



WOLVERHAMPTON
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

the
wgs philosophy
and
handbook
2009-2010

the challenge of scholarship
the spirit of commitment

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WOLVERHAMPTON
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Aims

WGS aims to be a busy, happy and successful community with young people, their learning, development and welfare at the heart of everything we do.

The Red Book

This handbook, the Red Book, states the school's philosophy and then goes on to explain the roles that the school, the students and the parents have in helping to turn our Philosophy into a reality.

To that end, the Red Book outlines the routines, information and policies which help to ensure that students and parents know how the school functions from day one. Rights are matched by responsibilities, expectations matched by guidance and support.

We hope that we haven't missed anything vital and that we practise what we preach. Indeed, since no school is perfect, we must always be trying to improve and so, if students, parents or staff wish to change or add anything to our Red Book, then please contact me to discuss your ideas.

Vincent Darby
Head

Philosophy

the challenge of scholarship the spirit of commitment

The philosophy of Wolverhampton Grammar School places scholarship at the heart of a challenging education which promotes achievement through active involvement. It seeks to develop self-awareness and a sense of responsibility, values both individuality and altruism, and fosters the spirit of community and commitment traditional to the School.

Boys and girls come to Wolverhampton Grammar School from all sorts of schools, families and cultures. Their experience, knowledge, cultural experience and skills are diverse, and are a source of strength and richness to the school. **What we expect all our students to have in common is an interest in thinking, learning and finding out.**

What this means for a WGS student

We will ask you to be scholarly, i.e. to work hard, to get into the habit of enquiring and finding out for yourself, to read a great deal and be responsible for your learning. True scholarship is concerned with discovering new facts and ways of thinking, understanding them and making connections between them.

This will be challenging and will require commitment from you. You will be expected to get involved, be positive and stick at things when they get tough, both in academic work and in life outside the classroom.

As you progress through the school we will encourage you to grow into a mature, thoughtful individual who will use your talents creatively and imaginatively for others as well as yourself. We will ask you to be self-critical, self-aware and responsible and we will expect you to be a giver to school, not just a taker from it. In that way, being a student at WGS should be positive, active and fulfilling experience in which you contribute to the spiritual well being of the whole school community.

And for parents

We believe that our philosophy makes considerable demands of us as a school, its students and you, their parents. We ask you to provide consistent, co-ordinated support and encouragement from home, ensuring that your children come to school:

- punctually
- rested, organised and with homework done
- wearing uniform correctly and equipped for the day.

We will try to keep you fully informed and will respond promptly to your concerns (see **Complaints and concerns** later in this handbook).

Responsibilities

Yours

With **rights** come **responsibilities**. You have a right to hold your own opinions: constructive questioning is an essential part of scholarship. But you have **no** right to

- express views that are intolerant, hurtful or disrespectful of, or harmful to, other people
- disrupt academic work in class or elsewhere
- undermine the values of the school
- defy those in authority.

Relations between students and teachers, and students and students (including prefects), must be based on mutual respect and good manners.

Your teachers will encourage you to develop good work habits and to support you throughout your time at WGS, but you must be prepared take responsibility for your own learning. You have a responsibility to:

- try your best and always work hard, going beyond the bare minimum
- hand in work complete and on time
- complete your homework diary while you are in the lower school and thereafter for as long as you need it to organise your work
- not pick and choose, but demonstrate a full commitment to school life in its entirety
- respect, support and care about other people
- use your right to a voice in a courteous, constructive and responsible way (see above)
- take action if you think someone's being bullied or unfairly treated
- wear uniform smartly
- treat the school facilities sensibly.

Ours

WGS teachers will aim to:

- educate you in the broadest sense, not just to get you through exams, and make learning challenging and stimulating,
- help you become a self-sufficient, independent and effective learner
- encourage you to think critically and analytically and encourage you to take risks
- work with you positively and fairly
- mark your work helpfully and return it promptly
- give honest and helpful reports on your progress to you and your parents
- stop and deal with any bullying or unkindness that they see or hear about.
- listen to you and let you speak

And they will aim not to:

- accept work from you that is not your best or only 'good enough to get by'
- let you get away with interfering with others' work in class through being disruptive or distracting in your behaviour

- label you, put you down, or humiliate you
- be sarcastic

Duty of Care

Child Protection Policy

The Children Act stresses the duty of all citizens to be alert for signs of child abuse and to take action when they see or suspect it. In all such matters the protection of the child is paramount. Schools have a particular responsibility for child protection. WGS will take action in cases of suspected abuse and takes for granted the support of parents in the protection of children.

All members of staff are asked to be alert to signs of abuse and know that they should report any concerns or suspicions to the Head and the school's designated teacher responsible for child protection. The school follows the guidance provided by the Wolverhampton City Council Children's And Young People's Services *Safeguarding And Protecting Children: Guidance For Schools And Education Services* which is stored electronically in the teaching staff handbook.

Mr Hills, Deputy Head, is the school's designated teacher responsible for Child Protection. Mrs Fogarty is Deputy Child Protection Officer. Mr Hills and Mrs Fogarty undertake training every two years in Child Protection and inter-agency work, whilst all staff are trained every 3 years through inset training days. Part-time and voluntary staff are made aware of the schools Child Protection procedures through the Staff Survival Guide. During recruitment interviewees include specific questions on child protection issues.

The school operates safe recruitment procedures including CRB checks and compliance with the ISI Regulations.

The school undertakes an annual review of child protection policies working closely with Jackie Orledge, the Governor with specific responsibility for child protection. We review policies and procedures looking at the work done in this area over the previous 12 months. A report is then prepared for the full Governors meeting in February.

Everyone should be aware that children who are suffering abuse may be too frightened to tell anyone: they need encouragement and sympathy if they start to talk about their problems.

