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## Governors Report to Parents/Carers

Governors are glad to report that the school year '22-'23 has begun with the prospect of 'business as usual' (fingers crossed) after a very turbulent couple of years.

Our long-standing chair of governors, Sue Gough, has retired after many years of consistent and strong service with The Westminster School. She will be greatly missed but leaves the school in a very positive position with a record number of students and a robust, personalised and creative education for all.

Governors have continued through the pandemic to ensure that their statutory duties are met and look forward to being able to actually visit school on a more regular basis this year rather than meeting through the ether!

Governors are extremely grateful to all staff at The Westminster School for maintaining a high quality of education for all students during the last, very challenging, two and a half years. In particular, governors are indebted to the Senior Leadership Team of Mrs Joanne Flowers, Mr Ben Taylor and, of course, Mr Oliver Flowers for their strong, consistent and sensitive approach. Our committed, enthusiastic and skilled staff are fundamental to the success of our students.

Governors would also like to thank parents and carers for their understanding and support over the last few years. The aim of The Westminster School has been to keep everyone safe whilst delivering the best possible education for students. Without the aid of parents and carers this task would not have been achieved so 'thank you'.

Despite the various restrictions during the pandemic governors have met virtually, and more recently in person, on a regular basis. This has enabled us to maintain a strong oversight of policies, practice and school developments. We have updated our knowledge and understanding through online training and development. The school website details the work of governors and how we link with school staff to ensure that all students make progress, are safe and happy at The Westminster School.

As the newly elected chair of governors I look forward to an exciting time ahead with further opportunities to meet students and staff and contribute to the continued successful development of the school.

**Pat Evans, Chair of Governors**

## Our School Safeguarding Team



**Mrs Flowers, Deputy Head Teacher  
Designated Safeguarding Lead**



**Miss Webb, SENCO  
Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Lead**



**Mrs Taylor, Family Support Worker  
Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Lead**

### Early Help in Sandwell

Early Help is the support offered to potentially vulnerable children, young people, and their families. The purpose of Early Help is to put in the right support, at the right time, so that the additional vulnerabilities and needs that families may be facing are addressed and are less likely to escalate to a point where intrusive statutory interventions are required.

Early Help is delivered by all agencies in Sandwell, working as single agencies or collaborating with each other. Partnership is a strength in Sandwell and this strategy will build on the effective work with families and the effective interagency relationships that already exist. Locality working is at the heart of partnership working in Sandwell and is about improving the quality of life within the community and the way in which services are provided within the community. Many of the services available in Sandwell are locality based, with some services offered borough wide. Services such as Sandwell Childrens Trust's Strengthening Families Service, Adult Services and neighbourhood teams are co-located, which enables agencies to effectively work together to deliver the right support, in the right place at the right time.

If you think you or your family could benefit from Early Help support, contact one of the School Safeguarding Team for more information.

### Operation Encompass

#### What is it?

Operation Encompass is a Police and Education safeguarding partnership that supports children and young people exposed to domestic abuse. It aims to ensure schools are notified in a timely manner of any domestic abuse incident where a child was either present or registered at the address. This early notification should mean that, in most cases, schools are alerted in readiness for the children arriving at school the first working day following an incident.

Operation Encompass will also ensure that a member of the school staff, known as a Key Adult, is trained to allow them to liaise with the local authority and to use the information that has been shared, in confidence, while ensuring that the school is able to make provision for possible difficulties experienced by children, or their families, who have been involved in, or exposed to, a domestic abuse incident.

#### How can I find out more information?

If you want to know more about Operation Encompass, call the school directly and ask to speak to one of the Safeguarding team.

## 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.

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. Regular attendance is key for the young person's education, time off can cause worry and anxiety for upon return and affect self-esteem. It also gives the young person opportunity to:

- See friends and feel included
- Learn new things and develop skills
- Increase confidence and self esteem
- Build resilience
- Improve those important social skills

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.

