

WEST GRANTHAM UPDATE


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Church of England Secondary Academy

Monday 6 July, 2026

Art, Appreciation, and Added-Time Drama

The past fortnight at West Grantham Secondary Academy has been all about looking ahead to the future. Our school has been buzzing with energy as we welcomed Year 6 students from local primary schools for their Transition Week.

Throughout the week, they followed a timetable much like the one they'll experience when they join us in September, giving them a real taste of secondary school life. They threw themselves into a range of activities, from solving crime scene investigations in Science to designing and building bridges in Design Technology. It has been fantastic to see so many enthusiastic students getting involved, making new friends and building confidence ahead of their move to WGSA. We look forward to welcoming them back as Year 7s in September.

While our future students were discovering life at secondary school, our current Year 10s have been out in the world gaining valuable real-life experience through their work placements. Work experience provides a fantastic opportunity for students to develop new skills, explore potential career paths and gain an insight into the world beyond the classroom. We look forward to hearing all about their experiences when they return.

Our Year 11 students have also had one final opportunity to celebrate their time with us, attending their prom following the completion of their exams. It was a wonderful evening and a fitting way to mark the end of an important chapter. The students looked fantastic and it was lovely to see them enjoying one last celebration

together before they begin the next stage of their journeys.

Duke of Edinburgh participants have continued preparing for future adventures, recently focusing on communication skills. Students have been learning how to communicate clearly and effectively in different situations, including having a go at reading and writing messages in Morse code. While we're not sure any of them are ready to become telegraph operators just yet, they've certainly learned that communication is more than simply sending a text!

The improving weather has also allowed our athletics enthusiasts to get plenty of practice in ahead of Sports Day. Students have been working on a range of disciplines, including javelin throwing, shotput and long jump, and there has already been some healthy competition developing. A number of keen Year 9 students have even challenged their teachers to 100-metre sprints. We won't reveal the winners, but let's just say the annual staff-versus-student race could be one of the most closely contested in years.

As we begin looking ahead to September, plans are already underway for next year's enrichment programme. Some exciting new opportunities are being developed behind the scenes, and we're looking forward to sharing more details soon. There will be plenty of opportunities to get involved, learn new skills and have fun outside the classroom.

We hope everyone enjoys the final few weeks of term as much as we know we will.

A word from...

Our Year 6 Transition Buddies

Toby

On Monday it was Year 6 Transition day and I was a buddy in the afternoon. It was very nice getting to be with them. We did lots of different things with them like building a bridge and seeing how many weights it could hold and also did crime scene investigation to see who ate the chocolate that was missing from Science. It was very fun to see figure out who took it and nice just getting to know the Year 6s. On Tuesday we did PE and on Monday played a game orienteering around the school to get to the layout and classrooms.

Lola

On Monday afternoon we did a CSI (Crime Scene Investigation), then we did a hunt around the whole school. The Year 6s said they loved it. I met a lovely Year 6 girl, she was so sweet and came to me every day. Tuesday afternoon we did Art and PE. Wednesday we did Maths and time with their new form tutors. Meeting the Year 6s was amazing and I think they will all do amazing here.

WEEK A - JUL 06

Mon

Football Clubs, Fitness Gym, Gardening Club, Library Club

Tue

Library Club
Basketball
Christian Union

Wed

Athletics, Rounders, Fitness Gym, Library Club, STEM Club, Dodgeball, Sewcial Club
Open Evening

Thu

Homework Club
Fitness Gym
Debate Club
Chess Club

Fri

Library Club

WEEK B - JUL 13

Mon

Football Clubs, Fitness Gym, Gardening Club, Library Club

Tue

Library Club
Basketball
Christian Union

Wed

Athletics, Rounders, Fitness GYM, Library Club, STEM Club, Dodgeball, Sewcial Club

