

News Update

(21st December 2023)



Dear families,

Welcome to the final 2023 Christmas edition of the William Ellis newsletter, packed with examples of learning experiences that I think exemplify our school motto, "Rather use than fame" and our sense of purpose: to nurture successful students and good citizens through strong relationships. I am proud of the energy that students and staff have put into these types of projects in addition to their normal lessons, homework and regular extra-curricular activities. I would also like to thank our team of dedicated and hard-working staff who have gone to great lengths to make these experiences possible and successful.

I would like to also congratulate Year 11 and 6th form students for the efforts they have put into preparing for internal examinations over the past two weeks. They have conducted themselves in a mature and focused way throughout and will receive valuable feedback from their teachers in January.

Year 11 parents evening is on Wednesday 31st January with bookings available on Bromcom in the New Year.

Attendance

We know that some students have been unwell this week, but it is important that following some rest and recovery over Christmas they are all able to attend school 100% of the time in January and through 2024. Students with 100% attendance or 96% and above will receive recognition in their assemblies today or will have done this week. Particular congratulations to 10B, 9W, 8L and 7F for their strong attendance in the four days of this week.

Newsletter archive

We have had a request from families for access to previous newsletters and the information they contain. The main school newsletters can be found here [William Ellis School - Newsletters & letters home](#) and the newsletters from LaSWAP, for 6th form students, are at <https://www.laswap.camden.sch.uk/Parents/Newsletters/>

Support for families and young people over the holiday period

The Camden Holiday Activities and Food winter programme runs from 27 December 2023 to 5 January 2024 and is open for children and young people aged 5 to 16 who live in Camden and are eligible for free school meals. For further information, please see: <https://haf.youngcamdenfoundation.org.uk/>

The school has also donated this term to the Queens Crescent Community Centre and Kentish Town food banks. Both support families and young people in the local area and are open throughout the Christmas period. Please contact them through their own websites if you need support.

The school building will be closed from 1pm today until we reopen on 8th January. If you have urgent concerns about a young person, please follow the advice on this page [Safeguarding adults and children - Camden Council](#)

Safeguarding – early morning entry arrangements

Following a Camden Review and feedback on safeguarding, we will be making the following changes to entry arrangements at the start of the day:

- Students who come onto site before 7:45am will need to wait at the front gates of the school until a member of staff lets them in, and also then wait at the front door. Only students in uniform or 6th form students wearing an ID badge may be allowed in.
- Students attending early morning basketball will be let in at 7:15am. If they arrive late to school they will have to wait to be let in by another member of staff.
- From 7:50am there will be a member of staff on duty on the front driveway or at the gate to ensure that no unauthorized visitors come onto the school site.
- As a reminder, if you are visiting the school you will need to sign in at reception and wait to be given a visitors badge. Visitors cannot be seen without an appointment as they cannot be unaccompanied in the school and most staff are teaching lessons during the school day and in meetings before and after. For more information about communication between school and home, please see our [WES Family-School Communication guide](#)

Parents' and carers event: supporting use of social media

It was a pleasure to host this evening last week, where parents who attended were able to hear from the school and university partners about how to work constructively together about this issue. Thank you also to those who gave feedback on this event. This was stimulated by the "Counter Don't Cancel" workshops in the summer, captured in [this documentary film](#).

Year 9 Parents' Evening and MCAS

A reminder that Year 9 Parents' Evening takes place on 11th January and booking opened last week. Appointments to see teachers must be made online, via the MCAS portal. To find out more about booking appointments if you have not already done so, please see the guidance on the school website: www.williamellis.camden.sch.uk/parents-evenings

The school will re-open to students on Monday 8th January, with registration at 9:35am followed by period 2 lessons. The first week back is Week A.

Best wishes for the holiday season and the start of 2024!

Yours faithfully,



Izzy Jones, Headteacher

Must Read

I'm dreaming of a GREEN Christmas!

The tradition of bringing greenery indoors dates back to ancient times. Often as a symbol of life over death, or the renewal of crops expected in the spring. As such the "Must Read" display in the library this week features wintery tales and books with green front covers. Dive into a great read this holiday by borrowing a book from the library or checking one out online through ePlatform. Here are some of the best titles -

I hope you all have a lovely Christmas Holiday and a very happy New Year! - Miss King - School Librarian

Other titles you may enjoy



ePlatform



Winter Entertainment Evening Karl Altmann, Assistant Headteacher

A fantastic evening was had by all those who attended and performed at the annual Christmas Concert on Wednesday 6th December. I particularly enjoyed the last set, a Jazz ensemble, playing Miles Davis's *U'n'I*.

