



Dear Parents, Carers and Friends of Wallington County Grammar School

Per Ardua ad Summa, 'through difficulties to the heights', is a phrase that I have been reflecting a lot on as we come to the end of the Spring Term. During the past twelve weeks, our students and staff have faced some momentous challenges that have put this motto to the test. These range from the rigours of a full Section 5 Ofsted Inspection to students having to plan a full week's worth of whole school events for RAG Week. From rehearsing and performing the most ambitious musical production we have put on as a school in 'Our House' to preparing for exams that will influence the course of so many of our students' lives. From battling through some of the toughest Rugby Sevens tournaments in the country to going through a gruelling two day selection process to become Captain of School. What has been clear though is that, through all of these struggles, the qualities of the members of our community have shone through, not just the self-discipline and endeavour that we speak of so often, but genuine courage, compassion, commitment and no small amount of

creativity. It is because of these qualities that we reach the heights we do - We were judged as outstanding in all categories by Ofsted, Jay and his team raised an enormous £6,345 from RAG week, 'Our House' was a resounding success and we reached the semi-finals of the Roslyn Park Sevens. Two of our girls rugby squad have even been scouted by England Rugby during tournaments this term. The Captain of School interviews were also a huge success with Finlay Moore being chosen to represent the School next year with a fantastic team to support him. Finally, we are of course confident that our students will make every success of their GCSE and A level examinations next term and will go on to gain places in our outstanding Sixth Form and with some of the world's best universities. These are great heights indeed and I am proud of everyone who has contributed to making this term such a success. *Per Ardua ad Summa.*

Jamie Bean, Head of School

PTFA Update by Katherine Herrick, Chair WCCGS PTFA

11+ Familiarisation Tests

It has been another very successful term for the PTFA. Our 11+ Familiarisation Test places went on sale at the beginning of January and so far we have sold over 2,000 seats, raising an amazing £54,000. The tests will be held in May, June and early July and we would still welcome volunteers to assist in invigilation and marking so if you could spare time to get involved for an afternoon or morning session please email Kate at helpers@wccgsptfa.com Volunteering is not only hugely worthwhile in terms of what we can contribute to the School but is also a great way to get to know other parents.

Our Events

The annual quiz night, held last month, was a very enjoyable evening once again for all the parents and staff who attended. Particular thanks are due to our fabulous Sixth Formers who assisted on the night to help make it such a success. In addition to social events the PTFA have continued to provide support for the School by providing refreshments at events such as the Fashion and Talent Show and the school musical. Our second hand uniform sales at the Year 7,8 & 9 parents evenings have been particularly popular so if you have any uniform in good condition that your son has grown out of please could you donate it by handing it into the School Office in a bag clearly labelled 'PTFA uniform'. Next term we will turn our attention to hosting the Induction BBQ which plays such an important part of welcoming new Year 7 students into WCCGS. If you would like more details of upcoming events or uniform sales, you might be interested in our new Facebook page (Wallington County Grammar School PTFA) or you can visit our website www.wccgsptfa.com

PTFA Meetings and Changes to the Committee

Following two and a half years as Chair, Steve Crosby stood down from the post at the beginning of February. His time in the post has been hugely successful, seeing the PTFA go from strength to strength and the introduction of the Familiarisation Test. I know I speak for all of us when I say we are all extremely grateful for the energy and commitment he has shown. I was elected as Chair with Melanie Symes-Brown as Vice Chair on 6 February with the rest of the Committee remaining unchanged.

All parents and guardians of children at the WCCGS are automatically members of our PTFA. You are entitled to participate and vote and we are always very happy to see new faces at our meetings, which are usually held on the first Tuesday of the month. Our next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on 2 May and we would love to see you and hear your views. If you can't make it to our meetings (and not all of us can) but would still like to contribute to our activities in some capacity, please just drop us a line at info@wccgsptfa.com

Please remember that if you are visiting the School or waiting for your son/daughter at any time of the day, please park considerately in neighbouring roads avoiding The Manor Way and Derek Avenue and not over dropped kerbs or on grass verges. Thank you for your co-operation.



