



Ethos, Aims and Expectations Policy

General Statement

West House School is an independent preparatory school for boys aged 1 to 11 and girls aged 1 to 4. The school serves Birmingham, Solihull, Sutton Coldfield and the surrounding area.

West House has occupied the same site since its foundation in 1895 and is set in five acres of wooded grounds less than 2 miles from Birmingham City Centre.

West House School enjoys a fine reputation within the local and wider community. This centres on the quality of care and the unique family atmosphere experienced by those associated with the establishment. As stated in the school prospectus West House is a non-denominational school guided by Christian principles. It aims to be a provider of a high quality holistic education and enjoys an outstanding success rate in placing boys in grammar and independent secondary schools in the Birmingham area.

The School Ethos

A Vision Statement for West House School

The aims of the school

West House is a school with a happy, caring atmosphere and over a century of academic, sporting and musical success. Our aim is to combine the best of our traditions with an education which will prepare pupils for their future. The key components of the aim are to:

- Provide an inclusive environment where every pupil can realise his or her potential
- Foster the development of the whole child in an atmosphere of genuine care
- Promote positive behaviour, attitudes and values
- Celebrate success

- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum complemented by rich and varied extra-curricular activities

To achieve our aim:

- Every member of the school community will be treated equally, having equal entitlement and access to any learning opportunities which will allow them to fulfil their potential.
- Every child will be given opportunities to develop fully the skills already possessed and to learn new ones. Resourcefulness and adaptability will be promoted, and independent, enquiring minds fostered.
- The curriculum will extend and enrich each child's experience. The school will, therefore, seek to be at the forefront of innovation so that resources and teaching can match every individual's needs. While tradition is valued, change will be embraced.
- The importance of high quality teaching in providing the best learning opportunities is acknowledged. To this end, staff will be actively encouraged to continue their professional development. Support for pupils, both within and outside the classroom, will be available and appropriately focussed throughout the school.
- An environment which is safe, stimulating and meets the physical, social and emotional requirements of each individual will be maintained, and, where necessary, improved.
- Children will be encouraged to realise that as members of the school, local and global communities, they share responsibility for their immediate environment and the wider world.
- Everybody should have respect and understanding for each other, and demonstrate that they value the rich mixture of cultures and spiritual beliefs represented in the school and in the communities in which they live.
- Parents will be urged to support and share in their children's education. Communication between pupils, parents, staff and governors will be strengthened in order to further the development of the school.
- All members of the school community will be expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct, which will be reviewed regularly.

It is our wish that every individual, on leaving West House School, shall have happy memories of his or her time here and will feel well equipped with the qualities and skills necessary to meet the challenges ahead.

General Expectations of Pupils

1. Punctuality

- Pupils should arrive promptly at the start of the school day. Formal registration for pupils in Reception to Year 6 takes place at 8.30am.
- Pupils should be aware of times of lessons and be punctual. Pupils in the Prep Department should move between lessons quickly but safely, particularly when moving between Woodbourne and the main school building.
- When attending Music lessons, pupils should request to leave a lesson in an appropriate manner and move quickly to and from the peripatetic lesson.
- Staff should deal with a lack of punctuality in an appropriate manner. Generally, a 'one-off' should not bring about a formal disciplining of the pupil. It goes without saying, that staff must be punctual too!

2. General Behaviour

- Pupils should behave to the highest standards at all times and follow the school code of conduct, which periodically they will be invited to revise and contribute towards.
- Uniform should be clean and tidy (e.g. ties should be done up and shirts should be tucked in). Smartness fosters personal discipline.
- Running is not permitted inside the school buildings as it poses a potential threat to health and safety.
- Pupils are expected to follow the basic classroom expectations of which they will be reminded on a regular basis. They are displayed in each classroom.

3. Manners

- Pupils are encouraged to engage adults confidently and with respect. In particular, pupils should wish adults "good morning" or "good afternoon" where appropriate. They are more likely to respond to adults if the latter set the correct standards.
- At doorways, pupils should wait for adults and hold the door open.
- At the end of the lesson, when pupils are moving rooms, they should stand up, put their chairs under and wait to be dismissed in silence.
- Pupils are encouraged to listen when adults are talking and not to interrupt. Under no circumstances, should a pupil answer back, however frustrated they may feel. Teachers will always give pupils a fair hearing!

