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A Message from the Head Teacher

Well this has this year flown by. It started with COVID-19 and has now ended with a colossal heatwave. It has been tough at times, but it would not have been possible without everyone support. In the face of adversity everyone has pulled together, and we have overcome all the challenges presented to us. The achievements of our staff and students through the year have been amazing. Students have been engaged in a wealth of learning activities and we have seen a return to our enriching educational experiences from achieving Gold and Silver Duke of Edinburgh Awards to formal accreditations and qualifications.

Although attendance at school has waxed and waned due to the pandemic with illnesses and isolations, we need to ensure a real big push next academic year and I would welcome your support with this matter. This improved attendance agenda is being promoted by the [Department of Education](#) and the Local Authority. If the global pandemic has taught us anything it is that young people flourish when they are in their educational setting and that it is a vital part of their development, routines and wellbeing. If you have any challenges with attendance, then please reach out to the school and a member of the team are here to support you.

Our business partnerships with external companies such as Ground Control, Mitie, Marston's and DPD continue to flourish. Harnessing these partnerships will provide increasing opportunities for work experience, internships, apprenticeships and future employment. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all our partners and we look forward to working with you next academic year.

Next academic year is set to be an exciting time for the development of the school. Highlights we are looking forward to include: the opening of the Social Enterprise Outlet at Baggeridge Country Park, opening our own store on Blackheath High Street, launch of the DFN Project Search initiative at the DPD HQ in Oldbury, more opportunities with creative arts and continued outdoor adventurous activities with Malthouse Activity Centre and Challenge Academy.

We have a few students and staff leavers set to go to new things in September. I would like to thank you for your hard work and take this opportunity to wish you well for your new adventures and next steps.

The school opens again for students on Wednesday 7 September 2022. I hope you all have a safe and enjoyable summer break.

Mr O M Flowers
Head Teacher



Parent & Carer Survey

Thank you to everyone who completed our Parent/Carer Survey earlier this year. 108 responses were received, which is a 45% return rate. We greatly appreciate and value your feedback and input into our surveys.

Survey Highlights

99% agreed that their child felt happy and safe at School. 95.4% also agreed that their child felt happy coming to school. 96% felt that the School had dealt well with the challenges presented by COVID. 98% agreed that School ensures their child is well looked after and 91% felt that the School's Behaviour policy is fairly and consistently applied.

95% agreed that their child is making good progress at School and 97% agreed that our curriculum provides opportunities to be involved in community activities.

Over 91% of respondents agreed that the School keeps them well informed of their child's progress, helps them to support their child's learning and responds well to any concerns that they raise. 99% agreed that their child is taught well at School and over 98% of parents and carers agreed that they would recommend The Westminster School to other parents.

Here are a selection of comments made in the survey:

- *My child adores all of her teachers and now loves learning'*
- *'The school has been amazing dealing with COVID and I feel comfortable sending my child to school'*
- *'My child is very safe'*
- *'Would come to school on a Saturday if he could'*
- *'His EHCP is followed strictly and works well for both my son and the school. This helps his learning and ability to grow.'*
- *'My child comes home every day from school telling me the different things she's learnt at school which never happened at her previous school'*
- *'He goes out more than me!'*
- *'He has really grown up and learnt so many life skills that he would never have learnt in a mainstream setting. I am so proud of him and his achievements and so thankful for the support the school give and the people there.'*
- *'It's lovely to see my child's learning through the evidence for learning app which we've never had before as it allows us to see what our child has learnt in the day and I can carry it on at home'*

Responding to the Results

Based on the results of the survey and the feedback received in the comments sections, the School is planning the following next steps:

- Continuing to develop strategies to enable parents and carers to give feedback effectively
- Launching the EFL parent/carers app that will enable parents and carers to access more progress information about their child (i.e. Annual Review Paperwork, annual school reports etc)
- Calendaring a series of workshops for parents and carers to attend to support them in helping their child learning at home
- Reapplying for The Parent Partnership Award in academic year 2022/23.
- Continuing to develop and improve communications with parents/carers
- Facilitating a parents and carers to network with each other for support
- Supporting parents and carers to help their child access their local communities



School Survey
31st March 2022 to 14th April 2022



Attendance Matters



At The Westminster School we know that our students learn many important skills and have a lot of fun doing so every single day, and we believe that it is vital for students to arrive promptly at school and attend every day. Good attendance is vital to your child's progress and we aspire to high standards of attendance for every one of our students.

