

September 2011

Dear Parent

Welcome to the new academic year and a special warm welcome to all those families who join us for the first time this year. We are sure your son/daughter will thrive during their time at Westborough.

We also extend a very warm welcome to the students, staff and parents of the former Birkdale High School. We hope that you will very quickly feel part of the Westborough Community.

You join the Westborough family at a very exciting time. Our GCSE results this year were the best on record with a magnificent 74% of our students achieving 5 A\* to C Grades, 42% with English and Maths. We also feel very privileged to have "inherited" staff and students from the former Birkdale High School who of course were one of the most improved schools in Yorkshire last year and have again this year achieved magnificent results. The improvements made by both schools over the past few years provide a strong platform for Westborough to move forward in partnership with The Dewsbury Learning Trust (Huddersfield University, Heckmondwike Grammar School and Kirklees College) to ensure that we continue to become a highly successful school which serves families and children in our area well.

I can say without hesitation that this success is down to the high calibre, hard-working staff we have at Westborough who do everything they can to ensure our students reach their potential; and of course we have a hard working body of students who, together with their parents' support continue to strive for excellence in their studies. I know this will continue with the new and enlarged staff team that we now have.

You can see why we believe that Westborough is an outstanding school which offers students the opportunities to achieve in all aspects of their learning – academic, sporting, musical, social, cultural and moral.

We welcome the following staff who join Westborough from September:

All staff from the former Birkdale High School

Mr L Patel, Business Studies

Mr A Healey, French

Mr P Smith, Business Studies

Mrs H Ridout, Maths

Mrs A Du Quesnay – Head of Student Progress Y7/Teacher of Science

Miss A Khan, Science

I would now like to move on to some of our rules and regulations. We know through our work with parents that you always tell us that you send your children to Westborough because of the high standards the school sets in relation to personal presentation and behaviour. We know therefore that you will support the school in ensuring that the following rules are followed by your sons/daughters.

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## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Attendance at Westborough High School is always well above national averages. This is because we have very tight systems which ensure that absences are picked up very quickly. The majority of our students understand why attendance is important. We have very few students who are persistently absent and we thank you for this.

I wish I could say the same about **PUNCTUALITY**. There are far too many students arriving to school late. We acknowledge the issues of traffic surrounding both the Stockhill Street and Halifax Road site. I make no excuses for saying that this should be taken into account when planning the time at which your children leave home for school.

It is now a priority for Year 10 and 11 students as the Post 16 colleges/providers are now not accepting students who are late more than 5% of the school year. **Students who have a record of being late at school are unlikely to get a college or post 16 place.**

The school is taking lateness very seriously this year with members of the Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Student Progress monitoring and checking students on a daily basis to ensure that they are not late to school. **Please support us in this. It is for the benefit of your son/daughter and essential to their future career whether that be college or work Post 16.**

## MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones are **not allowed in school**. Any student who needs to contact a parent, carer or family member in an emergency situation will have immediate access to a land line in the school office. Sadly, mobile phones are becoming more than just a means of communication and last year we had several instances of phones being used for other purposes such as videoing and uploading images on to the internet. On some occasions mobile phones were ringing during lessons which is not acceptable as it prevents others from learning. In the interests of the safety of all our students we have to ensure that this does not happen. If your son/daughter brings a mobile phone into school then it will be confiscated and kept in the school safe until the end of the half term at which time parents may collect it. I know that you will support us in this for the protection of all our young people. If there are instances where you know you will need to contact your son/daughter during the school day or they you, then please telephone and ask to speak to the relevant Head of Student Progress who will do everything they can to assist you.

## COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

Many of our students do not live within the immediate Westborough community. However, their arrival and departure from school does have an impact on our neighbours. Most of our students know how to conduct themselves when out in the community, but sadly last year a few let us down by trespassing in gardens, swearing and being abusive to neighbours and on two occasions we had reports of a small group of students throwing stones at busses and lorries. The school will not tolerate this and will be taking greater measures this year to make sure it does not happen. Could I request that all parents discuss with their children their need to be respectful of our neighbours when arriving and leaving school.

## UNIFORM

School uniform is something which helps foster a sense of belonging to our school community. Students at Westborough are generally excellent in terms of school uniform – I am very proud of them. School uniform also includes hair styles, school is not the place for extreme/fashion hair styles. The same is true for trousers, they should be suitable school trousers rather than fashion trousers. You may be aware that for the new Y7 we are strongly enforcing the existing school uniform policy regarding the wearing of sensible black footwear, as indicated in the Y7 induction booklet that all new parents receive. We would ask all Y7 to keep to this.

**Calendar – please note the following important dates:**

**PARENTS' EVENING/DAY**

Year 7 – 18 October 2011 and 9 May 2012 Review Day  
Year 8 – 1 February 2012 (Options Evening) 7 February 2012 Review Day and Options  
Year 9 – 18 January 2012  
Year 10 – 26 April 2012  
Year 11 – 24 November 2011

**SCHOOL CLOSURES**

**Friday 25 November 2011**  
**Monday 28 November 2011**  
**Tuesday 3 January 2012**  
**Monday 7 May 2012**  
**Monday 23 July 2012**

**LUNCHTIMES**

Students are only allowed out at dinner times if a parent requests permission in writing in advance for the student to go home for lunch. We cannot give permission for any student to be out of school at lunchtime to buy their own food in local shops.

**HOMEWORK**

All Westborough students have a homework timetable which is written in their planners. Please ensure that your son/daughter undertakes homework according to the timetable. Homework is a very valuable component of learning and enhances student progress and achievement.

If you feel your son/daughter is not getting enough homework or you have concerns about the type and quality given, please contact their relevant Head of Student Progress at the school.

**BEHAVIOUR**

We have an excellent behaviour system at Westborough, based on rewards and consequences. Details of our system are available from school and in your child's school planner.

**PARKING**

We constantly receive complaints from local residents re parking by parents at the end of the school day. In one incident last year, an ambulance was apparently blocked from collecting an elderly resident; residents have commented that in the morning they have seen parents drop children then go back down Stockhill Street which is of course one-way. I would be very grateful if you could ensure that you do not block any driveways, park on the yellow lines or block traffic. Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Would parents of students on the Halifax Road site, please ensure that they follow the parking rules and restrictions for that site.

**SAFETY OF OUR YOUNGSTERS IS A PRIORITY FOR US ALL.**

## **HOW TO PRAISE AND HOW TO COMPLAIN**

Like every school we are delighted to be praised for our successes and like to receive compliments in recognition of our efforts. We also know that we can always do better. However, if you have any concerns about aspects of our work or wish to make a complaint, please do not hesitate to contact us. You can contact the school by phone, in writing or in person. If you wish to see a particular person it is often better to telephone the school first to make an appointment.

Thank you for your help in these matters.

## **HEAD OF SCHOOL DUAL CAMPUS ARRANGEMENTS**

Please would parents note that due to the school operating across two sites this year, the following Leadership Arrangements will apply.

I will work across both the Stockhill Street and Halifax Road site on alternate days.

Mrs L Tempest, Associate Head will be the Head of the Halifax Road Campus  
Dr Sarah Wild, Associate Head will be Head of the Stockhill Street Campus

Between the three of us and with the support of a full complement of Senior Leaders on both sites, we will ensure that your children receive the best education possible and will be only too happy to speak or meet with you to address any concerns you may have.

We wish your children a very successful year at school and look forward to meeting you throughout the year.

Yours faithfully

**Mrs J E Pruchniewicz**  
**Executive Head**