



# Westlands School Information Booklet

## Westlands School Radar Message



**Respect:** Respect comes first. We value respect for others and respect for ourselves. Care, courtesy and consideration cost nothing, and we expect kindness because it makes our school a happier place. We appreciate the advice and experience of staff who work in our school.

**Achievement:** Achievement is the core purpose of our school. We value learning and encourage progress so that we can all have the opportunity to reach our potential. We celebrate our success from both inside and outside school.

**Diversity:** We embrace the fact that we come from different backgrounds. This diversity makes our school a more interesting and inspiring place. We value inclusion and encourage those who need extra support.

**Aspiration:** We really do believe in our motto that at our school we 'Expect More'. We aim to develop skills for a life of learning. We value ambition, both at school and in developing our character.

**Resilience:** We value effort and the determination to keep trying when we have made a mistake. We want to develop independence as we grow. Developing mental toughness will help us to respond to pressures we might face in our lives.

### Westlands Classroom Code

1. Be on time and ready to learn.
2. Follow your teacher's instructions.
3. Be positive and purposeful about your learning.
4. Always try your best.
5. Remember that everyone has the right to learn in this classroom.

# Westlands - Home School Agreement

We believe in working closely with parents and carers to provide children with the best experience at Westlands School. Therefore, we have a Home School Agreement which we will upload to Admissions+ that we ask you to engage with prior to your child starting school in September. This agreement covers what parents/carers, the student and the school will aim to do throughout your child's time here.

## Community Structure

At Westlands School we have a team of staff who support each year group. We call this team the community. The community team will ensure that your child settles successfully into Year 7 and will continue to work with them whilst they are at Westlands. The community team is made up of the following staff:

- The **Principal** provides strategic leadership of the community.
- The **Learning Leader** ensures students are achieving their full potential, identifies underperformance and supports students in addressing this, liaises with parents/carers, ensures students are appropriately set, supports staff in dealing with underperforming students and conducts learning conversations.
- There are also two **Pastoral Support Managers (PSM)**. The PSM is usually the first port of call for students and parents/carers. The PSM oversees pastoral care, deals with low level behaviour issues, investigates any issues which may arise and is often the main liaison with parents/carers.
- Students meet with their **Community Time Teacher** twice a week as a whole class. In these lessons, which are an extension of the PSHE curriculum, they discuss the different aspects of the Westlands Radar, as well as other topical issues.
- As well as their year group, each student will belong to a House, which will be allocated to them. Each House has a **Head of House**, who will support students with extra-curricular activities, encourage participation with competitions and house points. The school has four houses:
  - Hawking (blue)
  - Pankhurst (green)
  - Seacole (yellow)
  - Turing (red)

## Contacting the School

We believe it is important for school staff and parents/carers to work closely together and, therefore, encourage parents and carers to contact the school with any queries they may have. Parents/carers are able to contact the school in a variety of ways. The main school telephone number is 01795 477475, which will provide callers with a range of different options to choose from. Parents/carers can also email the school office on [westlandsoffice@swale.at](mailto:westlandsoffice@swale.at). Our office team will then forward your email to the most relevant staff member. Full contact details of how to contact us are included on our school website, using this link: <https://www.westlands.org.uk/page/?title=Contact+Us&pid=2>

## School Uniform

We believe that by dressing smartly, students have the most productive and positive mind-set for learning. Therefore, we promote and expect all students to maintain high standards when it comes to uniform, wearing it correctly and in the required style. All items of uniform worn to school must be of conventional school style appropriate for formal

school wear and should be **clearly marked with the owner's name**. This helps students and staff find any lost items to return to their owner (please see the section on lost property below). We have included our school's Behaviour and Uniform Policy in Appendix A of this document for your reference. You will also find a copy uploaded to Admissions+. If parents/carers have any doubts about what may be inappropriate, they should contact one of the Pastoral Support Managers on 01795 477475. Some parents/carers have found it helpful to send pictures to the Pastoral Support Managers via email before purchasing items to check these will be suitable.

All items of uniform can be bought at: Forsters' Ltd, 17-19 East Street, Sittingbourne ME10 4BQ.

Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 are not permitted to wear make-up. In Years 10 and 11 only discreet make-up is allowed. No students are allowed to wear jewellery of any sort to school, including earrings. If students do wear jewellery to school, it will be confiscated and locked in the school office for collection by a parent or legal carer after school. Ears should be pierced only at the beginning of a main holiday to allow time for healing so the earrings can be removed on return to school. Hair styles and colour should be acceptable for a formal school situation. No visible tattoos are permitted at any time, including during PE lessons or games activities.

When students are travelling by public transport or are walking or cycling to or from school, they are expected to wear their full school uniform.

## School Equipment

It is expected that each student will carry with them on a daily basis, a bag large enough to carry an A4 folder, containing the following equipment:

- 2 working black pens
- a pencil
- a rubber
- a pencil sharpener
- a ruler
- a calculator

There may be occasions where your child borrows a book from a teacher or the school library. We would expect students to take care of these resources and, if unfortunately, books lent by the school were to be damaged or lost, these would need to be paid for. In addition to the basic list above, the following are very strongly recommended and encouraged:

- a protractor
- a pair of compasses with small pencil
- a scientific calculator

## Entrances, Exits and Amenities

### Arriving and Departing

To ensure a smooth start and end to every day, students enter and exit the site through different gates, depending on which year group they are in. Year 7 students arrive at school via Westlands Gate. This is the main entrance at the top of Westlands Avenue. They then make their way to their playground, which is the closest area to their gate, Newlands Playground. Year 7 students also leave through the same gate, making their way down Westlands Avenue to return

home. At the start and end of the day, the Community Team are at the gates to welcome students, ensuring they are the first and last port of call.

### Toilets

Just like with entrances and exits, each year group has their own set of toilets to use. The Year 7 toilets are at the Newlands end of the school adjacent to their playground. Your child will be shown where their toilets are during Transition Evening and at the start of Transition Week.

### School Canteen

Year 7 students can buy food from two places. There is the main canteen just off of the Year 7 playground, where students can sit inside to eat. There is also an outdoor serving facility for Year 7 students to purchase 'grab and go' items from the canteen. We also have two large covered seating areas on the Year 7 playground. Please see the section 'ParentPay' which covers how parents/carers can pay for their child's food.

## My Child at School (MCAS)

We use My Child at School, which is an app-based communication tool, to communicate with parents and carers. It will allow you to view your child's timetable and any exam timetables, as well as interact with how they are behaving in school by viewing the positive points they have been awarded by staff. We also use MCAS to send reports and achievement data to parents/carers. You will be sent login details in September via email and will need these in order to access your account. You will also be sent a reference guide, which you can also find on the website using this link: <https://www.westlands.org.uk/page/?title=My+Child+At+School+%28MCAS%29&pid=122>

Letters and communication from the school will be emailed to parents/carers using the email addresses you have provided to us. Please note, these will not appear in your MCAS account; they will only be sent via email. With that in mind, it is vital that you keep us informed of any changes to contact details, especially email addresses.

## Attendance and Appointments

Ideally a student should attend school every day and arrive on time. However, we understand that sometimes circumstances may not make this possible. An individual attendance of above 96% is expected from all students. Dental and hospital appointments should, as far as possible, be made outside school hours. Where this is not possible we encourage students to attend for at least part of the school day. Parents/carers must provide a letter in advance for any requests for student absence. The student must also be given a note to release them from class. The full attendance policy is on our website.

The Attendance Office will help parents/carers with any aspect of attendance. We ask that parents contact the Attendance Office by telephone on the first day of absence. **The direct telephone number is 01795 413920 or press 1 on the main number, or email [attendanceoffice@swale.at](mailto:attendanceoffice@swale.at) to report absences, appointments or leaving school outside of the normal start and finish times.**

## Holidays in Term Time

Holidays during the school term are subject to the relevant school policy in this area and will only be authorised by the Headteacher in exceptional circumstances. Holidays will not be authorised for students studying in Key Stage 4.

