



End of Term Letter

Headmaster

Dear students, parents and friends,

In 2011, the Home Secretary, Theresa May, introduced the concept of 'Fundamental British Values' into public life: the value and importance of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. They were taken up by Michael Gove in 2014 as Education Secretary and made a compulsory part of schools' curriculums. Now in my 20th year at Wallington County Grammar School, I have seen a few government initiatives come and go, but this has endured, even when governments have come and gone. And rightly so; they are indeed 'fundamental' and are concepts we take very seriously. They have never been more important, and we go to great lengths to ensure they are woven into the fabric of Wallington County Grammar School.

Take democracy and the rule of law, for example. In terms of leadership, schools are by nature undemocratic - thankfully, I don't have to run for election and, no matter how much they may wish to, the student leadership team are unable to deselect and replace me with a candidate of their choosing. However, the belief in the fundamental importance of democracy permeates a huge number of areas of school life. Just last week, the elected school council fed back to me on what they perceive to be our core strengths: great teaching; a friendly, supportive community; our co-curriculum and house system; great facilities including our library, sports hall, and café; as well as strong academic support. They also offered some fantastic ideas for improvement, including refining our homework policy, upgrading our toilet blocks, and tweaking menu planning to ensure the café has a full range of options for those last in. Staff voice is also in rude health, with us being in the final stages of updating our staff care strategy to include backloading continuous professional development to the quieter summer months and increasing curriculum support for administrative tasks. Our Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) curriculum in Years 8-10 is littered with lessons celebrating the value of liberal democracy and the importance of the rule of law. It covers the roles of the constitution, executive, and legislature; the key part the judiciary plays in upholding our human rights; the role of the media and pressure groups in politics; and the importance of international law. We have been very privileged to welcome political speakers, including the current MP for Carshalton and Wallington, to talk to our students about how democratic politics works for the people it is set up to serve. We have also participated actively in the Sutton Schools Council, feeding back on the safety of young people on our streets to councillors and police officers alike.

Individual liberty is an interesting concept in a school. Students and staff are not free to do as they choose. We have a robust behaviour policy for students and a code of conduct and teacher standards for staff. Students are told where they need to be, when, what work to do, and whether they can talk for 5-6 hours a day. Staff are strictly forbidden by law from voicing personal political views to students and are expected to deliver a national curriculum prescribed by the government. But these features do not undermine our sense of individual liberty. The national curriculum we teach is prescribed by a government democratically elected by the British people. We as staff cannot voice personal political opinions so that students are free to think for themselves about



End of Term Letter

Headmaster

who they wish to vote for. Students are free to feedback on our policies through our elected school council and do so, creating meaningful change as a result. Yes, we are rightly constrained by rules, policies, and laws, but fundamentally we have our liberty and should never forget it. To abandon these laws and policies would be to lose our freedom to chaos.

And finally, there is tolerance and mutual respect. As prescribed by the government, 'tolerance' particularly focuses on other faiths and beliefs, but in practice, it widens to all protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act of 2010. Importantly, as a school, we do not just 'tolerate' people who are different to us. We welcome them, embrace them, nurture them, care for them and, as a school, educate them. This is why, every year, subject leaders set out how they will celebrate members of our communities no matter their age, race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, or pregnancy. All are welcome, all are included, all are equal. Our well-being curriculum teaches tolerance explicitly to all year groups. We invest heavily in the value of languages to connect us with those from different countries - this includes Mrs Campello Martin leading our work to provide opportunities to sit GCSEs in languages other than French and Spanish. In history, we often pause our curriculum to focus on what is happening in other areas of the world whilst, for example, William the Conqueror is winning the Battle of Hastings. We ensure our English, art, music, and drama curriculums focus on the greatest artists of both British and world culture.

These are the British values we are mandated to educate students in, and it is our duty and our pleasure to do so. The beauty of them is that, if we ever come to disagree with them, we have the liberty, tolerance, and mutual respect to debate them, the democratic ability to change them, and the rule of law to uphold whatever new set of values we might choose. They are indeed fundamental.

In other news, we have one member of staff leaving us this Christmas - Mr Cardenas, who joined us in 2014 as our data manager. He is going on to a well-earned retirement, and we thank him for all his work. I must also thank our incredible PTFA who have agreed to fund a toilet refurbishment in the English block, a new oven for the café, library books, a reconfiguration of our art rooms and reflective film for all south-facing windows to keep them cool in the summer months. On top of the whopping £20,000+ raised through our giving day, we are in a position to continue to invest heavily in our students' bright futures. Thank you to all who have given so much.

Have a wonderful Christmas, make sure we do more than 'tolerate' each other over the holidays, and I look forward to a fantastic Spring Term.

Your faithfully,

Jamie Bean
Headmaster
Wallington County Grammar School





Library: Winter Reads 2025

Reminder: you'll earn commendations if you read and review these over the holidays!

Crater Lake by Jennifer Killick

Welcome to Crater Lake: the Year Six school trip from hell! Maybe it's the bloodstained man who tries to stop the coach, maybe it's the absence of welcoming staff, but something is definitely not right at Crater Lake activity centre. Then, at night, things get much, much stranger... but no matter what happens, don't – ever – fall asleep!

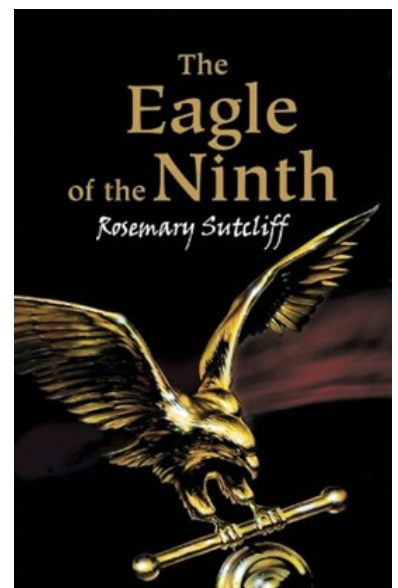
The School Librarian says: For any newly-minted Jennifer Killick fans following her visit earlier this year, *Crater Lake* is an ideal companion piece to her *Dread Wood* series. If you like one, you'll like the other!



The Eagle of the Ninth by Rosemary Sutcliffe

The Ninth Legion marched into the mists of northern Britain - and were never seen again. 4000 men disappeared and their eagle standard was lost. It's a mystery that's never been solved, until now . . . Marcus has to find out what happened to his father, who led the legion. So he sets out into the unknown, on a quest so dangerous that nobody expects him to return.

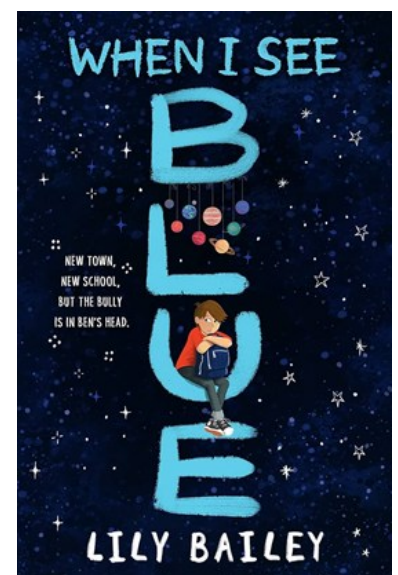
The School Librarian says: A classic adventure story and one of the most beloved children's novels ever written. It's inspired by real history but allows its story licence to speculate about what might have happened rather than just adhering to what did. A great read.