Spring News From the Art Department – Ms Musselbrook, Mr Grant

House Art

House Art was launched during the pre-Christmas House Assemblies with the theme announced as 2016: Annus Horribilis? The question mark proved very important as pupils were asked to ponder if the year had been as unpleasant as media commentators would have us believe. As usual pupils from all Key Stages proved themselves to be very creative when interpreting the brief and the exhibition contained a range of responses with the judges picking out Ore Ijinigba, Harrison Rowland and Pathushan Sutharshan's pieces as particular highlights. The judges were not aware of which display belonged to which house but all was revealed for a well-attended unveiling after school on the last Friday before half term. I would like to thank the House captains for co-ordinating their house submissions, Mrs Donald and Mr Grant for their help in displaying the work and Ms Bryan, Ms Moyle, Mr Nicholson and Ms Noor Ahmed for agreeing to the difficult task of judging. The final marks separated the top two houses by only one point - so congratulations to Carew on narrowly defeating Radcliffe.



Sutton Youth Art Exhibition 2017

Every year, each Art Department from the Sutton Borough is invited to display work in the Europa Gallery in Sutton Library. For many pupils this is the first time they have been able to enjoy the experience of seeing their work against the plain white walls of a gallery space. The exhibition opened on Thursday 16th March and was incredibly well attended by local dignitaries and artists and the friends and families of the exhibitors. WCCGS exhibited a range of work from Art Club mosaics to Year 10 still life paintings. Shekinah Opara (U6WO) was highly commended for her self-portrait in the style of Gustav Courbet. Mrs Donald and Ms James did sterling work in curating and hanging our display which showed off the artistic talent we are lucky to enjoy at WCCGS.

Art Trip to New York



New York City's weather in March can be fickle, but the art on display is consistently top quality. This is what 24 members of the Sixth Form and three teachers discovered during our trip to the Big Apple earlier in the month. After two glorious days of spring sunshine – at least the shafts of light that permeate the nest of skyscrapers that dominate Manhattan – allowed us to meander between Chelsea's contemporary galleries, a snowstorm encouraged us to linger (with enjoyment) in the Metropolitan Museum's vast atrium. After snowball fights in Central Park, selfies atop the Empire State, and the consumption of scores of dubious looking hotdogs it felt as though we had sampled the best of the city.

Avid flâneurs in this vast metropolis, many of the art students will use their experiences to fuel new works, while others enjoyed a refreshing introduction to both American culture and 4000 years of artistic production. With only one disaster (Mr Greenley's botched purchase of tickets to a basketball game, subsequently resolved by the kind staff at Madison Square Garden) this trip was a testament to the students of WCCGS, who rather than living up to the caricature of esoteric grammar school boffins proved themselves urbane, street-smart, and wide open to new experiences. We were lucky to enjoy conviviality, some superb breakfast foods, and the avoidance of an anachronistic blizzard by a few days. Thank you to all involved.





Taming of the Shrew by James San, Y7

The vibrant, turquoise sky radiated brightly as we ventured out. Gentle zephyrs penetrated our faces as we felt a sense of freedom. As we meandered through Beddington Park, there was a seemingly endless variety of flowers that swayed in unison with the trees like a choir. It was indeed a pleasant experience.

Departing Hackbridge, the train appeared more spacious than we thought. As all our stomachs were gurgling and pleading for food, it was the perfect opportunity to have a tranquil break. Ravenously gulping away, Michael started to change the atmosphere from relaxed to comical. After hysterically laughing after Ette had said so innocently, the amusement was contagious that all of us started to chuckle. I perspicaciously decided to film the scene. Replaying it after was unambiguously humorous.

The viewpoints at Blackfriars were breathtaking. The River Thames was moving serenely as we were impatiently waiting in an extensive queue. Once we had finally reached Shakespeare's Globe, Michael accidentally gave a member of staff his ticket, while the rest of us were discreetly guffawing.