Parents/carers are reminded that they cannot expect the school to agree to a holiday during term time. In fact, the Governors of the school actively discourage this practice. Any such request must be submitted in writing prior to any holiday being planned and will be replied to. If the holiday is still taken, a penalty notice may be issued.

Under normal circumstances, absence will not be granted for a holiday. If a child is taken on holiday without permission, this will count as an unauthorised absence and will be reported as such on all reports and references.

## Rewarding Students

We like to reward students at Westlands School and have a number of different ways in which to do so.

### Positive Points

We have a rewards points system, where we award positive behaviour points to students who demonstrate positive behaviours. Parents and carers can view these on MCAS. A new level is achieved with every 50 points awarded and rewarded by the Community Team.

### Homework Hampers

Homework is an important part of school and extends a student's learning and helps them progress. Each term staff nominate students who have consistently submitted good quality homework for a Homework Hamper, which is full of treats.

### Praise Postcards

Students can be awarded a Praise Postcard for continued hard work or for a really special piece of work or display of effort. These will be sent home to you or given to your child to bring home.

### Book of Commendation

This is a Headteacher award. Students who go above and beyond, who achieve something special are recognised by the Headteacher by being entered into the Book of Commendation and presented with a RADAR badge.

### Social Media

We have a school Facebook page, 'Westlands Secondary School' which is dedicated to praising students. We welcome parents/carers following this, to join in with celebrating our students' achievements.

## Advice On Lost Property

We have a lost property collection point in the main school office. Staff and students will make every effort to return all items of **named** lost property to their rightful owner. All items of lost property are held in the main office, but where there are items unnamed and unclaimed, these will be disposed of at the end of Terms 2, 4 and 6. As already stated, your child's property should be clearly marked with their name.

It is not always a good idea for your child to bring expensive items to school. We do need to emphasise that students who bring to school expensive items of clothing or equipment, such as designer coats, jewellery, mobile phones, smart-watches or any other electronic device, do so at their own risk. **The school cannot accept any liability** for loss or damage.



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## The Use of Mobile Phones in School

At Westlands we embrace the use of technology and appreciate that most students will have a mobile phone they wish to bring to school. We also know that mobile phones and other related devices, can be a huge source of distraction and can, at times, be used inappropriately. Students may bring mobile phones to school if they use them sensibly and appropriately. The times students can use their mobile phones on the school site are before school, at break-time, lunchtime and after school.

Students must not use their phones in lessons. This includes answering their phone, texting, viewing the screen in any way, or simply having them visible. Phones should be in silent mode and must not disturb learning. This rule also applies in the corridors and around the site between lessons when students are expected to move around the school briskly but safely.

Students must not use mobile phones to bully, personally harass or post private information about another person using social media nor should they be used to record conversations or take photographs or videos of anyone without their consent.

If students abuse these rules the phone, including SIM card, will be confiscated. Any student who refuses to hand over their phone will be placed in the Pupil Support Provision as a punishment, but there will still be an expectation that the same phone is handed in, even if this happens a day or so later.

All mobile phones must be kept out of sight at all times. At no time should students have mobile phones visible in their top blazer pocket or top pocket of their shirt.

Phones that are confiscated by staff will be kept securely and can only be collected by the **parent or legal carer (no other relative)**.

Parents/carers with extenuating circumstances who are unable to collect a mobile phone can arrange, for a fee, for the phone to be sent home by special delivery, which will require someone to be at home to sign for it.

Full information regarding our policy on mobile phones can be found with our Behaviour and Uniform Policy in Appendix 1 of this document.

## Homework

### The Library

The school provides a great deal of support for homework and students have a number of opportunities to complete homework at school. In particular, students are able to use the library, supervised by a member of staff, after school until 4pm Monday to Friday. Within the library students have access to ICT. The SENCo, Mrs Graves, also runs lunchtime homework clubs in B Block with teaching assistants available to help.

The Library Computer Management System uses a fingerprint recognition system to identify students. This allows the students to borrow and return books easily, without the need for a library card, speeding up the loan process and ensuring that there is less chance of mistakes being made. Fingerprints are not stored by the system and it is not possible to create an image of a finger from the information. This does not contravene the Data Protection Act in any way.