Abuse may take a number of forms:

- neglect
- physical injury
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse

Any allegation or suspicion of abuse by a member of staff should be reported direct to the Head or, in his absence, any other senior member of staff, such as a Deputy Head or Head of Year. Any allegation or suspicion of abuse by the Head should be reported to Mr Hills who will immediately inform the Chairman of Governors. (There is more information for teachers in the Teaching Staff Handbook).

For students If you are worried about possible child abuse - in connection with yourself or with someone else – you should talk to a member of staff. WGS encourages an open atmosphere in which you can talk to anyone with whom you feel comfortable.

We will treat any information you give us with complete discretion and will not share it indiscriminately. We may have to share information, only on a ‘need to know’ basis, to enable other professionals to take appropriate action. (See the confidentiality policy below).

Confidentiality policy

Students often ask for ‘confidentiality’, but while teachers will always be discreet and keep things private, they cannot promise *not* to pass the information on to anyone. This is because the law gives them heavy responsibilities as adults who have care for young people. Peer Supporters are also bound by this code of confidentiality.

All personal information about you is regarded as private, and teachers will not pass it on indiscriminately (for example, they won’t chat about you in the staff room). But they cannot offer you or your parents unconditional confidentiality: by law, teachers must pass on (to senior staff or to the people or agencies who have responsibility for such matters) information about behaviour or events likely to cause harm to young people.

Where teachers have to pass on such information, or where they need to seek professional advice in order to help you, they will tell you what is happening, and who will have access to the information.

Depending on your age and maturity, teachers are not necessarily obliged to pass on information to your parents, though they will usually encourage you to seek support and help from them.

WGS policy is that in lessons teachers will not put pressure on a student to disclose personal information, and will discourage fellow students from applying any such pressure. For example, they will want you to be careful in a PSHE lesson when discussing sensitive or controversial issues.

Listening, advice and counselling at WGS

People often say that there is a need for ‘counselling’ but do not really know what that means. A counsellor cannot solve your problems but can listen, help you to look at the problem from every point of view, to understand your own feelings, to weigh up the alternatives and to make your own judgement about the action to be taken. Sometimes just getting things off your chest to a neutral person can change how you see things. Sometimes a problem needs to be discussed with the person you think is causing it, or with someone who can change things.

Help available in school

WGS takes very seriously the need to provide care and advice for all its students. Form tutors and Sixth Form tutors accept that pastoral care is a most important part of that job: they will normally hope to be the first person you will turn to for help. Subject teachers, too, see pastoral care and support of their students as being an integral part of their academic role. **At WGS any student may always approach any member of staff for help or advice.** Teachers are used to balancing the various parts of their job and you can feel safe to trust them to be

discreet and caring when helping students in difficulty. Teachers who want to improve their counselling skills receive basic level training.

Even so, students are still sometimes nervous of discussing problems with teachers because they are both advisors and authority figures. For that reason the Student Parliament planned various ways in which students can have access to advice and/or counselling from people within school or through an outside counsellor, currently Mrs Ros Howard. Sometimes the hardest problems are the ones you think adults – teachers or parents – might find silly.

Peer Support

Student Parliament initiative led to a scheme of Peer Supporters in school. All Peer Supporters have undergone training in listening and basic counselling skills and are available at lunchtimes and break times around school or in the Peer Supporters Room between Big School and the John Roper Room

How to seek help

Students are welcome to find any of the senior staff or Heads of Year, in their offices, and ask to talk confidentially. These include:

- Mr Darby (Head)
- Mr Hills (Deputy Head)
- Mr Anderson (Deputy Head)
- Mr Benfield (Head of Sixth Form)
- Mrs Fogarty (Head of Middle School)
- Mr Tyler (Head of Teaching and Learning/ Director of the OpAL Programme)

Other members of staff have specifically offered to counsel students:

Mr Bennett	Mr Johnson	Mr O'Malley	Mrs Ward
Mrs Dalzell	Mrs Laurino-Ryan	Mrs Preston	
Mrs Finn	Mrs Mahey	Mr Ryan	

You are advised to choose the person that you feel most comfortable with and who is best placed to help you. It may be someone in the list above, another teacher in the school or someone outside it. If you want to talk to the **school's outside counsellor**, Mrs Ros Howard, you should contact any of the members of staff above - or you can ask the Head's PA, Mrs Boss, who will arrange (in confidence) an appointment in a quiet and private room in school.

Helpful telephone numbers

For some problems you would do best to seek specialist help. Details of many useful help lines, services and their telephone numbers are printed at the end of this section. If you need the use of a quiet place for a confidential phone call, just ask any member of staff.

Other policies

WGS Equal Opportunities and Race Equality policy

Equal Opportunities is about valuing differences, and recognising that individuals have different needs.

Every student and employee at Wolverhampton Grammar School has the right to equal opportunities irrespective of

- gender, age, race, religion and political beliefs.
- differences of domestic or social circumstances, disability, physical appearance or sexuality.

All members of the community at WGS are of equal worth and everyone is entitled to be treated with equal respect, courtesy and consideration. This is not only true between student and student but also between members of staff and between teachers and students. We aim to raise awareness, and challenge any instance, of unfair discrimination. We aim actively to promote race and gender equality and the principle of school inclusion and to assess and monitor school activities, achievements, outcomes and student participation by both race and gender.

These principles are present in the School Philosophy, which is accepted and understood by the school community, including parents and governors of the school. The policy should always be considered in conjunction with other school policies, such as those on Special Needs, Anti-bullying and Child Protection. It should be adhered to in all aspects of school life; for example, in the classroom, in extra-curricular activities, in sport and through day-to-day interaction inside or outside school.

If individuals or groups are conscious of being treated unfairly the usual sources of help are available. These are listed above.

The **Equal Opportunities and Race Equality policy** is an ongoing and developing policy and should never be considered static or complete.

