

West Hill Primary Academy

Parent Handbook

*Taking you step-by-step through
starting school*



A part of
 The
Golden Thread
Alliance

As united as we are different.

Welcome to West Hill

Katy Ward, Head Teacher

We are delighted that your child will be starting with us at West Hill primary Academy, We look forward to working in close partnership with you, to ensure your child has the best possible start to school life.

On the following pages you will find our key information such as uniform, term dates, attendance and absence reporting, breakfast and afterschool provision. If you find you have any questions that are not covered in this handbook, please do contact the school office who will be very happy to help!



Reception and In-Year Admissions

As part of our admissions process, we ask all parent(s)/carer(s) to complete an online admissions form in preparation for their child's enrolment. The online form provides us with important information such as parent emergency contact details, medical information, SEN, ethnicity, dietary needs and parental consents.

Our Admissions Officer will send you a secure email link for you to be able to complete this document. The online system is very user friendly. If any steps are missed, it will gently remind you to go back and complete the necessary information. You will also be asked to provide your supporting documentation, and you will be able to upload this to the form.

Should you experience any difficulties using the site, please contact the Admissions Officer at clare.sommerville@golden-thread.org or by telephone on 01322 226019.

Key Information

The School Day

What are our school times?

- Reception & Key Stage 1:
8:30am–3:10pm
- Key Stage 2:
8:30am–3:15pm
- We operate a soft start in the morning where children can come into school from 8:30am. The school day officially starts at 8:50am and this is when the children should be in class and when the register is taken. The register is a legal document, and it is crucial that this is taken promptly so that we know which children are in school. Therefore, if you arrive after this time, then we will ask you to go to the school office where your child can be marked present. You will be kindly asked to leave your children to walk across the playground if you arrive after 8:45am.

We would prefer that you walk with your child to school to promote healthy lifestyles, however if you do have to drive then we would ask that you park a few streets away to keep the congestion outside the school to a minimum.

For safety reasons, no vehicles should be driven into school grounds by parents, carers or relatives of the children unless the child is registered as disabled. We also ask that bicycles and scooters should not be ridden on the school grounds at the beginning and end of the day when the paths are busy. Dogs are not allowed in school, either on or off the lead, unless assistance dogs or by approval.



Arrivals and Departures

The school gates open at 8:30am and registration is at 8:50am

Smoking/vaping is strictly prohibited on the premises, both inside and out.

Key Information

Attendance

Absence

It is important children arrive on time. If they are persistently late, the matter will be discussed with parents. If the situation does not improve, we may involve our Family Support Team or the Educational Welfare Officer.

If there is a reason for the lateness, please let the office know, especially if your child has a medical appointment. Proof of medical appointments will be requested.

If your child has a contagious infection, please report this to the school office. All information will be treated with confidentiality

Punctuality

It is important children arrive on time. If they are persistently late, the matter will be discussed with parents. If the situation does not improve, we may involve our Family Support Team or the Educational Welfare Officer.

If there is a reason for the lateness, please let the office know, especially if your child has a medical appointment. Proof of medical appointments will be requested.

Poor Attendance

The government has stated that once a child's attendance figure reaches 90% or less, they are classed as persistently absent. This is equal to just 30 school days, so please help your child by ensuring they are in school unless there is a valid reason for their absence.

A copy of our attendance policy is available on the school website.

Term Time Leave

Children will only be allowed term-time leave for extenuating circumstances, at the discretion of the Head Teacher. All other leave will be unauthorised and may incur a fine.

Any request for term-time leave must be submitted in writing, using a Term-Time absence request form (available from the school office).

The Head Teacher will review the request, and you will be notified of the outcome.

Any trip should not be booked until you have received written permission from the Head Teacher.

Key Information

Illness/First Aid at School

If a child is taken ill or is injured whilst at school, he/she will be put in the care of a staff member who is first aid trained. The seriousness of the condition will be assessed, and the staff member will act accordingly, either by treating the injury, or in a more serious case, contacting the parents. It is therefore essential that we have the most up-to-date emergency contact number.

