Wanstead High School

Education with Character

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Headteacher: Miss E Hillman

22nd October 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Thank you for all your support this half-term and we hope you have a pleasant week with your family. Please don't forget that if you need any safeguarding support from the school during this time, you can email safeguarding@wansteadhigh.co.uk. This has been a really successful half-term with lots going on, excellent teaching and learning across the school, much reduced staff absence and huge inroads made in the Science department. You can read all about our news in and out of the classroom in the Heron Homelink published later in the week. We wish Years 11 and 13 all the best with their mocks starting after half-term.

Here are some key pieces of information in preparation for the second half of term.

Uniform

As you know, we return to full, normal school uniform on Monday 2nd November until the Summer term. Please do check the website if you want clarity about this and ensure your child knows how to tie a tie. We expect tights to be worn by all pupils opting to wear skirts - tights are not an excuse to wear tiny skirts. All skirts should rest on the knee and not be rolled up and we will have a big push on this after half-term. Pupils should have a robust waterproof coat (and umbrella if necessary) for the impending weather, especially as there is limited indoor space with the building work. Other uniform issues that need addressing:

- Hoop earrings are not permitted. Please read the jewellery section on the website and all piercings must be removed for PE.
- Tights should not have holes in - tights should be 40 denier or more to prevent rips.
- Any socks worn over tights must be black.
- Shirt top buttons must be done up.
- Lanyards must be worn at all times. If pupils lose lanyards, a new one must be purchased at a cost of £5.

A staff survey has confirmed that staff are overwhelmingly pleased with the impact of the summer uniform, but support this being during the Summer/Autumn months only. We will continue to consider this and take feedback from the wider community at the end of the year.

Please also be mindful that any new piercings or false nails must be removed before returning to school. Pupils who return with these still visible will not be able to rejoin mainstream lessons, provision will be made for them in an alternative space and learning will take place online. Thank you for your cooperation in helping us maintain our school expectations.

Basic equipment and essentials list

Below is a reminder of our required basic equipment and essentials list. If your child has any missing items, please can you ensure to stock up over the half-term, or communicate with the school if you require any support.

- 1 green pen
- 1 glue stick
- 2 pencils
- Ruler
- 1 eraser
- Pencil sharpener
- Calculator (scientific)
- Whiteboard pen/marker
- Reading book/books for the day's lessons
- Optional Extras: Highlighters, colouring pens/pencils

Please note that for safety reasons, compasses and scissors are not permitted

Staffing

We welcome 4 new staff members on 2nd November to our support teams. These are Zoe Warriner, SEND Administrator, Sabah Butt, HR Administrator, Frances Green, SEND TA and Fizaa Farrukh, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead who will support Ms Cini in this vital area.

Ms McQuillan has now started her maternity leave and we wish her well at this exciting time.

Prayer Room Facilities

In addition to our extensive extra-curricular programme, we are pleased to offer Prayer Club at Key Stage 4 and 5 lunchtimes. On Friday, the Prayer Club will also be available at Key Stage 3 lunch. We are very grateful to the staff that are giving up their time to facilitate this as well as all other opportunities that are available. The Wanstead High Extra-Curricular offer can be found at: https://www.wansteadhigh.co.uk/page/?title=Clubs+and+Extra%2Dcurricular+Activities&pid=154

Parent/Carer Online Safety Survey

Over recent weeks, we have become aware of a number of concerns linked to pupils' use of social media, particularly activity within WhatsApp groups involving younger pupils. While these issues do not involve all children, they have highlighted the significant influence that online interactions can have on friendships, wellbeing, behaviour and safeguarding.

As a school, we are keen to work in partnership with families to help children navigate the online world safely and responsibly. To support this, we would be grateful if you could complete this short survey - 5 questions. Your responses will help us better understand parents' and carers' attitudes towards social media and mobile technology, levels of confidence in supporting online safety, and any further guidance or training that would be beneficial.

Survey Link - https://forms.gle/WJgFLLgWv7wkm44PA - please complete by Friday 6th November 2026.

The survey is anonymous but if you would like to speak to a member of staff about this issue, please contact your child's Head of Year in the first instance.

Winter Safety

As we move into the winter season, including Halloween and Bonfire Night, we encourage all families to keep safety in mind and to always know where your child is. Please remind your child about safety including:

- Take care when travelling in the dark and be mindful of surroundings.
- Follow road safety rules carefully, particularly during darker mornings and evenings, including using the crossing near school.
- Be respectful of others when celebrating Halloween and make sensible choices when out with friends.
- Enjoy Bonfire Night safely by attending organised events.

Thank you for your support in helping us keep our young people safe.

Pupil Leadership

The last week has seen lots of exciting activities within pupil leadership: prefects were announced and have successfully begun their duties-conducting tours and are well underway in planning some charity and community events. In the countdown to Christmas, the prefects will be stewarding the shoe box appeal, Christmas Jumper Day, Christmas Dinner and Christmas Tree reflections to name a few of their projects. More details will follow, but a huge congratulations to the 30 Year 10s that have been successful and have started so brightly.

Last week also saw Years 7-11 complete their pupil council hustings in assemblies. Shortlisted pupils pitched their cases to their peers before whole year group votes took place. The results are in but at the time of writing, they have not been announced - stay tuned to the Heron Homelink for updates. Well done to the large numbers that applied, those that were shortlisted and especially those that have been successful in being nominated by their year groups as year group representatives.

Science Fair 2026/7 – Celebrating Science and Our Communities

We are excited to launch this year's Science Fair, inspired by the Black History Month theme, 'Honouring Our Communities'. We would like pupils to choose a scientist connected to their own community, whether that is their family's country of origin,

their local area or somewhere in the UK. This is a lovely opportunity for pupils to celebrate their heritage and discover the contributions of scientists from different backgrounds.

The task is compulsory for all Year 7 and 8 pupils, and we would love Year 9 pupils to get involved too! Pupils have until the end of this term to complete a project or piece of research inspired by their chosen scientist. Projects will be collected during the first week back after Christmas, with selected entries showcased at our Science Fair.

We are also hoping to offer some fantastic prizes for our Science Fair winners and would be very grateful for any contributions from our parent community. If you, your family or a business you know could donate a prize, such as a science-related gift, voucher or tickets to a show or exhibition, we would really appreciate your support. There is, of course, no obligation to contribute.

We can't wait to see what our pupils come up with! If you have any questions about the task or would like to donate a prize, please email Ms Thompson directly at v.thompson@wansteadhigh.co.uk.

Sixth Form Open Evening

Our Sixth Form Open Evening will take place on Thursday 26th November from 5.00-7.00pm. Details are on the school website. **The following day, Friday 27th November, school will be closed to pupils for staff training.**

Year 9 Online Progress Evening

Don't forget this will take place on 10th December - further details to follow.

PTA

Continued thanks to the PTA for their support and for the fun run that took place on Saturday. £3,700 has been raised so far. Sadly, I was unable to attend due to a family commitment but I will be all ready for the Traitors quiz night on 27th November where I shall be channelling my inner Claudia!



Return to School

Monday 2nd November - a late start for pupils. Gates will open from 10.00am for a 10.20am start. Pupils will be in registration from 10.20-11.20am for phone collection and various activities to re-set for the half-term ahead.

Wishing you a safe and happy half-term and we look forward to seeing a number of Year 11 parents at the Information Evening on Tuesday 3rd November.

All the best

Emma Hillman

Emma Hillman
Headteacher