### Completion of Homework

We will organise and publish a homework timetable and staff will set homework via Google Classroom. Parents/carers are expected to ensure that homework is completed by their child.

## Clubs and Activities

A large number of clubs and activities are organised at lunchtimes and after school. An up-to-date clubs and activities timetable can be found on the school's website where there is always something to suit everyone.

Parents/carers should make their own arrangements for students to get home in the evening.

## Working Collaboratively

Throughout the school year we will be hosting a variety of events on the school site that parents/carers will be invited to. This will help parents/carers learn more about the school and what their child is learning and experiencing. These events will also provide parents/carers with the opportunity to share their views and work collaboratively with staff, helping to shape the future of Westlands School.

## Supporting Students with Medical Conditions

Our First Aid Room is supervised by trained first aiders throughout the day. Medications should be kept in the First Aid Room and administered by our Lead First Aider. Parents/carers can give us the details of any medical conditions through our admission form but can also contact Mrs Lyall, [benita.lyall@swale.at](mailto:benita.lyall@swale.at), our Lead First Aider. For students who already have a Care Plan at primary school, please ensure you have made a note of this on our admissions form or let us know separately.

## Westlands is a Nut Free School

We have students at our school who are allergic to nuts, including airborne allergies. This means that even opening a food product containing nuts may cause a severe allergic reaction leading to anaphylactic shock, requiring an ambulance. Please do not allow your child to bring any food product that contains nuts into school. Many unexpected food products contain nuts such as cereal bars. We ask that you please read food labels carefully to help us keep our school nut free and safe for all of our students.

## Free School Meals

If you are receiving Income Support, income-based Job Seekers Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, guaranteed element of pension credit, or Child Tax Credit (without Working Tax Credit), Universal Credit and your annual income does not exceed current government legislation, your child may be entitled to receive school meals free of charge.

Those already approved at their present school do not need to supply new evidence, but are required to inform The Assessment Team at KCC of the secondary school that their child has been allocated as soon as they receive confirmation. For further information, go to:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/free-school-meals>

Our canteen is run by an external company called Nourish who run a breakfast club each morning opening at 7.45am and closing at 8.30am. Any student can buy breakfast. Students receiving Free School Meals are given a free breakfast up to the value of £1.10.



# ParentPay

ParentPay is the form of payment at Westlands School.

What does ParentPay do?

- Enables you to add money to your child's school meals account
- Enables you to pay for trips, clubs and other items such as music tuition fees
- Offers a highly secure payment site
- Gives you a history of all the payments you have made
- Allows the creation of a single account which you can add all your children to, even if they attend different schools (as long as the school subscribes to ParentPay)
- Shows you all items available for payment relevant to each of your children
- Emails a receipt of your payment to the email address you register

How do I get started?

Once your child is on roll, you will receive an activation letter to enable you to set up your ParentPay account. The activation letter will contain a personal activation username and password to enable you to login to ParentPay. During the activation process you will be guided through changing your username and password to something more memorable; you can also merge your accounts if you have more than one child at Westlands School or children who attend different schools (as long as the school subscribes to ParentPay). **Please do not hesitate to contact our Finance Team at [finance@swale.at](mailto:finance@swale.at) or 01795 426091, option 1 if you need assistance.**

More Information can be found on the ParentPay website [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com)

## Privacy Notice

Our privacy notice for parents/carers can be viewed here <https://www.swale.at/page/?title=Privacy+Notice&pid=33>

## Young Person's Travel Pass

You can find out information about the Young Person's Travel Pass here:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-transport/KCC-travel-saver>

## Who to Contact

During the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 you should contact:

Dr Clark, Senior Assistant Headteacher, [richard.clark@swale.at](mailto:richard.clark@swale.at), who will either deal with your enquiry or ask a relevant member of staff to deal with it.

# **Appendix 1**

## **Westlands School Behaviour and Uniform Policy**

**(including mobile phone protocol)**

Please click the following link to view our Behaviour and Uniform Policy

[Behaviour and Uniform Policy](#)