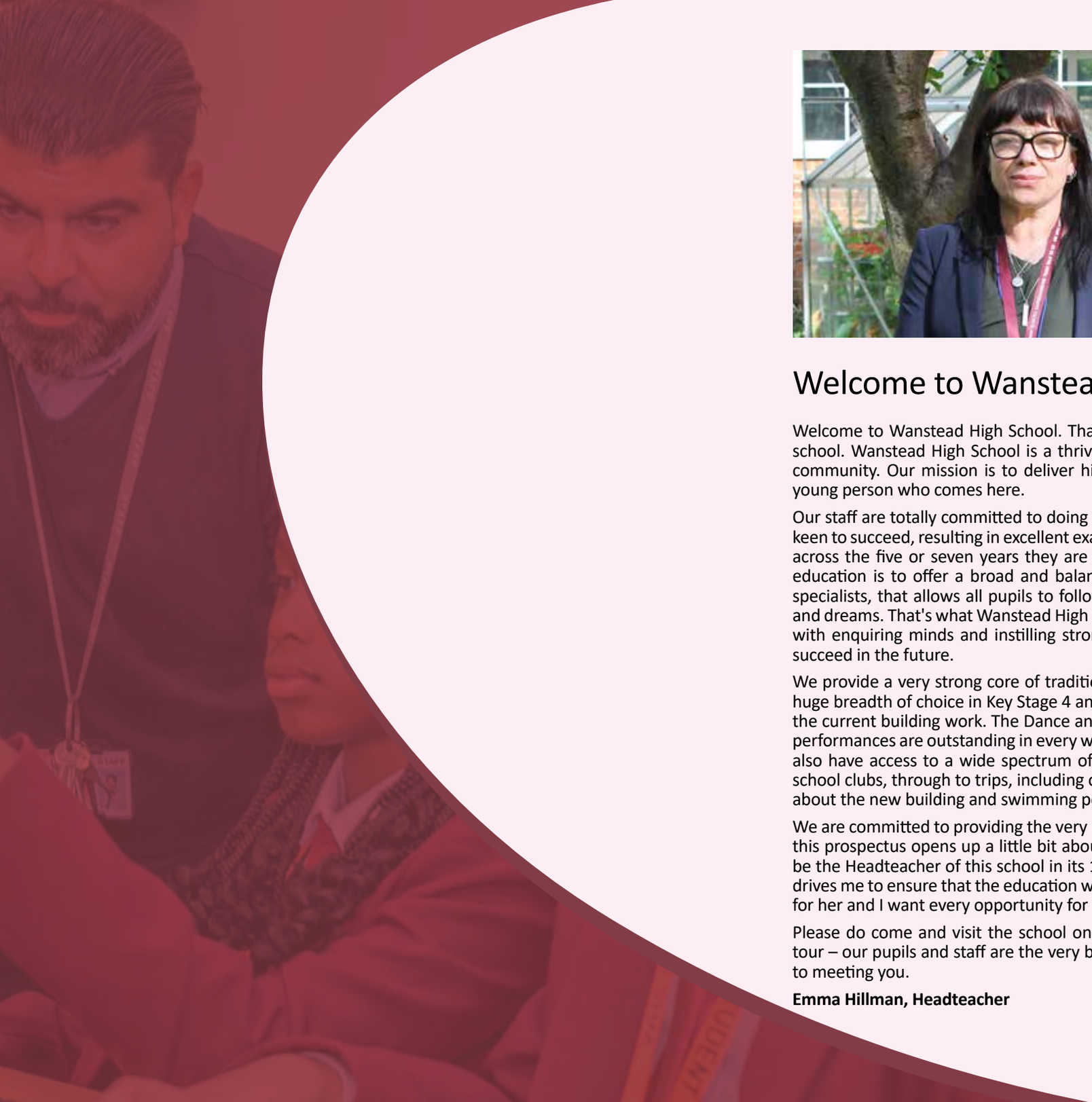
ABEUNT STUDIA IN MORES

Wanstead High School

Education with Character

Prospectus



Welcome to Wanstead High School

Welcome to Wanstead High School. Thank you for showing an interest in this amazing local school. Wanstead High School is a thriving 11-18 comprehensive school in the heart of the community. Our mission is to deliver high quality education with character to every single young person who comes here.