Additionally, if students are persistently late and arrive after 9.30am, they may miss vital information given in the mornings, opportunities to meet their friends and get ready for lessons.

Persistent, severe or unexplained lateness can be classed as unauthorised absence and may be referred to the Local Authority.

Students who do not attend regularly may miss out on valuable learning experiences, as well as trips and visits. We closely monitor attendance across the year and we expect it to be at above 95% for our students. Any student with attendance below 90% is classed as a persistent absentee.

Children whose attendance is below 95% will have their attendance monitored on a weekly basis and we will make contact with their parents regarding any absences.

Medical Appointments

If your child has medical appointments, it is best to try and make these at the end of the day, to prevent your child missing out of the school day. However, we understand that this may not always be possible and we request that appointments are made after 10am and your child comes in to school before and after the appointment or appointments are made for after 2pm wherever possible. If your child has a medical appointment, please contact School Office on 0121 561 6884 and send in a copy of the appointment letter/card for our records.

Holidays in Term Time

The Head Teacher can only authorise absences in exceptional circumstances and the government have provided the school with strict criteria which they must follow.

Leave is unlikely to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. If the Head Teacher grants a leave of absence, it will be for the Head Teacher to determine the length of time a child can be away from school.

If you apply for holiday leave, please do so before booking to avoid disappointment.

Absence must be recorded as unauthorised if a holiday leave form is not completed before the period of absence – this cannot be authorised retrospectively. Holidays which are unauthorised should not be taken. If they are, parents may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution.

Should you wish to request holiday leave during term time for your child, you should do this by requesting a leave of absence request form from School Office.

Parent Support

We work hard to support children and families who are experiencing problems with attending school. If you would like someone to talk to about attendance or need some additional help and advice around your own child's attendance please contact Denise Taylor, our Family Liaison Officer on 0121 561 6884.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Post 16 students completed their expeditions for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award in Edale, in the Peak District, Derbyshire in June.

The group set up camp at Newfold Farm Campsite and spent three days exploring the area, including Jacob's Ladder and Mam Tor.

We are exceptionally proud of the group who have worked so hard throughout the programme to achieve their Award, which is highly valued by College and employers.



Smile SEN Football Festival at Aston Villa

Congratulations to our budding footballers who attended the Smile SEN Football Festival hosted by Aston Villa in June. The team had the chance to play against other special school teams from across the region.

We are hoping to organise more teams next academic year to take part in fixtures in a range of sports within the local community.



Trip to Drayton Manor Park

A group of students from PD and Bridging Pathways enjoyed a trip to Drayton Manor in June. They had an amazing time going on the rides and having fun!

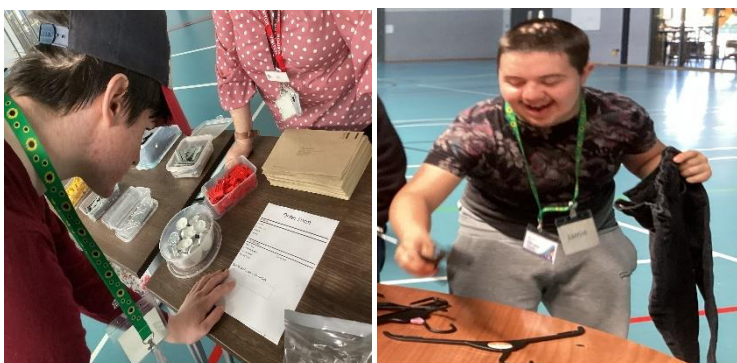


Preparing for Work at The Way in Wolverhampton

Students from Waseley and Haden had the opportunity to visit The Way in Wolverhampton this half term

They took part in a range of activities to help them prepare for the world of work. This included learning several key employability skills.

They looked at roles in Retail, Packing, Business and Administration and Warehousing.



Futures Fayre

We held our first Futures Fayre on 23 June this year, which was open to all KS3 – 5 parents and students.

