

Westfield Newsletter

News and updates for parents and carers of students at Westfield School | July 2018



Lots of change and lots more to come!

As I approach the end of my first year as Head of Westfield School, I look back on a year in which I have

learned a great deal, a year that I have thoroughly enjoyed, and a year in which a lot has changed at Westfield. The school's Ofsted report from February 2017 signposted several key areas for improvement, and we have taken significant action to address these.

Ofsted said we needed to raise our expectations of students and what they can achieve. In response we have changed the way that we set academic targets for students. All students at Westfield are now set challenging targets that are achievable with a lot of hard work.

We have also introduced the ARKS ethos - this is the expectation that all members of School community are Ambitious for themselves and others, Ready to work and learn, Kind to one another, and that they keep themselves and one-another Safe. These four simple expectations underpin the high expectations we have of ourselves and one another. Since June we have been rewarding students who consistently meet these expectations with ARKS points.

We have also raised expectations of student uniform, and continue to work hard to ensure that our students wear the Westfield uniform with pride.

Finally, our strong links with Silverdale Sixth Form will see around 10% of our out-going Year 11 students accessing A-level courses at Sheffield's top-performing post 16 provider next year.

Ofsted said we needed to improve the quality of teaching and learning so that these, and therefore pupil progress, are strong in all departments. In response we have written and implemented a new teaching and learning policy that

all teachers now work hard to apply. The implementation of this policy is systematically checked by members of the Senior Leadership Team and Faculty Leaders, who now regularly visit lessons and check student books to ensure learning is of a high standard. This way the best teaching can be identified and shared, and teachers can be supported to keep improving. Many of our teachers have accessed the best available training, including the nationally recognised Outstanding Teacher Programme. Crucially, we have also recruited 15 new teachers (6 in English alone!), all of whom are subject specialists. Some of these teachers have joined the school in the latter part of this academic year, and others will join us in September. We are very excited about the new ideas this will bring, and we are delighted to be fully staffed with subject specialists for September 2018.

In addition to this we have made some changes to our curriculum for next year. In Years 10 and 11 we have put extra English and Science classes onto the timetables of all students to maximise their chances of exam success in these fundamentally important subjects. Some students in the current Year 10 will move teaching groups when they enter Year 11 to allow this timetable change to work effectively. However no student will be disadvantaged by this change and all students will benefit from the additional provision in English and Science.

Ofsted also said that we needed to improve student behaviour, attitudes to learning and punctuality. In response we have introduced a simple, in-class approach to challenging poor behaviour and attitudes to learning called Choice, Chance, Consequence. This approach is now used by all teachers, and gives students two opportunities to make better choices before they are removed from lesson and placed in a next-day detention. We have also introduced ARKS points as a

new rewards system to reward and celebrate the vast majority of students who show a consistently positive attitude to learning in every lesson, every day. We have improved punctuality to lessons by awarding ARKS points for being on time, and through sanctioning poor punctuality with next-day detentions.

Ofsted said we needed to improve the quality of leadership at all levels. In response we re-structured our leadership team. We now have a clear structure of leadership at a faculty and subject level, and a Senior Leadership Team who have clear remits to lead on our school priorities.

While there is still much work to do to ensure Westfield fulfils its potential to become a truly Outstanding school, I am pleased with many of the changes we have made this year, and I am confident that, given time to embed, they will give us a great platform for further improvement next year and beyond. I am very thankful for the great support I have had from parents and carers throughout this year who have offered praise when it has been earned and constructive feedback when it has been necessary.

We would like your feedback!

Please see news item overleaf about a new parental survey, which I hope you can take part in.

Thank you - and have a happy holiday!

Mr Joe Birkbeck
Head of Westfield School



Westfield School

An exciting end to term...

As we approach the end of this academic year, we are very much looking forward to some exciting events that are ahead of us before the end of term.

Year 6 Transition

From Monday 16 July we will be joined in school by the Year 6 students who will be joining Westfield as Year 7s in September. Our Year 6 students will be with us for the final week of term and will have the opportunity to meet and get to know our students and staff, to familiarise themselves with the building and, most importantly, get involved in some very exciting learning opportunities.

Y7 - 9 Sports Day

Monday 16 July will also be Westfield School's Sports Day. This year we have taken the decision to hold Sports Day here at the school to take advantage of our excellent sporting facilities and to ensure that the activities on offer are inclusive of all students. This will mean that all students in years 7, 8 and 9 will be able to take part in the exciting team and individual events that will take place.