WGS Anti-bullying Statement

1. All bullying is unacceptable. No one at WGS should ever be made to feel unhappy, undervalued or humiliated.
2. Deliberate unkindness or any action that gives hurt, whether verbal, physical or mental and whether intended or not, are bullying and will not be tolerated between students or teachers and students.
3. It is bullying to write notes, make phone calls, send electronic messages or create or post them on websites if they might offend, hurt, annoy or worry anyone, whether it is a student, teacher or someone else. From home, from school, from anywhere, it is still bullying.
4. Students have a right to privacy of property and personal information in school. It is dishonest and can be a form of bullying to go into another person's pocket or bag, read a private document or electronic message or use someone else's computer ID (however, see *ICT Policy* re staff supervision of student computer access).
5. The WGS Philosophy states that 'WGS is a happy and friendly community in which everyone respects, supports and cares about everyone else.' It is our aim to ensure that is always true.
6. The school will thus take the firmest action against any bullying, teasing, racial or sexual harassment or other form of hurtful or negative behaviour.
7. The school works to promote the positive qualities of altruism and community spirit by means of consistent school-wide consideration of those values in assemblies, tutor groups,

PSHE, the Community Service Programme, fund-raising activities, our link with Uganda and, indeed, through our approach in and out of the classroom.

8. The school works hard to create an open atmosphere in which students are able to speak out without fear and to seek justice for themselves and for others. Any student who feels unhappy or threatened should not regard it as a private or personal problem but should seek the help of a friend, senior student, teacher or counsellor (see Care for students: forms of help in the Red Book).
9. It is the duty of everyone who sees an instance of bullying – or potential bullying – to act to stop it. This duty applies to all students, teachers and other members of staff.
10. Parents who are worried about bullying issues are always welcome to contact the Head or any other member of staff about their concerns.

**The school supports the aims of the DfES/Anti-Bullying Alliance's *Anti-Bullying Charter*.
*The full Policy can be found on the website and is available on request***

WGS Drugs policy

The school condemns the misuse of drugs and the supply of illegal substances. In its responses to drug misuse and in the education it provides about drugs, the school broadly follows the guidance provided by the DfES in its Circular DfES/0092/2004 Drugs: Guidance for Schools.

Drugs education at WGS endeavours to give factual information about drugs and the consequences of their use. Through specific education in PSHE and other areas of the curriculum we aim to help students to make balanced and informed judgements about drugs and to develop the attitudes and skills they need to avoid their misuse.

The school believes that all students, staff and parents have a duty to take action when they learn of the misuse of drugs.

For students: If you (or a parent or another student on your behalf) genuinely seek help with a drugs-related matter, you will be dealt with in a non - disciplinary manner. The school will try to give you help, support and advice. We will treat any conversation or information you give with complete discretion and will not share it indiscriminately. We may have to share information, only on a 'need to know' basis, so that other professionals can take appropriate action (see the **Confidentiality policy** above).

Except in the above circumstances:

- **if you are discovered dealing in controlled drugs, or being in possession of them with intent to deal, you will be expelled.**
- **if you are found to be using, in possession of, under the influence of, or providing others with controlled drugs at school, or when they are identified with the school, you can expect to be expelled.**

The school will thoroughly investigate suspicions of drugs use and possession within school and will deal with them in a similar manner.

Smoking and alcohol

You must not bring alcohol or tobacco onto school premises, nor smoke or drink alcohol on school premises or elsewhere when you are wearing uniform or are otherwise clearly identified with the school, except on particular senior school occasions which are specifically approved by the Head well in advance and where responsible behaviour can be guaranteed. The whole school site is a No Smoking area.

First Aid policy

The School Secretary, Mrs Harvey, is senior first aider. Seven other members of the non-teaching staff, and a number of teachers, are also trained first aiders.

If you feel ill you must not phone home and ask to be collected. The school has responsibility for you, must make that decision and must hand you over officially to the care of your family. So if you feel ill, you must report to the General Office. There you may be kept under observation for a period of time to allow the first aider to see how things develop and to make a judgement as to further action. In the case of minor injuries, first aiders will apply dressings, bandages, ice-packs etc: parents should inform the school about any allergies to plasters.

The school's provision of first aid is precisely that: a trained first aider will see you, or attend the scene of an accident or injury, and make an assessment of your needs. In case of accident or injury school first aiders will not administer medicines, not even paracetamol/aspirin.

The first aider will assess the extent of damage and decide whether to summon an ambulance. If the injury is serious or if there is any doubt as to its implications, the first aider will either summon an ambulance or phone your parent(s) to collect you. In some circumstances, the first aider will arrange for a member of staff to take you to Accident and Emergency and arrange for your parent(s) to meet you there.

ICT policy

You are strongly encouraged to use the school's computer facilities for work and to seek any additional help that you may need. You have your own personal user password account and it is your responsibility to ensure its proper use and security. The Internet and school intranet are provided for you to conduct genuine research and communicate with others. All the sites you visit are recorded. Access is a privilege, and you must exercise that privilege responsibly and sensibly.

Your computer (file) storage areas will be treated as school property. Members of the ICT staff may look at your files and communications to ensure that the system is being used responsibly, and can view a computer screen at any time from anywhere on the school network without your knowledge. You should therefore not expect that your work and emails will always be private. Whilst every attempt is made to ensure the safety of your work in folders kept on the server, you must be responsible for making your own copies of work done.

You must not

- log on to anyone else's account
- send, display or access any obscene or offensive material
- use computers or the Internet for anything objectionable (e.g. pornographic, racist, obscene, satanic or improper) or use obscene or offensive language (not least because they are representing the school on a global public system)
- enter *chat rooms* on the Internet (unless as a work-related project authorised by a teacher)
- harass, insult or attack others through electronic media: you should never send any electronic message that you would not say to someone face to face (see the **WGS Anti-bullying policy**; point 3)
- violate copyright laws
- reveal any personal information, the home address or personal phone numbers of yourself or other people

- download games or other executable programs
- intentionally waste resources on unnecessary or unauthorised activities
- carry on a private business
- undertake financial transactions either on your behalf or on that of the school.