When I See Blue by Lily Bailey

There are 4 things you should know about Ben: He's 12 years old. He's the new kid at school. His special number is 4. He has a bully in his brain.

Sometimes Ben's brain makes him count to 4 to prevent bad things happening. Sometimes it makes him tap or blink in 4s. Mostly it makes the smallest things feel impossible. And with a new school, a moody big brother, an absent dad and a mum battling her own demons, Ben feels more out of control than ever. But then he meets April, and with his new friend, Ben might finally figure out how to stand up to the bully in his brain, once and for all.





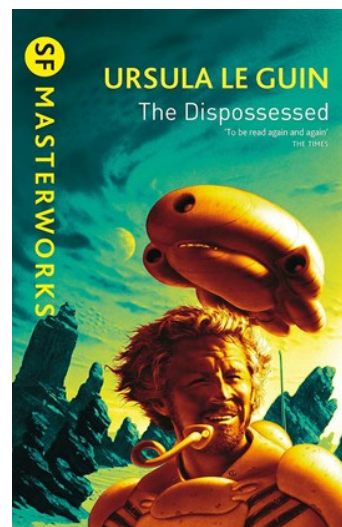
Library: Winter Reads 2025 (Continue)

The Dispossessed by Ursula K. Le Guin

The Principle of Simultaneity is a scientific breakthrough which will revolutionize interstellar civilization by making possible instantaneous communication. It is the life work of Shevek, a brilliant physicist from the arid anarchist world of Anarres.

But Shevek's work is being stifled by jealous colleagues, so he travels to Anarres's sister-planet Urras, hoping to find more liberty and tolerance there. But he soon finds himself being used as a pawn in a deadly political game.

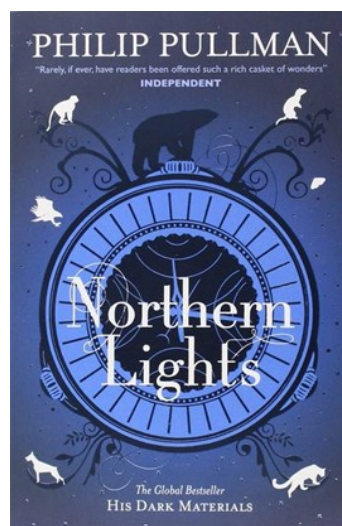
The School Librarian says: This blew my mind to atoms and made me need to read everything else Le Guin ever wrote. Yes, it's hard to summarise without making it sound dry, but trust me, it's incredible. As good as political science-fiction gets.



Northern Lights by Philip Pullman

Lyra Belacqua and her animal daemon live half-wild and carefree among scholars of Jordan College, Oxford. The destiny that awaits her will take her to the frozen lands of the Arctic, where witch-clans reign and ice-bears fight. Her extraordinary journey will have immeasurable consequences far beyond her own world...

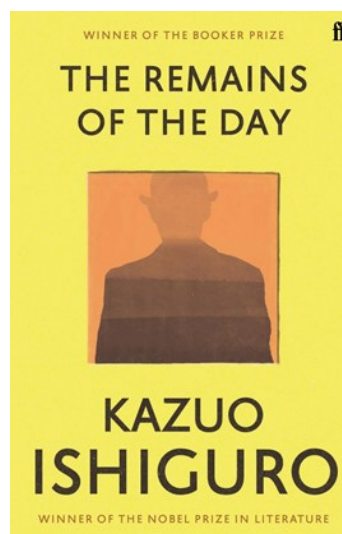
The School Librarian says: A remarkable, imaginative fantasy novel with parallel universes, truth-measuring devices and armoured, talking polar bears that also asks major, probing questions about religion and faith. It was banned in parts of the United States when it was first published, which is usually a pretty reliable measure of quality in a book.



The Remains of the Day by Kazuo Ishiguro

In the summer of 1956, Stevens, the ageing butler of Darlington Hall, embarks on a leisurely holiday that will take him deep into the English countryside and into his past... A contemporary classic, *The Remains of the Day* is Kazuo Ishiguro's beautiful and haunting evocation of life between the wars in a Great English House, of lost causes and lost love.

The School Librarian says: The novel on my A-Level English reading list that has stuck with me these many (many) years later. A heartbreaking, exquisitely-written masterpiece of duty, regret and chances not taken.





Library: Winter Reads 2025 (Continue)

Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens

After Oliver Twist asks nasty Mr Bumble for more food, he has to flee the work-house for the streets of London. Here he meets the Artful Dodger, who leads him to Fagin and his gang of pickpockets. When a thieving mission goes wrong, Oliver narrowly avoids prison and finds himself in the care of kind Mr Brownlow. But Fagin and the brutal Bill Sikes go in search of the young orphan, determined to drag him back . . .

The School Librarian says: You don't want to be left behind at the school production of *Oliver!* next term, do you? Read this and see what all the fuss is about. It's famously quite good.

The Shining by Stephen King

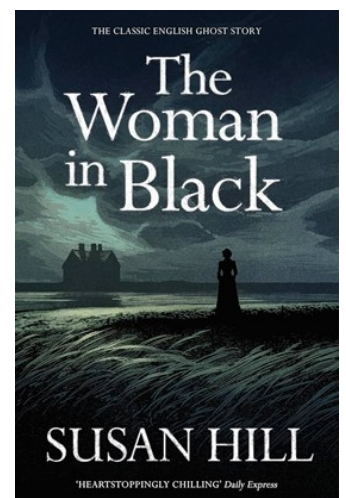
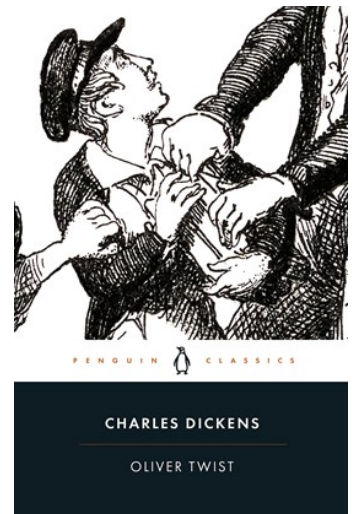
Danny is only five years old, but in the words of old Mr Hallorann he is a 'shiner', aglow with psychic voltage. When his father becomes caretaker of the Overlook Hotel, Danny's visions grow out of control.

As winter closes in and blizzards cut them off, the hotel seems to develop a life of its own. It is meant to be empty. So who is the lady in Room 217 and who are the masked guests going up and down in the elevator? And why do the hedges shaped like animals seem so alive? Somewhere, somehow, there is an evil force in the hotel - and that, too, is beginning to shine...

The Woman In Black by Susan Hill

Arthur Kipps, a junior solicitor, is summoned to attend the funeral of Mrs Alice Drablow, the sole inhabitant of Eel Marsh House. The house stands at the end of a causeway, wreathed in fog and mystery, but it is not until he glimpses a wasted young woman, dressed all in black, at the funeral, that a creeping sense of unease begins to take hold, a feeling deepened by the reluctance of the locals to talk of the woman in black - and her terrible purpose.

The School Librarian says: Christmas is a time for traditions, and a ghost story at Christmas is one of the finest traditions. Susan Hill's eerie, genuinely haunting ghost story is up there with the best of them - and if you ever get a chance to see the stage adaptation, take it. It's absolutely terrifying.





