

Newsletter

Newsletter No: 208



October 2011

Dear Parent/Carer and Friend of the School,

I am very pleased to welcome you to the first newsletter of the school year which features highlights of some of the activities the students have been involved with in this first half term. We've held a number of information events and parents evening where I've enjoyed meeting many of you and I hope that I'll meet many more of you over the rest of the year.

The last week of the half term saw our first 'Deep Learning Day' for the year. Titled *What's Good for Me? Healthy Body, Healthy Mind* and it centred on physical and mental well-being. Mr Tailor organised 14 guest presenters to complement sessions run by teachers and the day was a great success. All the boys I've spoken to said they enjoyed it and the feedback from our visitors was enthusiastic. We will have a 'Deep Learning Day' each half-term as part of our personal, social, health and cultural education programme.

The new pupils in Years 7 and 12 seem to have settled in well and I'm pleased that so many of the new Year 7 are getting involved with clubs and activities. The new Year 12 got off to a good start on their induction day and many have put themselves forward for a range of activities at the recent volunteering fair. The PE department are leading the way in getting pupils involved in some healthy competition; in-school and with other schools. We've had both football and rugby fixtures and our teams have given a good account of themselves and have shown real grit and determination.

Our school wide focus on Literacy has begun well. Literacy – essentially the ability to read, understand, and use information – is fundamental to learning in school and those with good literacy skills are more likely to have

higher self-esteem, better health, better jobs and decent wages. We, like many schools in Camden, are paying particular attention to Literacy this year. While led primarily by the English Faculty all faculties are taking part. One aim is that specific attention be paid to one aspect of Literacy every week in every subject. We also have a coordinated programme in place for extra support for some pupils. The focus on Literacy is just one aspect of our School Improvement Plan. If you would like to see what else is in the plan there is a summary on the school website.

Next half term we will be consulting parents and carers about school communication. I'd be very grateful if you would complete a questionnaire which will be available on Progress Review Day.

I hope you enjoy reading about the activities covered in this half term newsletter.

Sam White
Headteacher

CHANGE TO SCHOOL CALENDAR

The Christmas holidays have been extended by one day, which means the first day of term for students is :

Thursday, 5th January

This has come about because of the extra day for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Mr Taylor, RE/Cross Curricular Co-ordinator, writes:

“What’s good for me?”
Healthy Body, Healthy Mind
Deep Learning Day

Tuesday, 18th October saw the first of six **Deep Learning Days** here at William Ellis School. With the theme of “Healthy Body, Healthy Minds”, students in Years 7 to 11 participated in a series of workshops which aimed to explore this in different dimensions. Given the scope of expertise in our locality, we were fortunate enough to have 14 external speakers into school for the day that facilitated different workshops; all students had access to three of these.



Students in Years 7 and 8, in amongst an exploration of what it means to be ‘happy’ and ‘our physical well-being’, participated in a workshop on “spiritual well-being” led by Elise Koscumu and Simon Radomski from *CrossTeach*, a local Church-based organisation that works with young people in the area.

A *Qualified Learning Mentor*, Samson Osun, then facilitated a *Me and Myself* workshop for Year 7 students that explored the concepts of confidence and teamwork in developing a healthy mind.



Year 8 students, in one of the workshops, saw demonstrations of how to make healthy snacks which they were fortunate enough to then try! Thanks to *Community Kitchens Project*, Nutritionists Manny Epton and Ruby Dhama, helped boys to read and understand food labels whilst enjoying some freshly made salsa and guacamole!



Students in both Years 8 and 9 were put through some strenuous exercise as they skipped for 30 minutes thanks to George Kubu from *skipping4schools* all the way from Harrogate in Yorkshire! Albeit a few groans that this was for ‘girls’ and ‘childish’, the manner in which students engaged and attempted some challenging techniques was impressive!

This was followed, for Year 9, by a workshop on *Me and Myself* facilitated by Wayne Sawby, a *Qualified Learning Mentor* who has worked across schools in London.



