

# William Ellis School

Headteacher's letter to families

Summer Term - 10th May 2024

Dear families,

This week has marked the start of written public examinations for Year 11 and post-16 students - their opportunity to show everything they have learnt over their secondary school career up to this point. We would like to congratulate them on their revision and studies so far, and wish them well in the packed schedule of exams for the next two weeks, and into June.



## Revision and study support for Year 11

Although students will be in exams for significant periods of the coming weeks, students should use the time in between to attend their normal Year 11 lessons where they will be supported with revision and teachers will be available for support and help. Revision/exam prep is difficult and having the structure of a school day is helpful. Uniform and conduct during the exam period, in and around the exam hall and while otherwise in school, should meet school expectations at all times.

## Uniform reminders

As the weather warms up, an increasing number of students are asking about the uniform requirements during the summer term. When governors ratified the uniform policy in Spring 2024, they considered this question explicitly and the new uniform code is published here: [William Ellis School - Uniform](#)

Please can I emphasise the following:

- A blazer is compulsory in school up to the end of May
- Students are not allowed to wear tracksuit tops or hoodies in and around the school
- Students need to have correct PE kit: the blue t-shirt and shorts from our uniform supplier
- Any trousers or shorts must be grey or black and smart (no jeans, chinos, combat trousers, tracksuit style or material). If their socks are visible with shorts, they must wear white, black or charcoal grey socks.

## Survey for families

Thank you to those families who filled in our recent survey. The responses were positive about students feeling safe and happy, high expectations of learning and behaviour, and the range of subjects and extracurricular opportunities on offer and students' wider personal development. The comments provided to the survey have been summarised as follows:

“The school excels in nurturing personal development, particularly in areas of gender, sexuality, and feminism, creating a well-rounded experience for the boys. It effectively manages resources to support pupils with challenging behavior and is praised for its **responsive and caring staff**. The **smooth transition** from primary school, facilitated by summer school and kind teachers, is highly valued by parents. The school's **pastoral care** is excellent, with form teachers and heads of year providing outstanding support. Parents feel the school is **welcoming and open**, offering a **supportive and inclusive environment**. The **extra-curricular support** and **GCSE preparation** are also commended, as they contribute significantly to the students' academic success. Overall, the school is celebrated for its **dedicated staff** and the **positive community** it fosters, making it a commendable choice for parents.”

Responses were less positive about how well families understand what the students learn within each subject, and the speed and clarity of communication is not as good as some families would like it to be. These were the key areas of improvement that were commented on, and what we are doing this term to address it:

- Improve the cleanliness of the toilets: we are increasing the presence of duty staff in and around the toilet area during break and lunch and between lessons, and not allowing students to visit the toilets unsupervised during lessons
- Reduce reliance on substitute teachers, especially for GCSE subjects: as we know that teachers will be supporting students on residential camps this term and not with their classes, we will be employing additional permanent staff to cover lessons in school, so that if lessons are covered it is by teachers with whom students are more familiar.
- Increase regular communication of school achievements: we will endeavour to do this through the newsletter, our Twitter/X platform and other means!

- Provide greater curriculum transparency, including academic challenge: as our website is upgraded over the summer, curriculum information will be clearer and more accessible to all
- Improve sports opportunities and inclusivity.
- Increase students' self-discipline and sense of responsibility: this has been considered in the way that we have planned the curriculum for Key Stage 3 camps this year, and the importance of representation and community is a theme that will run through assemblies – including the LaSWAP consortium. It will also be an increasingly prominent theme in our Professional Development for staff.

We will re-open the survey for one further week, for families to give any additional responses. This is the link:

<https://forms.office.com/e/0c8n1SPrAJ>

## Year 9 Assessments and Camp Week

End of key stage 3 assessments for our Year 9 students will be taking place during the week of 13th May. We have been talking to students about these assessments, so they know what they will be assessed on and we have been giving them structured advice about how to revise. Most of the subject assessments will take place in the Sports Hall with some practical assessments for Art/Graphics, Drama, Music and PE in suitable spaces. Individual timetables for students' practical assessments in Art, Graphics, Drama, Music and PE have been posted on Satchel.

We are running these assessments in much the same way as public exams so that students are aware of and ready for GCSE assessment. There will be special access arrangements for eligible students.