Department of English: Poem sharing

A Kind Sort of Christmas

It will be lonely this Christmas,
for those without homes,
A Blue one indeed,
for those without clothes,
A Silenter Night,
for those without laughter,
Perhaps a Last Christmas,
for those who come after,

After blizzards and the unyielding dark,
After floods and the lack of an arc,
After sirens that echo through broken down towns,
After hope wears thin, and faces wear frowns,

May someone's door open,
May someone's voice sing,
May someone's own warmth,
and the joy that it brings,
Cater to the cold and the weary tonight,

Cater to the young, the women, and old,
for giving is a kindness that cannot be sold.

By Daniel Luck, WCGS Poet Laureate



Department of English: Poem sharing

Mrs Cat's Christmas

Faraway Faraway, in cold, distant lands,
Over the snow and the underlit rivers,
Empty of even the bleating of lambs,
Where snuffles and sneezes turn outright to shivers,
In a bundle of coats and a frost-tinted hat,
Lived the purfectly, pleasantly old Mrs Cat.

She bustled each morning through iced air,
Her whiskers aglow with the glint of new frost,
Humming a tune with a peppermint flair,
Counting the mittens her kittens had lost,
In Wonderland Winters she lived for the time,
When the door would ring with a knock and a chime.

Her neighbours - three sparrows, a fox and her aunt -,
With tinselled down scarfs and burgundy layers,
Were greeted in harmony with a cinnamon chant,
To gather round closely for afternoon prayers,
And by the fire they kept all their stockings safe and warm,
From the casually mischevous young master storm.

They sat in the heat, and chittered and chattered,
Whilst the night wrapped the sky in a blanket of blue,
Mr Hare brought out cocoa in mugs nicely tattered,
Lanterns and sparks still flickered on through,
For even in lands where the sun seldom sat,
Hope brewed each Christmas for old Mrs Cat.

By Daniel Luck, WCGS Poet Laureate



Department of English: Poem sharing

My Father

My father tries his luck at poker
when he thinks no one will notice
the empty pocket stains
hanging half-up, half-down
from the seams of his charcoal trousers,
his blue-collared shirt hanging half-untucked.

He falls asleep with 4 dog tags, 2 ties and half
a noose
wrapped round his neck.

But most nights he just lies there,
motionless against the headboard,
he clutches the covers like I did when I was
Scared of a monster under the bed.

My father wishes away the days
he spends alone,
sat watching that old car show
which ended long before tv static
was wiped from off the screen.

My father who learned the ‘new kind of
maths’ to teach me what first place felt like,
who braised turkey every special Sunday,
to avoid the bland service of “just some other bird”.

My father who lived through the 80s,
and the ice-age.
Who built a family
while I turned a blind eye to the hammer.

My father who keeps his glasses in the
glovebox,
says he doesn’t need them,
says he’s seen enough,
but I’ll catch him squinting at faces
when perhaps he doesn’t want to see them
pass.

And in all of this I’ll hold him,
still learning to call him by his name,
but wonder how many times he saved me,
without ever saying a word.

My father, who’s never spoken of his
childhood,
asks if it’s getting cold,
and I say “no, not today”,
but draw the covers up a little higher,
in case the monster never really left.

By Daniel Luck,
WCGS Poet Laureate



Department of English: Poem sharing

A Boy's Elegy

Lesser than blood stains pale in the light of the moon,
white-washed beside the patchwork skin
which draws folds from its hallowed-cheeked child.

He lies dormant on the slab of bruised Earth,
piles up in mud like an open-casket coffin;
eyes staring at your unwillingness to lend a hand
of help. He screams at you through dried lips,
chapped from his kiss with death.

And the red sea in which he pools,
seeps into the souls of the imagined girls' hands
he would have loved to hold,
jumped at the chance, their
memory nothing but last breaths still misting.

Generous shells tint his frostbitten hands
the colour of gunpowder, a greyish smear
on the uniform he kept pre-buttoned.

Perhaps his poor face could have been saved from such
disfigurement. He would have liked
his mother to see his cheeks just one last time.

He would have liked his mother
to see his cheeks just one last time.

By Daniel Luck, WCCGS Poet Laureate



Drama Department:

My Neighbour Totoro 9/9/25

“Nice story. Slow pacing at first but soon speeds up. Well executed and highly imaginative puppetry and adaptation of the film. Good acting and portrayal of characters in a way familiar to the film. Overall very enjoyable to watch with good music, set and story. 4/5”

By Enzo Garcia



House Drama - 2025

House Drama event was nothing short of extraordinary—an evening filled with energy, creativity, and sheer talent. From the moment the lights dimmed to the final applause, the entire production showcased brilliant staging, heartfelt performances, and an atmosphere that made the whole event feel truly special.

But the undeniable highlight of the night was **Bridges**, who delivered a stunning performance centered around the theme of *strings*. Their piece was beautifully crafted—clever, emotional, and full of subtle details that kept the audience completely absorbed. The way they incorporated strings, both literally and symbolically, added layers of meaning that elevated their act far beyond a standard performance.

The **best twist of the night** came when the musician’s natural talent—raw, unfiltered, and breathtaking—took center stage. It was one of those rare moments where the audience collectively leaned in, fully captivated. That sudden reveal of genuine musical brilliance tied the entire narrative together and made Bridges’ performance unforgettable.

In the end, it was no surprise at all that **Bridges won**. Their creativity, passion, and exceptional execution made them stand out in an already incredible line up. It was an amazing evening from start to finish—one that left everyone buzzing long after the curtain fell.

By Jermaine Adu- Poku



Drama Department:



FairField Halls

“Croydon Music and Arts (CMA)'s upcoming performance will showcase the great work created in our amazing local schools.

This performance will display the talents of many of our wonderful Croydon Secondary Schools. Quest Academy, Coombe Wood, Wallington Grammar, Harris Invictus, Ark Blake, Harris City Academy, Oasis Shirley Park, Archbishop Tenisons, Norbury High and Waddon Commu-

It was a wonderful experience and I am so thrilled to have had the opportunity to perform at such a venue and experience certain aspects of the Theatre. It really helped strengthen our performance and we ended up with something I was really proud of. What a joy to do at my age!

By **Seb Atkinson Year 8**



On the 3rd December, we had the pleasure of attending the Croydon Schools Arts and Music Festival at Fairfield Halls. WCGS were represented by members of the “Oliver!” Company who shared a snippet of act one. Well, if I wasn’t already excited about seeing Oliver! in January, I am now! The boys all gave confident and grounded performances and were clearly not at all phased by having to adapt their work to such a big venue.

Everyone’s performance was full of energy, their voices were clear and their dialogue precise. The leads connected well with each other and were so clear in their storytelling. As an audience, we were invested!

The ensemble had tonnes of energy, and were on point with their choreography and their own characterisation - I found myself wanting to know more about each of those characters and how they had ended up in Fagin’s gang!





Drama Department:

They rightfully got a huge cheer at the end - and perhaps the best bit of the evening was seeing how each of the schools supported the other performing schools. As well as *Oliver!* we were treated to steel bands, gospel choirs, girl bands, a "Croydon Nativity", rap artists, guitarists. It's a privilege for the WCGS boys to be a part of such a diverse and talented community of artists and we're grateful to Mrs Shears and Mrs Tanner for making that possible.

By Mrs Luck, proud Mum of Barney Luck, Year 8!



Oliver

Rehearsals for our school production of *Oliver!* have been going really well. We've been working hard since September, and the progress is really starting to show. The cast is growing more confident each week, the musical numbers are coming together, and the scenes are running more smoothly with every run-through. With our performances coming up in January, it's exciting to see all the effort and teamwork paying off. If we keep going at this pace, the show is going to be fantastic!