A range of further education providers and local businesses were available to discuss education and employment opportunities open to students once they leave The Westminster School. Support agencies, including SENDIASS were also on hand to offer advice and additional support to parents.

The event was really well attended and the feedback we have received has been very positive. Thank you to everyone who came along to the event.



Visit to Superbloom at the Tower of London



This year the Tower of London is celebrating The Queen's Platinum Jubilee by filling the moat with flowers to create a spectacular display. Designed to attract pollinators, 'Superbloom' will bring a spectacular natural beauty to the urban space and introduce a new biodiverse habitat for wildlife. It will celebrate the value of nature for our wellbeing, giving people time to slow down, reflect and bask in the simple joy of flowers in bloom. A group of students went to London to see the display.

Schools across the UK are joining the celebrations by creating their own Jubilee flower gardens and at Westminster pupils are helping by creating our own Superbloom areas on campus.



Mulberry Class Work Towards Achieving John Muir Award



Mulberry Class have been pond dipping during their visits to Saltwells Nature Reserve this term.

They have been working towards their Explore Challenge of the John Muir Award, which requires them to explore their local areas of nature and undertake some conservation work.

The Award encourages awareness and responsibility for the natural environment in a spirit of fun, adventure and exploration.

The Westminster School Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

Students, staff and governors celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in style in June. We held a Jubilee Fayre in the MUGA, with stalls including tea and biscuits, cucumber sandwiches, Eton Mess, scones and elderflower lemonade. Primary pupils also had their own celebrations down at our Forest School with some familiar looking visitors!

Willow Class baked a beautiful jubilee cake, Waseley students made Jubilee jam tarts and students from Rowley, Clent, Rowan and Cedar classes worked together to create a Jubilee collage.





Plas Gwynant 2022

A group of students had a 3 night stay at Plas Gwynant Outdoor Education Centre in Wales in May. They took part in activities including team building, climbing, walking, canoeing and gorge walking.



Learning Outside the Classroom

Learning outside the classroom (LOtC) is an integral part of our curricula at TWS. Forest School activities take place on campus and we regularly also access local nature reserves such as Saltwells and Baggeridge Country Park. Students get opportunities to play and develop a range of new skills and there are also opportunities for conservation work in the local community. This year, we've also visited Malthouse Stables for canoeing and kayaking.

We also have our school garden on site, where students grow their own vegetables and flowers.

Students also visit areas in the local community as part of their My Thinking and My Community challenges including Blackheath and Merry Hill, learning about different types of shops, using public transport safely and picking and paying for goods.



School Uniform Policy

Whilst our uniform hasn't changed for next academic year, we have set out our approach to requiring a uniform that is of reasonable cost and offers the best value for money for parents and carers in our Uniform Policy, which is available on the school website - <https://thewestminsterschool.co.uk/parents/school-policies/>.

Our uniform is:

For pupils in Years 3-11:

- Plain black or grey skirt or trousers.
- White blouse, shirt or polo shirt (embroidered polo shirt is available but is optional)
- Royal blue jumper or cardigan embroidered with the school logo
- Navy blue blazers with the embroidered logo can be purchased but these are not compulsory.
- For PE, black shorts, white t-shirt, black or navy tracksuit, trainers/pumps.
- Swimming trunks/swimming costume
- PE kit bag

For students in Post 16:

- Plain black or grey skirt or trousers
- Black polo shirt with embroidered logo
- Black sweat shirt with embroidered logo

Plain uniform, without the logo, can be purchased from supermarkets such as ASDA and Tesco. Pupils should not wear excessive jewellery or items that may get entangled/caught – eg drop earrings All items of pupil's property should be cleared labelled with their name. This makes it much easier to return items to the correct pupil.

Uniform items with the school logo can be ordered from Ace Embroidery: <http://www.ace-embroidery.co.uk/> 0121 559 1234 sales@ace-embroidery.co.uk

Plain uniform, without the school's logo, can be purchased from supermarkets such as ASDA and Tesco.

School has a bank of second-hand uniform that pupils may access and we are always happy to accept donations of good quality second-hand uniform from parents/carers.