We use Medical Tracker to log all first aid incidents, allowing us to record and track these incidents as well as medication administration that involves your child. Should your child require first aid treatment or receives medication, you will be notified immediately by email.

Paediatric Paracetamol in School (Calpol)

In line with recently updated guidance, we can, if necessary, administer paediatric paracetamol (Calpol or generic brand) as part of our first aid response to managing a high temperature in a pupil.

Before doing so, new parents must complete the Paediatric Paracetamol consent section of their admission form. For current pupils, a form can be obtained from the school office. Once the paracetamol has been given, you will receive a notification of this via Arbor, giving details of the time that the paracetamol was administered and the dosage.



Medicine in School

Only prescribed medicine can be administered in accordance with DfE guidelines, and as agreed by the Trustees.

The relevant permission form is available from the office and needs to be completed and signed by the parent.

Key Information

School Uniform

It is important that our children feel smart, as what a child wears to school reflects his/her attitude to learning; it portrays the school's ethos and shared positive values. In a drive to further improve standards across the school, any child not wearing full school uniform will be given a letter to take home at the end of the school day and it is expected that they will come to school in full uniform the following day.

Uniform List – EYFS & KS1

- White polo shirt
- Red crew sweatshirt/v neck jumper/cardigan
- Black/grey tailored/pleated trousers/shorts (no leggings, Lycra-based trousers or other types of trousers)
- Grey skirt or pinafore
- Grey/black/white socks
- Sensible black/brown shoes with flat soles or very low heels
- Summer: red/white checked dresses or red/white narrow striped dresses

Uniform List – KS2

- White shirt/blouse with collar & school tie
- V neck jumper/cardigan (KS2)
- Black/grey tailored/pleated trousers/shorts (no leggings, Lycra-based trousers or other types of trousers)
- Grey skirt or pinafore
- Grey/black/white socks
- Sensible black/brown shoes with flat soles or very low heels
- Summer: red/white checked dresses or red/white narrow striped dresses

PE Kit - KS1 & KS2 only

- Blue/Black shorts
- Plain White T-Shirt
- Plimsolls
- Trainers
- For outside PE pupils can wear a Navy-blue Tracksuit
- All pupils should wear PE kit to school on their allocated PE day.

Key Information

School Uniform

School Uniform Supplier

The school has partnered with TFS School & Dancewear who can provide branded school uniform for West Hill pupils eg school jumper, book bag. They are based at 45 Spital Street, Dartford.

Tel: 01322 291838
www.tfsclothing.co.uk

Non-branded uniform can be purchased from other high street retailers.

A selection of pre-loved uniform can be purchased from school.

Lost Property

Please ensure that your child's uniform is clearly labelled with their name, which will allow for lost items to be returned to your child promptly.

If an item of clothing is mislaid at school, please inform the class teacher as soon as possible so that your child can be helped to find it. Any unnamed property is collected in a lost property container. Any unclaimed property at the end of term is disposed of via charity collection or sold as second-hand uniform, following reminders to parents.

Jewellery

Jewellery is not appropriate for health and safety reasons and should not be worn for school, unless for religious reasons.

Small stud earrings can be worn, but children need to remove them for PE. The school does not accept responsibility for damaged or lost jewellery.

Children may wear a watch, but the school similarly does not accept any responsibility for damage or loss.

Mobile Phones

If a pupil brings a mobile phone to school, it must be presented to the class teacher first thing in the morning to be kept securely in class until the end of the school day.

Key Information

Food in School

School Dinners

The school provides healthy, freshly prepared meals through its in-house catering service, accommodating vegetarian and dietary requirements.

Universal Free School Meal for Pupils in EYFS & KS1

Funds are allocated by the Government to every school in England to provide all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, with a free nutritious meal at lunchtime; parents/carers do not have to sign up for this, just inform us that you wish for your child to have a school lunch.

Paying for school meals in KS2

Once a pupil moves to KS2 (Y3 onwards), parents/carers will need to pay for school meals, and this can be done online via the Arbor parent portal. The cost of a school dinner is £3.00 per day, and this can be paid for via your Arbor parent account. If your child prefers, they may bring a packed lunch to school.