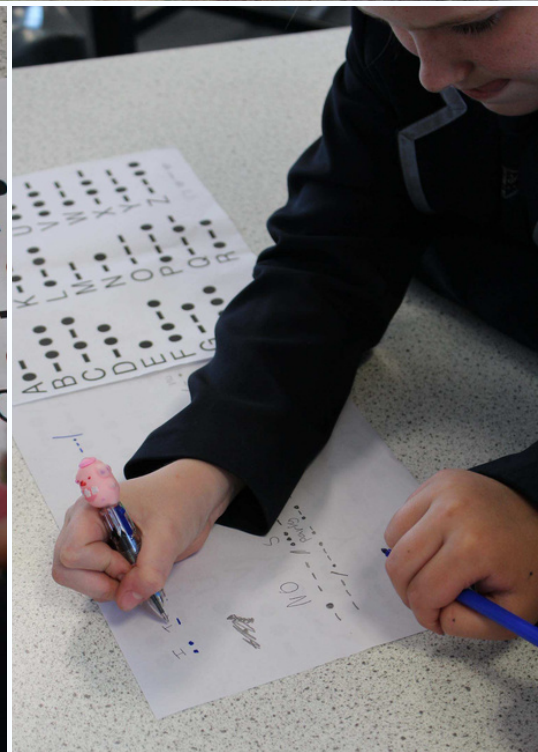
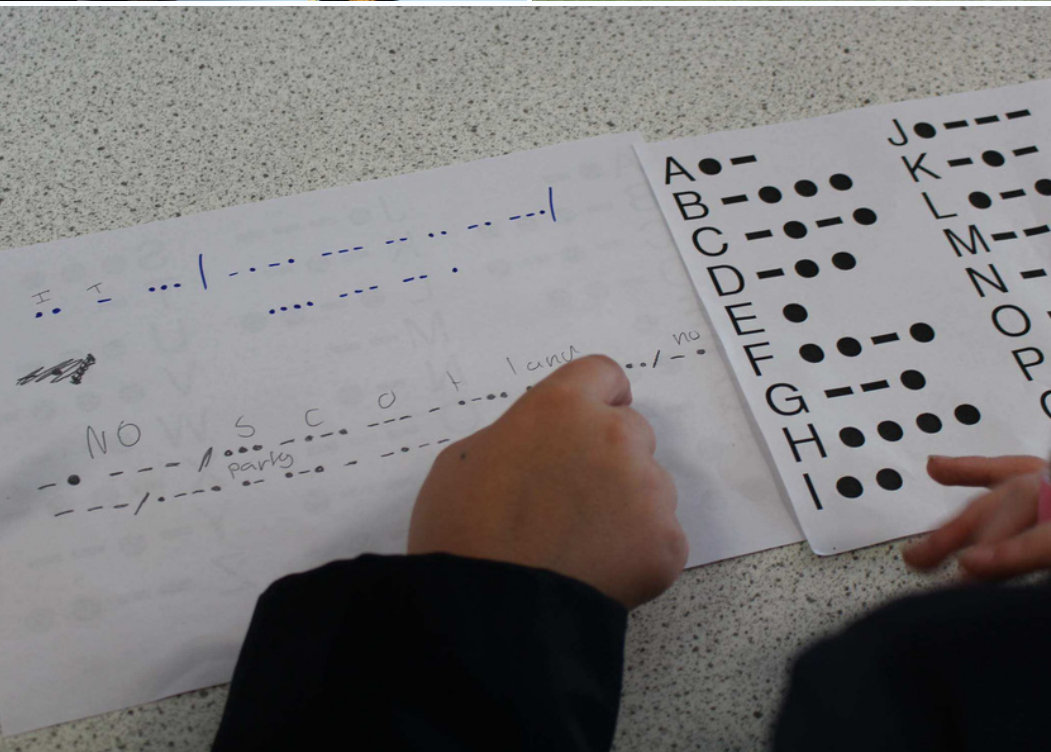
Thu

Homework Club, Fitness Gym, Debate Club, Chess Club
PSHE Drop 6

Fri

Library Club
Sports Day





SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

10 Conversation Starters for Parents

Talking about mental health to children is sometimes hard. To the point that we can put off raising the subject, not wanting to unearth problems or raise overwhelming subjects that we perceive our child is too young or not ready for. But rather than keeping children in the dark, this guide is designed to help you confidently talk about mental health, so they feel comfortable talking about their own worries and end any stigma before it begins.



1 LISTEN

This sounds obvious, but it is not something we are always great at. Active listening is where we listen without interrupting or making judgements and shows interest in what is being said. If your child feels listened to in the 'smallest of problems' they will become confident that you will listen when the 'biggest of problems' arise.

2 ASK TWICE

The campaign from time to change is great. <https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/support-ask-twice-campaign>. Be tenacious about your child's wellbeing. Children instinctively know when your questions and support come from a place of wanting to help and care.

3 THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A STUPID QUESTION

This advice also relates to the first point. If your child can ask you any questions about the smallest of things and you listen and answer without shaming or belittling, then they will have more confidence to ask the biggest of questions.

4 BE OPEN AND HONEST

Children appreciate honesty, particularly if you are having to share information or talk about a difficult subject. For example, you may be talking about death or loss; 'It's very sad that Nana has died' or 'I feel sad that Nana has died'. How you talk about a subject will differ depending on their age and developmental maturity. Talking about death to a younger child for example will be different to that of an older teen, as their experience and understanding of death is different.

5 KNOW WHEN TO SEEK HELP

Assess the severity of the mental health difficulty you are noticing. Is the difficulty making it hard for your child to function regularly throughout everyday life? How frequently is your child affected, how long does it last and how persistent is it? Are they having problems controlling the difficulty? Talk to your child about your concerns and that it is likely they will need further support beyond family and friends.

6 TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH NATURALLY

Speak about mental health as part of everyday life, so that talking about our feelings and those of others is normalised. If the usual 'are you ok?' is not creating an opportunity for dialogue then say something like 'I know when something like that has happened to me I felt like this... is that how you are feeling or are you feeling something else?'

7 EMPATHISE

'It makes sense that you would feel this way, it is understandable'. Children often worry about things that we, as adults, might see as trivial or silly. However, for them at their age and stage it is a big concern and they need our kindness and care when they show their vulnerability and share their worries.

8 HELP YOUR CHILD FEEL SAFE

Teens particularly feel that by talking about their worries or concerns that this will make things worse. Reassure your child that you will discuss a plan of action together and what may or may not need to happen next. If they are a younger child, it is likely you will need to lead the conversation and explain next steps.

9 MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

Be mindful of the language you use at home to describe and talk about mental health. Stigma often arises from misconceptions and a choice of language which is harmful. Using the word 'mental', 'man-up' or other such words in a derogatory way won't encourage your child to talk about their mental health for fear of being belittled.

10 IT IS OK TO SAY 'I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO NEXT'

Adults do not have all the answers but often children think they do. It is ok to acknowledge that what your child is experiencing is not something you have come across before or know anything about, but that you will work it out together and seek help together.

Meet our expert

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department of Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



Sources of Information and Support

Your GP
Young Minds <https://youngminds.org.uk/v>
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>
<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/news-and-blogs/parenting-tips/2016/november/a-simple-guide-to-active-listening-for-parents/>
<https://www.themix.org.uk/mental-health>