

Parent/Carer Newsletter

Friday 11 September 2026



Headteacher Messages

Welcome Back

It has been wonderful to welcome students back to WKGS and, following our shorter first week, to enjoy our first full week together. A particularly warm welcome goes to all of those who are new to our community, whether joining us in Year 7, Sixth Form or at another point in their school journey. There has been a tremendous energy around school and I have been really impressed by the way students have settled so quickly into their lessons, routines and wider school life.

As we begin a new academic year, it is also an opportunity to reflect briefly on the achievements of the students who came before them. Our summer results once again demonstrated the strength of academic performance across the school, with our GCSE students achieving an average Grade 7 across all entries and 58% of grades awarded at Grades 9–7. We were equally delighted that 80% of last year's Year 11 chose to continue their A Level studies with us at WKGS, a wonderful endorsement of their experience here and of the Sixth Form community they want to remain part of.

For our outgoing Year 13, 96% have progressed to university and 55% to Russell Group universities. These are exceptional outcomes and something of which we are incredibly proud, but university, and certainly any particular group of universities, is only one measure of success. Other students have secured excellent apprenticeships, employment and work-based opportunities, and we are equally proud of every young person who has left WKGS with an exciting and purposeful next step ahead of them.

For me, this is an important part of what we mean by Pioneering Excellence and Compassionate Community. We want our students to achieve highly and to be ambitious for themselves, but we also want them to discover what success means for them individually, to feel supported in pursuing it and to grow into thoughtful, confident and compassionate young people along the way. The start that students have made this September gives us every reason to be excited about the year ahead.

High Standards

One of our priorities at the beginning of every year is to establish the routines and habits that allow students to thrive, and the early signs have been extremely positive. Attendance has been approximately 97% during these opening weeks, while lateness has been exceptionally low at around 1%. Both are excellent starting points.

The challenge now is to sustain them. Strong attendance, punctuality and readiness to learn make a significant difference over time, just as the small habits of arriving prepared, taking pride in work and making the most of every lesson contribute to longer-term success. We will continue working with students to establish these routines and to reinforce the high standards we expect across school.



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As always, the partnership between school and home is incredibly important. When the same messages about attendance, punctuality, organisation, kindness and pride in what we do are reinforced both at school and at home, they quickly become part of the culture rather than simply a set of rules. Thank you for your continued support in helping us establish such a positive tone from the very beginning of the year.

Embracing Opportunity

It has also been brilliant to see so many students beginning the year by getting involved in everything that school life has to offer. Our Key Stage 3 students in particular have thrown themselves into new clubs and activities during these opening weeks, trying new things, meeting new people and embracing the opportunities available to them.

As our Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form students settle back into the demands of GCSE and A Level study, I would encourage them to do the same. Academic success matters enormously, but some of the most valuable experiences of school happen beyond the classroom. Sport, music, drama, clubs, societies, volunteering, leadership and House activities give students opportunities to develop confidence, friendships and skills that complement their academic studies and make their experience at WKGS richer.

Our House Extravaganza will shortly launch this year's House calendar and provide another opportunity for everybody to get involved. Every student who takes part will record their first participation in a House event for the year. Our challenge is for every student to participate in at least two House events across the year, while those who really embrace the programme and enter nine or more events will be recognised through our end-of-year contribution prizes.

There will be plenty of opportunities to do that, and I hope students will be willing to try something unfamiliar as well as returning to the activities they already enjoy. One of the great privileges of being part of a school like WKGS is the sheer breadth of opportunities available. Our ambition is not simply that students leave us with excellent qualifications, but that they leave having discovered interests, developed confidence, contributed to their community and made memories along the way.

It has been a hugely encouraging start to the year. Thank you to students for the enthusiasm and maturity they have shown, to staff for everything they have done to make the opening weeks run so smoothly, and to parents and carers for your continued support. I am very much looking forward to seeing everything that our students will achieve together over the months ahead.