Wayne who spoke so engagingly and realistically about the importance of a healthy mind and body in growing up; something well-received by a ‘real’ Londoner and not the everyday teacher!

Year 10 and 11 students were given the opportunity to participate in some “fitness training” led by trainers Neil Riches from *Peak Physique Personal Training* and, his colleague,

Kevin Lilly. Thanks here to *PPA Education Ltd* for helping to arranging Samson and Wayne's contribution for the day.



Also, students in these two years groups participated in two workshops on the use, misuse and affects of drug-taking led by two companies – *Drugs Line* and *Drugs Alert*. As ex-offenders and people who work in rehabilitation centres, the facilitators spoke openly about the consequences of taking-drugs and the effects on a body and mind. Lisa Griffiths and Darren Gold, from the respective companies, did a great job in helping to arrange this.



From initial reactions, students enjoyed the day in which learning had been planned so that there was increased engagement with the local and wider community. As this is one of our school's priorities, this will be developed upon in the Deep Learning Days to come hereafter.

In the words of Steven Mervish from *Drugs Alert*, "Students were excellent, very responsive and all participated very well." Elise Kosumcu added, "I think it was an excellent idea. Thank you for asking us along!" This is a testimony to our students' engagement and attitude to an issue which affects us all.

The next Deep Learning Day is on the 15th of December with a theme of: "*Who am I in relation to others?*" – *Relationships*. We hope to make the day as informative as possible to

ensure not only that we meet the demands of the PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship education) provision but that students have access to speakers from the local and wider community on a regular basis to develop their learning. Thanks for everyone involved, including the great work done by staff, to make our first Deep Learning Day a positive one!

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT NEWS

Mr Forrest, Head of Geography, writes:

The winner of the Geography Department *Open Evening Postcard Competition* was Joseph Lihou, of St. Michael's School with 7 correct countries guessed. A small prize will be despatched to him soon.

YEAR 7 CHESS CLUB (2011-12)

Mr. Forrest writes:

Several boys have started to come to Year 7 Chess Club, held on Thursday lunchtimes, in room 13. Boys who have so far made a promising start include Danell Edwards (7ASZ), Alban Tahiraj (7AME), Milo Tingey (7AME), Constantine Kotsis (7SPE), Laurie Bilton (7SPE) and David Rojas-Torres (7RMC). The club runs all year with a knockout competition for the 16 best players in May/June and prizes are awarded to the top 4 players.

LA SWAP NEWS

Laura Martin-Clark, Deputy Head/Director of Sixth (WES/PHS) writes:

Year 12 Induction Day

The new Year 12 students in the joint sixth got off to a great start on Thursday, 8th September with a full-day programme of induction activities. After a packed 'Welcome' assembly, students were divided up into groups to follow a schedule of the following:

- A study skills session focusing on the importance of learning independently, asking focused questions to develop learning and working with friends outside of lessons.

- A talk from Paul Teulon, Head of Admissions at Oxford University, explaining why AS grades really count towards a strong University application, as well as the importance of good quality relevant work experience and volunteering activities.
- An interactive group seminar with Ms White and Ms Lamont, Heads of Year 12, about joining in with life at La Swap and meeting the expectations we have of our sixth formers.
- A team-building workshop led by Future Foundations, showing students how to get the most out of working as a group and helping each other with problem solving.

The Induction has really helped our Year 12 students to hit the ground running and their teachers have commented on the positive and studious start they have made to their sixth form studies.



Cambridge Vice-Chancellor Visits La Swap

On Thursday, 28th September, Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, visited La Swap to meet with students and staff. Year 11, 12 and 13 students from William Ellis and La Swap listened to a talk on the application process, then took part in two workshops about *Student Life at Cambridge*, and *What to do now to maximise your chances*. There was a chance to ask questions about studying at Cambridge and hear from two of their student ambassadors about their experience of applying from a state school and finding their way through the college system. Staff had a chance to quiz the Cambridge visitors about access from all backgrounds and talk

about their entry systems and procedures with admissions tutors.

