



End of Term Letter

Headmaster

Dear students, parents and friends,

What a brilliant term we have had here at Wallington County Grammar School. Much of the first half was spent digesting the extraordinary success of our students in their summer examinations and drawing out any lessons that could be learned for the future. It transpired that our Sixth Form students really had done something quite special with the School winning an award from ALPs, the country's leading provider for post 16 results analyses, for making progress in the top 1% of schools in the country from GCSE to A Level. Their achievements, combined with the equally remarkable success of last year's Year 11, placed WCCGS in the top 30 state schools nationally for the first time, up 34 places on last year, and put us second in the borough for examination outcomes. Congratulations to students and staff for reaching such heights.

This success was noticed in November when we had our annual whole school review undertaken by our Trust. Six senior leaders took part and were blown away by how hard working and articulate our students are and how well supported they are by their teachers. In their report for governors they said: *It is exceptionally clear that WCCGS is a very special school; School staff are deeply ambitious for their pupils, and have a deep sense of moral purpose in all they do. This intent cuts across all areas of the school - though an intensely academic environment, there is a huge emphasis on developing pupils' wider interests and character; There is a strong focus on ensuring the most disadvantaged students do particularly well; There is a deep sense of integrity in the school - leaders are very clear that they have a responsibility to always act in the best interests of students; In particular, students feel very lucky to attend the school. They particularly value that the school, while intensely academic in focus, offers much more than this and ensures they develop as a whole person; Overall, it is clear we are lucky to have a school of WCCGS's calibre in GLT.* High praise indeed from some very experienced educational leaders and thinkers.

Teachers have been working hard on ensuring the classroom environment is as productive as possible. Mini whiteboards are now in use across the school to ensure all students are thinking during questioning activities and the responses of all students, rather than just the ones with their hands up, can be assessed by teachers and any misconceptions addressed. Similarly, nominated (rather than hands up) questioning is being used to maximise academic press and participation in discussions. Mrs Owen has been on a commendations crusade and we are happy to report that students, including those in older year groups, are now receiving more than ever and hopefully feel recognised for their exceptional achievements as a result. We have also tightened up morning form time routines to ensure all students are prepared for learning with the right equipment from the very start of the day. On the subject of morning registration, thank you to parents for supporting their children through some dire road closures in the area and we are looking forward to seeing student punctuality return to our usual high standards in January.



End of Term Letter

Headmaster

It has also been a wonderful term in terms of the co-curriculum with Carew winning house drama yet again with a great play about a son returning from fighting abroad only to be cruelly manipulated by his father. The autumn concert had some virtuoso performances from our best musicians and our sportsmen and women have met with notable successes including reaching the South London finals for indoor athletics, and victories for the rugby first XV against Gravesend, Halliford, Ravenswood, St Olave's, Claremont and Riddlesdown. Wallington was also recognised as one of the top 25 cricketing state schools in the country so huge congratulations must go to Mr Henderson and the games team. Year 11 have all now had specialist careers interviews and have been commendably engaged in our virtual work experience programme, winning participation prizes from our provider Springpod. As you can see, the co-curriculum really is thriving.

In terms of charitable giving, our PTFA have been working their socks off as usual. They have kindly agreed to fund a new minibus and queuing barriers for the cafe to ensure a more orderly line. Mr Asten, our new development manager, has made a flying start, transitioning the School onto the Just Giving website and securing a £3,000 parent donation in the first week after launch. He will be leading a team of Sixth Form fundraisers next term who will work to increase contributions from our parents and alumni. Please can the many parents who are already contributing ensure they cancel their standing orders and move payments onto the Just Giving platform as soon as is convenient.

Finally, we must say goodbye to some staff:

- ◆ Mr Rumbold joined the school in September covering for Mr Flook in the aftermath of the summer election in which he stood as an MP. Mr Rumbold will be going on to study for a masters degree.
- ◆ Mr Emerton joined our IT team in 2016 and was promoted to IT manager in the summer. He has taken a position with the Ministry of Defence which starts in the new year.
- ◆ Mrs Skipp has worked at the School since 2010 as our assistant cook. She will be moving on to lead her own kitchen at Grove School.
- ◆ Ms Musselbrook joined our art department in 2005. Since then she has been promoted to the positions of Year Leader, leader of our Anti Sexism Taskforce, and Subject Leader of Art. She has run countless trips both in the UK and abroad and has taught many other subjects including *wellbeing* and *civilisations*. She will be moving to St Olave's Grammar School as Head of Art in January.

All that remains is for me to wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy new year and I look forward to the year to come with optimism and hope for what our students will achieve and become.



Your faithfully,

Jamie Bean
Headmaster
Wallington County Grammar School

Link to Just Giving website: <https://checkout.justgiving.com/hsr1fhsh98>



Department of English: Winter Read 2024

Mortal Engines by Philip Reeve

In a dangerous future, huge motorised cities hunt, attack and fight each other for survival. As London pursues a small town, young apprentice Tom is flung out into the wastelands, where a terrifying cyborg begins to hunt him down.

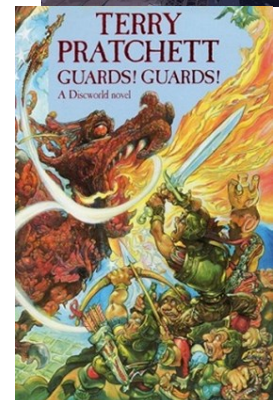
The School Librarian says: This is a true original, a fantastic post-apocalyptic adventure in a brilliantly bonkers, richly imagined world. It has moving cities that eat each other to steal their resources, one of the best female antiheroes in any book I've read, and three sequels. If anything, they're even better than this first one.