Drama Department: Complicite

The following *Devising in the Secondary Classroom* workshop was delivered at our school by Martins Imhangbe. This session, based on Complicite's professional practices, gave students a hands-on introduction to devising theatre, focusing on collaboration, physicality, and ensemble-building. Students explored movement, rhythm, space, improvisation, and play, developing a shared visual language to help shape and tell their own stories.

Martins' engaging approach and expertise provided valuable guidance, inspiring students to take creative risks and experiment with ideas in a supportive environment. The workshop built directly on techniques used by Complicite in professional rehearsals and offered practical insights that will enhance students' GCSE and A Level Drama projects.

"This workshop really pushed me to find creative ways to communicate through physicality rather than words and was an overall amazing and immersive experience."



**Drama Department:**

DIGITAL THEATRE+

The joy of theatre is available to all of you in your homes this Christmas, thanks to the schools access to this service. This is for employees and students of WCGS, so please do not share this code, but do enjoy it. Slava's Snow Show is a wonderful treat for all ages.

You can log in on smart tv's, or your phone and cast it across, or on any pc, or device.

The first 3 are family friendly.

Digital theatre log in

Digital Theatre+

<https://auth.digitaltheatreplus.com/>

Username: user.wcfgs

Password: happened@5562

Our recommendations are:

A Christmas Carol

<https://edu.digitaltheatreplus.com/content/productions/a-christmas-carol-bristol-old-vic>

Peter Pan

<https://edu.digitaltheatreplus.com/titles/peter-pan>

The Woodsman

<https://edu.digitaltheatreplus.com/titles/the-woodsman>

A Dissapearing Number

<https://edu.digitaltheatreplus.com/titles/a-disappearing-number>

Great Expectations

<https://edu.digitaltheatreplus.com/titles/great-expectations>

Into the Woods

<https://edu.digitaltheatreplus.com/titles/into-the-woods>

Kafkas Monkey

<https://edu.digitaltheatreplus.com/titles/kafkas-monkey>

Kinky Boots

<https://edu.digitaltheatreplus.com/titles/kinky-boots>

Lovesong

<https://edu.digitaltheatreplus.com/titles/lovesong>

The Rivals

<https://edu.digitaltheatreplus.com/content/productions/the-rivals-heritage-theatre>



MFL Department:

**Congratulations to our students on their achievement
in the GCHQ National Language Competition 2025!**

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

Team Generous Bull

1. Vakish Indrajith
2. Arjun Bhagat
3. Kyrill Huang
4. Shlok Naik

Team Silly Goat

1. Yuk Hei Lee
2. Jayden Sam
3. Elio Yonas
4. Fahad Ghazi

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 worked hard and really well. Team Silly Goat ranked 699th, and Generous Bull team achieved an impressive 12th place out of over 2500 teams nationally!

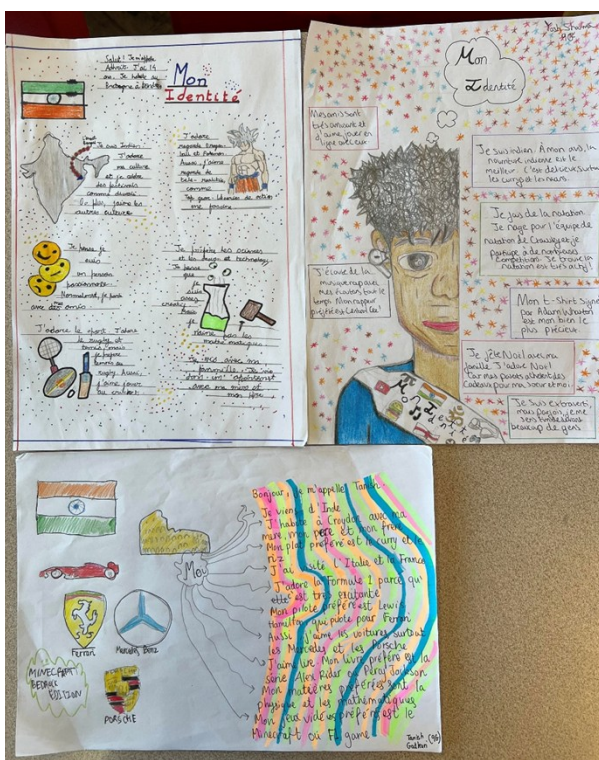
This is a fantastic achievement, and we are incredibly proud of their hard work and commitment. Congratulations to all involved – your success is a reflection of your determination and enthusiasm for language learning. Keep up the great work!

By Ms G C Martin

Who are we?

With my 9G French class, we recently explored what identity means to them. Students learned key definitions and vocabulary in French, then created a poster expressing (through words and images) what identity represents in their lives. I am always amazed by the many facets of creativity that emerge in this kind of work. All students produced thoughtful and meaningful posters, but the three showcased here particularly stood out for their combination of effort, originality of expression, and strong use of French. Well done, 9G, for your enthusiasm, creativity, and hard work!

By Mrs A. Gabriele





MFL Department: Cooking French Specialties in MFL

Our Year 8 French students have done a fantastic job putting our food topic into practice by cooking some delicious dishes at home. They prepared wonderful golden pancakes and a tasty quiche Lorraine, showing not only their creativity but also their enthusiasm for exploring French cuisine. Well done to them for their effort and impressive results!

Huge well done in particular to students in 8T and 8C French: Seb Atkinson, Austin Wong, Simon Woznieswski, Prashray Bhardwaj and Samuel Lawrenson for their amazing cooking skills!

By M Paradis





MFL Department:

Cultural Diversity Week - September 2025

Isn't it amazing that every single person on our planet is unique? Cultural Diversity week was an amazing opportunity to celebrate the beauty of being part of different cultures and backgrounds, which are integrated into what defines us as individuals.

We celebrated diversity this year by creating a fantastic assembly video featuring a mix of our A-Level French and Spanish students with diverse viewpoints. For example, one of the A-Level French students, Luke Thever, discussed his favourite German word "ungeziefer", which is certainly not going to be a part of his speaking exam, but it shows how other languages can enrich our lives. As for me, I talked about how the impact of Spanish colonisation and Chinese gastronomy can be felt, tasted and seen in Filipino culture.

Alongside this video, Mrs Gabriele and the A-Level French and Spanish classes performed the song 'Imagine' by John Lennon live in the assemblies for the lower school students. The touching message of the song makes the listener ponder what a world without hate and discrimination would be like and how we should work towards building a unified global community.

Overall, what we can learn from this celebration is the beauty of being diverse and unique and how our differences should not serve as a social barrier but rather as building blocks to a better world.

By Carl Romero U6B/Sp





MFL Department: Y10 French Trip

Earlier this year, from the 29th of September to the 3rd of October, members of Year 10 French classes were invited to explore the north of France, including popular locations such as Mont Saint Michel, Saint Malo, and Omaha beach. For many, this trip was a spectacular success, linking our in-class work to the real world, and helped develop our French skills, most of all giving us wonderful memories to cherish forever with all the members of our class and staff, not only with daytime activities and outings, but also with the nightly games provided by the kind members of the place we stayed at, La Grande Ferme, and the fact that all activities and even dinner were conducted in French.