Children whose attendance is below 95% will have their attendance monitored on a weekly basis and we will contact 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 it is expected that 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.

An 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.



UK Health  
Security  
Agency

NHS

# Should I keep my child off school?

## Yes

### Until...

Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and Flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

## No

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about...

Hand, foot and mouth	Glandular fever
Head lice	Tonsillitis
Threadworms	Slapped cheek



SCAN ME

### Advice and guidance

To find out more, search for health protection in schools or scan the QR code or visit <https://qrco.de/minfec>.

## Social Enterprise

Students have been involved in a range of social enterprise activities, including Social Enterprise Day this term. They have been learning about product design, marketing and merchandising and produced a wide variety of brilliant products including board games, garden planters, tie dye garment, gifts for dog owners and sweet treats. The products have been sold through Facebook, at our Christmas Fair and church fairs in the local community.



## A Message from the Head Teacher

This term has been a positive return for many of our young people and our attendance is hovering around 89.60%. Attendance is one of our main priorities this year and we have a team of people working tirelessly to identify the challenges associated with attendance and breakdown these barriers. Sickness associated with winter bugs is unavoidable at this time of year, however good attendance is linked to good outcomes and academic progress.

Our curriculum offering continues to flourish and we have been able to return to our off-site educational visits which truly enriches the experiences for our young people making them excited to come into school. These visits bring some of the abstract concepts to life and allow them to implement their learnt skills in a variety of different contexts. It has been wonderful to see all the activities so far this year focusing on learning, developing emotional resilience, purposeful and effective communication, developing creativity and functional skills for the future.

It has also been wonderful to collaborate with our partners at the Malthouse Activity Centre and Challenge Academy to provide opportunities for Team Building, Problem Solving, Rock Climbing, Canoeing and Archery.

I hope you and your family have a safe festive break and we look forward to seeing you return to school on Tuesday 3 January 2023. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**Mr O M Flowers**  
Head Teacher



# Amazing Autumn Term Activities

There has been so much going on this term – here's what we've been up to.

Frank Chapman Centre Residential



Duke of Edinburgh's Award



Remembering Mrs Hazel Cooper





Workplace Visits



Social Enterprise Day



Children in Need



Our Tributes to Queen Elizabeth II



Forest School

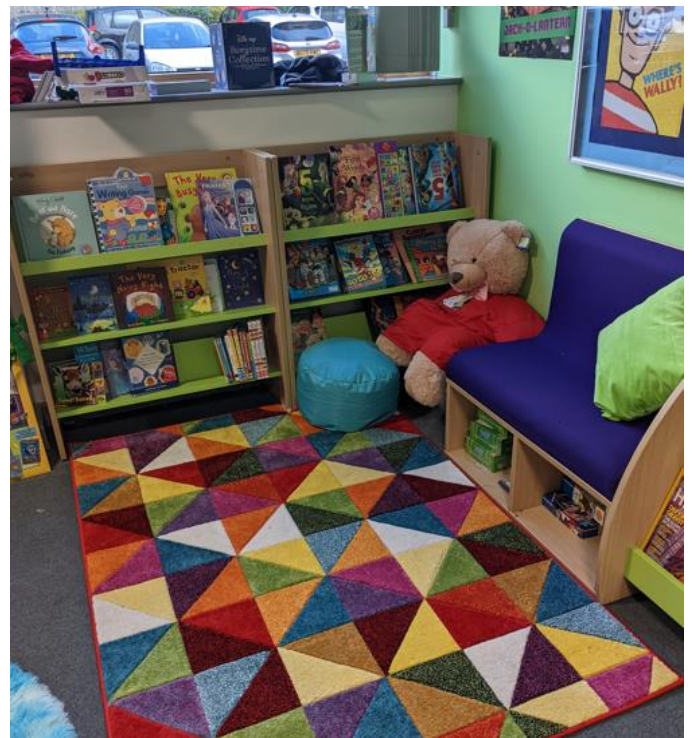


Clent Cook Breakfast



Rowley go to Baggeridge

## School Library



Our newly refurbished library is now open. All pupils can use the library, borrow books and take part in lots of exciting activities. Classes will also be visiting the library as part of their timetabled lessons.