Guards! Guards! by Terry Pratchett

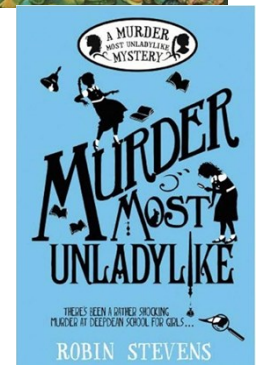
Insurrection is in the air in Ankh-Morpork. The Haves and Have-Nots are about to fall out all over again. Captain Sam Vimes of the city's ramshackle Night Watch is used to this. It's enough to drive a man to drink. Well, to drink *more*. But this time, something is different - the Have-Nots have found the key to a dormant, lethal weapon that even they don't fully understand, and they're about to unleash a campaign of terror on the city. Time for Captain Vimes to sober up.

The School Librarian says: It can be difficult to know where to start with Terry Pratchett's Discworld, but this makes a perfect entry point. It introduces the City Watch and Sam Vimes, probably Pratchett's greatest character, and sees them facing (literally) million-to-one odds as they go up against a terrifying dragon.



Murder Most Unladylike by Robin Stevens

When Daisy Wells and Hazel Wong set up a secret detective agency at Deepdean School for Girls, they struggle to find any real crimes to investigate. (Unless you count the case of Lavinia's missing tie. Which they don't.) Then Hazel discovers the body of Miss Bell. And when she and Daisy return five minutes later, the body has disappeared. Not only do they have a murder to solve - they must prove one happened in the first place...



Naruto, Vol. 1 by Masashi Kishimoto

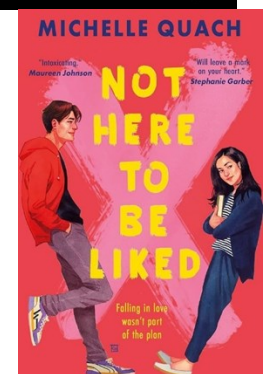
Twelve years ago the Village Hidden in the Leaves was attacked by a fearsome threat. A nine-tailed fox spirit claimed the life of the village leader, the Hokage, and many others. Today, the village is at peace and a troublemaking kid named Naruto is struggling to graduate from Ninja Academy. His goal may be to become the next Hokage, but his true destiny will be much more complicated. The adventure begins now!

The School Librarian says: Naruto is probably the most popular thing in the library at the moment, and this is where it all begins. Read this and see what all the fuss is about (but you might need to reserve it first...)



Not Here To Be Liked by Michelle Quach

Eliza Quan fully expects to be voted the next editor in chief of her school paper. She works hard, she respects the facts and she has the most experience. Len DiMartile is an injured baseball player who seems to have joined the paper just to have something to do. Naturally, the staff picks Len to be their next leader. Because while they may respect Eliza, they don't particularly like her. Eliza is not here to be liked. She's here to win. But someone does like Eliza. A lot. Shame it's the boy standing in the way of her becoming editor in chief...



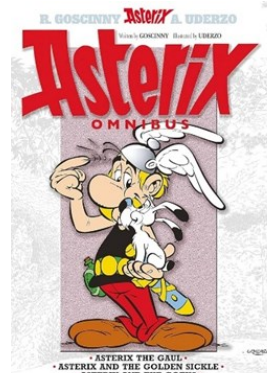


Department of English: Winter Read 2024(Continue)

Asterix Omnibus Vol. 1 by René Goscinny & Albert Uderzo

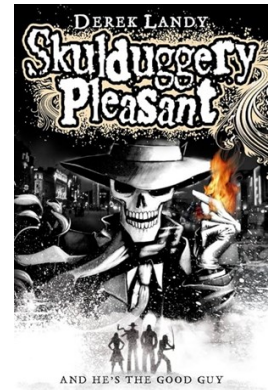
In “Asterix The Gaul”, we join Asterix, Obelix and co. as they try to defend one small village in Gaul from the mighty legionaries of Rome who surround them. Disaster strikes the Gaulish village in “Asterix And The Golden Sickle”, as Getafix the druid has broken his golden sickle which means no more magic potion. In “Asterix And The Goths”, Getafix is kidnapped by the Goths so Asterix and Obelix have to ride to the rescue.

The School Librarian says: An all-time classic of the comics medium. When it comes to the long tradition of wonderful French comics, Asterix is one of the first to spring to mind, and this collected edition makes an ideal gateway.



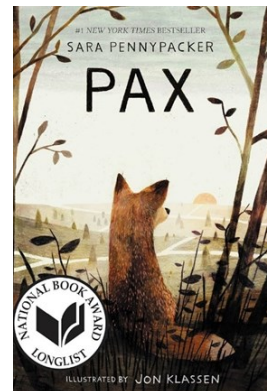
Skulduggery Pleasant by Derek Landy

Meet the great Skulduggery Pleasant: wise-cracking detective, powerful magician, master of dirty tricks and burglary (in the name of the greater good, of course). Oh yeah. And dead. Then there's his sidekick, Stephanie. She's... well, she's a twelve-year-old girl. With a pair like this on the case, evil had better watch out...