On the first day after arriving, we visited Mont Saint-Michel. There, we looked at a lot of historic spots on the island. We started on the mainland, with a short walk through a countryside path. We travelled via bus on a bridge, and eventually walked the last portion of the bridge, which let us see the beautiful view properly. On the island, we could start to see the real size of the city, with how tall it was, how long the paths up and down the mountain were, and how steep some of the paths suddenly became. We visited the cathedral atop the mountain, and saw the proper size of its interior. Personally, I was very interested in the architecture that went into such a place, and the detail in the stone-carved grotesques. We then walked back down through the city, via a path that took us along the wall of almost a castle, allowing us to see an entire portion of the city from above. As we were travelling back over the bridge, we could already see how much the tides had come in while we were there, evidencing the fact that Mont Saint-Michel was used as a fortress (and then a prison), before being converted into a tourist hot-spot for people all around the world.



MFL Department:



When we went to Saint Malo, we really got a sense of French history and culture. Commencing on a trip around the fortified city walls, we were enamoured by the thoughtful design of the town's architecture, and the natural beauty presented by the channel, of which the coastal town bordered. This then followed down through the winding lanes and rows of shops and houses that flowed through the city, breathing with movement and history. We then stopped at the local church, (a personal trip highlight), in which we moved by the ancient yet awe-inspiring stained-glass windows, before we were able to indulge in traditional galettes empowering our final activity of the outing to survey the shops around town on our own.



**MFL Department:**

On the last outing of the week, we visited Omaha beach. Omaha beach was a landing point for American soldiers on D-Day, the day that marked the start of the end of World War 2 for Western Europe. We saw the various statues that were around, and the museum showcasing several artifacts recovered from the battles, such as models of tanks, and weapons used by specific soldiers or divisions. However, the focus of all of our attention was the American cemetery, basically a manicured field of graves, each marking a single soldier who was killed in the combat. The graves stretched almost as far as we could see, stopping only at the treeline, and sometimes continuing past for a few metres. I am sure the overall experience sparked many thoughtful conversations between the pupils, such as the question of whether to forget the conflicts and move on, or to remember them and learn. However, regardless of the answer, I am sure everyone on it will remember this trip for a long time.



To conclude, the experience was very insightful into French culture, especially the history, and helped us tremendously with our French learning journey, as well as being very exciting to be a part of. I have no doubt that this has imparted very important memories to us, that we shall carry for our years to come, as well as further igniting our passion for the French language.

By Joss Dawson, Ishan Singh



MFL Department:

Don Quijote / Three Musketeers - Y8 theatre workshop 19 September 2025

Part of this year's European week of Languages celebrations involved all year 8 students in a foreign language theatre workshop.

Freshwater Theatre company facilitators took yr 8 French through a journey of discovery of Dumas's Three Musketeers and how from 3 they became 4, with the addition of D'Artagnan.

Y8 Spanish students discovered Cervantes' s epic novel Don Quijote and answered the question "was he mad or was he a hero?"

All students had to use key language for the plays and some even took part. Without doubt, battle scenes were the favourite of spectators and actors alike.

Studying a language is not just vocabulary and grammar, it is a journey through history, literature, the arts and travelling the world. We will continue this journey through KS3 and KS4, maybe even KS5 with some students.

Vive les langues ! / ¡Viva los idiomas !

C Mortreuil





Geography Department: Year 8 Geography and Art trip to Wisley

This September, we Year 8's, had the amazing opportunity to take a trip to the vibrant, breath-taking gardens located in Wisley. This was home to RHS Wisley Gardens and it was full of bursting, colourful flora from the moment we walked in. Throughout the trip, we adventured through the whole of the site, coming across many instances of an abundance of flora, and we were also lucky to catch sight of some beautiful fauna. As we walked through the site, we also took many photographs to highlight the beauty of nature in its ideal state, while capturing picturesque compositions of the structures on display like the massive glass house, the RHS Hilltop, and many more lovely sights all around. Everywhere we went, there were lots of very well-maintained, and well-placed plants that towered over us, trees that looked beautifully cut and huge, calming lakes and ponds that sent us into a really peaceful state, and all the plants and wildlife, was a breath of fresh air most definitely. RHS Wisley was definitely a well-enjoyed trip, as we experienced the sight of such beautiful plants and wildlife that I couldn't recommend more, to go and venture for yourselves!

Not only did we get the chance to tour the gardens, but we later got the opportunity to spend our afternoon with RHS Wisley staff, and get to learn about their ecosystem. We were shown all the plants that they contain indoors, and we later were allowed to create our very own mini-spider plant from the roots of a fully developed spider plant! Before that, we recapped some biological processes that occur to the plants in these gardens, and after we went around inspecting the plants characteristics, like temperature, overall shape and their relevance etc. Then we finally got the chance to create our own plant that would originate from the roots of another spider plant, and we then had to keep care of them to eventually develop into a grown spider plant wherever we want!

Shayan Walji Y8





Art Department: Year 8 Art & Geography Trip to Wisley

This September the Art Department and the Geography Department organised a day trip to RHS Garden Wisley in Surrey, and were lucky enough to enjoy a beautiful sunny day! Year 8 artists took part on a learning walk, and were asked to take photographs and transfer these images to their sketchbooks. The visit offered opportunities for Art students to study natural forms, colour, texture, and pattern. Students recorded visual information through sketching and photography that related to their classwork, paying particular attention to composition. Other key focuses were perspective, symmetry and balance, leading to a portfolio of excellent images and visual notes!



Photo courtesy of Mr Smith



Photo courtesy of Mr Smith



Art Department: Doodle Club



The Friday Doodle Club continues to be a popular highlight of the end of the school week. This club is all about providing students with a relaxing space to sit down, switch off, and simply draw for pleasure.

It has been fantastic to see our students connecting their spontaneous drawing styles with the work of professional artists such as, Jon Burgerman, Hattie Stewart and The Doodle Boy (Joe Whale).

The club celebrates how simple lines and shapes can lead to sophisticated and personal works of art. It's a wonderful weekly reminder that creative expression is a powerful form of relaxation and self-discovery.

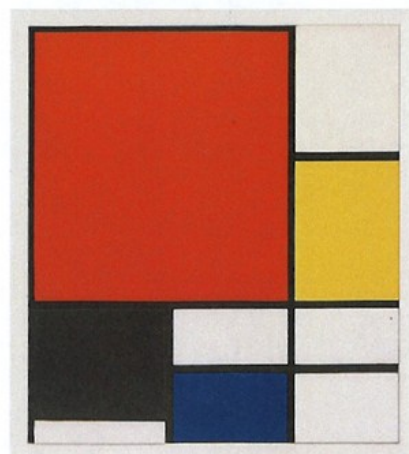
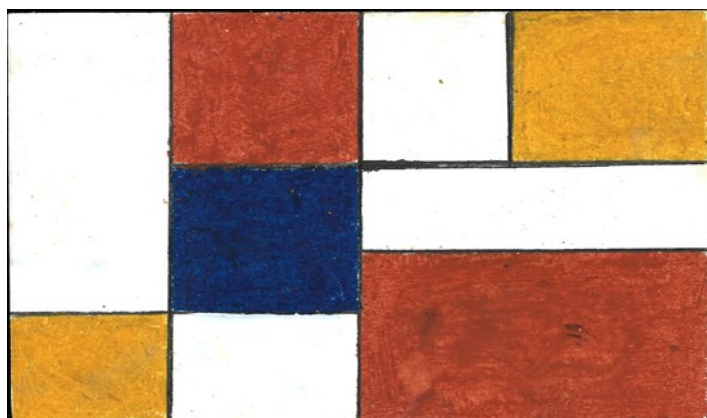




Art Department: Year 8 Masterclass

Year 8 Art Masterclass has begun, and keen students are encouraged to speak with Mrs Pal-iotta about joining on Thursday lunchtimes. So far, we have looked at the monochrome landscape photographs of Ansel Adams and have tried to recreate one of these images using graphite sticks, paying close attention to tonal values. We have attempted some pastiche works based on the abstract work of Joan Miro and Piet Mondrian, and created responses using chalk and oil pastels. Students also experimented with texture by making a tonal drawing of a mystery object held in the hand but hidden from view, relying on touch rather than sight. Another session was spent sketching a still-life arrangement and applying watercolour to create a simple line-and-wash piece.

