



# West Park

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

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Dear West Park Families

We are approaching the end of an extremely long and action packed first term. A 15 week plus first term is always a challenge and with the added complexities of a range of viruses, the continued impact of Covid and the cost of living crisis, we have certainly had some significant obstacles to manoeuvre around over the last few months. Times can be tough both in and out of school and it is during these periods of turbulence that the strength of community comes to the fore.

At West Park we are blessed with a team of talented and very committed staff who regularly go above and beyond to help and support the pupils in their care. Alongside this we have a large group of West Park families who work alongside us and it is this strong partnership that ensures that we get the best for our children.

Sadly, very occasionally a parent or carer calls the school and can be particularly abusive and confrontational with the West Park team. This behaviour will not be tolerated and actions will be taken to prevent these individuals repeating this behaviour moving forward. Please be mindful that staff are often busy teaching, delivering support sessions and organising pupils throughout the school day so response to queries cannot always be instantaneous. Thank you again to all of you who are so grateful for our input and for the amazing work that is carried out by Team Reception and beyond.

## **Year 11 Mock Exams**

Our Year 11s have started their mock exams, a crucial time for them to assess how they are progressing in their individual subjects and to become accustomed to an exam period which is similar to the one that they will undertake in June and July. It has been fantastic to see how this Year group has matured over the last four and a half years and I am very optimistic that they will secure some impressive outcomes as they complete their time with us. I have been very proud of how the Year 11s have engaged with their exams so far. As we move into the new term Year 11 will have a small number of weeks left to prepare for their final exams. Expect Year 11 pupils to be in catch ups and revision sessions as staff go that extra mile to prepare them for their final exams. The first public exam is the IT exam that takes place in February 2023.

## **ParentPay**

The ParentPay system has now been amended so that families can put on any amount of money at any time. Hopefully this will make ParentPay more accessible and support families as we go

through the challenging winter months.

### **Epraise/House System**

This term has seen the launch of our new rewards platform, Epraise and the relaunch of our House system. It has been brilliant to see our pupils so engaged in Epraise and so keen to be awarded Epraise points. The Epraise shop opened early in December and pupils have purchased a range of items including art sets, water bottles and house t-shirts. A number of pupils used their points to access 'the gift of time' experience and enjoyed a range of sweet treats, music and even a rendition of the YMCA.

The music theme continued through to our House Karaoke as our Heads of House convinced staff and pupils to perform a Christmas classic with them in the main hall. All the performances were packed with festive exuberance and after much deliberation the winning house was judged to be Chatsworth, with their version of Sparkle and Shine!

### **Non-Uniform Day**

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December is the final day of a long first term of this academic year. For Years 7 to 10 this will be a non-uniform day and an opportunity to wear Christmas jumpers and/or festive outfits. Year 11 will finish their mock exams on Thursday and thus, we will ask all of Year 11 to be in full school uniform. However, to recognise the end of a very busy exam period, we will allow all of our Year 11s to leave site at 11:00 a.m. for an early start to their Christmas holiday. I hope that Year 11 have the opportunity to rest and relax over the Christmas break after a very busy mock exam period. There will be no afterschool clubs, homework clubs or catch up sessions on this day as we shut down for Christmas.

We have a large number of items in lost property, we will be distributing these to an appropriate organisation after the Christmas break. If you would like to come in to view these items this will be facilitated at 3:15 p.m. on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December. Please report to Reception.

### **Eco-shop**

Our Eco-shop has been a very positive development this term and it is fantastic to see so many local families accessing this support on a weekly basis. A huge thank you goes to our partners at Fareshare, Spondon Relief in Need Charity and Birds Bakery who help us stock the shop with a range of fantastic items. Thanks also to all the staff who donate their time to facilitate the shop. The Eco-shop will open for the last time this term on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December. The shop will be closed over the Christmas break and re-open in the new year on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> January and Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

### **Community**

As we approach the Christmas break it is so important for us to look out for each other and to ensure that we are all doing our bit to keep members of the community safe and well. Please be reminded of the following:

- E-scooters can be very dangerous, particularly at this time of year. E-scooters are not designed to be driven on the roads and are often impossible for motorists to see. Pupils are not allowed to bring their E-scooters onto the school site.

- Road Safety is so important as one careless act can cause huge issues for youngsters and their families. Children should cross roads carefully and be aware of other pedestrians on pavements, at crossing points etc.
- After the tragic events in Solihull where 4 children lost their lives after falling through ice, please stress to your children the need to keep away from open water. Open water is exceptionally cold at this time of year and hidden currents can make it even more dangerous.

The West Park community were devastated to hear of the passing of one of the West Park family, Lachlan Regan. Lachlan was a lovely lad who was always keen to have a chat and was happy to support other pupils around the school. Our thoughts and love are with Lachlan's family during this difficult time.

As one year slowly winds down to its conclusion, another year is poised to commence. 2023 will undoubtedly be an interesting one and we will need to continue to work together to overcome the difficulties that will be evident across our society. However, a new year provides an opportunity to refresh and reinvent with a new energy and vigour. Attendance to school is crucial so please ensure that your child is ready and raring for the new term.

At West Park a new term allows all pupils to benefit from a fresh start and to demonstrate a positive attitude and desirable behaviour. As we start the new term, we will continue to develop our school systems to get the best for all of our pupils and to create a learning environment that we can all be proud of.

I wish you all a very merry Christmas, a joyous Hogmanay and all the best for 2023!

Kind regards



Scott McGregor  
Head