You must check with a member of the ICT staff before opening unidentified email attachments or completing questionnaires or subscription forms.

ICT sanctions

Sometimes students seem to think that because everything on a computer is ‘virtual’ that it doesn’t matter what you download, what messages you send to other people or how you interfere with other students’ files or email accounts. It does matter, and serious harm can be done all too easily (see also the **Anti-bullying policy**).

- If you break any of the rules above you may be banned temporarily or permanently from the network.
- If you use inappropriate language or behaviour additional disciplinary action may be added.

Printing

- You will be given a print quota for the year. If work for a particular subject requires you to do more printing than your quota allows, get a note from your subject teacher asking for it to be increased by the ICT staff.
- Do not print unnecessarily or carelessly: save paper.

Safety Policy for Sport/Outdoor Pursuits

The school strives to ensure that the highest standards of safety are set and met in sporting activities in order to minimise the risk of injury. However, parents and students should understand that all competitive sports and similar physical or outdoor activities by their very nature have the potential for injury.

In the following sports the school requires students to wear protective items, even in practice. No student will be allowed to participate without such protection where it is specified.

cricket	helmet (for all batsmen and fielders when close to the bat)
football	shin pads
hockey	shin pads and mouth guard
rugby	mouth guard
squash	goggles

The school provides cricket helmets and squash goggles, though serious players may wish to purchase their own. Students must provide their own shin pads and mouth guards. The school recommends that mouth guards be supplied and fitted by a specialist rather than bought in shops over the counter. However, the choice of purchased safety equipment is for parents, not the school, to make: the school will check only that it is being worn and will not assess its quality.

In outdoor activities away from school such as canoeing, abseiling etc, students must wear the safety equipment provided. When cycling to or from school, students should wear a helmet. Parents should provide students with suitable protective cream for playing sports in strong sunlight.

Uniform

The purpose of having a school uniform, traditional to this school and to British schools in general, is to ensure that all students are identified with the school and all appear neat and unobtrusive. School uniform is formal attire, like a suit, and as such it is inappropriate to wear it informally (e.g. with shirts not tucked in). It is important that students, staff and parents work together to maintain the school's high reputation in this respect. Sixth Formers do not wear uniform; they wear suits instead.

The WGS uniform is kept simple and comparatively inexpensive and is in keeping with other styles of formal work dress. As times change, so do uniform requirements – within reason. Thus girls are allowed a choice of skirts or trousers, tights or socks, because the world outside school gives women a breadth of choice which is not paralleled for men. For similar reasons girls are allowed to wear earrings, while boys are not: there are precedents in the outside world where earrings are still not considered consistent with men's formal dress codes.

Blazers must be worn at all times. Wearing a top over the shirt/blouse is optional. Shirts must always be tucked in, and must therefore be long enough to be tucked in. You must wear a tie except during lunch times if playing ball games etc. or if a teacher gives specific permission during a lesson. In such cases, you must put your tie back on at the end of lunchtime or of that lesson.

If you really try, you can dress in a way that observes the letter but not the spirit of the uniform regulations. If, as a result of such efforts, you stand out from the rest, your dress will be judged unacceptable. All your clothing should be marked with your name.

Uniform common to boys and girls in *Big Six* – Year 11

- The school blazer must be a formal black, single-breasted jacket, with school badge
- Grey V-neck pullover with school badge
- Plain black leather shoes
- School tie: Years 7-11: black with narrow red stripes; *Big Six* have their own tie

BOYS' UNIFORM

- White shirt, long or short sleeves, with neat pointed collar
- Long, black trousers (cloth material: not denim or corduroy)
- Plain grey or black sock

GIRLS' UNIFORM

- White shirt, long or short sleeved, with neat pointed collar
- Black skirt **or** trousers (rules as for boys)
- Skirts must be pencil, no shorter than knee-length and no longer than mid-calf.
- Trousers must be tailored; neither tight nor baggy; nor excessively flared;
- not jeans or corduroy
- Grey or black socks **or** grey, black or neutral tights must be worn

SIXTH FORM

- Grey, black, brown, navy pinstripe or plain suits and shoes to match
- White shirts and school ties
- Any V-neck pullover/cardigan/waistcoat – same colours apply to these as to the suits
- School tie: broad black and red stripes

Sports Kit for *Big Six* – Year 11

BOYS' GAMES (WINTER)

- Black sweatshirt
- Black games shirt (reversible red band)
- Black shorts
- Red and black socks
- Shin pads
- Football boots
- (Mouth guard : see Policy)

GIRLS' GAMES (WINTER)

- Black sweat top
- Red blouse
- Black Skort (replaces black games skirt & cycling shorts)*
- Red and black socks
- Shin pads
- Outdoor trainers*
- (Mouth guard: see Policy)

BOYS' PE AND SUMMER GAMES

- White T-shirt
- White shorts+
- Short white socks+
- Training shoes with non-marking soles+

GIRLS' PE

- White T-Shirt*
- Ordinary loose fitting black shorts
- Short white socks*
- Training shoes with non-marking soles

BOYS' CRICKET

- White shirt
- White sweater (optional)
- Long white flannels
- Cricket boots
- Items marked + above

GIRLS' GAMES (SUMMER)

- Items marked * above

Sixth Formers (only) may wear their own sports kit as long as it is in the school colours

Uniform outside school

You must wear school uniform with tie for journeys to and from school, in school and for all official school functions (including home and away matches) and all school trips *unless* a teacher gives specific instructions to the contrary. After school you may go home in cricket whites with jacket: after a late finish you may go home in other sports kit. You may wear trainers for informal ball games, but you must wear correct shoes at all other times in school and for lessons and journeys to and from school.