Pax by Sara Pennypacker

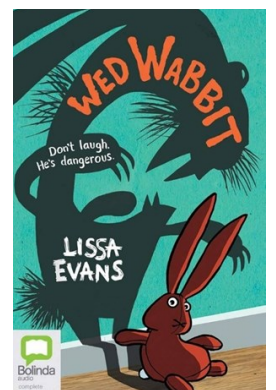
“I had a fox. I have a fox... We left him on the side of the road. My dad said we had to, but I should never have done it”. Pax and Peter have been inseparable ever since Peter rescued him as a cub. But when Peter is forced to return his fox to the wild his world is torn apart. Despite the encroaching war, and the three hundred miles between them, Peter sets out to find his fox. Meanwhile Pax waits hopefully for his boy...



Wed Wabbit by Lissa Evans

Fidge is having a bad week. She’s been flung into a bizarre world alongside three companions: two are deeply weird and the third is her awful cousin Graham. She has to solve a series of nearly impossible clues, defeat a dictator who can’t pronounce the letter ‘r’ and deal with three thousand Wimbley Woos (yes, you read that sentence correctly). And the whole situation - the whole, entire thing - is her fault.

The School Librarian says: The title and cover made me laugh, so I read the first couple of pages on a whim and immediately wanted to read the rest of it. It’s very, very funny.





Drama Department:

Box House Theatre workshop Year 10 GCSE Drama

Year 10 were fortunate enough to take part in an all day workshop delivered by Box House Theatre. This workshop was funded by the generous Jack Petchy winner Charles Wood, who wanted his award to benefit his whole Drama class. This workshop provided the entire GCSE Drama class with a springboard from which to develop their ideas for their component 2 GCSE Devising exam. Pawel Goras said, "It allowed me to develop a large range of ideas for my drama devising and it also helped me consider abstract and platform theatre as possible influences in my performance"



Frantic Assembly Workshop Year 9 GCSE Drama

On Wednesday the 6th of November, Year 9 drama students had a frantic assembly workshop and it was fantastic. Throughout the workshop, we learnt so much in a short space of time. A few of the lessons we learnt are the significance of following and leading in drama, the importance of teamwork, and most importantly the power of movement. And the best part of it all was that it was all done in an extremely engaging way and I can honestly say it was the most fun filled two hours I've ever spent in school.

by Theo Fletcher

James Kehoe added, "I believe that, especially with the amazing opportunity to have a frantic assembly workshop, that it will help us dramatically improve our skills for the future."



**Drama Department:****Lord of the Flies whole school production in rehearsal**

After a very popular audition process, the competition was tough, Mrs Tanner and Mrs Shears decided to create three different casts. These would be representative of the changing attitudes and behaviours of the boys as they lose touch with civilisation and turn more and more savage on the island. After an initial read through in their groups, the cast have set to work rehearsing every week. We look forward to welcoming you in January to the performances.



Tuesday 21st, Wednesday 22nd and Thursday 23rd January 2025.

Tickets available now on Parent pay

<https://www.parentpay.com/>

Adults £6 under 18 £4



Drama Department:

The Buddha of Suburbia Theatre Trip A level Drama

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2024/event/rscwise-children-the-buddha-of-suburbia>



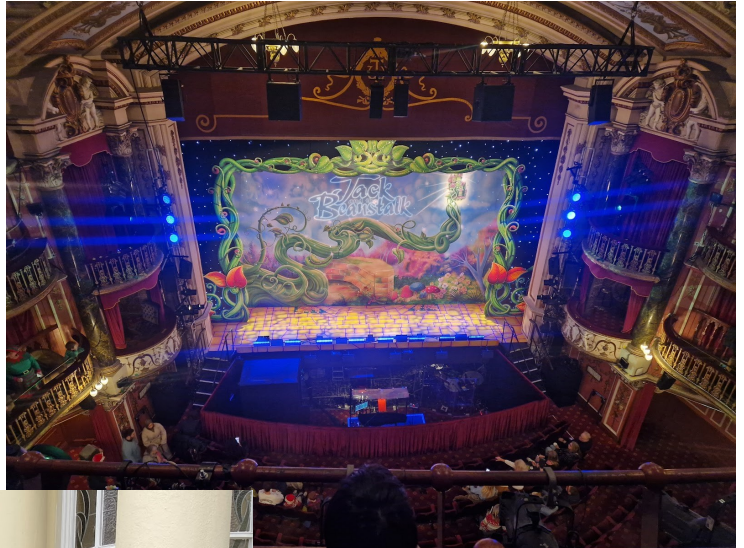
This 'glorious and intoxicating five-star' (Times) production based on Hanif Kureishi's award-winning novel. South London in the late seventies. High unemployment, high inflation, food shortages and strikes. But despite the winter of discontent, 17-year-old Karim's life is about to explode into glorious technicolour as he navigates a path to enlightenment. Or at the very least, Beckenham. Director Emma Rice brings her unique and joyful style to Hanif Kureishi's award-winning 1990 novel, exploring family, friends, sex, theatre and, ultimately, belonging, in a critically acclaimed production that will leave you 'on a rare high' (Telegraph).



Drama Department:

Jack and the Beanstalk Year 7 Lottery Trip

20 Year 7 students enjoyed a trip to see Jack and the Beanstalk at Wimbledon theatre. The production of this classic fairy tale was brought to life with a modern twist, featuring dazzling special effects, lively musical numbers, and plenty of comedic moments. The production starred Alexandra Burke who performed her smash hit "Hallelujah". There was plenty of slapstick comedy, audience participation, and heart-warming moments. It was an unmissable event, perfect for creating magical memories.