With very best wishes,

Mr S Clarke
Headteacher



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Beyond Horizons

Opportunities, experiences and activities beyond the classroom

Get Into Business, Accounting & Finance – Friday 18 September, 5 – 7 pm

Please refer to the attached flyer for a free virtual insight evening for students in Years 11-13.

Get Into Law – Wednesday 16 September, 5 – 7 pm

Please refer to the attached flyer for a free, virtual event featuring 12 international law firms.

National Youth Jazz Orchestra's Liverpool Holiday Project

Please click the following link [National Youth Jazz Orchestra's October Holiday Project](#) for details of a 2 day project in Liverpool for young musicians, aged 13 – 18 who are the equivalent of Grades 3+ on their instrument.

Oxton Hockey Club

Please see the attached flyer for further details of opportunities and activities offered by Oxton Hockey Club.

Try a Club Week – Get Involved!

It has been fantastic to see students getting involved in Try a Club Week, dropping into different activities, meeting the staff and students who run them and discovering something new. The week is all about giving students the confidence to try things out before choosing the clubs they would like to attend regularly this term.

Our wider Beyond Horizons programme is an important part of life at WKGS, and we encourage and expect students to make the most of these opportunities. KS3 students should attend at least two clubs each week, KS4 students at least one, while our KS5 students are increasingly taking on leadership roles and helping to run opportunities for younger students.

The full Autumn Club Timetable will be published on the school website and Microsoft Teams and will also feature in next week's newsletter. Students will be given clear instructions about how to sign up for their chosen clubs and what is expected once they have committed to attending.

A huge thank you to all the staff and students who give their time to make such a varied programme possible – and to everyone who threw themselves into trying something new this week!

Veterinary Medicine

Please refer to the attached flyer for Y11/12 students who are interested in a career in Veterinary Medicine.



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WKGS Futures

Our WKGS Futures programme is underway! Each week, students have the opportunity to hear from people with a wide range of careers, experiences and interests, helping them discover pathways they may never previously have considered. It is encouraged/ expected that students attend two each academic year and attendance is tracked/rewarded.

This week, students heard from Professor Emma Boyland from the University of Liverpool, who gave a fascinating insight into the world of psychology: what it is really like to study human behaviour for a living, how psychologists design research, and her own work exploring eating behaviour.

Coming up next week: we welcome Geoff Bosworth from Calday Grange Grammar School's Combined Cadet Force (CCF). Year 12 students will find out more about the CCF, its Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force sections, and the fantastic opportunities it can provide to develop leadership, teamwork, confidence and new skills.

Could you be one of our future speakers? We would love to hear from parents, carers, alumni and members of our wider community who would be willing to give students a short insight into their career, industry, expertise or an unusual route into work. Talks don't need to be polished presentations – students particularly value hearing about real experiences, different pathways, what a job is *actually* like and the opportunities available to them.

If you, or someone you know, could offer a WKGS Futures talk, please get in touch with the school. We would love to build an exciting and varied programme across the year.

Year 11 Careers Appointments

Our one-to-one careers appointments will begin in the next few weeks, with every Year 11 student having the opportunity to meet individually with our Careers Adviser.

Please encourage your child to check their school emails regularly for their appointment and write the date and time in their planner so they don't miss it.

Careers interviews are also available to students in other year groups who would find one helpful. Students can simply **speak to Mrs Kimber to request an appointment.**

General Messages

Free School Meals – Changes from September 2026

The eligibility rules for Free School Meals have changed from September 2026, meaning that **many more families receiving Universal Credit may now be entitled to free school meals for their child.**



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We would like to thank all of the parents and carers who completed an eligibility check over the summer. This has enabled us to ensure that eligible students have their Free School Meal entitlement in place for the start of the new school year.

If your household receives **Universal Credit** and you have not yet completed a check, we strongly encourage you to do so. Even if your child has not previously been eligible for Free School Meals, the new rules mean that they may now qualify.