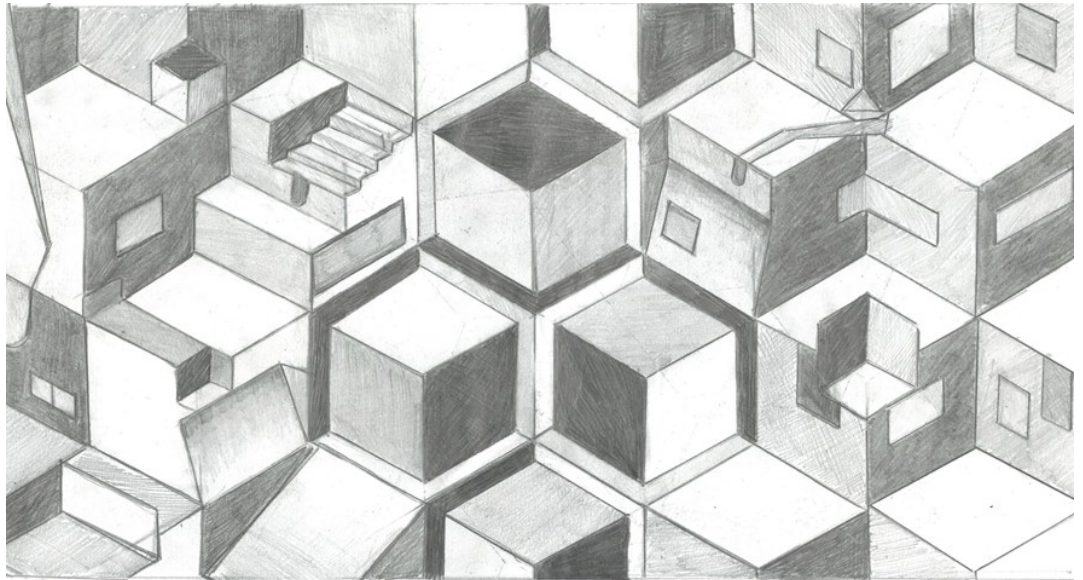
As we approach the new term we will be starting to spend some time exploring new techniques and materials and investigating other artists in order to embark upon our own artist research pages. Well done everybody!



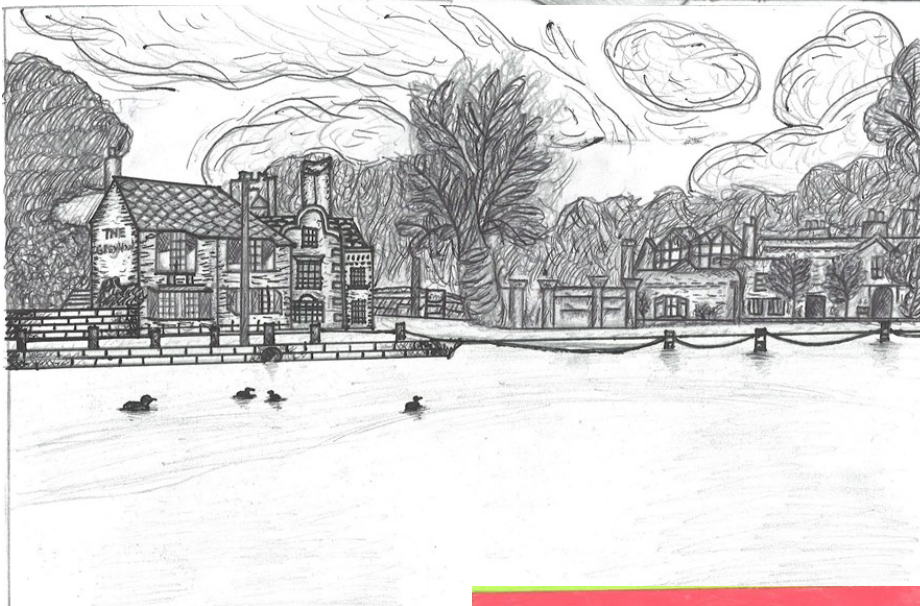


Art Department: Artists of the Month

Congratulations to Aarav Nuthi, Ackshith Tharshigananth, Adrain Tsang, Arjun Nath, David Burde, Simon Wosniewski, Matthew Medina and Michael McCearney for being our current artists of the month! Below are a selection of their artworks.



Aarav Nuthi 7S



David Burde 8S



Matthew Medina 9W



Art Department: House Photography

This November we ran our annual photography competition, open to all students at WCGS and, for the first time, included judged entries from House Masters. This year, the theme was: **Ordinary Magic - finding beauty in everyday places, moments or objects**. Our Judge, Tom Cebula is an experienced photographer and producer for the BBC, National Geographic, and the Discovery Channel, and he provided some amazing feedback and special mentions when deciding what points to award for interpretation, composition, creativity and written response.

The winning House was WOODCOTE! Well done to Woodcote and to all students who participated.

Enjoy a selection of our favourite entries below, and get ready for our department's second competition coming up on 5th February - **House Art! This year's theme is: Chaos and Order; exploring the duality of structure and spontaneity.**