Seb Lack (7Ra) said " I thought the show was amazing, personally my favourite character was Simon, the only bad thing was the noises at the beginning and after the interval jumped out at you, scared me and had no warning"

"Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's Jack's GIANT beanstalk! And this year, it's bigger and more magical than ever as *Jack and the Beanstalk* returns with a brand-new cast to take you on a soaring adventure to the clouds. Joining the fun is none other than pop sensation and West End star Alexandra Burke as the villainous Mrs. Blunderbore! She's set to cause plenty of mischief, but don't worry - comedy legend Joe Pasquale steps in as Jack Trot's hilarious brother, Simon, along with cabaret icon Ceri Dupree and West End diva Ria Jones."



London Theatreland <https://www.london-theatreland.co.uk/theatres/new-wimbledon-theatre/jack-and-the-beanstalk.php>

**Drama Department:****House Drama 2024 - The Journey Home**

House Drama in WCGS was a huge success! We saw 6 terrific plays by the prompt "Journey Home" and we witnessed 6 unique performances that really embodied the WCGS spirit. Carew captured the night, carefully crafting their play around Brechtian physical theatre and (what I believe was the highlight of the night) the incredible choreography in the musical scene between Kyle Onyango and Markos Karagkiaouris that would bring any Drama teacher to their knees crying in joy. I can't help but mention my house (Radcliffe) with a different take on the prompt, opting for a comedic play inspired by the events of "A Christmas Carol" by Dickens as the audience was taken through an emotional rollercoaster.

My personal Favourite performance was by Mandeville: A comedic play about an inheritance crisis with everything we look for in comedy: Dance, Drama and most importantly, funny characters. Shout out to David Encarnacion and his dance group.



I would also like to give a shout out to the Drama Department for putting together this wonderful night and allowing the students to unleash their full creative capabilities and for their hard work in organising the night from lighting to tickets.

Programmes below <https://sites.google.com/wcgschool.co.uk/house-drama-2024/home>



MFL Department:

6th Form Visit to the BFI: Almodóvar on the Edge

On Friday 15th November, a group of year 12 and 13 Spanish students, accompanied by Mrs. Gabrielle and Mrs. Campello-Martin, had the fantastic opportunity together to visit the BFI in Southbank, which immersed us more into the A-level movie 'Volver'. Many other schools from all over the country also joined the event and it was a great way to communicate with other Spanish-speaking students. We were very fortunate to be funded by the Jack Petchy Award and on top of this, we experienced a beautiful view of the bank and the festive market by the side. The initial presentation was led by Professor Sarah Wright and Dr Miguel Garcia, who spoke Spanish throughout with some English translations of key vocabulary. We were first introduced to 10 movie clips from Pedro Almodóvar, including Todo Sobre Mi Madre and Pepi, Luci, Bom y otras chicas del montón, where we looked at common features that appeared in all the films. Analysing some of Almodóvar's films gave us more insight into his uses of colour, the composition of camera angles, intertextuality and the roles of men and women. The highlight of this interactive trip was the cinematic screening of the movie Volver, which had a different feel than watching at home. We finished our day by walking around Covent Garden and across Waterloo Bridge where we watched the sunset by the river. I truly enjoyed this experience as it gave me a different outlook on Almodóvar's films and I can't wait for further trips in the future!

by Viviene Lim





MFL Department: Year 10 France Trip



Between the dates of 30th of September and 4th of October, 33 of us, French students got the opportunity to travel to France for 5 days. We travelled on the Eurostar to Paris which took approximately two and a half hours and was very smooth.

Over the course of the five days, we visited numerous key French monuments such as the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe, the Louvre and the Sacré-Cœur Basilica. We stayed in a very comfortable hotel on the main metro line #1. Every day was a fitness test as we did a lot of walking between the venues. Luckily,

there was some help, the Metro and we could rest during the boat cruise.

The metro proved to be a slightly scary experience for all the corridors and if you were not prompt, the doors would close on you ferociously. Some groups had to catch up on the next metro as they were not able to get in before the doors closed! Despite this, the Metro is the best way to get to places quickly in Paris.



Some of the most striking sites were the huge street art frescos near the Place d' Italie and in some of the old streets of the Butte aux Cailles, as well as the "love you" wall in Montmartre. One of the highlights of our trip was also the breath-taking views of Paris from the 58th floor of the Tour Montparnasse, where Piotr and Georgios braved their dislikes of heights. On the Thursday, we spent time with our pen pals in the Collège Rameau in Versailles and we then visited the Chateau. We were so lucky to have a nearly perfect week with good weather to enable us to enjoy the views and our discoveries.

On top of it all, the culinary experience was fantastic, and we tried a variety of restaurants, from le Bosu near Notre Dame to a brasserie at Montmartre, with live music.

All in all, it was a trip worthwhile going to and for you future year 10 French students, this is something you may wish to go on.

by Darian Bogdan, edited by Taha Tanveer

Some students certainly made the most of it, from chatting to their pen pals to interacting with members of the public in French! Parents, if you want to see more of our trip to Paris, ask your son to show you the shared photos on his Google classroom page.

by C Mortreuil





MFL Department:

Celebrating the Launch of Our New Languages Tie

I am thrilled to announce the introduction of a *Languages Tie*, a badge of honour for students who excel in languages. This initiative recognises the hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm of students who show exceptional promise and achievement in their language studies, as well as those who contribute to fostering a love for cultural diversity across the school community.

The journey to creating this tie has been a collaborative and creative process. Last April, we launched a *Languages Tie Logo Competition*, and we were delighted to receive an incredible number of entries. It was wonderful to see such engagement from our students, showcasing their enthusiasm, creativity, and passion for languages. The logos of the following 7 students were shortlisted: Lisa Okello, William Frost, Josh Mozak, Akhilesh Maddimsetty, Smayan Bhatia, Yakshagna Muppanemi, and Marcus Marquez. While their designs ultimately could not be chosen due to visibility constraints on the tie, their contributions were invaluable.