## Futures Fair



We held our Futures Fair on 21 October in our Post 16 centre. Students and their parents/carers were able to visit a wide range of stalls to learn more about their options for further education and employment.

Agencies in attendance included The Gap Centre, Ruskin Mill College, Sandwell College, Juniper Training, QAC, Ground Control and The Westminster Specialist College.



# Creative Arts

Creative Arts is a key component of our curriculum at The Westminster School. Our TLR for Creative Arts is Mr Hill, who is responsible for the My Creativity area of learning with Miss Noke. Mr Hill had an article posted in the Arts Award magazine about how important an enriching arts curriculum is to our students.

## The Importance and Value of the Arts for Children and Young People in Schools



### Arts Award

Arts Award is a range of unique qualifications that inspire children and young people from 5 to 25 to get involved in art in all its forms. We support schools in developing Arts Award.

#### Read the story of Arts Award in action:

#### MY CREATIVITY

**“** The Westminster School is a Special Needs School for pupils aged 7 to 25 in Rowley Regis. We offer a curriculum which consists of six areas of learning *My Thinking, My Care and Independence, My Communication, My Wellbeing, My Community and My Creativity*. Personalisation is key to everything we do at The Westminster School. We have switched our curriculum from the outside-in to inside-out, placing our young people at the centre of everything we do. For many years we adopted the traditional approach to the arts, offering Art and Music lessons to our pupils up to Y9 and then as an option in KS4 and 5 through BTEC but we realised this alone was not the right way for our cohort. From this the *My Creativity* area of learning was born.

We were keen to give our pupils voice and choice in the arts and although we have many that adore Art and Music we have others that seek an alternative. We wanted to ensure that creativity was integral to our curriculum from our youngest to our oldest pupils and the introduction of the Arts Award in KS4 and 5 was essential to this. The Arts Award gave us the flexibility to,

alongside Art and Music, introduce to our curriculum Dance, Game Design and Drama through both the Hippodrome Education Network and Young Promoters supported by Black Country Touring. The introduction of these options has enabled pupils who may have felt alienated in the arts to feel included.

We believe that everyone has an artform or a craft that they can excel in and we pride ourselves on being able to give our pupils the opportunity to find it. We introduced the whole school *My Creativity* morning this year and it has thrived and pushed *My Creativity* high up the school agenda. During these lessons a large cohort of staff deliver an artform or craft that they are passionate about. These include, Musical Theatre, Electronic Dance Music, Turntablism, Sewing, Animation and Mask Making to name just a few.

The *My Creativity* morning started with all pupils taking part in a taster session in each option before selecting their options for the year. Many pupils have enjoyed taking part in a new art form for a term and then moving onto a new experience. Pupils have been able to learn and create alongside pupils from different pathways and year groups. This is something they do not get the opportunity to do at any other point in

their school week. Some pupils have found comfort in a particular artform and have taken part in this for the whole year. This is where our personalised curriculum comes into its own allowing staff to personalise the learning for that pupil. One boy who had often found engaging in the arts difficult in the past took part in sewing. He found his passion and developed his skills to be able to make his own plush toys based on animal themes.

Not all our pupils at the Westminster School will have the same life chances as their mainstream counterparts but we hope through the immersion in an enriching arts curriculum each one will find something creative, that will enrich their lives forever.

**Michael Hill**  
TLR *My Creativity*, The Westminster School, Rowley Regis.



# Art

What has been happening in the Art department this half term?

KS3 have been learning about Colour Theory. They have produced colour wheels showing the Primary and Secondary colours. Using paint to mix colours. They then added elements of collage and found items from a nature walk in the forest school.



