



Ethos, Aims and Expectations Policy

Policy Title:	Ethos, Aims and Expectations Policy
Last Review:	August 2025
Next Review:	August 2026
Responsibility:	Deputy Head, Headmaster
Other relevant policies:	Anti-Bullying Policy Curriculum Policy Health and Safety Policy Marking, Assessment and Feedback Pupil Behaviour Policy Safeguarding Child Protection Policy Staff Code of Conduct WHS Teachers' Standards

General Statement

West House School is an independent preparatory school for boys aged from 6 months to 11 and girls aged from 6 months 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 happy family atmosphere experienced by those associated with the establishment. As stated in the school prospectus, West House is a non-denominational school. It aims to be a provider of a high-quality holistic education and believes that breadth of education and the freedom to have fun enhances achievement in all areas. As a result, it 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, creative and expressive success. Our aim is to combine the best of our traditions with an education which will prepare pupils for their future, instilling within them a commitment to life-long learning. 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 defined by The West House Way
- Celebrate success and promote a sense of enjoyment in all aspect of school life
- 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 and give them the greatest chance of success.
- Every child will be given opportunities to develop fully the skills already possessed and to learn new ones. Resourcefulness, resilience 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 and pupils encouraged to make responsible use of technology.
- The importance of high-quality teaching in providing the best learning opportunities is acknowledged. Staff will be expected to demonstrate a commitment to their professional development. Support and mentoring for pupils, both within and outside the classroom, will be available and appropriately focussed throughout the school.
- Physical and digital environments which are safe, stimulating and meet 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. British values will be actively promoted.
- Everybody is expected to 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 expected to support and share in their child's education. Communication between pupils, parents, staff and governors will be strong, positive and productive.
- All members of the school community will be expected to adhere to the West House Way 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 buildings.
 - 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 West House Way Code of Conduct, which they will, periodically, 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.
 - Pupils are reminded on a regular basis to take responsibility for maintaining their own health, safety and welfare, and to consider the potential consequences of their actions.
 - 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 or they are attending a supervised session indoors.
- Pupils need to let off steam; running and noise are inevitable, even desirable. However, individual fun must not come at the expense of another's enjoyment of school life. Overly robust play and bullying in any shape or form will not be tolerated and addressed in line with relevant policies.
- 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 and EYFS staff 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 should read, understand and follow the Code of Conduct – Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff.
- 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 the learning experience is purposeful, varied and enjoyable.
- 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 Safeguarding Policy, the Health and Safety Policy, Marking, Assessment and Feedback Policy, the Anti-Bullying Policy and the Policy on Pupil Behaviour.
- Teachers should upload their weekly plans to the Learning Platform 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 Grounds and Maintenance Department via the online maintenance reporting form in line with the school's 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. The appropriate supervision of pupils and keeping them safe transcends any other consideration.
- During wet weather, there is a collective responsibility for supervising pupils. All staff are effectively 'on duty'.
- Pastoral care is the responsibility of all members of staff. All members of staff have a role to play in maintaining the school's reputation for providing a unique, caring, family orientated atmosphere. Monitoring the mental wellbeing of pupils is a collective responsibility.
- 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 full-time teachers and part-time teachers working in the morning session should be in school by 8.00am each morning and are encouraged to attend briefings as directed by the Headmaster. All other 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 Teams, Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Senior EYFS staff 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.

Monitoring and Review

The Ethos, Aims and Expectations Policy is underpinned by the specific policies of our school which make us what we are. The Headmaster will carry out a periodic review of this policy in consultation with members of staff.