Isa Mannan 7WO



Theo Shepherd 8RA



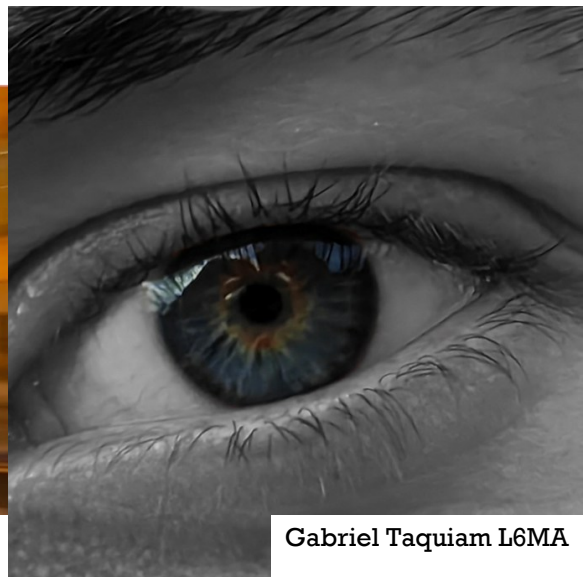
Harshith Reddy Kaasam 8G



Art Department: House Photography



Benjamin Tanner 9CA



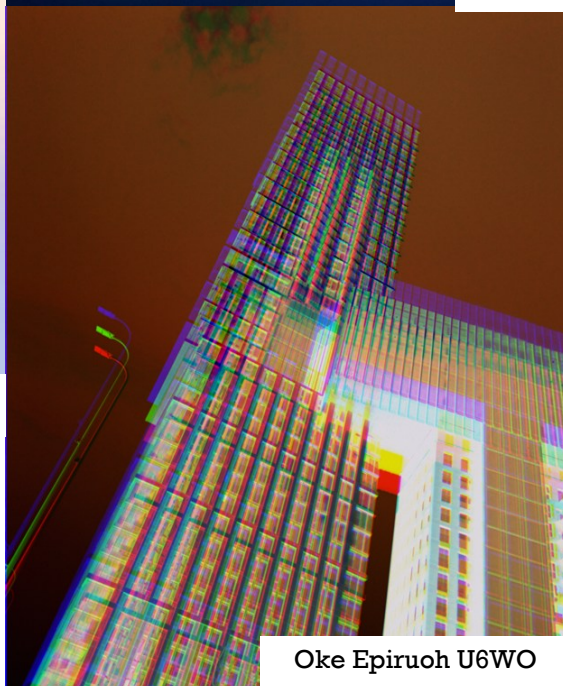
Gabriel Taquiam I6MA



James Kehoe 10RU



Arjun Bhagat 9WO



Oke Epiruoh U6WO



Art Department: Awards for Artistic Excellence

This year in the End of Term assemblies, the Art department will award certificates for the demonstration of Artistic excellence; to recognise consistent dedication and the production of sophisticated artworks. These certificates will be awarded to

David Burde KS3

Simon Wozniewski KS3

James Kehoe KS4

Gabriel Taquiam KS5

Congratulations and well done for all your hard work throughout the year!

Key Stage 5 News

Our hugely talented A Level students have produced some fantastic self-portraits as part of their coursework - these were on display at our recent Sixth Form Open Evening for all to appreciate.





Art Department: Articulation Public Speaking Competition

This month, we held our annual public speaking event, where Year 12 and 13 students delivered captivating speeches on an artist and topic of their choice. The standard this year was exceptionally high, making the judging process particularly challenging!

After much careful deliberation, Aarav Ram (Year 12) emerged as the clear winner. Aarav captivated the audience with his enthusiasm and insightful content, exploring Van Gogh, mental health, and the emotional power of painting.

We are thrilled to announce that Aarav will now represent Wallington Grammar at the regional heat at the Dulwich Picture Gallery in London on 14th January 2026, competing for a place in the London finals. Congratulations, Aarav, on this outstanding achievement!



Happy Holidays!

We hope all of our students have a restful and enjoyable break, returning refreshed for the new year. Over the Christmas holidays, we encourage everyone to take the opportunity to visit an art gallery or exhibition on these colder afternoons. This year, we recommend *Theatre Picasso at the Tate Modern*, *Radical Harmony at the National Gallery* and for some festive snowy landscapes and photography, check out *Michael Kenna: Shin Shin at the Photographer's Gallery*.

See you all in January!



Claude Monet, The Magpie (La Pie), 1868-69










WCGS 24-Hour 'Netathon'



I am delighted to share our latest fundraising initiative for the upcoming [Wallington County Grammar School](#) senior cricket tour to Sri Lanka...

On Sunday 4th January, through the night and into Monday 5th, our Sri Lanka tourists will be taking part in an exciting challenge to raise money for their forthcoming tour - over a 24 hour period, students and staff will be:

- Bowling 
- Batting 
- Engaging in 1-to-1 bowling machine led coaching 
- Playing in small-sided indoor matches 
- Coaching junior WCGS cricketers 
- Teambuilding activities 
- Keeping a close eye on the 5th Ashes Test 

Thus far, the boys have done fantastically well in raising money for the tour, covering costs of the cultural opportunities which they will experience in July, along with playing and training kit for their trip.

If you are able to sponsor the team, please use the link below - every little helps, and this is a fantastic opportunity to really make a difference, and enrich this wonderful experience for our young cricketers:

https://www.justgiving.com/page/wcgs-srilanka26-1732627454861?utm_source=SFMC&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=LFCFRUK_TopX_1pc&mi_u=54448649&mi_ecmp=LFCFRUK_TopX_1pc

Please do reach out to me via email jhenderson@wcgschool.co.uk if you would like to get involved in this event in any way, shape, or form (this could be a number of things, such as supplying balls for this event, dropping in to offer some coaching, or even to partake in some nets).

Thanks in advance!

By Mr J Henderson

Head of Cricket





Female Forum

In Female Forum, we aim to create a strong, supportive community for the sixth form girls.

On 20th November, the school hosted its very first Giving Day, which featured a much-anticipated Girls vs 1st XVI rugby team netball game. Unsurprisingly, with an extremely strong defence and attack, the girls beat the rugby team for the first time in over seven years. It was a massive win, which shows the true sense of female power and teamwork, so well done to everyone who played!

The following day, on 21st November, we welcomed a guest speaker, Andrew Hampton, who gave a really interesting and motivating talk about creating mutually respectful relational cultures - this helped inspire us to reflect on empathy, respectful behaviour and supporting girls through friendship challenges. This talk had given us a valuable opportunity to reflect on these important themes.

Lunchtime sessions have been really busy this term, and we also ran a girls' social and pizza party after school with Mario Kart, snacks, board games and music! It was a relaxed, fun evening where everyone could hang out and enjoy each other's company. These social events really help strengthen the female community within WCGS by letting us come together and connect, share experiences and inspire each other. Alongside this, it has given us the chance to build meaningful friendships across both year groups- I can't wait to see how our girls flourish with these upcoming events!

A Space for Inclusivity, Connection and Positivity

We are excited to invite students to join Pride & Allies, our school's inclusive group for LGBTQ+ young people and allies. This is a welcoming, supportive space for anyone who wants to explore identity, meet others, ask questions, or simply enjoy a positive environment during the school week. Our goal is to celebrate diversity, encourage understanding, and create a community where everyone feels respected and valued.

Pride & Allies also helps students develop confidence. Many people feel insecure about who they are or how they fit in, and this community offers reassurance, support, and a space to feel proud both of their identity and of themselves as individuals.

Pride is all about acceptance, celebration, and feeling comfortable with who you are. It's a reminder that everyone deserves respect and confidence, no matter where they are on their journey. Gender identity simply refers to a person's inner sense of who they are male, female, both, neither, or somewhere in between and everyone experiences it differently. Pride & Allies provides a safe, respectful environment for anyone exploring or learning about identity.



Introducing Pride & Allies – A Space for Inclusivity, Connection and Positivity **(continue)**

Meeting Details: When: Every Friday during lunch Where: MA8

Each week offers something different: relaxed chats, creative activities, student-led discussions, and opportunities to connect. Get involved as much or as little as you like.

In Partnership with Free2B Alliance

We are proud to work with Free2B Alliance, a London-based organisation supporting LGBTQ+ young people and their families. Their focus on wellbeing, empowerment, and education helps strengthen the support we offer at school. We're also delighted to welcome the amazing JC from Free2B every other week to lead discussions, offer guidance, and support anyone who needs it.

What Free2B Brings

- Support: One-to-one mentoring to help students explore challenges and build confidence.
- Youth Groups: Safe and friendly spaces for LGBTQ+ young people, including trans and non-binary students.
- Training & Awareness: Workshops to help schools grow into more inclusive environments.

Looking Ahead

We have an exciting year ahead for Pride & Allies, with several key events to look forward to:

House Pride, a new house event where students can express what Pride looks like to them through a creative, positive celebration of identity and allyship.

Pride Week 2026, our second full-school celebration taking place in summer 2026, featuring themed days, student-led activities, and opportunities to raise awareness and celebrate diversity.