Food/Nut Allergy

Awareness



West Hill is a food allergy/nut aware school. To maintain the safety of **ALL** pupils, we ask that all food brought into school from home is **NUT FREE** (including nut derivatives). This includes Nutella and most supermarket chocolate spreads. Sweets, chocolate, chewing gum, nuts etc are not permitted in school

Healthy snacks & drinks



There are a range of options for all pupils to receive free or paid for milk and fruit, depending on the age of the child. The office will be pleased to provide further information. Fresh drinking water is available all day at school; pupils are encouraged to purchase a water bottle to keep in school for use during the day

Key Information

Free School Meals

We want to make sure that we are providing your child with the best education and support we can. Healthy school food has obvious health benefits, helping establish good eating habits for life and improve pupils' readiness to learn.

Registering for free meals could also raise an extra £1,345 for your child's school to fund valuable support like extra tuition, additional teaching staff or after school activities. This additional money is available from central government for every child whose parent is receiving one of the benefits listed below:

Qualifying Benefits – effective September 2026

Free school meals are available to pupils in receipt of, or whose parents are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:-

- Universal Credit
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

A pupil is only eligible to receive a free school meal where both:-

- a claim for this support has been made
- their eligibility has been verified by the school where they are enrolled or by the local authority

Households may also be entitled to a meal if they:-

- are in receipt of income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- receive the guarantee element of Pension Credit
- meet criteria set out in separate guidance for [families with no recourse to public funds](#)

Applications can be made at the school office or online and decisions are usually notified immediately.

Key Information

Wraparound childcare for families (term-time only)

Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club operates between 7:00am and 8:30am. Children can enjoy some quiet time and a healthy breakfast before the school day begins.

West Hill Chill

West Hill Chill is an after-school care club, which runs from 3:15pm to 6:00pm every day. Within the opening hours of the club, there are three different sessions available, depending on the parent's care requirements. Further details of this can be found on our website.

During the club, children can take part in a wide range of activities including art, Lego, board games, computer games, iPads, TV and much more. The children will also have a healthy light meal before they leave. Children can be collected at 6:00pm from the canteen entrance located in Lawrence Hill Gardens

How to book

We have partnered with Childcare Bookings for Schools to manage the booking, payment & administration of the Wraparound Care for the school. Bookings can be made using a simple, intuitive online booking system which provides 24/7 access to make & amend bookings, update details, or download financial statements, with phone or email support available from 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday, all year round. You can access the system by visiting: <https://west-hill.cbfs.uk>

The account registration process is completely free and should take no longer than 5 minutes to complete. All that is required is for you to provide details for:

- The account holder (you) and your child(ren).
- Two different emergency contacts.
- A payment card (no payment will be taken, but a card will be required to make bookings).

For any queries related to the running of the club itself (e.g. food, activities, welfare, or lost property) your point of contact will remain the school.

Key Information

Afterschool Clubs & Activities

Clubs & Activities

At West Hill Primary Academy, we offer a range of after-school clubs, details of which can be found on our school website. There is no charge for a club run by the school, however, clubs run by external providers incur a cost and should be booked directly via the provider concerned.

For clubs run by the school, places can be booked on Arbor, and these are allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis. ▪ Parents should be aware that clubs are normally year group related and usually last for one term.

Seek Permission

We will always seek your permission if any activity takes place after school. If we are playing a sport at another venue we will try to arrange transport – but it may involve children sharing lifts in other parents' cars. We will always inform you of the arrangements. We will ensure that children are brought back to school, but it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for your child to get home from school.

Charging Policy

We recognise that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, visits and residential experiences can make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal and social education. It is hoped that parents will be prepared to make contributions towards these activities. If this causes difficulties, we hope you will contact the school.

Key Information

Working with Parents

Parental involvement

Our school is well established in the community and has a reputation for good quality education. We enjoy a great deal of parental interest and support. This is borne out by the day-to-day co-operation of parents with school routines, good levels of communication through Class Dojo, popularity of school events and very high attendances at parent/teacher consultations.