Inside Shakespeare's Globe was like a wooden amphitheatre. We sat in the middle of the theatron, having a splendid view of the stage. The musical orchestra in the corner made us prepared and anticipated for the show, playing quick and intense music.

Once the characters came out, all of our eyes opened and were transfixed on them. The action instantaneously began as fighting began, but comical at the same time with the sound effects. We felt a range of emotions throughout the Taming of the Shrew: shock, anger, hap-

piness and empathy. However, with Michael sitting next to me, my perspective of the play turned into a different direction.

We applauded for the characters at the end after their summary and lively song that quickly became stuck in our heads. As we exited, Mrs. Weddell took a group photo of us, like a souvenir. The sun was about to gloriously set, its ochre rays of light shining on us once more.

On the train back to Hackbridge, all Michael and I did was rapturously laugh at the footage we shot before. However, we felt bad inside for Ette, so we re-shot the videos to make it less wild. Michael, on the other hand, did not understand the plot, and just decided to repeat the questions back on the train, and Ette replied so amusingly that it was even funnier than before.

As I left the group, I knew that my experience on this trip was beyond fun.



SMASHED! By Sulaiman Galaria, Y7

On 16 March 2017, the Year 7 and 8 students of WCCGS were taken on an educational journey on the misuse of alcohol, through the workshop "SMASHED", delivered by Collingwood Learning who are a small team with backgrounds in education, the arts, and media, whose mission is making learning engaging and inspirational.

The story of two young and promising students who messed up their lives due to alcohol, was well acted out by a team of performers. The consequences of giving into peer pressure, the risks and the negative implications of alcohol misuse were emphasised in a very innovative and entertaining way. The creative involvement of the audience made the workshop more interesting and meaningful to the students. Not only did the students enjoy participating in the workshop but they also took away a powerful message about the importance of making the right choices in life.



We are always keen to receive parental views. Any suggestions for improvement, ideas for implementation or comments on what we have done well, please email Mrs Owen on enquiries@wccgs.org.uk



WCCGS E-safety 2017

E-safety affects us all; many households have phones, laptops, ipads etc. and most of our young people know how to access an online world that is ever-changing. With these changes come new challenges as although the internet and the devices we possess can create many benefits and opportunities, it is vital that we are aware of the ways that these can be misused and abused so that we can protect and educate our young people.

With this in mind, from February 1st 2017 Miss Ball and her team of Ambassadors began promotion of E-safety Week in WCCGS. This would be a compilation of a range of form time activities, assemblies, competitions, parent workshops, meetings with e-safety charities, challenge days e.g. with Year 9 and whole school workshops with Digital Awareness UK (who recently appeared on BBC News, and presented to Parliament, promoting the significance and the necessity of education in this topic) to help promote E-safety across WCCGS.

Within form times the Ambassadors were able to complete presentations to all years where they were able to

help pupils explore and discuss key topics that such as:

What are current E-safety topics that affect young people today?

What apps, sites etc. should we be aware of and why?

Staying safe online – what pupils can do to ensure E-safety e.g. blocking and privacy settings.

Effects on our health – how much do our phones etc. affect us and how can we find a better balance?

In preparation for Safer Internet Day on February 7th 2017 Miss Ball and her Ambassadors worked with all three key stages to create assemblies that addressed topics that the young people in our school felt required more education e.g. digital footprints, online grooming and what to look out for, sexting and responsible sending of materials, the role of apps in the distribution of our personal information etc. These were very successful and the ambassador's delivery was outstanding.

On March 2nd 2017 Miss Ball invited parents to attend a workshop, in which resources and supports were

provided to help parents support their tweens and teens with this vital education. It is vital that parents are able to communicate with the school to safeguard our young people and that they can also remain educated on this ever changing and challenging topic to help keep our young people safe. If more information is required or you have any queries regarding this please contact eball8@suttonmail.org.

On March 03rd 2017 Miss Ball and her Ambassadors hosted Marta Ricardo Rocco who is the Commissioning Coordinator and LSCB Children & Young Persons Engagement Coordinator for the borough. We are very proud of the maturity, diligence and proactivity of our young people; their willingness to support the school and their community in addressing this important issue is very admirable and we could not be prouder of them.

