



December 2021

NEWSLETTER - Issue 7

[www.watling.academy](http://www.watling.academy)

## Parks Trust Trip Hazeley Wood

Watling Academy were fortunate enough to be awarded funding from John Lewis to support us in taking some of our students out to visit Hazeley Wood, our local Parks Trust site. The year 7 and year 8 Eco Councils have both taken part in this trip, alongside the two forms who showed the highest levels of engagement in last half term's Eco Council competition.

While at Hazeley Wood, we were joined by two members of The Parks Trust who taught us about our responsibility to Respect, Protect and Enjoy our woodland. The groups carried out some litter picking, taught each other about the signage in the wood via charades, learned about what to take when out on a walk, wrote an acrostic poem and designed a unique piece of natural art. We were ready for a rest by the time we came back to school!

We learned some interesting facts while we were on our trip. Did you know that Hazeley Wood is surrounded by a plastic barrier to keep endangered newts safely within the woodland area? Did you know that pumpkins can be poisonous to hedgehogs? Our top tip is to place pumpkins on a picnic table or tree stump so that the only animals that eat them are the ones that are supposed to!

In the New Year, we will be joined by The Parks Trust during an assembly so that everyone knows how to enjoy our local parks safely and understands the work that this charity gets up to.



*Ms Cox*



### Words from Mr Bacon - Head of School

Throughout the last six weeks I have been fortunate enough to interview nearly 100 candidates who have been applying to work at Watling Academy from next September, some earlier. From a whole range of backgrounds, experience and interests it is always a privilege to talk with those who want to work at our school. Overwhelmingly they talked passionately about the chance to make a difference to the education and lives of our children here at Watling but also our values and ethos – Respect, Responsibility and Kindness and STEM, Sustainability and MK. I believe that these are something special and unique and whilst we are not perfect, our students and staff proudly engage with and reflect these in the way they work and the articles in this newsletter demonstrate absolutely that.

As we head into the Christmas holiday, I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone associated with Watling Academy – students, families, staff, governors, and the wider community for playing their part in successfully navigating what has been another challenging term with COVID as a backdrop. Despite that challenge we have over 400 students regularly attending after school clubs each week, over 30 students involved in our Eco-committee, over 30 students involved in our Student Councils, nearly 200 students involved in trips and fixtures, 480 students involved in STEM curriculum days and much more and this is with only two year groups! Well done to everyone.

A reminder that our Celebration of Success online ceremony celebrating some of the Individual achievements of our students can be found on our website alongside the Learning Pathways evening online events for Year 7 and Year 8.

Finally, I would like to wish all of you the best for the festive period with the chance to celebrate or relax in whatever way you have planned. Stay safe and well and we look forward to welcoming our students back to school on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> January after COVID testing on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup>.



## Women in Engineering Trip to Nifty Lift

We had the very exciting opportunity to visit Nifty Lift in Milton Keynes for the women in engineering day 2021.

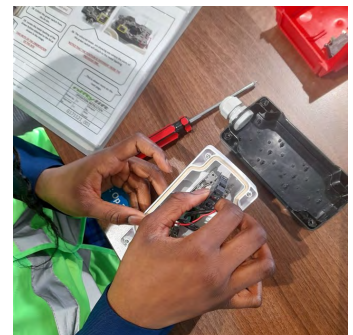
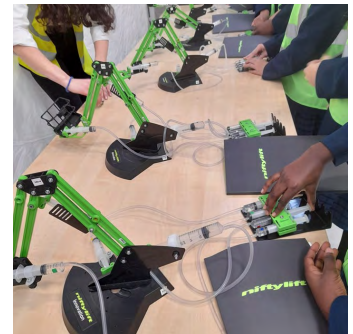
As we arrived the students were very excited to be able to follow assembly diagrams for emergency stop buttons for the Nifty lifts. In teams they assembled real life stop buttons and also had the opportunity to talk to women engineers about their jobs, what they entailed and how they got there.

The next part of our visit was a tour of the factory. We were all taken in by how enormous the factory was, but very efficient in its manufacturing process. Each area had its designated purpose, staffed by experts in that process. As part of the tour we were shown the CAD (computer-aided design) development office, and the massive 3D printer they have for prototyping. It was amazing to see the skills we are teaching our students in school, having their real life practical applications.

The next part of our tour involved students being able to work small scale hydraulic nifty lifts so they could understand the power of hydraulics through syringes and water, they also had a chance to work the control panel of a Nifty lift and then saw the all electric nifty lift in action demonstrated by two women who helped engineer it.

The final part of our tour was where students got to use the same CAD software that the product designers and engineers at Nifty Lift use to design and then 3D print an emergency stop button fidget toy. It was great to hear from the women designers and product designers about how they use this software in their jobs to test new products and improve existing ones.

I'm sure this has inspired many of our young women to consider engineering as a career choice for them. Several of them were asking when they could come back again!



*Mr Houghton*

## BEBRAS COMPETITION



Students across the school this half term have taken part in the annual Bebras competition. The competition is made up of a mixture of 18 different questions with the difficulty increasing as students progress through the questions. The competition tests student's ability to problem solve as well as use their computational and logical thinking skills that students have been developing in Computing lessons since joining Watling Academy.