Any parents or pupils interested in knowing more can contact La Swap's Higher Education Advisor, John Beckett jbeckett@parliamenthill.camden.sch.uk

John is based at the WES/PHS joint sixth on Mondays and Wednesday.

ENGLISH FACULTY NEWS

Ms Damms writes:

Camden Writing Competition 2011

We were very pleased to receive the news that four of our boys had been invited to the finals of this borough-wide competition which were held at the Wallace Collection on the afternoon of October 12th 2011. Mr Greenwood accompanied finalists Jamie Gordon (9LDM), Jack Lawrence (10SLI), Joshowan Bhattacharjee (11JSE) to the awards ceremony where the students and their guests were able to see each other's work and meet co-finalists. This year's writing theme was 'Camden' and Jamie had submitted a short poem based on close observation of a moment on Hampstead Heath last July, Jack an imagery-rich descriptive passage, and Joshowan a wildly imaginative short story involving a memorable combination of zombies and Hampstead Heath. A fourth finalist, Joshua von Uexkull (11PKK), was unable to attend because he was on a field trip at the Mill, but we were pleased to be able to report back to him that he had actually won the Key Stage 4 narrative prize for his short story. We congratulate all the finalists on their work, and look forward to reading their future publications.

Members of the English department are involved in the running of three clubs:

- Mr Eastham, creative writing for Key Stage 3 students
- Ms Kerr a reading club for Year 9
- Ms Damms a Key Stage 3 Latin club

We have been delighted to welcome students to our various lunchtime sessions. Ms Edwards, a guest teacher from the Institute of Education, has generously offered her services in the Latin

club which means that we are now able to welcome Year 7 students to the Monday lunchtime sessions: her aim is to 'fast-track' them so that they can catch up with our older boys who have been studying for over two terms, and who have finally hit the past tense! (We would love to receive any unwanted Latin dictionaries should you happen to have any at home.)

Ms Silver has been busily enriching the lives and experiences of her Year 13 students in media. Last week Year 13 Media met director Marc Price and lead actor Alastair Kirton from the award winning British zombie movie '*Colin*'. The industry professionals were able to give the students an insight into filming on a budget, ways of subverting the usual conventions associated with a specific genre and ideas for approaching the practical coursework task at A2.

PERFORMING ARTS FACULTY NEWS

Mr J Pratt, Head of Faculty, writes:



Our photograph shows Year 8 students, Frankie Jones and Pleurat Hadziu rehearsing for the *Shakespeare Schools Festival*. William Ellis Drama Department has participated in the festival every year since it started in 2000. This year we will be performing Shakespeare's Scottish play at the Arts Depot in North Finchley on Friday, 4th November. The boys will be performing again in school on Wednesday, 16th November at 6pm as part of our Year 8 performance and exhibition evening. All welcome!

Year 7 Drama Club starts on Wednesday, 23rd November. All Year 7 actors welcome!

Drama Clubs which will continue after half-term are:

Monday:

Year 9 and Year 8 Shakespeare Festival rehearsals

Tuesday:

Year 8

Wednesday (starting 23rd November):

Year 7 Drama Club

Thursday and Friday:

Year 11:

Coursework support in the library

Step into Dance will be returning to William Ellis in January. Last year we limited the project to Year 8. This time, it will be open to any keen boys in Years 7, 8 or 9 who want to develop their skills in movement and dance. More details in the December newsletter.

The Year 12 drama students have already been to see '*The Kitchen*' and '*13*' at the National Theatre as part of their 'Live Theatre Evaluation' unit and the drama department has many more thrilling and mind-expanding theatrical trips planned for future terms!

Two of our former students have had great success in their careers on the stage. Ashley Hunter, whom we know at **Ashley Walker**, has just finished playing the lead in *A Clockwork Orange* at the Theatre Royal, Stratford East. He starred in some of the musical theatre productions we staged at Ellis in 2002-2004, including *Five Guys Named Moe*, *The Club of Life* and *Godspell*. Ashley went on from WES to study at the Central School of Speech and Drama and has been noticed!

