



Year Seven Student Led Conferences Parent Information June 2018



***‘To develop lifelong learners
who approach the world with
confidence and curiosity’***

West Island School Aim



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What are Year 7 student-led conferences?

The primary difference between the more traditional parent/student/teacher meeting and the West Island School *student-led conference* is that each WIS student is required to be involved in preparing for and participating in the conference. With the *student-led conference*, responsibility is delegated to the student who takes the leading role during conference discussions and demonstrates how they have made progress as a learner. The *student-led conference* places students at the centre of the conversation to talk knowledgeably about their areas of growth and challenge. Your child will reflect and evaluate on the skills they have developed and wish to develop by considering the ways in which they learn.

What is the focus for the student-led conference?



During the preparatory period leading up to the *student-led conferences*, Learning for Life teachers will guide students towards an understanding that learning is something they do rather than something that is done to them. This is in line with West Island School's overall philosophy and we work with students to ensure they understand that they can make a positive difference for their own future. Putting students in the driver's seat of their conferences creates opportunities for reflection, engagement as well as empowerment and ownership of their learning.

What preparation is required for the student-led conference?

Your child will be required to understand that they are accountable for finding and presenting specific evidence to show their progress as a learner. Students will be encouraged to find evidence to present at the conference that will demonstrate the progress they have made since the start of Year 7 and they will use the format provided in Learning for Life lessons to scaffold them through this process.

Your child will be encouraged to identify their strengths, to recognise areas for further development and to establish steps needed to further progress as a learner.

Your child will complete the following prior to the conference:

- A letter welcoming you to the conference.
- A conference plan.
- Evidence of areas of growth and challenge.
- Completed self-reflections for each piece of evidence.
- Completed a reflection of the ways they have approached their learning.
- Three goals for the next academic year.



How are the student-led conferences organised?

- Students from 7 Han, Ming and Qing will lead conferences with their parents on **6 June**. Students from 7 Yuan, Song and Tang will lead conferences with their parents on **7 June**. Tutors will be in attendance on both days.
- Approximately four conferences will take place at the same time in each designated conference room.
- Conferences will be scheduled during the normal five lesson day. None will take place outside of lesson time.
- Each conference will last 40 minutes in total.
- Students will attend normal lessons, but will leave at the beginning of the lesson scheduled for their conference in order to prepare their material in their designated conference room.
- Students will welcome you to the conference with a letter or video message.
- Students will share their conference plan with you to aid timing.
- Students will present evidence of areas of growth and challenge. These may contain non-assessed work, assessed work or CAS commitments.
- Students will share their reflection of the ways they have approached their learning with you, illustrating the ways they have demonstrated skills this year and highlighted how they can improve and practice these skills further.
- Students will share their three goals for the next academic year. This will provide you with an opportunity to work together and create a plan of action to help them achieve their goals.
- The Vice Principal overseeing the Pre 16 Guidance and Achievement team, the Director of Learning – Pre 16 and Head of Year 7 will be in attendance during the conference sessions to answer questions from parents and to aid in the smooth running of the conferences.

Determining a successful student-led conference

A successful *student-led conference* is one where your child is able to recognise and explain what learning tools they have used, acknowledge their level of competence at that point in time and seek further strategies and approaches in order to develop.

The longer term objective is that with on-going practice, reflection and self-awareness of their capabilities, your child will be able to see how they can transfer these skills to other learning contexts.

What is your role as a parent?

The Year 7 *student-led conference* provides your child with the opportunity to practice their communication and leadership skills. Your child will share their progress with you and will be encouraged to lead a two way conversation about their learning. Please come to this conference prepared to listen, acknowledge your child's effort and growth, and feel free to ask questions that encourage your child to reflect on their learning.

The format of this *student led conference* provides you with the opportunity to delve beneath the brief answers you might receive after a busy day, such as "Fine" or "Okay thanks" if you ask your child how they are progressing in a subject. The structure of the conference should allow you as parents to discuss your child's learning beyond their initial feelings and thoughts about subject specific areas.

Towards the end of the conference your child, in conjunction with you, will identify the appropriate next steps in their learning to help them achieve their three goals for the next academic year. This is to be handed in to the tutor and used as reference in subsequent One to One Tutoring sessions. Once the appropriate next steps have been identified, there will be an evaluation of the conference to be completed by both you and your child.

What role does the Tutor fulfil prior to and during the conference?

Tutors:

- Produce a schedule of appointments in conjunction with the students.
- Create a comfortable space for parents and students to meet.
- Serve as facilitators and not as leaders of discussions during the conference.

What do students need to do prior to and during the conference?

Students:

- Select evidence of areas of growth and challenge to showcase to parents.
- Reflect upon and evaluate selected evidence to determine what was expected, the things that were done well and what could have been done better.
- Complete the reflection of the ways they have approached their learning.
- Identify three goals for the next academic year.
- Create a conference plan and consider timing of the conference.
- Write a letter or create a video message to welcome parents.
- Negotiate appointment times with their parents and Tutor.
- Prepare their evidence to showcase and ensure that all resources for the day are ready in advance.