Checking is quick and straightforward using Wirral Council's online eligibility checker:

<https://apply.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims-wirral>

There is no disadvantage in completing a check, and an eligible application helps ensure that your child receives the support to which they are entitled.

If your circumstances change during the school year, you can also complete a new eligibility check at any time.

Open Evening - Wednesday 16 September

We have lots of volunteer tour guides for Open Evening, which is brilliant! If anyone else would like to help, they are very welcome. Please give permission here: [Open Evening 'tour guides' 2026 - Wednesday 16th September 2026 - Fill in form](#) If students are staying in school, please let us know on the form as we will provide pizza for them. All Y7 helpers must stay in school, Years 8 to 13 may leave school & return to help, with parent/carers permission on the form.

Suicide Awareness Talk

A letter has been sent to parents/carers of students in **Years 9 and 12** regarding an upcoming **suicide awareness talk on 17 September**, delivered by the Martin Gallier Project.

As part of our commitment to being a *Suicide Safer School*, this session will support students to recognise when others may be struggling, feel confident to seek help, and understand the importance of talking openly about mental health. The content is **age-appropriate and sensitively delivered**, focusing on awareness, support, and reducing stigma.

Parents/carers are encouraged to **read the letter carefully and discuss the session with their child**. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school for further support.

Year 12 Study Skills sessions

Year 12 all have 1 compulsory study session per week scheduled onto their timetables from next week, for the next 3 weeks. These sessions will be in small groups in Easedale House, with Jenny Brown. The sessions will cover time management, organisation, study strategies, super-curricular activities, where/how to seek support etc.



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WKGS
WEST KIRBY
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Upcoming Calendar Events

NEXT THREE WEEKS



*A vibrant
community
inspiring
brighter futures*

	w/c 14 SEPTEMBER	w/c 21 SEPTEMBER	w/c 28 SEPTEMBER
ALL WEEK	Y13 Assessment Week	Scholastic Book Fair in the Library at break & lunch	
MONDAY	Y9 & 10 ESFA U15s Girls Schools Cup		Flu immunisations Y11 RS Poland Trip leaves
TUESDAY	11+ INSET Day - closed to all students Y11 RS Poland Trip Info Eve on Teams 6.00pm	Y9 Sisters N Sport U14s Netball	
WEDNESDAY	Open Evening 5.30 - 7.30pm	Open Day - tours at 9.15am & 2.00pm Senior House Netball	Y8 & 13 Normandy Trip Info Eve 5.30pm Y7 Information Evening 5.00pm - 7.00pm
THURSDAY	Open Day - tours at 9.15am & 2.00pm Y12 Personal Development Day Y11 Silver DoE launch meeting 12.50 - 1.30pm Full Governors Meeting 4.30pm	House Bake-off Prelims Y12 Information Evening 5.00 - 7.00pm	
FRIDAY	Y7 Cross Country Lessons 3 & 4	Macmillan Coffee Morning Gold DoE Trial Expedition leaves for the weekend	Y10 & 13 Conwy Art Trip leaves
WEEKEND	Saturday - Gold DoE Training		

Community
 High Expectations
 Opportunity
 Innovation
 Curiosity
 Endeavour
 Together we make a difference

Useful Contacts and Regular Information

School Office

Online contact form: <https://wkgs.org/contact>

Email: office@wkgs.net

Telephone: 0151 632 3449

Website: <https://wkgs.org/>

Finance

Email: finance@wkgs.net

Reporting Student Absence (Illness)

Please leave a message on our answerphone by phoning 0151 632 3449 and selecting Option 2.

Alternatively, email: attendance@wkgs.net



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Leave of Absence/Medical Appointments

Please use this email to request a Leave of Absence or to notify us of medical appointments:
requestforleaveofabsence@wkgs.net

Lost Property

Lost property is located by the stairs in the H Block. We endeavour to return all named items to students, so please ensure belongings are clearly labelled.

Follow Us

For updates, reminders and news from around school.



<https://www.facebook.com/WestKirbyGS>



<https://instagram.com/WestKirbyGS>