Morgan Watkins, who went on from WES to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, is currently playing the lead in Edward Bond's landmark play *Saved*, at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith. He has worked at the Almeida Theatre and when he performed at the Palace Theatre, Watford, last year, he was described by a critic as a "lanky newcomer". Ashley and Morgan are very good at keeping in touch with their old school and we wish them well. Other recent WES leavers who have begun successful careers as actors include **Beru Tessema** (several seasons at Shakespeare's Globe, often to be heard on BBC radio), **Beth Cooke** (ex Parliament Hill girl who did Drama A

Level at WES), **Kingsley Ben-Adir** and **Besfort Williams**. Look out for them!

Mr Jackman, Head of Music writes:

Check out the music department's section of the school website (www.tinyurl.com/ellsimusic) for the latest information on musical instrument lessons, concert dates, events and activities. The first event is 'Meet the Musicians' evening on Wednesday, 9th November at 6pm. An opportunity for Year 7 boys to perform and parents to meet instrumental tutors. All welcome.

This term a few boys in Years 9, 10 and 11 have been taking part in a project with the Royal Academy of Music focusing on the music of Pierre Boulez. You can see a short slideshow of this on the school website.

Below is a list of extra-curricular music activities taking place each week in the music department.

Monday:

String Ensemble - 1.30pm

Coursework Club - 3.15pm

Tuesday:

Rhythm Skills - 1.30pm

Wind Ensemble - 1.30pm

Year 9 GCSE Club - 3.15pm

Wednesday:

String Quartet - 1.30pm

Symphony Orchestra - 3.15pm

Thursday:

Choir - 1.30pm

Big Band - 3.15pm

Friday:

Bass Ensemble - 1.05pm

MFL/EAL FACULTY NEWS

Mr Altmann, Head of Year 7, writes:

Year 7 European Day of Languages Competition

We have celebrated European Day of Languages at William Ellis for a good few years now and this year was no exception (albeit rather later than usual).

It is a great opportunity to highlight the importance of languages, not just those languages taught here but also those spoken at

home by the boys or indeed the staff. At the last count we had 44!

The boys are set the challenge of saying 'hello' in as many different languages and to as many members of staff as possible.

I must say that this Year 7 really got stuck in. Maybe it was the promise of great prizes and accolade, whatever the reason, they were certainly impressive.



Pochara and Lewis 7SPE write:

We learnt how to say hello in 40 different languages!

The competition involved having to find posters in the corridors or to find staff members with stickers on and say hello in the languages that they spoke and get their signature.

At break time and lunch time we all went around the school trying our best to get as many signatures as possible.

It was like a great journey going around the school speaking different languages. We think it made the teachers feel like they were celebrity stars!

We all had great fun and hope that we have won!

Interview with Robert Elms on BBC Radio London

Whilst enjoying a barbeque in my brother's garden during the summer holiday the conversation inevitably moved on to work. I told him that I was researching the history of the school for a Year 7 project, that I had been in contact with one of the 'Old Elysians' and that I had discovered some interesting facts and artefacts whilst reading about the history of the school and looking through the archives.

At the start of term I was contacted by a researcher from BBC Radio London asking me if I would be prepared to talk about William Ellis School as part of a school history feature on the Robert Elms Show. Ah ha, I thought, my brother

(a BBC correspondent) has clearly been up to something.

Apprehensively, I agreed to take part and on a Monday afternoon I was questioned, (over the telephone) live on radio, by Mr Elms. Amongst other things we talked about William Ellis the man, the school's early history, famous alumni and of course, Mr Elms spoke of his son Alfie in Year 11. Despite being rather nervous I thoroughly enjoyed the experience. It was undoubtedly made all the more pleasant thanks to the expert questioning techniques of Mr Elms.

You can listen to the interview via the school website.

