

## **News Update**

### **(17th November 2023)**



Dear families,

Welcome to this week's newsletter, which contains updates from the school and WESPA. The first item after my introduction is the new "book of the week" regular feature, from Islington Library Service who support our reading provision in school.

#### **Attendance to school**

You will have noticed that in recent newsletters and letters home we have started to write more about attendance. This is because coming to school on time and being present in lessons is the single most important factor, at William Ellis and nationally, in students doing well in their exams and feeling safe and happy in school.

**I'd like to congratulate the following forms on their strong attendance this half term: 11F, 10B, 9W, 8F and 7F.**

I realise the pressures around visiting family and travelling outside of holiday time. However, according to law students must be in school for the 190 days per year that it is open to them. Please do your utmost to ensure that students are in school up to and including Friday 22nd December. Requests for absence during term time for travel reasons will not be authorized.

#### **LaSWAP Open Evening, Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November**

This takes place next week and is an important moment for all Year 11 students, who are invited to the event from 5:30pm. Even if they are unsure about whether LaSWAP is their first choice, students can use the evening to consider which courses they would want to choose and to understand more about what their experience in Year 12 and beyond would be like. Information about bookings has already been shared, but for current information please go to [LaSWAP Sixth Form Consortium - Home](#)

A reminder that students will be dismissed after period 4 on Thursday to facilitate preparations of the school site for this event. The following day, Friday 24<sup>th</sup>, will be a staff professional development day with school closed to students.

#### **Uniform consultation**

We have shared with students this week a consultation on school uniform via Satchel One – you should be able to see this on the Satchel parent app. Although William Ellis is a uniform school, we recognise that the students' views are also important and this consultation will help inform future decisions we make. Please encourage students to complete it before it closes next Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> November.

#### **Supporting appropriate use of social media: an information evening for parents and carers, Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> November at 5:30-6:30pm**

We will be leading an evening for parents and carers to develop everyone's understanding of how to support our students with using social media appropriately, how to navigate the challenges it presents and different types of online content and interaction. We will be presenting jointly with colleagues from Middlesex University, who are also supporting us to run similar sessions for students in February, as they did earlier this year. This event is open to parents and carers of all students in Years 7 to 13, and so to manage the number of attendees please complete [this short online form](#) if you wish to attend. There is also an opportunity to ask any questions that you would like us to address during the session.

## **Catering update**

We are currently advertising for a Catering Manager to run a high-quality lunch operation. We need to fill this post as soon as possible. The vacancy can be found at [William Ellis School - Vacancies](#) If you know anybody who would be interested in this post, please let them know about it and encourage them to contact the school if they have any questions.

The limit on daily spending in the canteen is currently set at £6. This changed because of the price increases that were introduced in September due to inflationary pressures. For £6, students are able to buy a hot meal at lunchtime with selected drinks or a dessert, and a pizza or similar snack at breaktime. Free school meal allocated money can only be spent at lunchtime – this is a national policy.

We appreciate that some parents have requested a lower daily spend limit, but others were requesting the limit to be increased even before prices increased. We therefore will not be reducing the limit at this time. If you want to restrict spending to below £6 per day, please adjust the amount that you are topping up on ParentPay so that students know when they have overspent. We do not refuse to serve students at lunchtime even if their balance is below £0, because it is essential for them to eat lunch to learn effectively.

## **Year 7 Parents' Evening and MCAS**

A reminder that Year 7 Parents' Evening takes place on 7<sup>th</sup> December. Appointments to see teachers will be made online, via the child's MCAS portal. To find out more about booking appointments, please see the guidance on the school website: [www.williamellis.camden.sch.uk/parents-evenings](http://www.williamellis.camden.sch.uk/parents-evenings)

Year 7 families will be notified when booking opens.

## **Children's Commissioner's message about "The Big Ambition" campaign**

Dame Rachel De Souza has sent the following message to schools across London:

*By now, I hope that you have seen my national campaign The Big Ambition.*

*Children or parents can complete the survey here: [www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigambition](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigambition) . Further resources are available on our [website](#).*

*It is really important that the pupils at William Ellis School have participated in The Big Ambition survey and had their say. I want to ensure that the voices of all children in the London area are fairly represented in the findings so that I can share their views with the most senior members of the country.*

*The Big Ambition provides a much-needed opportunity for the children of England to tell political decision makers what is important to them ahead of the General Election. I will be sharing their responses with Government to ensure that children's voices are heard.*

This is a great opportunity to teach children about politics and why it is important for them to use their voice.

## **Camden events and activities for young people**

**Black History Season**, which runs until **15 December**, is a chance to celebrate, learn and explore Black culture. Check out the programme at [lovecamden.org/blackhistoryseason](http://lovecamden.org/blackhistoryseason) .

**Winter Holiday Activities and Food programme** will run 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. The programme offers free, fun activities and nutritional education - from learning to make healthy meals, to creative activities, including photography, drama, arts and crafts, and sports such as football and basketball. A free hot meal is included as part of each day's activities. The Camden HAF programme is co-ordinated by Young Camden Foundation on behalf of Camden Council, with funding from the Department for Education. To find out more and book your places, visit [Haf.youngcamdenfoundation.org.uk](https://Haf.youngcamdenfoundation.org.uk), or if you have any questions, please email [Info@youngcamdenfoundation.org.uk](mailto:Info@youngcamdenfoundation.org.uk).