The final design, which incorporates ideas from our students, features motifs of multiple languages and a stylised world map. This thoughtful combination beautifully reflects the global perspective and inclusivity that languages bring to our school.

How Students Can Earn the Tie

The *Languages Tie* will be awarded to students who demonstrate:

- Outstanding academic performance in one or more foreign languages.
- Active participation in language-related extracurricular activities, such as clubs, competitions, or cultural events.
- Leadership in promoting languages, such as mentoring peers or organising language-themed initiatives.

This initiative aligns with our school's mission to celebrate cultural diversity and to equip students with skills that will empower them on a global stage.

We think the final design is a beautiful and stylish tie, and we cannot wait to see our deserving students wearing it with pride. The first recipients will be announced in the December end-of-term assembly. Stay tuned!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the competition and contributed to this exciting project. Let's continue to celebrate the beauty of languages together!

by Mrs A. Gabriele



**MFL Department:****Highlights from Cultural Diversity Week 2024**

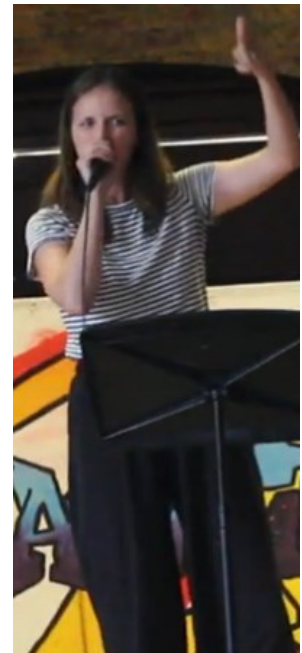
From 16th to 20th September, we celebrated Cultural Diversity Week, a vibrant event that brought our school community together to embrace and appreciate the richness of our diverse cultures, languages, and traditions. The week was a resounding success, with students and staff actively participating in various activities highlighting the importance of diversity and inclusion.

A particular standout of the week was the Jamaican Patty Sale, where students eagerly queued to enjoy the delicious treats, raising funds for future cultural initiatives. Another key feature was the Old Textbook and Dictionary Sale, which allowed students to rediscover valuable resources for their language studies while supporting sustainability.

The assemblies during the week were especially inspiring. Our Languages Sixth Formers led engaging presentations, discussing diversity in the UK, the importance of learning languages, and the incredible opportunities that multilingualism offers. They shared personal stories of how studying languages has broadened their horizons and enriched their lives. One of the most memorable moments was an amazing video showcasing the whistling language of La Gomera, which captivated the audience and drew attention to the unique ways in which people communicate around the world.

A massive thank you goes to everyone involved in the International Sing Staff event. Dr. Meek, Mrs. Martin, Mr. Jones and Mr. Bean, Mrs. Jackson, Mr. Singarajah, and Mr. Rhodes-Brandon delivered amazing songs and unique performances. Special thanks to our two students Barnaby Downer and Thomas Phasey, who were impeccable as presenters, lighting up the stage with their banter and natural charisma. The crowning moment of the event was the stunning duo performance by our students Thomas Phasey (on the piano) and Kyle Onyango (on the guitar) who beautifully sang the French song "Ton Visage" by Fréro Delavega, leaving the audience mesmerised.





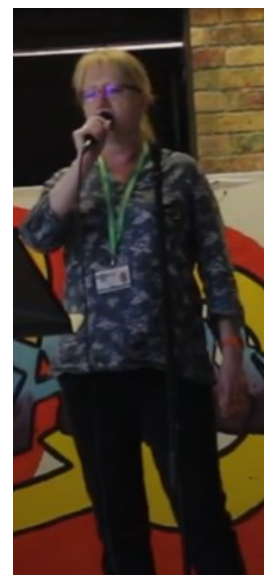
MFL Department: Highlights from Cultural Diversity Week 2024

The events raised an impressive total of £656.13, which will be dedicated to organising international cultural events for students, fostering a deeper appreciation for diversity and global traditions.

Thank you to everyone who made Cultural Diversity Week such an incredible success. Your enthusiasm, hard work, and contributions made all the difference. I hope you had a fantastic time participating in the events and strengthened your conviction that you are studying a subject that goes far beyond the study of languages.

Together, we have celebrated diversity, embraced different cultures, and accentuated the importance of understanding and connecting with others. We have shown how languages open doors to a wider world of knowledge, empathy, and unity. Our beautifully diverse and supportive community is something we can all be proud of. Thank you for being such an amazing part of it!

by Mrs A. Gabriele



**MFL Department:****Congratulations to Our Students on Their Achievement
in the GCHQ National Language Competition 2024**

We are thrilled to announce that eight of our talented Y9 students participated in the prestigious GCHQ National Language Competition this year:

Luke Bedford
Joshua Wahab
William Romanov
Antoni Stach
Jack Mitchell
Liam Oulton
Ezhilan Yasothar
Ishan Singh



Their dedication, passion for languages, and problem-solving skills were truly impressive as they tackled the challenging tasks set by this renowned competition. Both teams ranked really well -162nd and 68th out of over 3000 teams nationally!