SCIENCE FACULTY NEWS

Mr Denby, Head of Faculty writes:

Year 11 – Sets 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 11.4: Science Coursework is due after half-term and is worth up to 33% of your marks

But don't despair. Here's what to do over half-term to catch up and meet the deadline:

Group	What you need to do
11.1	Biology investigation Chemistry investigation Physics investigation
11.2, 11.3 and 11.4	Investigation (thiosulphate or osmosis) Case study (eg nuclear power, mobile phones)

Each mark gained by coursework is worth up to 3 in an exam

- Poor coursework will lower the overall grade
- Good coursework maintains the grade you are on
- Great coursework can raise your grade

**For online help sheets simply google:
William Ellis Science Coursework**

SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

We ask for parents/carers assistance in ensuring their sons are properly equipped for school.

Equipment

- Planner
- Pencil Case containing 2 pens and 2 pencils, sharpener, ruler, rubber, coloured pencils and glue stick
- School exercise books needed for the day
- Reading book
- PE Kit
- Calculator

SCHOOL UNIFORM

We expect all students to return to school in the correct full uniform for the start of the second half on the Autumn term.

School Uniform can be ordered as follows:

ONLINE – www.swi.co.uk

BY POST – please complete the order form

BY TELEPHONE – 0845 519 0099

TIES are on sale from the School Office @ £3.50 each.

School reopens for students on

Monday, 31st October 2011

at the normal time of 8.35am

**Students should be on-site by
8.30am**

**TERM DATES
2011 – 2012**

AUTUMN TERM

**Start of Term
Monday 5th September 2011**

**End of Term
Friday 16th December 2011**

*Half-term: Monday 24th October 2011 – Friday
28th October 2011*

SPRING TERM

**Start of Term
Thursday 5th January 2012**

**End of Term
Friday 30th March 2012**

*Half-term: Monday 13th February – Friday 17th
February 2012*

SUMMER TERM

**Start of Term
Tuesday 17th April 2012**

**End of Term
Friday 20th July 2012**

*May Day: Monday 7th May 2012
Half-term: Monday 4th June – Friday 8th June
2012
Inc. Queen's Golden Jubilee: Tuesday 5th June
2012*

****INSET DAYS**

*Thursday 1st September 2011
Friday 2nd September 2011
Friday 30th September 2011
Friday 25th November 2011
Wednesday 4th January 2012
Monday 16th April 2012*

DIARY DATES 2011-2012

Thurs 3 Nov	Year 11 Parents' Evening
Tues 8 Nov	PHS/WES Opportunities in 6th Form Evening @ PHS
Wed 9th Nov	Meet the Musicians 5.30pm
Thu 10th Nov	Year 8 Performance Evening
Thur 17 Nov	Progress Review Day
Wed 30 Nov	International Evening
Thur 1 Dec	Year 10 Parents' Evening
Thur 8 Dec	Year 12 Parents' Evening @ LSU
Wed 14 Dec	Winter Concert
Thur 15 Dec	Deep Learning Day II
Thur 19 Jan	LaSwap Open Morning @ WES
Thur 2 Feb	Year 9 Parents' Evening
Wed 8 Feb	Deep Learning Day III
Thur 9 Feb	Year 9 Options' Evening
Thur 23 Feb	Year 7 Parents' Evening
Wed 21 Mar	LaSwap Progress Review Day Deep Learning Day IV
Thur 29 Mar	Spring Concert
Thur 26 Apr	Year 8 Parents' Evening
8 – 11 May	Year 9 Exams
Thur 10 May	Year 11 NRA Evening
Tue 29 May	Deep Learning Day V
18 – 29 June	Year 7 & 8 Exams
2 - 6 July	Year 7 Camp Week I Year 10 Work Experience
Tue 3 July	Year 6 Induction Day / Parents' Information Evening
9 – 13 July	Year 7 Camp Week II
Tue 17 July	Sport Day / Awards Evening
Wed 18 July	Summer Concert
Thur 19 July	Deep Learning Day VI