Post 16 have been working on the Prince's Trust looking at developing paper skills. They will learn all the different ways of manipulating paper and adding decoration. The final outcomes will be large decorative bowls.



KS3 all in this together – KS3 have been learning about the impact of plastic pollution on the sea creatures around the world. They have been producing images of fish looking at the Artist Vincent Scarpace. They have used drawing, printing and collage techniques to create a huge display in school.



# Christmas Fair

Thank you to everyone who attended our Christmas Fair. It was a really special day, with many magical moments – including a visit from West Bromwich Albion! Thank you to Whitcombe Pipelines, Strong Telecoms, A F Blakemore, Carera Windows and One Stop Buffery Road for their fabulous donations.





## Register now for FREE Winter events

We are planning an amazing programme for the winter holidays and there is a real range of exciting things to get involved in for school aged children between 4yrs and 16yrs.

Pupils in receipt of Free School Meals will be receiving a HAF voucher with a 16 digit unique code which will allow you to book your children on to FREE activities and make memories over the winter holidays. The voucher will have a link to the website where you can book activities – You will also be receiving a postcard in the post next week to remind you of what's on offer and a link to our bright new website.

## What we are providing

The aims of the programme for those children and young people attending are:

- To have access to a healthy food offer over the school holidays.
- To have access to activities during the school holidays that are engaging and fun which they may not be already able to access.
- To learn about healthy foods and nutrition and physical and mental wellbeing.
- To have access to other local services.
- All activities will be delivered throughout the winter holidays across Sandwell some will be pre-book only and booking is already live.

## Holiday activities and food programme explained

December 2020 Government announced that the Holiday Activities and Food programme, which has provided healthy food and holiday activities to children since 2018, will be expanded across the whole of England 2021.

This programme will cover part of the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays in 2022 and will be available to school aged children and young people between the ages of 4 to 16 in every local authority in England who receive benefit related free school meals however some of the activities available are for anyone to participate in over winter.



## 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](mailto: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.

# Group A Streptococcal Infection

## Q. What is Group A Streptococcal?

Group A streptococci (GAS) are a type of bacteria that are spread by close contact between people.

## Q. What infections can GAS cause?

GAS can cause Scarlet fever and sore throats, more rarely it can cause more serious disease.

## Q. What is Scarlet fever

Scarlet fever is it is highly infectious and usually is mild. Symptoms:

- Sore throat
- Headache
- Fever
- A fine, pinkish or red body rash with a sandpapery feel. (On darker skin the rash can be more difficult to see but will have a sandpapery feel.)

## Q. How is scarlet fever treated?

Scarlet fever is treated with antibiotics. Contact NHS 111 or your GP if you suspect your child has scarlet fever.

## Q. Can my child go to school?

If your child has scarlet fever, keep them at home until at least 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment to avoid spreading the infection to others.

## Q. What is Invasive Group A Streptococcal Infection?

**Very rarely**, GAS can also cause more serious or 'invasive' infection (iGAS) including:

- An infection of the bloodstream
- Skin infection
- Toxic shock syndrome.

As a parent, if you feel that your child seems seriously unwell, you should trust your own judgement. Contact NHS 111 or your GP if:

- your child is getting worse
- your child is feeding or eating much less than normal
- your child has had a dry nappy for 12 hours or more or shows other signs of dehydration
- your baby is under 3 months and has a temperature of 38°C, or is older than 3 months and has a temperature of 39°C or higher
- your baby feels hotter than usual when you touch their back or chest, or feels sweaty
- your child is very tired or irritable

Call 999 or go to A&E if:

- Your child is having difficulty breathing – you may notice grunting noises or their tummy sucking under their ribs
- There are pauses when your child breathes
- Your child's skin, tongue or lips are blue
- Your child is floppy and will not wake up or stay awake

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scarlet-fever/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scarlet-fever-managing-outbreaks-in-schools-and-nurseries>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ukhsa-update-on-scarlet-fever-and-invasive-group-a-strep>