**Free Architecture and Design after school clubs for students aged 14-18 year:** STORE STORE are running free Architecture and Design After School Club opportunities for state school students aged 14-18 in Camden. Two clubs are running in November: **Waste City** run by [Re-Collective](#) where students will explore how waste is processes and design-build a compostable toilet and **Crochet Ballys** run by [Crochet Cooney](#) where students will learn how to make a balaclava using traditional techniques and sustainable materials. Students can reserve a place by emailing [school@storeprojects.org](mailto:school@storeprojects.org) with their name, school, age and which course they would like to attend.

Finally, our Non-Uniform Day at the end of October, supporting RBL's Poppy Appeal, raised over £340 in donations. We also had a very full tin of additional donations made by students and families who have bought poppies and other items from the school office's poppy shop. We will be given a grand total of the amount we have raised later in the year. Thank you to everyone who donated in support of this cause.

Yours faithfully,



Izzy Jones, Headteacher



# Must Read



In recognition of Remembrance Day, the must read book this week is *Boy, Everywhere* by A.M. Dassu.

13 year old Sami from Syria, lives like a normal teenager, pestering his parents for new trainers, playing computer games and football...but after a bomb attack in a local shopping centre his life is torn apart. Forced to flee the escalating conflict in Syria with his family, Sami travels across Europe into danger, poverty and fear.

“Fantasitcally well-researched and empathetic story that gives humanity and respect to those seeking sanctuary, busting a number of stereotypes about refugees along the way” - Amnesty International UK

### Other titles you may enjoy







William Ellis School

### Year 8 Messages

**Christine Mercier Peart, Head of Year 8**

I am hoping you all enjoyed recent Halloween and bonfire night events.

I would like to start this message with praise and mention how well our Year 8 has been doing in the football and basketball competitions taking place across Camden. Also well done to all participants playing for their forms and houses in our internal WES competitions.

While some of our Year 8 students enjoy the numerous sporting activities on offer, we are happy for boys with other interests to participate in the multiple other clubs the school offers (see the Y8 club timetable [here](#)). I'd like to make a special shout-out and 'well done' to Elias and Anes from 8L for recently organising a Board Games club! If any families have any board games (in good condition and with all pieces etc. present) that you would like to donate please feel free to do so; it will support this new and welcome initiative!

November's weather is really unpredictable! one minute it's sunny, the next it is raining cats and dogs! Please remind students to bring their rain coat with them even on days that may start out mild and dry.

Finally, a quick message from the PE department: If boys can't find their kit bags they must come with a T-shirt and shorts/tracksuit bottoms to do their PE lesson until they can find their PE kit.

Have a good November.

## STEAM Careers Talk for Year 12 Graphics Students Laura Madsen, Head of Art, Craft & Design

On Thursday 2nd of November the Year 12 Graphics A level class was visited by two Camden STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) Ambassadors, from the company *Moonbug*, who gave a careers talk about getting a role in animation and branding.



The ambassadors shared how they got their jobs and gave advice on how to create a portfolio. *Moonbug* makes online content (including the cartoon *Coco Melon*) which are shown on you tube and make money by having lots of views.

The group asked lots of questions and were lucky enough to get the LinkedIn address of one of the presenters and an offer to do work experience!

## WESPA Round Up Al Mobbs, WESPA Chair

### WESPA AGM Agenda, WES Debating Society and something for the weekend

Dear families,

It has been lovely to hear many stories of celebrations last weekend - a very happy Diwali to all WES families celebrating.

### William Ellis Debating Society

My huge thanks to Y9 parent and WES Governor, Hugh and to History and Politics teacher Emma Kritz for turning the ideas of a William Ellis Debating Society into a reality. 'WEDS' is now up and running and takes place on Fridays at 1.15pm in Miss Kritz's classroom. Please do let your sons know - it is an excellent and constructive way to learn how to argue a point, hone public speaking skills and consider multiple perspectives. Very valuable life skills!

Hugh has volunteered to help but on the occasion that he is not able, we will need another parent volunteer to help Miss Kritz. If you can lend a hand to steer our boys as they debate such hot topics as 'this house believes that single sex schools should be supported' or a mock general election, please email [williamellispa@gmail.com](mailto:williamellispa@gmail.com)

### WESPA AGM

There is much happening in the WESPA camp and I look forward to seeing many of you at the WESPA AGM next week. The WESPA Committee, Team and groups are doing amazing things behind the scenes and the meetings are an incredibly important forum to get together, share thoughts, opinions and ideas that will provoke action, help school and ultimately create a better environment for all of the WES community. If you have something to say or just want to listen, please join us on Tuesday.

**William Ellis School Parents Association (WESPA)**

**AGM AGENDA  
Tuesday 21st November 2023, 6.30pm  
William Ellis School Library**

WESPA welcomes all parents, carers and staff at the school. For any questions, please email:  
[williamellispa@gmail.com](mailto:williamellispa@gmail.com)

---

- 1. Welcome and apologies**
  - 2. Approval of last minutes**
  - 3. Chair's report**
  - 4. Finance report**
  - 5. Approval of accounts**
  - 6. Election of Trustees**
  - 7. AOB**
- 

**GENERAL MEETING AGENDA**

- 1. Communications overview and feedback**
- 2. WESPA initiatives and purpose - open discussion**
- 3. Date of Next Meeting**
- 4. AOB**

Thank you as ever to all the parents who are already helping with voice, action or donation - the power in numbers creates an undeniable difference. If anybody missed last week's shoutout for the WESPA Session Players, it's not too late to volunteer and it would be amazing to have your help (and bow or horn) at Winter Entertainment.

Have a great weekend and if you are at a loose end, why not check out the Growing Green secondhand clothes sale on St. Alban's Road on Sunday. It's free to attend and all proceeds go to help greening our local schools. (Flyer attached)

Best wishes  
Al

Chair WESPA