Otis and Miles from 7B write:

Our experience of the concert evening was spectacular, in the sense that we got to show everyone our musical talents. We have been practicing for the past few weeks before the show, every Wednesday.

It was very organised and fun, the teachers made sure we were not bored, and we were prepared for the show. We were also able to see talent from different schools in the area. Also, at the middle of the show we were able to see our parents. We could also buy cold drinks and snacks which went to funds for our school.

It was very pleasant to see everyone performing amazing pieces and songs that people wrote themselves! The drama was very entertaining and clearly spoken. The orchestra sounded amazing and had different people from different year groups, which was great to see. In the big band, everyone got a solo to play on their brass instruments, which was very surprising.

When we performed, it was very exciting to see all of our parents faces watching us perform our songs which we got to sing with the parent's choir, which sounded very good.

At the end of the performance, Mrs. Jones gave a speech congratulating our performances and our teachers who organised the event.

Overall, we all had a very enjoyable time at the evening.

William in 8K adds:

I found the concert inspiring to see the other boys in the school play so many different kinds of music; I performed in the choir and orchestra and there is no better feeling than a successful performance. The teachers helped make it really fun and I can't wait to perform at the next concert!



Year 8 Messages

Christine Mercier Peart, Head of Year 8

As we have been getting towards the end of term, Year 8 have been learning their Christmas song every Friday for our end of year assembly. There will be rewards and fun time to spend with their Form Tutor before going home on the last day.

I am glad to see that many boys are participating in new clubs such as the Games Club on Mondays in Room L02 (although football is still a big favourite outdoors). Next term there will be a new club called ECO CLUB supported by one of our parents. Please mention the club to your son. If you want to know a bit more about the project please [click here](#).

I wish you all a good festive season and a happy new year.

ARTiculate Project

Claire Özkaya, Mental Health Lead

The ARTiculate programme is designed by the British Association of Art Therapists to facilitate children and young people's emotional literacy through using Art in an educational setting.

The programme is based upon what children's and young peoples' art therapists have learned about what is effective in reducing anxiety and supporting emotional literacy through creativity. This is an evidence-based practice known to assist with the processing of adverse childhood experiences and trauma. The programme draws on this learning and adapts it for non-art therapists to use in an effective, safe and enjoyable way.

The programme is used at WES to support and encourage young people's creativity and emotional literacy.

A student will typically attend a programme of 6 weekly sessions, although some students will participate for longer according to need. The sessions have the ultimate goal of increasing emotional literacy, and building on the student's abilities to manage difficult feelings and self-regulation.

So far this term 15 students have taken part in the programme, they are selected through a referral process that is contributed to by Senior Pastoral Leaders, Heads of Year, and Tutors.

As the term draws to a close we have celebrated the creativity of the students involved by creating a 'Creature Feature' exhibition in school outside the main hall, which some of you may have seen if you came along to the Winter Entertainment on the 6th December!



Here is an anonymous quote from a year 11 student who is currently being supported by the programme:

"What I enjoy doing most is being able to express myself freely, whether that be through art or speech. I always feel as though I can always be myself around Ms Özkaya and she always listens and responds accordingly with true care for me, and I especially enjoy it when we have conversations about just about anything really. The time I've spent with her has truly helped me with my anxiety and relieved the stress of school."

Una Rodgers, Head of MFL:

GCHQ National Language Competition

During November, the MFL department ran a GCHQ National Language competition for Year 9 students. This a virtual competition where teams from schools around the UK compete against each other to solve language-based puzzles and score points. The aim was to inspire language learning by encouraging students to discover their aptitude for learning languages.

The event was led by Ms Holderer and students from 9B won the competition. Here is what they had to say about it:

"i thought it was challenging and puzzling... I had a fun time" - Callum

"I thought the GCHQ challenge was hard but it was satisfying to solve the riddles" Vincent

"I thoroughly enjoyed the GCHQ competition as it was fun, challenging and requires great teamwork skills" Astor

"I liked the language competition - there was a good variety of challenges and languages. It was nice to see the different languages in the competition" Philip.