Our staff are totally committed to doing the best for their pupils, and in return, the pupils are keen to succeed, resulting in excellent exam results across the board and their personal growth across the five or seven years they are part of the school. The key to successful secondary education is to offer a broad and balanced curriculum, consistently taught well by subject specialists, that allows all pupils to follow the most ambitious pathways to suit their talents and dreams. That's what Wanstead High School does so well! We are also equipping our pupils with enquiring minds and instilling strong positive values that will help them to thrive and succeed in the future.

We provide a very strong core of traditional subjects, from Year 7 up to A Level, as well as a huge breadth of choice in Key Stage 4 and 5, with amazing facilities across the school, despite the current building work. The Dance and Drama provision is second to none and the regular performances are outstanding in every way. In addition to learning in the classroom, our pupils also have access to a wide spectrum of extra-curricular activities from excellent sports and school clubs, through to trips, including opportunities to travel abroad. We are hugely excited about the new building and swimming pool which should be open in summer 2026.

We are committed to providing the very best for the young people in our care, and I hope that this prospectus opens up a little bit about what makes Wanstead special. I am very proud to be the Headteacher of this school in its 101st year. I have a teenage daughter myself and she drives me to ensure that the education we provide is second to none. I want every opportunity for her and I want every opportunity for your children too.

Please do come and visit the school on our annual Open Evening or by booking a morning tour – our pupils and staff are the very best advertisement for Wanstead High. I look forward to meeting you.

Emma Hillman, Headteacher

At Wanstead High School, we welcome all pupils into our caring and supportive school community. Our pupils respect each other and have an understanding and tolerance of different cultures and faiths. Pupils are engaging, open-minded, fun and have excellent manners.

We work closely with our many primary school partners so that the transition to secondary school is as smooth as possible. We have a very strong pastoral team in place to assist pupils to settle quickly into a warm and caring environment. Each July, prospective pupils are given the opportunity to spend a day in the school and meet their Head of Year and Tutor, both of whom play a vital role in helping them to settle in. These opportunities provide all pupils with the opportunity to get to know the school site, become familiar with teaching staff and meet new classmates. Pupils with SEND come in for an additional morning to ensure we relieve any anxieties in advance.

Redeveloping connections with the wider community has been a key priority for the school after the pandemic and we take every opportunity to welcome families and local people into the school (the PTA run a huge range of events) and enabling our pupils to serve the community in return.

“The school uses a range of well-considered approaches to identify and support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In the classroom, staff typically adapt activities to enable pupils to access the curriculum effectively. Pupils with SEND achieve well.” **Ofsted Report 2025**

“Most pupils describe the school as a place that is ‘not just about achieving well, but also about building our characters’.” **Ofsted Report 2025**

“At Wanstead High, staff hold children’s lives in their hands and hearts.”
Lead HMI Inspector and School Improvement Partner

Wanstead High School, a learning community

“The curriculum is broad and ambitious.”

Ofsted 2025

Learning for All

We strive for all pupils to reach the highest levels of attainment and have Challenge Cycles in place which are periods of assessment each term. This helps teachers to see where there are gaps and misconceptions and provides more robust data for reports. Aiming high at all levels is a key priority for us and this is encouraged in the classroom in all subjects and is reflected in results, which are above the national average year on year. We rigorously track data to adapt learning and intervention and ensure all pupils make progress and there are no gaps for key groups. Equality of opportunity is key to us and we strive to ensure all pupils can reach pathways of their choice.

Our curriculum models are designed to ensure that there is rigour and romance in each learning experience and we ensure that subjects offer opportunities for pupils to consider and develop education with character in each subject; also supplemented by out of classroom experiences ranging from local trips to art galleries and places of worship for example, as well as trips abroad.