This is a fantastic achievement, and we are incredibly proud of their hard work and commitment. Congratulations to all involved – your success is a reflection of your determination and enthusiasm for language

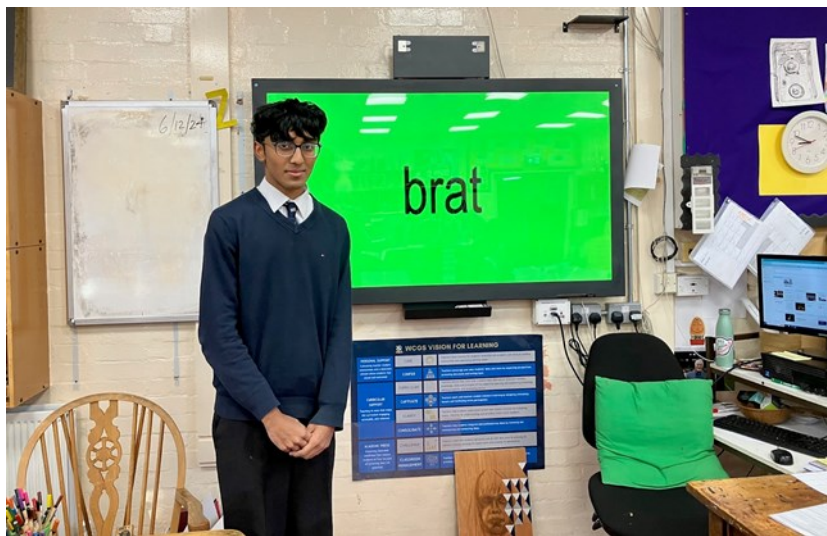
Art Department:**Sixth Form Enrichment - Introduction to Oil Paints**

This term, sixth form students have been attending a popular enrichment session in Art with Ms Ford, exploring the creative possibilities of oil paints. They have delved into landscape painting and experimented with bold, abstract compositions. The results have been impressive and we look forward to displaying these in the art department.



**Art Department:****Upcoming Articulation Competition**

On 14th January Thivyan Paranthaman will be representing WCGS at the regional heat of the National Articulation Public Speaking Competition. Run by the National Gallery, Articulation is entered by WCGS each year and the heats take place in gallery spaces around the country. This year Dulwich Picture Gallery will host the event. Thivyan will be giving a presentation entitled "Contemporary Album Art as a Cultural and Political Commentary" and we look forward to supporting him as he represents the school in this exciting competition! Thivyan won our internal heat which took place on Wednesday 4th December. Sixth formers Denny He, Kyan Navaja, Christian Udegbumam and Toby Wicksteed also delivered interesting presentations, with their subjects ranging from the music videos of Wooseok Shin to the dystopian artwork of Zdzislaw Beksinski.

**House Photography**

The Wrong Way Up! challenged students to defy gravity and flip their perspective, encouraging them to capture unexpected images that transformed the ordinary into the extraordinary. Submissions were due by December 13th, and we are thrilled to have secured a special guest judge for this year's competition: Tom Cebula. With an impressive career as a Producer and Director for the BBC, National Geographic, and the Discovery Channel, Tom brings a wealth of expertise to the judging panel. Winning entries will be proudly featured in our Spring Newsletter!



Anti Sexism Taskforce

25th November is White Ribbon Day, and the taskforce work hard each year to make sure there are events in the school calendar to mark the occasion. White Ribbon is a charity set up by men to combat violence against Women and Girls (VWAG). The theme this year was 'It Starts With Men'. We understand that there is a lot of work to do in educating men and boys about how they can be allies to women and girls and to combat harmful sexist attitudes that may lead to violence.

On Thursday 21st November the taskforce ran a workshop for Year 7 where we looked at stereotypes, gendered language and introduced the concept of the 'man box'. This was followed by a workshop with Year 8 where we explored the potential problems with online influencers and seeing how the students would respond to a range of scenarios. At lunchtime there was a bake sale to raise money for White Ribbon UK. Students were encouraged to donate directly online in return for some of the baked goods on offer.

On Monday 25th November, the taskforce began a week of assemblies about White Ribbon Day and spoke confidently about the work we have done and ideas about how others could become involved. WCGS staff were incredibly impressed with the content of the assemblies and the confident delivery by Year 11 students. On Tuesday 26th November, we welcomed Ciara from 'The REAL Project' to speak to Year 9 students about consent, sexual harassment and image based abuse. Ciara is a trained teacher and police officer and her in-depth knowledge about the law was incredibly powerful. Ciara returned on Thursday to speak to our female students at 'Female Forum' on similar topics.

It has been an absolute pleasure to work with such an incredible group of students who are so passionate about their work and making positive changes for their female peers. Thank you to Sachin Mehta, Finley Clooke, Malachi Ohene, Josh Mozak, Charles Ma and Jaami Sheikh for working with KS3 students during the workshops. Thank you to Saksham Wadhwa for masterminding the bake sale and raising £80 for the charity. Jacob Lidsey, Ameen Woly, Daniel Luck, Aariz Ahmed, Mustafa Rizvi and Max Shaw were eloquent and informative speakers during our week of assemblies, as well as taking an active role in the rest of the activities. If you are interested in supporting the valuable work of the charity, scan the QR code below!





Year 9 Student Leadership Team: Leading the Way for Black History Month

A huge congratulations to the Year 9 Student Leadership Team for their incredible efforts this term in celebrating Black History Month! Their leadership and creativity shone brightly as they organised a fantastic Cultural Poetry Competition, bringing together powerful voices and talents from across the school.

The team went above and beyond by delivering inspiring awareness sessions to every form group from Year 7 to Year 11, sparking thought-provoking discussions and deepening our understanding of Black history and culture.

Their achievements don't end there! The corridor display board they designed is now a stunning showcase of their dedication, serving as a vibrant reminder of the importance of Black History Month.