French Spelling Bee

This term, a group of Year 7 students have been working hard on Mondays at lunchtime to prepare for the French Spelling Bee competition. Foreign Language Spelling Bee is a competition for students in Year 7 to practise and improve their vocabulary, spelling and memory skills in a foreign language. Students have to translate the words from English and spell them in the target language.

Congratulations to Donnie, Neron, Otis, Joachim and Owen for their hard work - they will be taking part in the school competition in the Spring Term, followed by a regional final at the end of the Spring Term and hopefully a National Final in Cambridge at the end of the Summer Term!

Hayley Ward, Safeguarding Officer:

KS4 trip to the Ben Kinsella Trust

We were lucky enough to be offered a free workshop on knife crime at the Ben Kinsella Trust in Islington earlier this month. The Trust's award-winning knife crime prevention workshops teach young people about the dangers of knife crime and empower them to make positive choices to stay safe.

We hope to do more workshops in the future.



Year 10 'Achieve' Group festive baking

Also, the Year 10 'Achieve' group made mince pies for their cooking unit last week. They really enjoyed baking and said they were yummy.



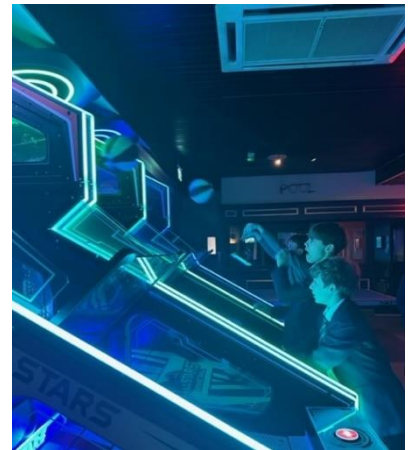
Year 7 Bowling Trip

Elizabeth Lawson, Head of Year 7

On Monday the 18th of December, I had the pleasure of taking a group of students out for a well-deserved trip to celebrate their incredible accomplishments in their first term at William Ellis.

Gili in 7K explained more:

"I think we can fairly say that every student that went bowling waited for this day to come. Four of the kids with the most praise points in their form were the ones to go bowling, so 16 altogether. All the pupils that went bowling had been Respectful, Resourceful, Reflective, Responsible and Resilient throughout the term. We left school at 11:15 and headed straight towards Rowans Ten Pin Bowl. We started at the arcade and when it was our turn bowling we split into 3 groups. Each of us had 10 turns, Miss Lawson and Mr Denning-Sen also played. Ms Lawson didn't win, Josh did. On the other hand, Mr Denning-Sen won his alley and in the third alley, Eshan won. Everyone had great fun. If you behave and get loads of praise points you can be next!"

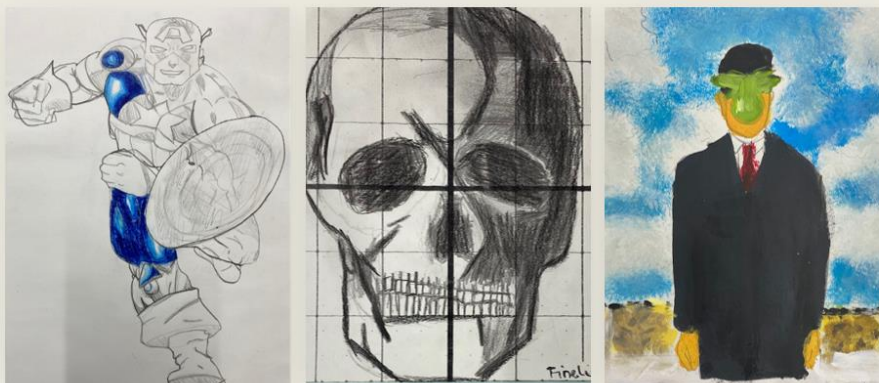


Artwork this term
Laura Madsen, Head of Art, Craft & Design

Here is a selection of photo of some of the fantastic artworks produced this term by students in Year 9:

year nine excellent work

Leon, Joseph



Amha, Leon, Ali, Jamal



Astor, Rio, Thomas, Ismail



Meanwhile, Year 10 have been working on poly printing:



Ms Sinnott adds that Year 7 students have been developing their continuous line drawings, and blending and toning work, demonstrating expressionism.