There were several students who excelled in this competition this year with **Marley Riley** (7DGR) being awarded Best in School with 172 out of 200 in the Juniors category and **Eve Webley** (RPR) awarded Best in School with 125 out of 200 in the Intermediate category. The following students who should also be recognised as they have made it through to the next round of the competition which takes place in February 2022:

Year 7 – Blessing Darko, Aidan Hodgson, Jamie Lynch, Marley Riley, Leo Vaughan and Allegra Wilby

Year 8 – Johnny Jeywright, Joshua Memery, Scarlett Page and Eve Webley

Massive congratulations to these students and everyone else who took part in the competition!

*Mr Bartlam*

## BCS CYBER CHALLENGE 2021

Year 8 students last academic year in their STEM lessons took part in a coding competition which is run by the British Computer Society and was open to all schools in the areas of Bedford, Luton, Milton Keynes, and Buckinghamshire.

The student's brief was to "create an educational resource that promotes the positive aspects of using online resources to learn, for schoolwork and social interactions, but also be careful to check if the information is true or false. The resource must encourage a behaviour of critical evaluation to get the best from online information and discard the fake."

Students spent around 4 weeks working in groups to plan, research, implement and refine their educational resource using Scratch. We can finally share the results of the challenge:

3<sup>rd</sup> Place (across all regions) - Ellie Handley, Sarah-Kate Jenkins and Yasmeen Khan

Eleanora Awetam's was highly commended for the educational resource that she created

Jensen Pughe, Rasheed Matanmi, Ethan Cox, and Oscar Theobald were also highly commended for the educational resources that they created.

We as a STEM team would like to congratulate all students for the effort, they put into their education resources.



*Mr Bartlam*



## ECO COMMITTEE

### GETTING ACTIVE

The Eco Committee has been launched to Year 7 and we now have 32 students on board, working together to make our school a greener place. They will be embarking on the Eco-Schools Green Flag award this year and our Site Manager has been invited to help them complete an initial audit of the school.



As a reward for their hard work over the previous year, the Eco Committee went on a trip to Hazeley Wood as part of the Parks Trust Environmental Awareness session (Please see front page for full story).

Just before October half term, the Eco Committee ran a form time competition to design a logo for the Committee and the two forms who engaged the most with the competition also got to go out on this trip.

The winning logo was designed by Lydia Worrall in 7AFR and has now been made into a sustainable badge by Mr Bailey our DT technician.

All Eco Committee members now have this badge to wear on their blazer.

*Ms Piper*

## CYBERFIRST COMPETITION



Teams of female students in Year 8 had the opportunity to develop their cybersecurity skills as competitors in the CyberFirst Girls Competition run by the National Cyber Security Centre this half term.

The competition is designed to boost interest in the cybersecurity field among female-identifying students, who are typically under-represented in cybersecurity careers. Competitors worked in teams of four or less to complete a wide variety of online challenges involving computing topics like cryptography, coding, binary, and more.

The top two teams nearly tied for first place, with one team winning by just 3 points. Nationwide results for the competition will be announced soon, with some teams being selected to move ahead to the in-person finals.

*Ms Norwood*

## STUDENT COUNCIL

The student council have been meeting weekly to discuss pertinent issues this half term, including looking at rewards to motivate students and deciding which charities to support for our end of term non-uniform days.

Recently, they met with the Managing Director of Miquill, our school caterers, to share their ideas on possible Improvements to the canteen. They conducted themselves in a confident and respectful manner.



*Ms Cox*

## NON-UNIFORM DAY

On Friday 3rd December, we invited all students and staff to wear red, blue, green or orange clothing to school (the colours of the emergency services) and donate £1 towards the 999 Cenotaph in London. This will be the UK's first monument to honour everybody who has served in the NHS and the emergency services,

We raised the grand total of £383.02.

Well done to everyone who took part!

**£383.02  
Raised !**



*Mr Stormer*

## FOOD BANK COLLECTION



### MK Foodbank

Watling students and staff have been working hard to collect items to support our local foodbank. We were impressed with the kindness our students showed in thinking of others during the Christmas period. Mr Quin's form, 7MQN and Mrs Wall's form, 8FWL, led the way with the most donations! Members of the student council helped to load the items into the minibus to be taken to the foodbank.

If you need extra support to get through the Christmas period then please call the Food Bank Helpline on **0300 303 4933** or text **HELP** to 07874 964505 to discuss your situation in confidence with experienced staff. The Helpline is open between 9:00am – 3:00pm, Monday – Friday. Alternatively, visit their website for more information: <http://mkfoodbank.org.uk/>

Jessica, Mihir and Sophia, student council reps from the forms that organised the highest number of donations (7MQN and 8FWL).

*Ms Cox*



## SPORTS AT WATLING ACADEMY



The MK Cross-Country Championship took place at Campbell Park on 17th November.

16 students represented Watling Academy at the event.