Some pupils require additional support to achieve the very best of their ability. Wanstead High School works closely with parents and carers to provide for the needs of each child and our SENDCO and SEND team are committed to ensuring outstanding provision in the classroom through quality first teaching and in the form of targeted intervention, such as literacy and numeracy and social skills. We offer a range of targeted programmes through our Inclusion Team; including mentoring schemes and projects aimed at extending the learning of all.

Relationships between pupils and staff are very strong and this is rated highly in all feedback. The staff body are now very collegiate and supportive and our staff are very positive about why this is a great place to work.

Behaviour for Learning

Behaviour in the school is excellent and the now established Behaviour Policy ensures that everyone in the community is aware of our high expectations and ensures a focus on reward and achievement. We strive to ensure there is no ‘invisible middle’ and that pupils who are quieter or not as well-known are encouraged and rewarded and able to showcase their talents. Safeguarding is exemplary and we ensure all pupils in our care are very well looked after all day and every day.

At Key Stage 3 and 4, all phones are stored safely during the school day ensuring that pupils do not have the distractions of social media during the school day. Success is celebrated within the school and pupil surveys recognise this as a key strength. We have an informative website, active social media and 'The Heron Homelink' informs pupils, parents and the local community of the many activities and events that are held throughout the year, whilst Award assemblies are a chance for the school community to share their achievements.

“Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They present learning clearly, select appropriate activities and ensure that pupils use vocabulary correctly.” **Ofsted 2025**

“Reading is a top priority. The school promotes a love of reading during form time and through other activities.” **Ofsted 2025**

An inclusive school where all are encouraged to achieve

Building confidence and success

The school and building is steeped in history and we want to ensure that the school goes from strength to strength creating new successes and achievements for our young people that will be remembered by the next generation. Wanstead High is now officially 101 years old!

We place particular emphasis on building confidence and success through the strong and supportive relationship between the tutor and each individual pupil. Every pupil is assigned to a Tutor Group and immediately benefits from the support of their tutor, an experienced member of staff who will be responsible for their pastoral care and acts as a mentor in relation to their academic progress and wider learning. Each year group has a very committed Head of Year who leads the ethos and vision for the year, ensuring progress and wider participation for every pupil. We have a strong pastoral team and a full-time counsellor.

Education with Character

As well as academic qualifications, we strive to ensure that our pupils are equipped to become confident, successful adults. Our pupils take a key role in the wider community and have the confidence to continue to achieve as they move on after their time with us.

Pupils selected key character virtues – and we all work hard to ensure these are virtues that we all aspire to live and breathe each day.