4. Playtimes

- During break, pupils should be outside unless specific permission is granted by a member of staff.
- Pupils need to let off steam; running and noise are inevitable, even desirable. Pupils should be positive and pleasant. Pupils must have regard to others –

e.g. a pupil causing an 'accident' by careering into another should stop, apologise and check that no physical hurt has been caused.

- Playtimes should end in good order, with pupils lined up on the terrace with their teachers, unless instructed to do otherwise.
- Pupils are expected to follow the playground expectations of which they will be regularly reminded. They are displayed in the playgrounds.

General Expectations of Teachers

The overriding responsibility of all teaching staff, including teaching assistants is to ensure that appropriate levels of supervision of pupils are maintained at all times. In meeting this and other obligations:

- Teachers will be punctual, prepared and organised. During timetabled lessons, members of the teaching staff have a specific responsibility for the supervision and welfare of their class.
- Teachers are to treat each pupil with fair consistency and as an individual.
- Teachers should apply rewards and sanctions consistently. Honest effort should receive praise and reward.
- Teachers should create an environment where learning is encouraged in an atmosphere of enjoyment.
- Teachers should set work which is suitably challenging, interesting and appropriate for the individual pupil.
- Teachers should support, care and be enthusiastic.
- Teachers should insist that pupils leave classrooms in an orderly fashion. Pupils should tidy up and stand behind their chairs in silence before moving on punctually at the end of the lesson.
- Teachers should be aware of, maintain and instil all policies, particularly the Health and Safety Policy, Marking Policy and the Policy on Pupil Behaviour.
- Teachers should provide the Headmaster with weekly planning documents by 9.00am on a Monday morning.

Expectations of Teachers outside the classroom

- Matters for repair or maintenance to the fabric of the buildings should be brought to the attention of the Head of Grounds and Maintenance in line with the General Maintenance Policy and Procedures.
- Teachers should be ready to approach and welcome positively visitors or strangers. This is both good PR and essential security.
- A duty rota for several key times is established and posted. Please follow the rota carefully to ensure cover and care is maintained.
- During wet weather, there is a collective responsibility for supervising pupils. All staff are effectively 'on duty'.

- Pastoral care is the responsibility of all teachers. All members of staff have a role to play in maintaining the school's reputation for providing a unique, caring, family orientated atmosphere.
- Lunchtimes offer an opportunity to encourage healthy eating, good manners and social discourse. Those taking lunch duties are asked to ensure that this is the case. Staff attendance at lunch times is an important part of their daily interaction with pupils.
- All teachers should be in school by 8.15am each morning and attend briefings as directed by the Headmaster. All part-time staff should be in school at least 15 minutes before they are due to commence work.
- All teachers should attend assemblies as directed by the Headmaster. Teachers are expected to support the value of assemblies and build upon assembly themes through PSHE lessons and opportunities which may arise on an ad hoc basis.
- All teachers are required to make contributions, in one form or another towards end of term concerts, plays and other activities as directed by the Headmaster. This includes contributions to the planning and delivery of such events.
- All members of the Senior and Middle Management, Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Nursery Supervisors are expected to attend Speech Day. The date is published at least 9 months in advance.
- All members of the school staff are requested to support events organised by the Parents' Association throughout the year. These are ultimately organised for the benefit of all children at the school and contribute significantly to the realisation of the Vision Statement.
- All members of the school and staff are expected to adhere to the school's policy on confidentiality. Staff should avoid discussing school related matters outside school and particularly those of a sensitive nature. No member of staff should refer to school related matters or individuals on social networking sites.
- All staff are expected to follow the 'Code of Conduct – Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff'.

Monitoring and Review

The Headmaster will carry out a periodic review of this policy in consultation with members of staff.

Implemented: September 2007
Reviewed: September 2018
Next Review: September 2019