Debating Team Shines in Prestigious ESU Schools' Mace Competition

The WCGS debating team achieved an impressive victory in the first round of the English-Speaking Union's Schools' Mace Competition, one of the most prestigious and long-standing debating contests in the country. Known for fostering critical thinking, persuasive argumentation, and teamwork, the Schools' Mace is a challenging arena for young debaters to demonstrate their skills.

On the evening of 7 November, the team took part online after a last-minute change from the original venue at Glenthorne High School. Thanks to the support of the site team, who kept the school open late, the boys were able to participate together, demonstrating their commitment and resilience. They were tasked with opposing the motion that facial recognition technology should be banned in public spaces, a topic that demanded careful consideration and nuanced argumentation. Their opponents, Sutton Grammar School, presented a strong case based on the importance of consent and concerns about racial bias in the technology.

The WCGS team rose to the challenge with eloquence and conviction. Noah Findell opened the debate with a compelling argument that highlighted facial recognition technology as essential for public safety and privacy, offering a strong contrast to other surveillance methods. Henry Merivale followed with a clear and persuasive speech, emphasising the technology's role in restoring trust and increasing efficiency within police services. Finally, John Stokes delivered a sharp and focused summary, addressing the key clashes in the debate, showcasing the strength of the team's arguments, and exposing weaknesses in the proposition's case.

This success would not have been possible without the meticulous research and support of Tom Jerrom and Markos Karagkiaouris, whose behind-the-scenes contributions were invaluable. The boys also benefited greatly from the guidance and expertise of staff members who generously gave their time to help them prepare.

The team's victory means they will advance to the next round of the competition, which will take place in January. In this round, they will debate whether globalisation leads to social inequality, another challenging and thought-provoking motion. Their achievement reflects not only their dedication and talent but also the enduring strength of debating at WCGS.

Please join in congratulating the team on their success and wishing them the best of luck as they prepare for the next stage of this prestigious competition.

Ms Boland



ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION

discovering voices



Classics Department:

Harrodian School Classics Conference 2024



Our trip to the Harrodian School's Classics conference is one that none of us are likely to forget. 15 Classics students from Y12 and Y13 went along on Friday 15th November. The enthralling talks ranged from broad overviews of the role of women in Homer and Virgil to analytical deep dives into transgender iconography in the ancient world. Our favourite lecture was Edith Hall's frank and funny, yet gripping insight into violence in Greek theatre - we learnt about the relationship between onstage and offstage brutality, as well as the importance of an 'epistemic contract' in entertainment.

Students jumped on the opportunity to probe titans of Classical academia in the 'question sections' at the end of each talk. These allowed the lecturers to clarify key points and reveal the more nuanced aspects of the topic at hand.

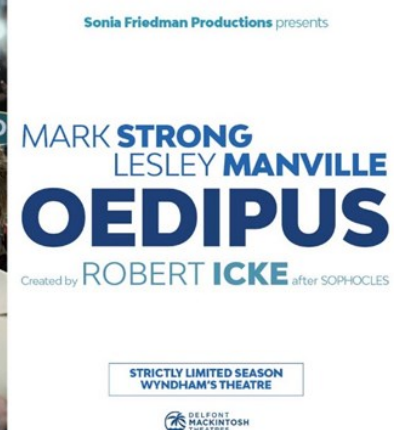
For example, I discussed the prevalence of 'prosecutor branding' with Dr Henriette van der Blom following her talk on Cicero.

Our appreciation of the talks was augmented by our excellent hosts, the Harrodian School. Their catering and care was second to none and the structure of the day accommodated for the intense academic nature of the talks.

Ben Wevill, L6CA

Oedipus Theatre Trip

On 13th November, 30 students from Years 11, 12 and 13 went on a trip to watch Robert Icke's reimagining of Oedipus, Sophocles' iconic tragedy. Starring Mark Strong as the titular protagonist and Lesley Manville as his wife/mother Jocasta, the play was a phenomenally constructed tragedy, preserving all the iconic themes and moments from Sophocles' original whilst simultaneously elevating the story with additional elements adapted largely from mythology. Icke re-focused the story around a political campaign, aptly adapting it to fit a modern setting; and Strong expertly portrayed the charismatic yet flawed hero, resulting in a powerful and emotive conclusion. As this text is studied on the A Level course, it allowed students an insight into some aspects of staging the play and allowed them to visualise certain other important moments. Overall, the play was both engaging and informative and a fantastic opportunity for all.



Noah Findell, U6MA



Classics Department:

Ancient Greek Club

John Stokes and Markos Karagkiaouris in Y12 have very kindly been running an Ancient Greek club for Y7 and Y8 Students every Wednesday lunchtime in Hu2. They would like to invite any more interested students to come along next term. Here's what some of the current attendees had to say about their experience:

'I have enjoyed learning more of the Ancient Greek alphabet as I have never heard of some letters before. I only knew the basic Greek letters such as Alpha or Beta but I know more now. It is great fun learning how to say Greek gods and common words in Ancient Greek letters!'

Advay Narasimhan, 7BR

'This term, I had the incredible opportunity to be part of the Ancient Greek club, where I've started learning a new and fascinating language. Unlike in our other lessons/clubs this one is a particularly small group so the 6th formers could really explain and discuss topics with us on a one to one level. John and Markos have made each session enjoyable with their enthusiasm and engaging teaching methods. They turned the complex language into something accessible and entertaining. The club's atmosphere is welcoming, and everyone is encouraged to learn at their own pace, which makes the experience even more enjoyable. I'm excited to continue my journey into the depths of Ancient Greek culture, and I'm very much looking forward to seeing what's coming next!'