Jewellery, badges and make-up

Anything but the simplest of jewellery is an inappropriate addition to school uniform. A single plain finger ring is acceptable, and girls (but not boys) may wear a single unobtrusive stud or ring in each ear (but nowhere else!). No other items of jewellery, bracelets, necklaces etc, should be visible. **For safety reasons, students playing sports must not wear any jewellery at all.** You may not wear lapel badges, ribbons (however worthy the cause) or other insignia, apart from peer support badges and/or poppies at the appropriate time.

Make-up should be minimal and discreet. If it is striking it is unacceptable and you will be asked to remove it.

Hats, coats and scarves

You may only wear a hat, coat or scarf moving between lessons when it is actually raining. In snowy weather we naturally relax this rule.

Hair

The school takes a liberal attitude to the length and style of hair. It must be of a natural colour, and be worn in a manner that is neat, tidy and unobtrusive. Subtle colour variations are acceptable, within the natural spectrum, but harsh or striking colour variation is not allowed. In the Sixth Form boys may have a neat beard or moustache: designer stubble is not acceptable. If you are a boy below the Sixth Form and feel you cannot shave for religious, cultural or health reasons, you should bring a note to your form tutor from your parents.

The School Day

School hours

The School Day begins at 8.45am and ends at 4pm Monday to Friday, operating on the following pattern:

8.45	First Bell	12.45	Lunch Break (12.50 Mondays)
8.50	Registration	2.00	Afternoon Registration (Bell: 1.55)
9.00	Assembly	2.05	Period 6
9.15	Period 1	2.40	Period 7
9.50	Period 2	3.20	Period 8
10.30	Period 3	4.00	School ends
11.10	Morning Break		
11.30	Period 4 (11.35 Mondays)	4.15	Coaches start to leave
12.05	Period 5 (12.10 Mondays)		

On school days the school is open from 8.30 am to 5.30pm. **Parents need to note that, outside those hours no responsibility can be accepted for students, parents or others on any part of the school's property unless attending a specific activity, function or other event, arranged and supervised by the Governors, Head or staff of the school.**

You will frequently stay at school for games, rehearsals or meeting of societies: this kind of involvement with the school's life outside the classroom is an important part of your broader education. But you should not be hanging around after school unsupervised or with nothing to do. The Jenyns Library and Sixth Form Library are open and supervised until 5.30pm. Homework Club runs in the Jenyns Library after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays: teachers and senior students will be there to help you if you get stuck.

Leaving the premises during the school day

No students, **including Sixth Formers**, may leave school during the morning, even in break.

We require Sixth Formers to be at school all morning, even in study periods, because we firmly believe in the importance of continued, consistent learning. It is an important area of difference from a Sixth Form college approach to study.

If you are below the Sixth Form you may not leave the site at lunchtime (or at any time during the school day) unless you have specific permission from your Head of Year: if, as a Sixth Former, you have no further lessons that day (and only under those circumstances), you may sign out (using the sheet opposite the Sixth Form office) and leave school from 2.05pm onwards. (*With written parental permission* you may leave at 12.45pm, subject to school commitments, if you have no lessons in the afternoon).

If you are late

If you are late for any reason you **must** register in the General Office before you go to lessons.

If you are absent

For planned absences (dental appointments etc) parents are requested to provide students with a note to the Head of Year, giving at least 24 hours' notice. Following an unforeseen absence, parents are requested to provide students with a note addressed to the form tutor. If the absence is for more than 3 days a telephone call during the period of absence would be appreciated: a note is still needed at the end of the period of absence.

If you need to miss a lesson for tuition on a musical instrument, you must get the subject teacher's permission at least 24 hours in advance. If, for some reason, lesson schedules have been altered so that due notice is impossible, you must still try to get permission.

If you have to miss lessons for an organised school activity, teachers will have been informed, but **as a matter of courtesy** you should inform your teachers as soon as possible that you will be missing their lessons.

Around School

Safety around the school gates

In the interests of safety, you should ask your parents not to drive into the school grounds when delivering or collecting you at the beginning or end of school. Parents should not park in any way that may cause a hazard in Compton Road or Merridale Lane. For safety reasons, you may not use the central 'In' gate to enter the school on foot. You must use the bottom pedestrian gate, the corner gate, the Arts Centre gate or the Merridale Lane gate. You should always cross Compton Road by the zebra crossing and take great care crossing Merridale Lane. You must not arrange to be picked up outside the Arts Centre: the school is bound by traffic regulations.

Mobile phones, MP3 players and laptops

You should always be wary of bringing expensive equipment to school and must not lend it to other people. **If you bring something expensive (however useful) like a laptop, you must**

make sure it is insured for use at school and for travel to and from school: damage happens easily and the upset caused is huge if the equipment is not unconditionally insured. You may bring a mobile phone to school. Phones must be kept switched off in lessons, assembly and registration and at all times in the library. Making calls or texting is not permitted between lessons because it makes people late. Keep a note of your phone's unique PIN number in case it is lost or stolen: you can find that number by dialling *#06#.

You will not normally be allowed to listen to iPods or MP3 players in lessons, though a teacher may allow this at his or her discretion. Teachers should never be put in the position of having to ask you to remove headphones - for example at registration or in lessons. If you misuse electronic equipment it may be confiscated.

Dangerous items

You must not bring to school any article that is dangerous or that could be regarded as a weapon. If you do, it will be confiscated and you will face serious disciplinary sanctions for bringing offending item to school.

Bicycles

Do not ride your bicycle into or out of the school gates or anywhere on the school premises. Push it, and padlock it in the rack. For your safety, wear a helmet to cycle.

Lockers

Every student has a large locker. Locker keys are issued by the Head of Year. Keep your key safe, preferably on a distinctive key-ring, but don't keep the locker number with the key. Any keys found should be handed to the Head of Year who will also supply replacements for lost keys at a cost. There are lockers in the Sports Centre for cricket bags or other bulky sports equipment: keys are available from Miss Munden (Head of Year 8).