We hope that as the weeks continue we will continue to work together to keep education of this vital topic fresh and prominent. Thank you for your support.

Hans Woyda Maths Challenge by Joe Levine, Y9

It began 4pm on a bitter Autumn afternoon in Classroom MA4. Four aspiring mathematicians were struggling for victory in the Hans Woyda Maths Competition; the only competition to require such a fine balance of speed, precision and punctuality (Diamoor)! The competition began with a group round robin, culminating in a series of knockouts. Gradually picking up speed, we won our group stage and the following two extremely tightly contested knockouts.

However, our demise came when we allowed a notorious Hampton side to get the better of us (again) by a mere one point in the Semi-Final.

I learnt that some things in life are far more important than worrying about Brexit and Chemistry tests! I would like to thank the whole team; Ozan, Matthew, Diamor and Mr Howells for a great learning experience – (one that some day, I will hopefully be able to repeat?!).

Qube Learning Awards



Congratulations to Matthew Ralph, from the WCCGS Finance Department who was awarded the "Partner Apprentice of the Year Award" at the Qube Learning Awards Evening at the Waldorf Astoria on 16 March. Matthew was selected from amongst all the apprentices supported by the 13 partner companies that make up the Qube learning partnership. The award was presented by Laura Hamilton (Presenter on Ch4 "A place in the Sun") and Grainne McCoy (Semi Finalist in "The Apprentice 2016").

Sainsbury's Active Kids 2017 – once again we shall be collecting vouchers. Please send any vouchers into school where they should be placed in the collection box at Student Services.

Thank you for your support.



School Musical: 'Our House', By Jamali Blair and Daniel Owusu, Y9

It's hard to believe this but, shockingly, it has been four years since we have done a proper whole school musical. It feels weird, or at least to me, it does. And I think it's safe to say that, after the success of this musical, the gap won't be so long next time. The musical is **Our House** and it has an extremely intriguing plot.

It tells the poignant story of a working class teenager called Joe Casey who, on his sixteenth birthday, is caught in a compromising situation of whether to make the easy wrong choice or the harder right choice. **Our House** the musical portrays how life would pan out based on what he chose for himself.

After the flyers went up for participation there were many students eager to participate, from Year 7 to Year 13. I really enjoyed this, as we got to galvanise everyone's talents. Additionally, it was really fun to meet new people, as usually there is a lack of opportunities for the whole school to come together for an exciting project like this. After initial casting the acting/singing roles, we designated jobs for our backstage crew, band members, set design and sound and lighting. Even though the audience just sees us on stage, having the times of our lives, it's important not to forget that without them the show wouldn't even go ahead.

Even though there were some nerves before the musical, I think it was a smashing success. I think what made it so wonderful, was how the little glimmers of potential all fused together for an enthralling show, which I think everyone enjoyed. Dominic Barnaby and Gaby Puleston-Vaudrey gave a virtuoso performance within their roles and Jamali Blair (me) really stood out as a stall-holder, even with that slightly unfortunate prop malfunction. Applause filled the room, and as we left the stage there was a

real sense of pride. There was rampant applause for "Tomorrow's Just Another Day", which was a real show-stopper and there was also a lot of applause for the energetic "Our House" performance, which fused dancing, singing and acting wonderfully. Mrs Weddell really did an impeccable job with the choreography, and Mrs Martin's multi-tasking (playing the piano, singing, conducting and even filling in for one of the roles) was super impressive.

I don't think anyone left the show, without loving it. A parent I spoke to said "it reminded her of a professional musical" and another one said it was "enthralling." Mr McLauchlan said it was "the most exquisite piece of theatre he has ever seen." Our wonderful lead Dom said "he loved playing the lead and that it was a fantastic opportunity that he would never forget." And that finishes our write-up aptly. I think if there was one word you could use to describe this musical, it would be **unforgettable**.



Self-Discipline Endeavour Excellence