Students in years 7, 8 and 9 should arrive at school 2 hours later than usual on Monday 16 July. We ask that students arrive at school by 10.30am, at which point they will be registered and then will spend the rest of the day taking part in sporting activities. The school day will end at the normal time of 2.45pm. The reason for the late start is to allow our Year 6 students to have some time settling into school without the busy environment that comes with all five year groups arriving at school by 8.30am. Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 should use this additional time in the morning to ensure they are fully prepared and equipped for Sports Day. Students should attend school in sports kit. This can be Westfield PE kit, or alternatively sports kit to reflect their Hall colours.

Don = Red Loxley = Blue

Rivelin = Yellow Sheaf = Green

Lunches will be available from the canteen at the earlier lunchtime of 12.00 - 12.30pm for students in Years 7, 8 and 9. Students will be asked to remain in the canteen at lunchtime, before competing in and/or supporting the inter-Hall athletics events that will take place on the school field in the afternoon. Please ensure your child brings plenty of drinking water and sun cream to school, as the weather may well be very hot. May the best Hall win!

Y10 'Be Ambitious' Day

As we approach the end of this academic year, we are very much looking forward to some exciting events that are ahead of us before the end of term.

Westfield has a strong track record in supporting students onto appropriate courses and apprenticeships post 16. We have strong careers programme and excellent relationships with employers. On Monday 16 July students in Year 10 will take part in a day that is designed to educate students on their options post-16, and give them an insight into the competitive world of employment and recruitment that they will enter when they leave Westfield.

Year 10 students should attend school from 9.45am and, where possible, are invited to wear formal business dress to reflect the content of the learning that will take place on this day. The reason for the slightly later start on this date is to allow our Y6 students to have some time settling into school without the busy environment that comes with all five years arriving at school by 8.30am. Year 10 students should use the additional time in the morning to prepare themselves for the day in the same way that they would prepare themselves for an interview situation. Students will take part in a variety of different careers and enterprise activities which will begin at 10.00am. The day's activities will end at 2pm and Y10 students will be allowed home to spend time researching the courses, apprenticeships or careers they aspire to access post 16.

Last Day Arrangements

As well as taking feedback from parents on what has gone well this academic year, and what could be improved next year, we will also be taking feedback from staff. In order to facilitate this the school day will end earlier than usual on Friday 20 July, at 1.05pm (lunchtime). Students who receive free school meals will have access to the canteen before they leave site. We do, of course, understand that this arrangement may not be practical for all families, and therefore we will make provision for any student to remain in school until 2.45pm. If you require your child/children to remain in school until 2.45pm on Friday 20 July, please contact reception by Friday 13 July so that we can plan this provision accordingly.

Start of term arrangements

All students will start back for the new academic year on Wednesday 5 September, and should be at school in full uniform at 8.25am ready for the start of the school day at 8.30am. Students will attend their ARKS (form) group as usual at 8.30am, where they will be issued with their new timetable. ARKS time will be extended until the end of period 2 to ensure that all key information relating to the new school year can be shared by Key Workers, and to enable every student to attend a 'welcome back' assembly. Students will attend lessons as normal from period 3 onwards.

We welcome your feedback

The whole team at Westfield have worked incredibly hard this year to move the school forward and to make improvements that will ultimately see improved outcomes and life chances for all our students

While I hope that as parents and carers you will have seen and felt some positive changes this year, I am very aware that there is still so much more we can get better at, and I would really welcome your feedback on what Westfield is doing well, and what we could do better. This will be invaluable in helping us to put plans in place for the academic year ahead.

I would appreciate it if you could spare 5 minutes to complete a short online questionnaire by following this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/VP8XK35>

S20 Foodbank

Over the course of this academic year our students, staff, parents and carers have made wonderful contributions to the S20 Foodbank.

The Foodbank have informed us that the summer holidays are one of the most challenging times for families that rely on them - and a time when donations decrease owing to holidays etc. - and as such we would like to have one last drive to collect food prior to the summer holidays.

Please could families that are in a position to do so send food and other household consumables into school during the last week of term to support the Foodbank in this difficult summer period. Students are requested to take donations to their ARKS Key Worker. Thank you.

Don't forget you can find out more information about school at our new website: www.westfield-chorustrust.org