- **Curiosity**
- **Integrity**
- **Respect**
- **Service**
- **Teamwork**

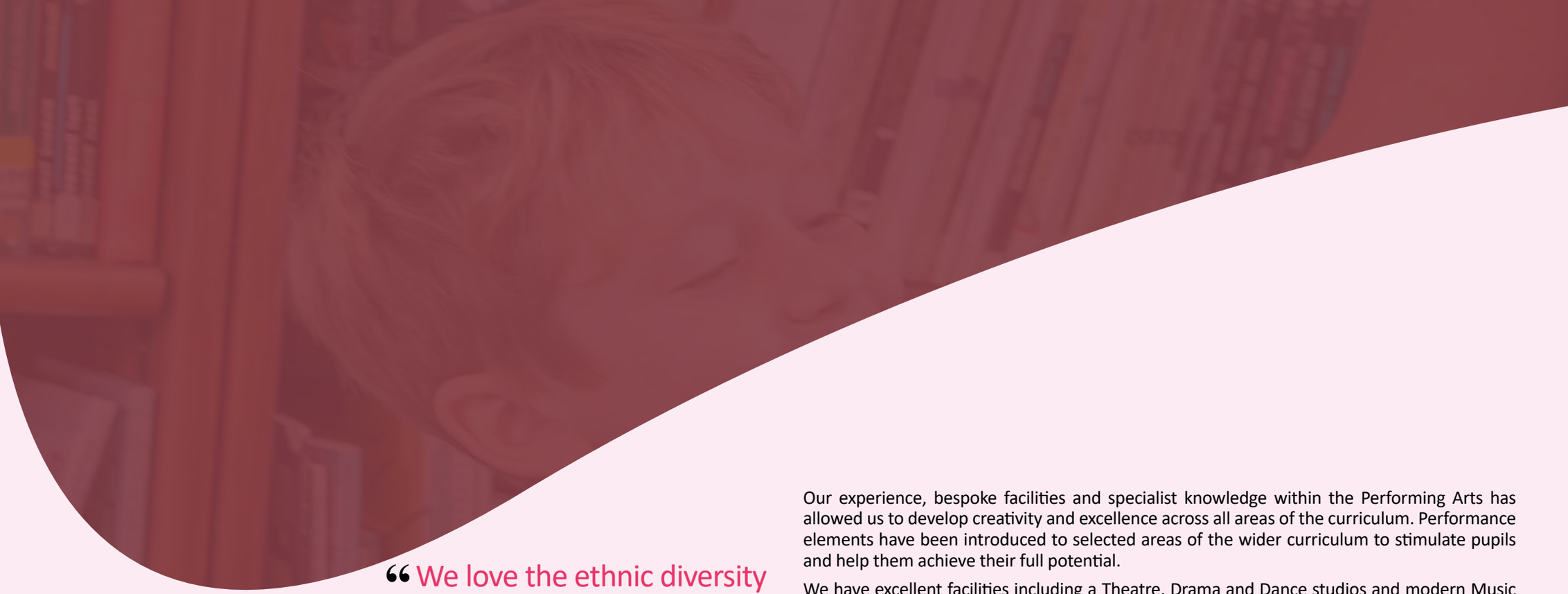
There are numerous opportunities such as Debating, involvement with the Wanstead Fringe and Jack Petchey events, such as the Speak Out Challenge. Extra-curricular activities including clubs, sports events, competitions and trips (including trips abroad) are a strong feature of school life. Sport is a highlight of the school and we have excellent facilities shared with the Leisure Centre. We regularly compete at a number of levels in many sports – both boys and girls and frequently win! We have a brilliant Sports Day at a local arena which many pupils said was the 'best day of their lives.'

Pupils can attend breakfast club and the library before school to ensure they are ready for school and well-equipped for the day ahead.

The school offers many Pupil Leadership opportunities such as being a Pupil Helper in Year 8 and a chance to be Head Pupils and prefects. There is a revitalised School Council which will become an integral part of the school and its desire to keep improving, as well as new opportunities to become leaders in other areas such as sport, fund-raising and mental health.

"We live in Wanstead and we love sending our children here as it is part of the overall community and the school represents this community. Our two children love being at Wanstead and have also felt part of this community."

Parent 2025



“We love the ethnic diversity of staff and pupils, extra-curricular opportunities, music and LAMDA lessons. The reward system linked to reward trips is great and the award assemblies help promote and celebrate achievements amongst peers.”

Parent 2024

Our experience, bespoke facilities and specialist knowledge within the Performing Arts has allowed us to develop creativity and excellence across all areas of the curriculum. Performance elements have been introduced to selected areas of the wider curriculum to stimulate pupils and help them achieve their full potential.

We have excellent facilities including a Theatre, Drama and Dance studios and modern Music Technology suites. There are a wide variety of Dance, Drama and Music clubs and workshops taking place at lunchtime and after school, with opportunities to join at all levels. Productions take place throughout the year and everyone is welcome to get involved, whether performing on stage or working behind the scenes. Early next year our school production is Our House.

We have been awarded Artsmark Gold, an award which recognises the high level of creative and artistic work that is continually produced across the school.

Specialising in the Performing Arts: learning through creativity and teamwork

Academic excellence

“The school has improved significantly over the last couple of years.”

Parent 2025

“It is a school that looks after all its pupils but is also ambitious for them in every way.”