During Games/PE lessons keys should be handed in to the member of staff. You should keep your valuables in your locker: belongings left anywhere else are vulnerable.

Bags

You must keep your bag either with you or in your locker at all times except (1) during Assembly (see below) when prefects will patrol or (2) during break and lunch time when you may leave them in your form room. At other times, bags left around will be impounded: they can be reclaimed from Mr Hills (Deputy Head) by paying £1 to charity.

During Big School Assembly, you can leave your bag in your form room or in the supervised areas outside between the John Roper Room and Rooms 46 and 47 and indoors in the John Roper Foyer. Year 7 students may leave their bags in the Hallmark Building during Assembly.

Litter and form rooms

Form rooms are not restricted to the members of that form, but only members of the same year group or prefects may enter another form room. It is the duty of members of the form to ensure that their form room is clean and tidy at the end of break and lunch time. We should all expect to have a clean and tidy room in which to work: it is the duty of everyone to help by picking up litter when we see it.

Litter is unacceptable and dropping litter is regarded as a serious offence.

Drinking and eating

The school encourages students to drink a lot of water. You may drink **water** (but nothing else) in lessons, using bottles with sports caps (except in some where teachers feel that creates a hazard).

You may not eat except in the Derry Hall, the John Roper Room and the Sixth Form Cafeteria.

You should not eat or chew between lessons, and a teacher should never have to ask you to stop chewing at the start of (or during) a lesson: that is a matter of courtesy.

Informal ball games

You may play informal ball games down the Valley (at lunch time only), on the hard area at the back of the Sports Centre, in the area between the Hallmark Building and the old Fives Courts (now minibus garages) and on the tennis/netball courts between the Sixth Form Centre and the Sports Centre. In the winter terms you may play on the grass near the Sports Centre only when the five-a-side goals are out. In summer you may play there, but only outside the cricket boundary and when cricket practices or matches are not taking place. You may never play ball games on the rest of the upper field during free time because these games damage the edges of pitches. You must never play games in goal mouths or on cricket squares except during official organised games. In winter, do not walk down to the valley pitches across the First XI pitch: walk round it, keeping behind the goal and off the cricket square. You may not play informal ball games on the netball/tennis courts when they are being used for practices or matches.

In the summer term only, Sixth Formers may spend periods in which you are not being taught outside in their designated area adjacent to the Sixth Form Centre: you may not play ball games or in any way disturb teaching by being out of doors.

Green thinking

Many of us, both students and staff, feel passionately about the need to recycle. All of us have a duty to do our best, particularly by using the recycling bins properly.

We should not waste paper (see **ict policy: printing**).

We can also make a difference by turning off lights when we leave a room and only opening windows when necessary.

Homework and Marking

Homework

Homework is set for all years on the following basis: (timings are approximations)

Big 6

Homework is introduced gradually as the year progresses, principally in Maths, English and Science. The year culminates with a major research project which requires students to undertake extensive homework.

Years 7 – 9

3 subjects per night

Year 7 25 minutes per subject

Year 8 30 minutes per subject
Year 9 35 minutes per subject

Years 10 – 11 3 subjects per night
GCSE courses make homework timings a more fluid concept, but 45 minutes per subject would be a reasonable expectation.

Sixth Form Work will be set as required. Sixth Form students should expect, in an average week, to work 15 – 20 hours in private study and at home.

If no specific is set by a subject on an evening (e.g. if a topic is finished and the teacher has yet to begin the next) then students are expected to use the time to re-read and review recent work to ensure that its content is properly understood. Students should record this in their planners as 'Review'.

Marking

Marking is a process designed to show both how a student has performed on a given piece of work or in a test **and** a means to help the student make improvements. Thus it is something that, when done well, involves both the teacher and the student. Teachers at WGS actively involve students in evaluating their work, both in reflecting upon what has been done and offering guidance for the future. Respective departments do this in different ways appropriate to the style and demands of their discipline.

Rewards and penalties

Rewards

The school is always keen to praise you when you do something to be proud of. Certificates and trophies are often presented in assembly, and there is annual Prizegiving where academic achievement and progress are publicly honoured, as is significant contribution to the school and wider community. There is also a scheme of Head's Commendations through which you might be sent to the Head to show him an outstanding piece of work by your own standards so that he can formally congratulate you and send a letter to your parents.

School Colours (marked by a special tie) are awarded in the Sixth Form for excellence in sport. National Colours are also awarded below Sixth Form for representing one's country (at any age) in an official/accredited national team. Honours (a different but clearly related tie) are awarded for excellence/outstanding achievement in non-sporting competitive or performance activities. National Honours may also be awarded. Students nominated for School Colours or Honours must meet the highest standards in each of three required criteria, in keeping with the WGS Philosophy: Excellence; Commitment; Altruism.

Penalties

The best sort of discipline is self-discipline. Yet the school does have to enforce good order from time to time, and there has to be a system of penalties to punish wrong-doing. As a school, we do not use any form of corporal punishment.

Lines and Essays

Lines may be set by prefects for minor episodes of misbehaviour. Essays may be set by teachers, usually as a punishment for stupid or irresponsible behaviour.

Informal Detentions

These are arranged by teachers to deprive you of some of your free time at lunchtime in order to make a point about some bad behaviour or to get some late or unfinished work completed. Teachers will only keep in a whole class when it is clear that the whole class has been collectively guilty of some wrongdoing.

School Detentions

You may expect to be given a formal School Detention as a consequence of serious misbehaviour or breach of the school rules, or for acting against the school's ethos by behaving selfishly, inconsiderately or dangerously. You will only be given a School Detention for academic reasons (such as poor effort or lateness) if the issue is ongoing and unresolved because you have failed to put right something you had said you would.