These are the most important rules for all students to follow that replicate the rules for GCSE and A Level exams.

1. Be on time for all your exams – if you are late or absent you must sit the exam at a designated alternative time which may be after school or at lunchtime.
2. Do not cheat in any way.
3. You must not take into the exam any notes or any electronic devices, or a watch of any kind. (There is a clock at the front of the room.)
4. Any pencil cases must be completely see-through.
5. Do not use any correcting fluid or highlighter pens.
6. Do not try to communicate with or disturb anyone else in the exam room.
7. Do not draw or write anything offensive or obscene.
8. If you leave the exam room without an invigilator, you will not be allowed to return.
9. Students must attend in full and correct uniform.

Please encourage your son to take these assessments seriously, try his hardest and do his best. We cannot ask more of the boys than that.

The assessment results will be reported in the end of year report in July.

## Camp – week of 20th May 2024

Mr Court is making final arrangements for camp. The camp is an important part of our *Outdoor Education* curriculum and as such we expect every student to participate in the camp. This is the school programme for all students that week.

If you have any queries about the camp activities, please email Mr Court: [court@williamellis.camden.sch.uk](mailto:court@williamellis.camden.sch.uk)

If you would like to discuss any concerns you have about your son attending camp, please contact your son's tutor in the first instance.

## Early close on 12th June

Students will be dismissed at lunchtime (1.10pm) on the day for staff training in the afternoon - this is across all four LaSWAP schools.

Yours faithfully,

**Izzy Jones**

**Headteacher**



## **This week's WESPA Round-Up**

WESPA Round Up | International Eve needs you, NW5 community power and dates for the diary

Dear families,

Thank you very much for the offers of help, food and ideas for International Evening on 20th June. Please keep them coming, it's a big night and we need everybody!

### **Kentish Town Summit**

Last night, on behalf of WES parents, I attended the Kentish Town Summit, an event hosted by the Council and dedicated to connecting people running community programs in or connected to Kentish Town. I found it very moving to hear from and meet so many interesting and inspiring people devoted to supporting NW5. Councillors, community centres, safe and nurturing afterschool opportunities for young people, neighbourhood forums - there are so many good things going on and amazing people (including many connected with WES) looking out for us. A recurring theme was how to sign post and connect so that we all know about everything available to us. I'll be posting more things here and please do get in touch if you have any ideas, thoughts or things that would help your family and friends. We are an amazing community and the more we pull together, the better it is for everybody.

### **WESPA dates for the diary**

- New family day for incoming students Sept 2024 - 11th May 2024
- WESPA General Meeting - all welcome and there will be biscuits - 20th May 2024
- WESPA Wednesday in the staff room - 22nd May 2024
- International Evening 2024 - 20th June 2024
- Year 11 Leavers' Celebration - 27th June 2024
- WESPA Awards - July tbc
- Working weekend at the Mill - 26-28th July

For those helping on Saturday, I really look forward to catching up then and for everybody, whatever your plans, have a great weekend and enjoy the sunshine.

Best wishes

Al

Chair WESPA

**Coming Up:**

<p><b>Year 11 GCSE Exams</b></p> <p>ALL DAY From 07 May until 21 Jun</p>	07 May
<p><b>Year 9 Exam Week</b></p> <p>ALL DAY From 13 May until 17 May</p>	13 May
<p><b>Year 13 Exams</b></p> <p>ALL DAY From 13 May until 21 Jun</p>	13 May
<p><b>Year 12 DofE Qualifying Expedition</b></p> <p>ALL DAY</p>	16 May
<p><b>Year 9 Camp Week</b></p> <p>ALL DAY From 20 May until 24 May</p>	20 May
<p><b>Year 10 Work Experience Preparation Day</b></p> <p>ALL DAY</p>	20 May
<p><b>Non-Uniform Day - £1 Charity donation to take part</b></p> <p>ALL DAY</p>	24 May
<p><b>Last day of Half Term</b></p> <p>ALL DAY</p>	24 May
<p><b>Half Term Break</b></p> <p>ALL DAY From 27 May until 31 May</p>	27 May
<p><b>First day of Summer Half Term 2</b></p> <p>ALL DAY</p>	03 June