

Wanstead High School

Education with Character

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Headteacher: Miss E Hillman

18th May 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

My apologies for sending a letter so soon after the last one, but I now have an update regarding the new building following a meeting at the end of last week. There will also be another short letter (alongside the Heron Homelink) at the end of this half-term. We will start slightly later on the first day back to ensure we can update staff on some key new legislation and guidance, including changes to schools' responsibilities around allergies and details will be sent in this letter.

We have now received the following written update from the Head of Leisure & Culture at the Local Authority regarding the building works. This is very unwelcome news, as we will not be able to move in in September as we had hoped. As a result, we will need to reconsider our plans for next year, including continuing with split break and lunch times at least until March 2027. Our current start and end times will therefore remain in place for now.

We will still begin the new academic year at the planned time (Thursday 3rd September), but we may use the two additional approved days granted by the Local Authority to support the move when it happens, as outlined in previous correspondence.

I do not yet have any detail on what the continuing works at the Leisure Centre will mean for the school community, but I have been very clear that we cannot have any further disruption to our site or any impact on our learners. I await further updates with interest.

Having said that, I trust the new team at the Local Authority. They have been honest and transparent with us and have made it clear that safety is their priority. They are picking up the pieces from previous leadership and are working closely with us to complete the project.

Wanstead Project Update – Redbridge Council Statement

Following the insolvency of Jerram Falkus Construction in February 2026 — the contractor originally responsible for delivering the Education and Leisure Block, the Council moved quickly to put a recovery plan in place. The collapse of the contractor was unforeseen and outside of the Council's control, but we acted as fast as possible because we know how important this development is to the school, its students, and the wider community. As part of its response, the Council carried out a detailed review of the site to understand what work had been completed and what still needed attention. This review showed there were several gaps that must be addressed before the building can be safely finished.

Redbridge Council is now taking proactive steps to make sure every part of the building meets the required safety and regulatory standards. This includes further investigations and opening up some completed areas so we can be absolutely certain about the condition of the work and what is needed to complete the project. The Council understands how frustrating this situation is and is extremely sorry for the delay. Our priority now is to make sure the building is safe, compliant, and delivered to the standard residents expect. Unfortunately, this means the Education Block will not be ready before March 2027. Redbridge Council expects to have a clearer picture of the timeline once the intrusive investigation work is completed in early August.

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At the same time, the Council is urgently reviewing the remaining works needed to complete the new swimming pool. We remain fully committed to delivering this much anticipated facility as part of the wider development, and we're excited to ensure the community benefits from high quality leisure provision alongside the new Education Block.

I am sorry to be the bearer of bad news but at least we now have an end date.

All the best

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Emma Hillman". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Emma Hillman
Headteacher