School Detention is a formal disciplinary procedure which takes place on **Monday lunchtime from 12:55 sharp to 1:35pm in room 89**. Detentions will be supervised by a member of staff, and you will be given work to do: this will be written on the red card given to you by the teacher to signal a School Detention. During the detention you will also have to explain to a senior member of staff why you are in detention and outline what action you are going to take to ensure that it doesn't happen again. A brief statement of what is agreed between you and the senior member of staff will be sent home: it will also be copied to your form tutor and to the teacher who gave you the detention. The fact that a senior teacher and your parents are involved shows that detention is a serious matter.

Sixth Form Detention

Sixth Form detention is served on a Friday evening from 4.05pm until 5.30pm. It can be given by the Head of Sixth Form, or a Deputy Head, of Sixth Form, following consultation with subject teacher(s) and/or the Personal Tutor. Such a detention can be awarded for breaches of discipline, poor attendance, or repeated failure to complete academic work.

More serious matters

If you behave badly in a lesson you may be sent out of the room. If the teacher chooses to send you to the Head of Year, a Deputy Head or the Head, you must report to the General Office: the staff there will organise the rest. In such cases you are likely to be in serious trouble. If you are in serious trouble, your Head of Year may give you a Saturday morning detention, keeping you in for two hours in school uniform on a particular Saturday morning.

Exclusion: Suspension and Expulsion

If you accumulate a lot of misdemeanours, or are responsible for a single serious disciplinary incident, you may be excluded from school either temporarily (suspension) or permanently (expulsion). Exclusions are handled by the Head or, in his absence, a Deputy Head.

Students returning to school following a period of exclusion must sign an agreement whereby they state formally that they will abide by the school's rules and ethos.

Parents and students have the right of appeal against permanent exclusion (expulsion). The appeal is heard by a panel of governors who have not been involved in the decision to expel.

Participation

WGS strongly encourages all students to participate fully and actively in the breadth of school life whether through sport, music, drama, outdoor pursuits, debating, or through a wealth of other clubs and societies. Equally, we encourage students to be involved, at an appropriate level, in helping run the school through such vehicles as Student Parliament and Peer Support.

It is important that students understand that **commitment** is a vital component of participation. Being part of a team, group, society or other body of people means that the success of the whole venture depends on your continued consistent involvement: other people need you to be there in the same way that you need their presence. Therefore you have a responsibility to go to practices, rehearsals, meetings etc for any endeavour to which you make a commitment. This may need you to make sacrifices sometimes.

In sport in particular it is an honour for you to be selected to represent your school and we take for granted that you will take part. If there is a clash of commitments with outside activities - for example, with a Saturday job, membership of another team or avoidable family commitments - the school expects you to honour your school commitment. In the event that you are unable to make a practice (or equivalent), or if there is a clash of commitments, you should seek out the teacher(s) involved and explain the problem. Where there is a clash it is for the teachers to resolve the problem so you do not get squeezed in the middle.

Similarly, Community Action (which senior students can do instead of Wednesday sport) is also a chance to represent yourself and your school to the outside world. You are committed to it for a term at a time, so you must take attendance seriously when placements are relying on your promised help.

The Student Parliament

The WGS Philosophy and Handbook are published so that everyone knows precisely what the school stands for and what everyone is working for. The Philosophy says you should 'find the courage to speak your mind, to argue for what is right and to work with others for the good of all.' At WGS we uphold your right to have a say in your education and to speak out when you see something that seems wrong. One way in which you can - and should - use your voice is through the Student Parliament. The Student Parliament allows Representatives, elected by each form, to voice concerns and suggest improvements in the running and organisation of the school.

The Student Parliament is *not* the right forum in which to discuss the individual concerns of particular students or complaints about other students or of members of staff. In such cases you should ordinarily start with your (form) tutor, but you might want instead to go to the Head of Year or a Deputy Head. If you feel you need help dealing with other students or your own problems you might like to speak to a Peer Supporter (see help available in school later in this handbook). However young or old you are, you have the right to see the Head directly about any matter of concern to you: but in most cases it would be best to go through one of the people listed above. The Head's and Deputy Heads' offices are in the main building, first floor.

Sport

For Year 10 and below, there is a games afternoon which is part of the school timetable. For Year 11 and the Sixth Form, school matches, team practices and a wide range of sports activities are held on Wednesday afternoons. There are also frequent matches on Saturdays. On Wednesdays here is also the option to take part in the school's Community Service programme. There are lots of different types of activity to choose from in Sport and Community Action: the only thing you may not choose is to do nothing!

You must get permission to be excused PE or Games for any reason (including illness) by means of a note addressed to the teacher in charge. You must give this note to the teacher *before* the PE/Games lesson. If you forget your kit you will be required to borrow kit so you can still participate.

Parents are always very welcome as spectators at school matches and other sporting occasions.

complaints and concerns

If you or your parent(s) are worried about something or want to make a complaint it is normally best to start by going to the person most closely connected with you, such as your (form) tutor. If it's a problem with a subject, start with your subject teacher. Teachers are busy and can be hard to reach by phone, but parents can leave a phone message asking the tutor to call them back. But only you or your parents can judge who is the right person to contact about your particular worry or complaint.

No one at WGS will tell you it's nothing to do with them: the staff all agree that *anyone* should be able to talk about what's worrying them to *anyone* - your (form) tutor, subject teacher, Head of Year or the Head or a Deputy Head, whoever seems the right person. Whoever you decide to approach will respond rapidly and, if they cannot solve the difficulty straight away, will say how long they need. Although it is often easiest for parents to write, the school's usual style is to sort things out face-to-face or by phone, rather than writing lots of letters.

If you or your parents feel that the methods above have not worked or are not suitable, you may wish your parents to make a formal complaint. If so, they should write to the Head, making it clear that it is formal. He will make a formal written reply within two weeks. If parents are not satisfied with his response to a formal complaint they can appeal to the Chairman of Governors: the Bursar will tell them how to do this. Such appeals are heard by a panel of governors who have not been involved in any way in the matter in question: the panel will also contain one person who has no formal connection with the school.