Parent 2025

Exam results are consistently above national averages and pupils go on to follow ambitious pathways, for Oxbridge and other Russell Group universities or challenging apprenticeships. We have an extensive and growing Careers programme and use Unifrog and Skills Builder as well as the Prospects Careers Service. We send out a regular bulletin to parents, as well as providing pupils with many employer interactions.

All of our pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum and make excellent progress supported by well-qualified and innovative teaching staff. We ensure pupils develop a love and passion for creative and collaborative learning – both the romance and rigour of the curriculum. Excellent teaching is combined with an expectation that our pupils will take an active, positive role in their own learning. We give pupils the confidence to achieve success in examinations and be ready to take their place in society as committed, responsible young people.

At Key Stage 4 and post-16, a full range of subjects are studied providing pupils with choice, as well as an excellent grounding in core subject areas. This includes new subjects such as Media and Sociology. Our pupils achieve extremely high in the core subjects and their chosen options and enjoy taking part in Maths challenges, Poetry Week events and Science Week.

> “In the sixth form, students demonstrate high levels of concentration and commitment to their learning.”
>
> **Ofsted Report 2025**

We have a large and thriving Sixth Form, offering a wide range of subjects at AS and A Level with outcomes among the best in the borough. The vast majority of our Sixth Form pupils go on to study at university.

The Sixth Form facilities include a supervised private study room with state-of-the-art computing facilities. In addition, there is a welcoming common room and new café.

Sixth Formers enhance the ethos of the school, supporting staff and pupils in Years 7 to 11 with extra-curricular activities, as well as acting as role models, encouraging younger pupils to aim high and follow them into further study. A social contract enables them to give something back to the school community by volunteering in a number of areas. We also offer Work Experience in Year 12.

A thriving Sixth Form encouraging aspiration and leadership

"My child is happy, so I am happy."

Parent 2024

"I love the diversity and it's so interesting."

Pupil 2025

"The amount of kindness is crazy."

Pupil 2024

Wanstead High School takes a very active role in both our local and wider community and has built relationships with local community groups, primary schools and a number of schools around the world.

We our working towards the Rights Respecting Award and have been awarded Healthy Schools status in recognition of our promotion and delivery of healthy lifestyle education.

There is a wide range of educational visits and pupils also take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Over 120 pupils completed the Bronze Award last year and others are working towards Silver.

We have enjoyed working with arts organisations including the National Portrait Gallery and the National Theatre on projects which will inspire pupils to succeed and produce work of the very highest standard. Pupils have performed at the Donmar Warehouse, Sadler's Wells, the Royal Albert Hall, National Theatre Studio and the Royal Opera House and have enjoyed attending productions and taking part in workshops at The Globe and other London theatres.

Our active Governing Body is made up of a wide selection of individuals from the local community, parents and the local authority who work effectively in steering the school to achieve its maximum potential. Our new PTA is highly active and have set the target to raise £500,000.

Working in partnership with our local and international community

Aspiring for Excellence

Wanstead High School has a clear vision that you can find in full on our website. We aspire to be a school that always creates:

- A love and passion for creative and collaborative learning - inside and outside of the classroom - which is encouraged to drive progress and ambition within our school: staff, Governors and pupils alike.
- A curriculum on offer that is engaging, relevant, broad and balanced and is implemented equally for every pupil in every classroom.
- A development of character that is fostered in all areas of school life so that pupils develop to be kind and respectful of others' views and opinions and nobody tolerates bullying or discriminatory behaviour. Pupils also strive to achieve specific character virtues, including integrity and teamwork.
- Pupils being challenged consistently to excel in everything they do, from academic study, sport and artistic skill, through to their personal and group behaviour and attendance.
- Pupil, parent and staff voice and strong relationships which help to shape our values and development.

The school has a clear School Development Plan to ensure the school can continue to grow and develop and always be the best it can be. The school is driven by a vision of growth and excellence, with a clear plan to ensure it continually evolves and reaches its fullest potential, striving to be the best it can be every day.

Wanstead High School

Education with Character

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