Primary Visits to the Sycamore Centre

Primary pupils have been visiting the Sycamore Centre in Dudley this year. The Sycamore Centre is an adventure playground with indoor and outdoor play areas.

There are lots of activities in this exciting play environment, which enrich learning and engagement and encourage skills such as communication, fine motor skills, gross motor skills, co-ordination and building relationships.

Pupils have been able to direct their own play and use their imaginations with the guidance of Sycamore staff and school staff.





Giving
disabled children
a brighter future



holiday activities and food



KIDS SEND Family Activities

KIDS have a range of activities on offer to families of children with disabilities / special needs during the summer holidays. If your child is entitled to free school meals you can register for HAF at <https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/holidayactivitiesandfood>

Friday 29th July: 3.00-5.00pm : SEND Private relaxed screening of 'Lightyear', Odeon Cinema, West Bromwich New Square (for children aged 5-16) (takeaway meal box provided)

Sunday 31st July: 3.30-5.30pm : Hydro Pool and Multi Sports session (for children aged 5-16) Portway Lifestyles Centre (takeaway meal box provided)

Tuesday 2nd August: Music Session + lunch, Go Play building, Corbett Street, Smethwick, B66 3PX (Age 5-16)

Wednesday 3rd August: 10.00-11.30am, SEND Air Mayhem session (takeaway meal box provided), Tipton Sports Academy, DY4 0BS (Age 5-16)

Tuesday 9th August: 10.30am – 12.30pm, Sensory Play session + lunch, Go Play building, Corbett Street, Smethwick, B66 3PX (Age 5-10's)

Thursday 11th August: 10.30am – 12.30pm, Sensory Play session + lunch, Go Play building, Corbett Street, Smethwick, B66 3PX (Age 10-16's)

Tuesday 16th August: 10.30am – 12.30pm, Family Fun session including Bubbleology, Multi Sports in the park, Arts & Crafts – For age 5-16's (breakfast box provided), Langley Lodge Community Centre, Langley Park, High Street, B69 4SL

Thursday 18th August: 2.00-4.00pm, SEND football session, GOALS, Cakemore Road, Rowley Regis, B65 0QX

Spaces are limited and booking is essential via e-mail: enquiries.orchard@kids.org.uk or telephone 01384 897489



Term Dates 2022/2023

September 2022							
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
35				1	2	3	4
36	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
37	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
38	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
39	26	27	28	29	30		

October 2022							
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
39						1	2
40	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
41	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
42	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
43	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
44	31						

November 2022							
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
44		1	2	3	4	5	6
45	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
46	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
47	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
48	28	29	30				

December 2022							
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
48				1	2	3	4
49	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
50	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
51	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
52	26	27	28	29	30	31	

January 2023							
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
52							1
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
3	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
4	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
5	30	31					

February 2023							
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
5			1	2	3	4	5
6	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
7	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
8	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
9	27	28					



March 2023							
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
9			1	2	3	4	5
10	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
12	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
13	27	28	29	30	31		

April 2023							
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
13						1	2
14	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
15	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
17	24	25	26	27	28	29	30

May 2023							
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
18	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
20	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
22	29	30	31				

June 2023							
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
22				1	2	3	4
23	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
24	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
25	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	26	27	28	29	30		

July 2023							
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
26						1	2
27	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
28	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
29	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
30	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	31						

 School Holidays
 INSET Days (school closed to pupils)



Evidence for Learning is our school's chosen platform to capture and record evidence of your child's learning. This is used by all teachers throughout the school to evidence their achievements across all subjects.

Parent View Portal

The Parent View Portal can be accessed by any Internet-connected device (iOS, Android, PC, Mac, etc.)

This enables us to share evidence of your child's learning with you. We share the evidence with parents via the Parent View portal. To access the Parent portal, you will be sent login details via two emails, the first email will contain your unique link to a secure webpage (please save it to your favourites or save the email for future reference) and the second email will contain your password.

If you ever need your password resetting, please email services@westminster.sandwell.sch.uk requesting a reset of your Evidence for Learning Parent View account. You will then receive a password reset email from TheTeacherCloud alternatively please let your child's class teacher know by providing them with your email address and we will ensure this is sent across to you.