



Dear Parents and Carers,

As we are now firmly into a short half term, I wish to update you on several key aspects of school life so that you can continue to support your child as we move towards the summer. It is a short term, but a lengthy letter, please stay with me until the end!



School Uniform Policy

I would like to address some issues around uniform policy that were raised by a small number of parents during the recent days of warmer weather. As you may be aware there is clear guidance to schools around the construction and enforcement of uniform expectations. Schools should consider a range of factors including affordability, clarity and should offer a gender-neutral policy – thus permitting anyone in our school community to choose any aspects of the uniform options.



In the spring term I started consultation on our uniform policy speaking with a number of young people in school and offering parental consultation via the Parent Forum. Most aspects of uniform policy were deemed to still be appropriate by stakeholders at this time. With both learners and parents, the area of most debate was that of school skirts. The challenge in schools of short skirts is not a new challenge, I remember this from my own school days. Nonetheless, in 2025 with digital communications, social media and a real focus in schools to stamp out negative sexualised language and behaviour the debate continues to be high profile.



The simple reality is that whilst most of our learners wear their uniform correctly a significant minority choose to wear their skirts at a length which is not appropriate for any working environment. This has to be addressed. Increasingly schools are now opting for trousers only in their uniform policies. I have listened to our community and elected to leave skirts (with tights) and tailored shorts in our policy. This was ratified by governors on 26th March 2025.



Last week when temperatures soared, given that the policy had changed mid-year I permitted skirts without tights on the two hottest days of the week. It was a sharp reminder as to why we had pushed for a change in policy as once again we saw a significant number of learners arriving at school with skirts of an inappropriate length.

For the remainder of this academic year, I will, when temperatures dictate it, make the call that some days in school will not require learners to wear tights or blazers. When this is the case, I will communicate in advance. Going forward into the next academic year learners will need to prepare for warmer weather by opting to switch to trousers or tailored shorts.

The school council are currently working with me on guidance to support parents on the types of trousers that are acceptable for wearing in school. I will endeavour to ensure that our website clearly and succinctly articulates the policy on uniform before the summer break.

In the meantime, I would ask parents to support the school by ensuring:

1. Skirts are worn with opaque black tights
2. Trousers are formal trousers with a waistband and button/zip fastening (and not flared leggings)
3. School shoes are worn (not trainers)





4. A school tie is worn
5. Piercings are restricted to one pair of earrings in the lower lobe
6. No other jewellery (other than a wristwatch) is worn to school



Schools do take many different stances on uniform that meet the needs of their community. It is my belief that high standards of uniform support good behaviour and productive learning in school. When uniform is good in school, the site is settled, and purposeful and our environment is mostly litter free.



Mobile Phones in School

The school policy states that learners should turn mobile phones off and leave them out of sight during the school day. Again, I would like to recognise that the majority of our learners, supported by our parent body do this. I would like to remind all parents that they should not text or call their children during the school day and should instead opt to contact the school with any urgent messages. Where expectations are consistently not being met around mobile phone use the school will enforce mobile phone contracts that forbid named individuals to carry a mobile phone in school.



Attendance

Punctual arrival to school and lessons every day is the best way for learners to ensure that they make good progress and receive the right support in school. Learners should be on site every morning by 8.30am ready to be in form rooms by 8.33am. Your child should also be aiming to be in school every day – if they are going to be absent due to illness or exceptional circumstances please contact school as soon as possible each morning. From the start of this term you should have started to receive weekly updates on attendance so that you can have regular discussions about this at home. Remember our school target is at least 97%. If you need any support with attendance issues, please contact your child's pastoral team.



Learning and Progress

Your support and partnership in your child's learning journey is invaluable. With the transition to the next year group approaching, this is a crucial time to help your child consolidate their learning, reflect on their progress, and begin preparing for the academic year ahead. Here are a few ways you can help your child over the coming weeks:

- *Encourage Reading:* Regular reading helps maintain literacy skills and builds vocabulary. Choosing a variety of texts your child enjoys can make this a fun and enriching activity.
- *Support Independence and Revision:* Encourage your child to take responsibility for organising their belongings, managing their time, and completing small tasks independently. If assessments are taking place, provide a quiet space for home learning and help them create a manageable revision timetable. Going over key learning can make a big difference in boosting your child's confidence for the new year. Refer to the knowledge organisers on our website for the essential information they need to know.
- *Reflection and Goal-Setting:* Encourage your child to reflect on what they've learned so far—what they've done well and where they might need more support. Work with your child to set realistic, positive goals for the rest of the term and consider the year ahead, helping to build motivation and purpose.





Westhoughton

HIGH SCHOOL

- *Promote a Growth Mindset:* Praise effort and resilience, especially when they encounter challenges—it's an important mindset to carry into the next year.



Perception Questionnaires

Please do take 5 minutes to complete these for us. I am always open to feedback on what can be better, and it is always good to hear what parents feel we already do well.



Thank you for your continued support.

Kind Regards



Mr N S Coe
Headteacher



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