The Policy allows for parents to attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish.

It provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulates that a copy of these findings and recommendations is –

- (i) sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about;
- (ii) available for inspection on the school premises by the head.

A written record is kept of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved at the preliminary stage or proceed to a panel hearing.

help lines and websites

If you want to use a telephone helpline, ask a teacher to arrange for you to use a private office phone. The following numbers and web addresses may be useful for teachers as well as students.

Base 25 (Wheeler's Fold: opposite Art Gallery)	0800 0730233 01902 572040	
Get Connected	0800 096 0096	www.getconnected.org.uk
Childline	0800 1111	www.childline.org.uk
Bullying Helpline	020 737 81446	
Kidscape	020 7730 3300	www.kidscape.org.uk
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000	www.nspcc.org.uk
Samaritans	0345 909090	www.samaritans.org.uk
Relate	0845 130 4010	www.relate.org.uk
Drinkline Youth Helpline	0800 9178282	
Alcoholics Anonymous	0845 769 7555	www.alcoholics-anonymous.org
Gamblers Anonymous	08700 50 88 80	www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk
Eating Disorders Association	01603 765050	www.edauk.com
Mind Information Line	0845 766 0163	www.mind.org.uk
Mental Health Foundation	02075357 400	www.mentalhealth.org.uk
National Drugs Helpline	0800 776600	www.ndh.org.uk
Teacherline UK	08000 562561	www.teacherline.org.uk

Cyber-Bullying: if you are being bullied by computer or by phone, you should look at the Anti-bullying Network website: www.antibullying.net/cyberbullying1.htm. It provides a list of telephone and internet providers and their contact details. It also has contacts for reporting abuse on Yahoo Messenger, My Space and Bebo.

Base 25 is a Wolverhampton based organisation that offers help and information to young people (aged 11-25). Services include drug and alcohol, counselling, housing and careers. Drop-in afternoons after 2.00pm

Get Connected is a free UK wide helpline that finds young people the best help whatever the problem. The helpline workers listen to what you need to sort out, talk you through the options you have, and then make suggestions of services where you can get the best help. Get Connected has access to information on thousands of places that can help, both locally and nationally. Get Connected can then provide a free connection to the service you have chosen, and can text important information to your mobile phone.

Mind is the leading mental health charity in England and Wales, working for a better life for everyone with experience of mental distress.

Relate is about relationships, all kinds of relationships. Whether you are having problems getting on with your partner, your kids, your siblings or even your boss – **Relate** can help.

You can also arrange for the **school's outside counsellor**, Mrs Ros Howard, to come into school to see you by asking any teacher or by going direct to the Head's PA, Mrs Boss.

The Ground Rules

You and Yours

Uniform

- You must appear neat and tidy and smart at all times. (This means having shirts tucked in, collars buttoned and ties done up.)
- Proper shoes must be worn at all times, unless you are actually playing some sport at break or lunch. Girls may not wear high heels or stilettos.
- Blazers (with the school crest) or jackets (Sixth Form) must be worn at all times.
- Skirts (including Sixth Form) must be straight, plain and knee length.
- Hoodies are not part of uniform and must not be worn.

Hair

- Must be neat, tidy and unobtrusive.
- Must be coloured naturally; harsh or striking colour variation is not permitted.
- Sixth Formers may wear neat beards and moustaches.

Jewellery and Personal Decoration

- None is best, but a single finger ring is allowed, and girls may wear a single pair of plain earrings or studs.
- Jewellery may not be worn when playing sport.
- Make-up should be discreet and any nail varnish should be clear, not coloured.
- Belts should be discreet. Large, decorative or colourful belts are inappropriate.
- Lapel badges may not be worn (except for a Peer Support badge).

Coats and Scarves

- Coats and scarves may not be worn in the school grounds unless it is raining or snowing, and must not be worn inside school buildings.

Bags

- Bags must be with you, or in your locker.

Phones and Music

- Making calls or texting is not allowed between lessons: it makes people late.
- All phones must be OFF in lessons, registration and assembly.
- Do not walk around school with earphones in: it's a) unsafe and b) rude

Valuables

- Don't bring any to school if you can avoid it.
- It is your responsibility to keep any safe. Use your locker!

You and Your Environment

Litter

- Dropping litter is a horrible, anti-social habit. Don't do it, or accept anyone else doing it. There are lots of bins around school: use them.
- Help improve things by picking up any litter you see and put it in a bin.

You at School

Coming and Going

- You have to be at school for morning registration at 8.50am.
- You have to be at afternoon registration at 1.55pm.
- You are expected to be there on time.
- If you are late and miss registration, you **must** sign the Late Book in General Office.
- Only Sixth Formers may leave the site during the day – and then only at lunchtime.
- Do not to come in through the main gate in the morning.

Absences

- **All** absences must be supported by a parental or doctor's note.
- Permission for planned absence should be sought in writing from the Head.

Lateness

- As a principle, it is never acceptable to be late.
- You must allow time to get to where you need to be so that you are on time.

Lessons

- It is **your** responsibility to be at your lessons on time.
- You may **never** miss a lesson without prior permission, or unless you are reporting ill to General Office.
- You should not have to go to your locker between lessons. If you must, for some reason, it does not justify lateness to your lesson.
- When moving between lessons walk briskly, don't dawdle.
- Sixth Formers are expected to work in study periods. Playing games or pastimes, inside or out, is not allowed.

Library

- The libraries are for work and research. You should never cause someone's work or concentration to be interrupted.
- The Sixth Form Library is for **individual, silent** study.

You and Work

You have a responsibility to:

- Work hard, be committed, and want to learn.
- Allow others to learn.
- Show scholarship in your work.
- Present work neatly and have pride in what you do.
- Get work in on time. This involves thinking ahead, planning and self-organisation.
- Keep going and not give up when something is tough.
- Ask for help when you don't understand something.