for Christmas holiday

SPRING TERM

Monday 6 th January 2025	Return to school
Friday 14 th February 2025	Break-up for half-term holiday
Monday 24 th February 2025	Return to school
Friday 4 th April 2025	Break-up for Easter holiday

SUMMER TERM

Tuesday 22 nd April 2025	Return to school
Monday 5 th May 2025	Bank Holiday
Tuesday 6 th May 2025	Return to school
Friday 23 rd May 2025	Break-up for half-term holiday
Monday 2 nd June 2025	Return to school
Friday 11 th July 2025	INSET DAY
Friday 25 th July 2025	Break-up for Summer holiday