Next term, Year 10 Art and Graphics students will be working on the 'Cabinet of Curiosities' project in partnership with Lauderdale House. This will be the second year our students have taken part in this project, which culminates in work being displayed as part of the Highgate Festival.

Year 7 Geology Event

Jasmine Cockcroft, Science Teacher & KS3 Science Lead

At the end of November, all of Year 7 took part in a live Zoom with Dr Amy Edgington from the UCL Earth Sciences department as part of our current 'rocks' topic.

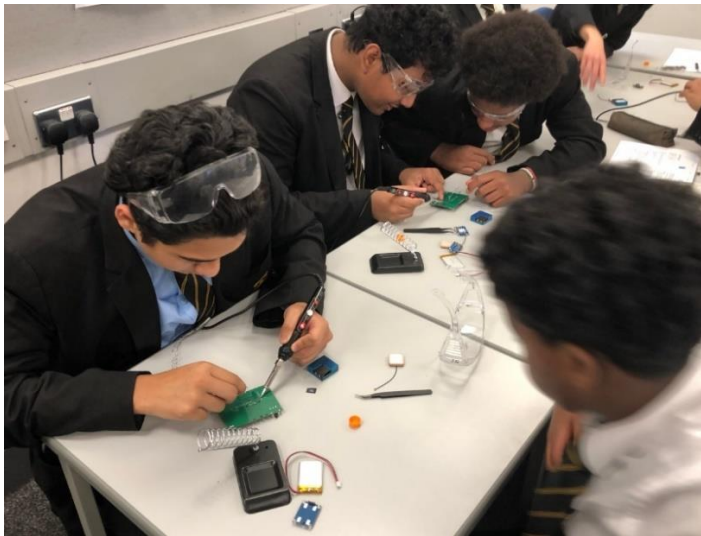
This was a great opportunity to meet a real scientist and to engage with their outreach project, Geobus. The students were given 3-D glasses and used them to identify rocks from images.

Geology enthusiasts might be interested to explore their Home Resources here: <https://www.geobus-london.org.uk/geobusresources>



Sel Pomeyie, Head of Geography:

Year 11 Community Air Pollution Sensor (CAPS) Project



In November, Year 11 Geography students were involved in a project to build air pollution sensors. This project consisted of 3 sessions where students learned about air pollution, built their own portable Air Quality (AQ) sensors, and then learned code to access the data.

The project covers multiple subjects from the curriculum and engages students with the issues of air pollution and the actions they can take to reduce it. Once fully programmed, the Y11s will be able to access all readings taken on a database which uses GPS to store where and when the reading was taken.

The pupils will be able to use the sensors when they complete their geographical urban fieldwork investigation in February 2024.

Year 7 Community Christmas Project

Yesterday, Year 7 students Leon (7F), Taha (7K), Hamdan (7L) and Freddie (7K) went to the Queens' Crescent Community Centre to help with Christmas Dinner for the elderly residents in the sheltered housing there when they dropped off the care packages students in their year group have been creating. The students were all a credit to the school, moving effortlessly around the room talking to the residents.

Freddie was so personable he was singled out as being "the next Prime Minister" and the QCCA staff got him to take the guests' lunch orders. He insisted on not leaving until he had gone around to each table to say goodbye to everyone the students had met.

Thank you to everyone who has donated items for this project, which have been gratefully received and will make a difference to members of our local community this Christmas.



WES@LaSWAP Christmas Party

Flora Wilson, Director of Sixth Form

The Sixth Form Student Council at WES organised a Christmas party for students and staff this week – not just to celebrate the season but also to raise money for Crisis at Christmas. Much fun was had by all and we hope it will be the first of many such social occasions organised for and by students! We also raised £67.70 for Crisis. Well done to all! Below is a photo of the people who made it all happen – after a decision that was only made two weeks ago it was excellent work!



WES 500 Words Update

Sam Nunnery, Assistant Headteacher

The WES 500 Words writing competition was launched this half term. The competition required students to write a creative story of just 500 words or less. Students were able to choose the theme and decide what their story would be about.

We received entries from KS3, 4 and 5 which are currently being judged following the 18th December closing date. Winners will be announced in January and will receive their Bronze, Silver or Gold prize Amazon voucher.

Good luck to all who entered!

