



WILLIAM ELLIS SCHOOL
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Dear families

Student leadership

We are now four weeks into term, and student leadership activities are now underway. Two weeks ago our “More in Common” assemblies were led by students in years 10 and 11, which drew on the words of Jo Cox: *“We are far more united and have far more in common than that which divides us.”* She believed passionately in inclusion and in celebrating our amazing diverse, multi-cultural society. Jo Cox was a Member of Parliament who was sadly murdered in 2016. Here at William Ellis, we believe in “More In Common” because we know that we all achieve better and have more contentment if we celebrate the diversity of our school community and work together to make it a better place. Last year, the “More in Common” pledges from the Student Council were:

1. to take better care of the environment;
2. to take part in at least one house event and one activity outside lesson time;
3. to take part in fund-raising activities;
4. to reach out to the local community;
5. to challenge prejudice and hate.

This week, the assemblies set students up to elect their 2020-21 Student Council representatives. There are representatives from each form and the Year 11 and 9 representatives are the House Captains and Deputy House Captains on the Student Council. They meet regularly, including with me, to ensure that students are able to influence the work and priorities of the school. Last year, for example, they led briefings for staff about reducing the school’s carbon footprint and environmental sustainability. There are also other opportunities for student leadership.

Each form has already elected their Sports Captains, and this week the Year 11 forms began their inter-house football competitions which are being held over the next few weeks. Like many competitive sports events at the moment these cannot have their usual spectators and our split lunch breaks mean that they can only be held on certain days, but the teams that have participated have shown real enthusiasm, high levels of skill and excellent sportsmanship. We are also pleased to say that attendance at extra-curricular PE has been gradually increasing, and those who attend clubs are looking forward to being able to play competitive fixtures against other schools, as soon as these are able to start. For sports enthusiasts who prefer watching to participating, Mr Meharg has created an online league that forms can join and compete with one another – boys in years 7-11 will receive more information from their tutors.

Open events and admissions

We have hosted two small open mornings for prospective families this week, giving them an opportunity to visit the school, although not go into lessons as they normally would have. It was a great opportunity for them to see the school in action, and ask questions of the panel – me, Karl Altmann, who leads our transition programme, and students in years 8 and 10 who spoke about the school from their perspective. We have a waiting list of families who would like to attend further open events and we are looking at other dates when we can open. Due to popular demand, we will also be running webinars for prospective families. If you’d like to see the video content that we’re also sharing with families, please take a look on our website: [a window into our school](#).

If you are a current parent but have a boy in Year 6 looking to join the school in September 2021, you still need to apply via your Local Authority on-line application form for a place in William Ellis. We give priority places to students who are siblings of current students. Please go to the [Camden website guidance on applications](#) if you are Camden resident. Applications must be made by 31st October 2020.

Preparing for winter

The colder and wetter weather is now upon us, and because year groups are now separated for break and lunch, we have minimal space inside for students during lunch and breaktime. Please could I ask that students come to school with a coat that is warm and waterproof enough for their journeys to and from school, and at lunchtime and breaktime. Today we had several students without coats or rain jackets. We are maintaining good ventilation in classrooms by keeping windows ajar, and so it would be useful for them to also have a jumper (normal uniform and PE kit) and a warmer PE top. Please see the guidance on uniform in previous letters. We understand that uniform and additional items are expensive, and if you need assistance with this please contact the tutor or Head of Year – we have items of old PE kit, uniform and some coats that have been collected by WESPA, our parents' association.

On Tuesday 13th October, we have HPV vaccinations for Year 8 and 9 and nasal flu vaccinations for Year 7. Given the ongoing challenges of COVID-19, it is important that we build community resilience to flu in particular, so that young people do not catch flu or transmit it to others. You will have been contacted by the Central and North West London NHS Trust about the vaccinations. Please ensure that your completed consent form has been returned to the school office by 9am on Tuesday 13th October.

Year 11 Parents' Evening

A reminder to Year 11 parents that we are hosting a face to face Year 11 Parents' Evening on Thursday 8th October, 4.30-7.00pm. There will be additional measures in place to ensure the safety of everyone in the school community – full details have been sent to your from Mrs Mercier Peart, Head of Year 11.

Yours faithfully



Izzy Jones
Acting Headteacher