More information about both events will be shared in the coming months, and students are warmly encouraged to help shape and plan what these celebrations will look like.

Come Join Us

Pride & Allies is open to everyone: LGBTQ+ students, those who are questioning, and all allies who want to support a kinder, more inclusive school community. Join us every Friday in MA8 (old AR2) to be part of something meaningful.

By Ameen Woly, Mustafa Rizvi and Saksham Wadhwa



Anti-Sexism Taskforce

The Anti-Sexism Taskforce celebrated White Ribbon Day at WCCGS on the 25th of November by embracing and actively campaigning throughout the 16 Days of Activism, where members of the taskforce promoted the 16 days by making assemblies to inform and encourage students to take part, and also go around to different forms to have students sign the White Ribbon Pledge, to never use, excuse or remain silent about violence against women and girls. This drive by the taskforce was further supported by an emphasis on local case studies, to show just how close to home these issues are and truly draw the right amount of awareness and urgency to the situation, with help provided on how sexism, microaggressions and harmful behaviours can be noticed, but also about how these harm the community we live and work in, even if they don't seem obvious at first.

In order to also include the younger years, the taskforce has also launched its Junior Anti-Sexism Taskforce project, so that this important message can continue to be spread, but in a more accessible and friendly way for younger students who might feel intimidated and off put by the more direct language used to target older students.

We also welcomed an amazing guest speaker to the school on Friday 21st of November, Andrew Hampton, to give all our members training on anti-misogyny, being a powerful voice to help guide our taskforce members in our aim to promote reduction of sexism and sexist behaviour.

Overall, this first term has been filled with passionate projects and inclusive campaigns to promote awareness and foster a more welcoming community.

We hope to welcome even more people into the taskforce in the next term, see you there!

By Toby Ou Yang

This year, the Anti-Sexism Taskforce at WCCGS marked White Ribbon Day (25th November) by embracing the 16 Days of Activism. White Ribbon Ambassadors from the taskforce produced and led assemblies across the school, emphasising the importance of recognising and calling out sexism, microaggressions and harmful everyday behaviours that may often go unnoticed. The campaign this year wasn't just about awareness though - there was a huge emphasis on real life case studies in our local area - including from the Sutton Women's Centre - highlighting how widespread gender-based violence is and how we all have a part to play to combat it. Throughout the 16 Days of Activism, ambassadors visited every form in the school to push for reflection and honest conversations about gender-based violence, and students were encouraged to sign the White Ribbon pledge a promise to never use, excuse or remain silent about violence against women and girls.

By Azain Syed



Careers Programme

This has been an exceptionally busy term for our Careers Programme. Year 10 students have begun their Virtual Work Experience Programme using the excellent Springpod online platform, through which they are gaining insight into a wide range of sectors, employability skills and university courses. The aim for all Year 10 students is to complete a minimum of three sector insights, three employability skills modules, and one university taster course before the February half term. Students will then have until May to complete at least two virtual work experience placements in sectors that interest them.

Parents can find out more about Springpod by clicking on the following link: <https://www.springpod.com/>

In Year 11, all students have now had one-to-one careers interviews with our fantastic careers adviser, Mrs Proctor, and have received personalised action plans to support their future decision-making.

In the Sixth Form, students in both Years 12 and 13 have been attending twice-weekly careers chats with parents and alumni across a broad range of sectors, including Law, Medicine, Finance, AI, Museums, Engineering, Local Government, Marketing, HR and Insurance. Attendance has been excellent, with students asking perceptive and challenging questions and providing very positive feedback about how much they have valued the experience.

In November, we launched our *Wallington Works* in-person work experience week for Year 12 students. Taking place from 6–10 July, this initiative is designed to give students the flexibility to gain a variety of meaningful workplace experiences through traditional work experience placements and/or school-organised workplace visits.

Finally, I am pleased to say that we have reintroduced our weekly Careers News bulletin, which advertises a wide range of careers-related opportunities to students, parents and carers. I hope that everyone has had the opportunity to read these and to take advantage of the opportunities advertised therein.

In March, we will be hosting both our annual Careers Encounter and our Universities Fair. This year, the events have been expanded to provide meaningful opportunities for students from Years 8–13 to meet and engage with employers, employees, and a wide range of Higher and Further Education institutions. These events will be complemented by a programme of careers-oriented activities in Form Time and Wellbeing, designed to help students in all year groups understand the world of work, access up-to-date labour market information, and make well-informed career decisions.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to our careers programme, including parents, alumni, staff and students. We would not be able to offer such a wide range of opportunities without your generosity and expertise. Should you wish to find out more about the careers programme at WCGS, or would like to participate in some way, please visit the careers section of the school website or feel free to contact me at kmeek@wcfgschool.co.uk.

Dr Kelvin Meek
Senior Teacher
Careers Leader

Subject Leader for History and the EPQ



Music Department Autumn Term Update

The Autumn term has been an incredible showcase of talent, dedication, and community spirit within our Music Department.

Autumn Concert

The Autumn concert was a great success again this year. It was a joy to see performers from every single year group take to the stage. The evening featured a diverse range of music from our choirs, instrumental groups, and a fantastic performance from the entire Year 9 GCSE class. With numerous bands and soloists, it was a wonderful evening celebrating the musical talent we have at the school. A huge thank you to everyone who performed and to the families and friends who came to support them.

Festive Highlights: Sutton Sings & WCGS Carol Service

As the Christmas season approached, our focus turned to two very special events. Our KS4/5 choir worked incredibly hard preparing for the Sutton Music Trust "Sutton Sings Christmas" event. Performing at St. Andrew's Church in Cheam alongside the John Fisher School and the Sutton Music Trust choir and orchestra, our students had the invaluable experience of collaborating with other local musicians to create a truly professional sound. Well done everyone who took part and thank you to those parents who came to support us there as well!

Following this, we held our Annual Carol Service at our local St. Mary's Church in Beddington. It was a beautiful, successful evening of music and reflection that provided the perfect lead-in to the Christmas holidays. Thank you to everyone who came, and to PTFA for supporting us with their refreshments!

Thank you once again to all the students for their hard work and to the parents and staff for their continued support of the Music Department. We can't wait to see you at our upcoming shows!

School Production of *Oliver!*: 13th – 15th January.

House Music: 13th March.

Representing WCGS: GLT Winter Concert

We were incredibly proud to be represented at the GLT Winter Concert. Two of our students, Marcus Marques and Finley Clooke, took to the stage to represent WCGS within the wider GLT community. They performed 2 amazing guitar duets that truly showcased their technical skill and musicality. Well done, Marcus and Finley—you represented the school brilliantly!





Imperial Science in Medicine School Teams Prize - RAIRDA Prize Results

Wallington County Grammar School

Dear Ms Fahimi,

Please congratulate your team on their fantastic presentation on Wednesday 1st October.

The judges were extremely impressed by all the posters and presentations delivered. You will be pleased to know that your team was placed first!

The results are as follows:

Joint First – St Olave’s Grammar School, Wallington County Grammar School and The Tiffin Girl’s School

Your school will receive a prize of £2000. This needs to be used for supporting science-related activity in your school. We will be in touch in the future to organise this. We would be very interested in hearing how you spent this in due course.

With best wishes, and please congratulate all the team members on our behalf, for a fantastic effort!

Kind regards,

Jaya Rajamanie
 Dorian Haskard, Cecilia Johansson, Jaya Rajamanie & Lucy Payne
Imperial College Science in Medicine School Team Prize Committee

