



Dear Parents/Carers,

26th September 2024



As the new academic year is now in full swing, I wanted to take a moment to celebrate how the year has started for us and share a few key messages with our school community. Our learners have returned well from their summer break and we are delighted to welcome our new Year seven cohort who have impressed us since day one. I know we will have had many anxious parents about the transition to high school – they are doing fine! If you do need any support, just give us a call.



Attendance

Improving school attendance is central to our work as a school. I would ask for all parents to support us in taking a bracing approach to attendance and encouraging everyone to attend school, on time, every day. There continues to be a national surge in term time holiday requests. Absence during term time significantly impacts on learning and progress, so we request that breaks are taken during school holidays. Only in exceptional cases will the school authorise time away from learning. I would ask that parents are understanding of the national expectations on schools in challenging attendance. Those in our school that attend every day leave in Year 11 with the best outcomes.



Uniform

The overwhelming majority of learners wear our uniform with pride, and we are grateful for parental support on this. It is our ambition to further improve standards of uniform this September. Our full guidance on uniform can be found on the school website [here](#). Key points to note regarding uniform are:

- every learner must wear school shoes and not black trainers. If the footwear is made by a sports brand, it will be deemed to be a trainer.
- one ear piercing in each ear is permitted. No other jewellery is allowed (except a wristwatch).
- skirts should sit just above the knee.
- hoodies must not be brought to school and will be confiscated at the gate.



I have recently been concerned by the length of some school skirts. I know that several parents have passed comment also. Short skirts are not appropriate for a working environment. In response to this our policy now states that where school skirts are repeatedly worn incorrectly, the school can and will direct young people to wear trousers for school.

Learners can expect to have prohibited items confiscated and to receive a sanction when uniform is repeatedly worn below expectations. We want to be fair to everyone. I would ask for your support in ensuring high standards of dress for school, with a particular focus on skirt length, school shoes and unnecessary jewellery.



Knowledge Organisers / Need to Know Booklets

I am thrilled with the work done to improve our curriculum at Key Stage 3 over the last twelve months. From September all learners in KS3 have a knowledge organiser booklet that covers all key aspects of the curriculum that are studied in the first term. These booklets are great for supporting parents in testing for end of unit assessments. Full details of our curriculum can be found on the website [here](#).

Form Time Reading

Whilst the earlier start this year may not be popular with all our teenagers, the additional time in school has been put to effective use. The launch of form time reading at WHS means that every child is engaged in the reading of literature with their Form Tutor. Reading opens the door to a good education. It has been nothing short of a joy to see this in school over recent weeks.



Parent Forum

I am always grateful to parents who give up their time to help me plan for continuing to improve our school. The partnership with our parents is important to me. Our first Parent Forum meeting is scheduled for Monday 30th September at 5:00-6:00pm. It takes place in the school Library. Full details are sent to all parents via Synergy, shared on social media and on the website [here](#) ahead of the meeting. Everyone is welcome. An indication that you are planning to join us enables us to ensure we have enough teabags and chairs!



Mobile Phones

Our school community has adjusted well to the ban on mobile phones. I would like to ask parents to continue to support us by not calling children or texting them, during the school day. Some young people still think it is ok to answer a call if it is a parent calls. Mobile phones must be turned off and kept out of sight for the duration of the school day. Any urgent communication for children in school can go via the school communication systems.



Year 11

We have written separately to Year 11 parents outlining our offer and support during this crucial year. I do want to recognise that this year group have really set the standard for learning culture in school. We were pleased to see an improvement in results last summer, but indications are that this year will be even better. They have come so far since I first met them in Year 8. The Year 11 Prefect Team are the best I have ever seen. This morning, I met with Senior Prefects, who are clearly committed to working closely with me on school improvement – welcome Ellis, Phomolo, Ava, Ruby, Adam and Ashley to your roles – I know you will be brilliant.

Please remember that our mid-week special revision offer runs until 5:45pm every Wednesday.



With thanks for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mr N S Coe
Headteacher