Arjun Nath, 7BR

'Ancient Greek Club has been really fun. We've been learning about the ancient Greek alphabet and mythology. Did you know that the word alphabet comes from the Greek letters 'alpha' and 'beta'? It's been really fun to talk about the Ancient Greeks with John and Markos and I wholly recommend Ancient Greek Club to anyone in Year 7 and 8.'

Mohamed Ali, 7BR





Wellbeing advice from our School Counsellor Renee Bond

The first thing I have coached to my student in this season is that well-being at this time of the year is very important as you don't want to become burnt out.

Revision is important to reach your goal, but we also need balance for our well-being, as if you are not present for yourself how will you be present to achieve your goals.

Maybe it would be a good idea to really relax and enjoy the first half of the Christmas break, set a date for when you would like to make a start on your revision.



I would recommend morning revision, for the amount of time your teachers suggest per day then you will have the rest of the day to indulge in the things you like to enjoy (this is really important)

Please find some Beacon house resources you can download with some well-being strategies you can engage with during the Christmas break.

<https://beaconhouse.org.uk/winter-resources/>

Here are some signs to look out for your child especially if there has been a loss or significant family disruption.

5 signs of teen mental health issues to watch for during the school holidays?

Five signs of teen mental health issues include **loss of interest** in activities they typically enjoy, **reduced self-care**, noticeable changes in **sleeping or eating habits**, **self-medication** with alcohol and drugs, and **significant mood changes**.

Questions?

Is holiday stress a thing?

Yes, holiday stress is real, for a number of reasons. Family drama can spike at the holidays. Spending time with extended family isn't always a relaxing experience. And feelings of grief can arise during the holidays as a result of divorce or loved ones that have passed.

How do I get rid of holiday stress in my family?

Spend time together doing things just for fun. Express gratitude for what you have. Discuss stress triggers in advance of get-togethers and come up with healthy coping skills. Prioritise the ones that are important.

Take time to decrease your own stress

You can't give what you don't have. If you want your teen to feel more relaxed at holiday time, you have to manage stress responsibly, too. Don't underestimate the extent to which you can intensify your teen's stress by becoming irritable in your attempt to make the holidays picture-perfect. If you're overtaxed, your teen will sense it. Make time for self-care and **find healthy ways to reduce your own stress at holiday time** so you can support your teen from a more balanced place.



Music Department:

Carol Service

The Autumn Term has been a busy one in the Music Department, as always. Our Year 11 and Year 13 students have been hard at work preparing for their mock exams, and have now completed their mock performances. Their compositions are also progressing well. Year 7 students have been perfecting their vocal rendition of You'll Be Back, while Year 8 students have been showcasing their band skills with Seven Nation Army. All students have had the opportunity to try their hand at playing the drums and guitar this term, which has been an exciting experience. Year 9 students have enjoyed ensemble playing and performed Don't Look Back in Anger and Live and Let Die at the Autumn Concert in November. In addition to our curriculum music, we've had three major events this term. The Autumn Concert featured a wide variety of music, with performances from all year groups, including solos, larger ensembles, and piano duets. A big thank you to all who took part! Sutton Sings Christmas was a fantastic opportunity for our choir students to perform at St. Andrew's Church in Cheam alongside the Glenthorne High School choir, Sutton Music Trust choir, and orchestra. We're grateful to everyone who participated and attended this wonderful event. We concluded the term with our annual Carol Service, a peaceful evening celebrating Christmas and showcasing our dedicated music students, who truly enjoy singing and playing together. Thank you again to all who took part!

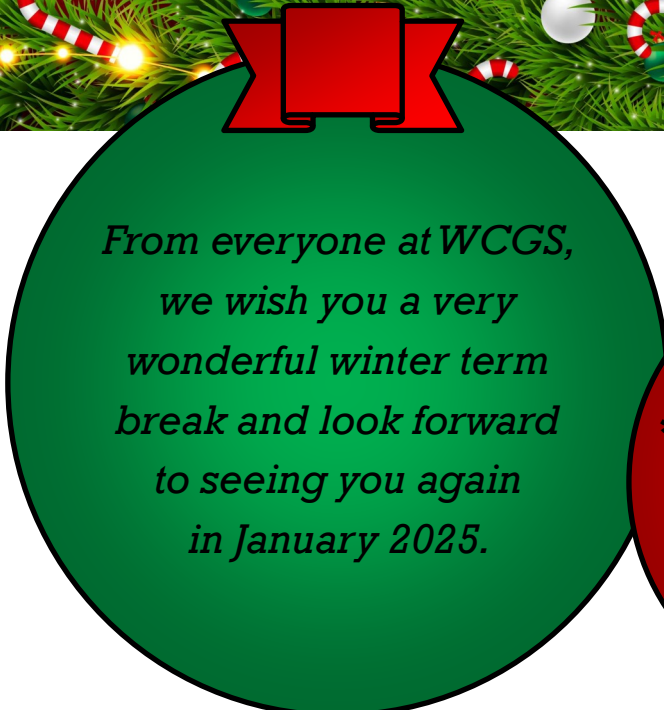
by Mrs. Martin, Subject Leader of Music





Big Congratulations!!

Ismael won Bronze at 8/12/2024's Judo British Championships in the u42kg Pre-cadets category. He will be selected for the England Judo team based on this result.



*From everyone at WCGS,
we wish you a very
wonderful winter term
break and look forward
to seeing you again
in January 2025.*



** Merry Christmas &
Happy New Year!**