Class Dojo

As a school community we use an app called Class Dojo to better communicate with our families. It's simple, secure, and gives you a window into your child's school day! We like all families to join by signing up for a parent account on ClassDojo! You can use it on any device: it's a simple, free mobile app for iOS and Android, and can also be accessed from your computer at [classdojo.com](https://www.classdojo.com).

Class Dojo is an avenue that many schools are already using, and it has proved very successful. To enable your child to access Class Dojo activities and to communicate with the class teacher, you will be provided with a login code. If you misplace your code or do not receive it, please email the teacher so they can send you the code

Homework

We recognize that the effective use of homework can enhance the overall level of achievement of our pupils. We therefore ask you to read with your child every evening, help them to learn their weekly spellings and complete tasks set on our maths platforms.

Curriculum homework is a wonderful opportunity to work together with your child. The tasks are a range of ideas from across different curriculum areas. It should be fun to do together and a good opportunity for the children to apply some of the knowledge they have been learning in class.



Key Information

Working with Parents

Contacting parents

In case it is necessary for a child to be sent home because of an accident or illness, it is essential that there is not only a phone number of your works address (if appropriate) but also an alternative contact. You will appreciate the need to keep this information up to date and it is vital that the school is notified of a change in circumstances as soon as possible.

Email services

In addition to contacting parents by telephone, we also use Arbor, enabling us to contact you quickly in case of illness, absence, cancellation of an after-school activity due to bad weather etc.

Letters, leaflets and a fortnightly newsletter are also sent via this service, making it very important for you to keep us informed of your current email address.

The PTA

The Parent Teacher Association is run by local parents and carers. The focus of the group is to help to raise money to provide additional equipment for the children and their classes.

Fundraising helps the school buy items and activities that the school does not have sufficient funds for. All parents and members of the school community can get involved if they choose, even if they only have a small amount of time. For further information please ask at the school office or email the team whoffice@golden-thread.org.

Voluntary helpers

Many parents give practical help in school, working with a particular teacher and class, performing a variety of jobs such as listening to the children read or helping them with craft work etc. If you would like to help in school, then please get in touch with the School Business Manager for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to be completed.

Key Information

Special Educational Needs

Inclusion/SEND

The school has an assistant head with responsibility for Inclusion, who manages the provision for children in school with special educational needs. In liaison with a range of outside professionals, parents and teachers, the Inclusion Manager ensures that children receive the support they require to make progress and achieve their best. Full details of the school's core offer for SEN can be found on the school website.

Access

Children with a physical disability are fully supported in accessing all parts of the school.

Gifted & Talented

We recognise that all children are individuals with specific needs, gifts and talents. Children who are exceptionally able or talented are monitored and provided with stimulating and enriching lessons appropriate to their needs.

School Policies

Parents & Policies

Policies are useful to parents. For example, a prospective parent might wish to view the school's behaviour policy or special education needs policy before deciding whether to apply for their child to attend the school.

High Standards

At West Hill Primary Academy, we believe policies are vitally important and help us to create standards of quality for learning and safety, as well as expectations and accountability. If you want to know what policies we have, you can either call the school office or visit the school website: www.west.hill.kent.sch.uk and click on Key Information and then scroll down to Policies to read some of our policies. Below are some of our key policies:

- Parent conduct policy
- Health and Safety
- Asthma care
- Charge and remissions
- Computing
- Data protection
- Finance
- Special Education Needs (SEND)
- Behaviour

Key Information



Term Dates – 2026-27

Term	Start Date	End Date	Number of School Days
1	2 nd September	23 rd October	38
2	9 th November	18 th December	30
3	5 th January	12 th February	29
4	22 nd February	25 th March	24
5	12 th April	28 th May	34
6	7 th June	23 rd July	25
Total number of school days			190
INSET DAYS	1st September, 4 th November-6 th November & 4 th January (5 INSET days)		
Bank Holiday	3 rd May		



West Hill Primary Academy,
Dartford Road, Dartford,
Kent, DA1 3DZ



01322 226019



whoffice@golden-thread.org



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