For many of whom, it was the first time they had ever competed in a Cross-Country event so we are very proud of all their achievements and ability to try something new.



*Ms Scarr*

It has been fantastic to see so many students getting involved in our extra-curricular sports programme this term. We have seen large numbers attending clubs for Basketball, Football, Badminton and Netball. We have also had some students taking the opportunity to take part in clubs for Rugby and Korfball. These clubs have given students an opportunity to develop their skills within these specific sports, but also to enhance their soft skills – such as teamwork, leadership, resilience, organisation to name a few. Our current club provision will be continuing after Christmas, so any students who have registered and been attending clubs will be able to continue in January. For any students that wish to become involved in January there will be details available through the website explaining how to get involved.

Alongside our extra-curricular club provision, we have started fixtures with other local schools this half-term. It has been brilliant for students to take part in competitive matches representing Watling Academy with pride and clearly displaying our core values of respect, responsibility and kindness.

Despite the challenges that have been presented by COVID guidance in schools, we have been involved in fixtures or tournaments in the following sports – Netball, Football, Basketball and Cross Country. Through these we have seen some excellent team and individual performances and the students should be incredibly proud of their performances.

As we move into 2022, I look forward to us continuing to develop Sport at Watling Academy. Students will support this growth through continued active engagement in both Physical Education lessons and our club programme, this will lead to increasing opportunities to represent Watling Academy in fixtures and inter-school competition. There will also be a number of inter house sporting events for

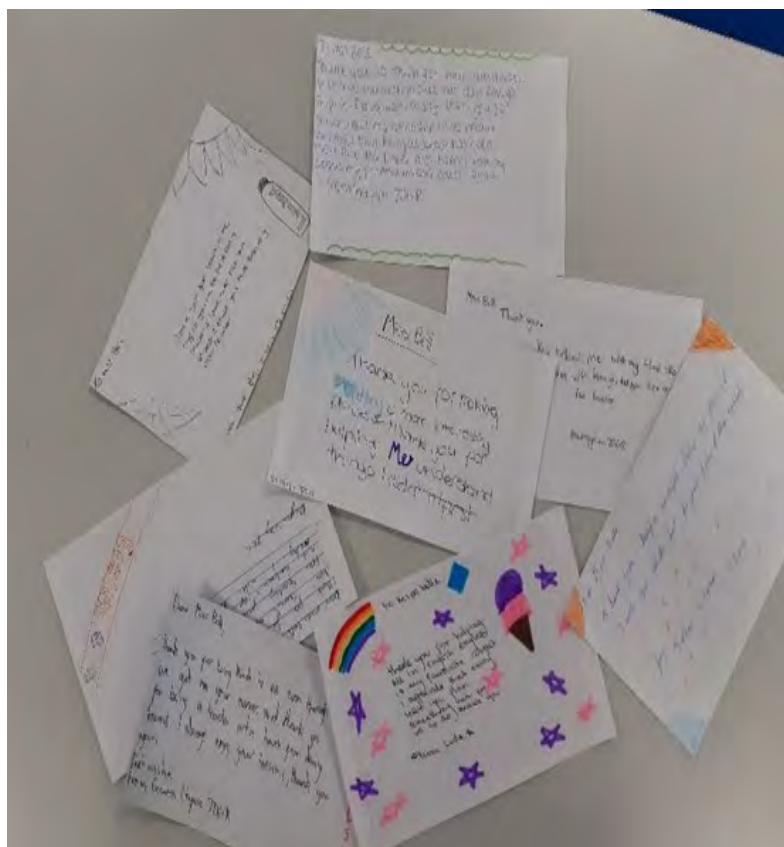
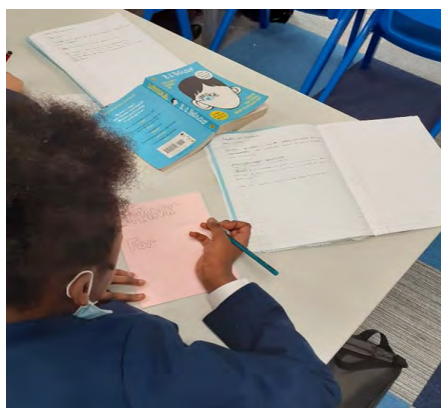
*Mr Stormer*

# ENGLISH ACTS OF KINDNESS

In year 7 English we have been reading the novel 'Wonder' about a boy with facial abnormalities attending school for the first time.

The ending of the novel fits with our school's core values as explained by the Principal in the novel:

"Kinder than is necessary. Because it's not enough to be kind. One should be kinder than needed... we carry with us, as human beings, not just the capacity to be kind, but the very choice of kindness... Courage. Kindness. Friendship. Character. These are the qualities that define us as human beings, and propel us, on occasion, to greatness."



In keeping with this message, students have been creating postcards and thank you cards in lessons for colleagues at the school. It has been great fun reading the inspiring messages of our students and to spread a little bit of kindness and early Christmas joy around the school!

**Great work year 7s and remember: "When given the choice between being right or being kind, choose kind."**

*Mr Quin*

# SPANISH SPELLING AND TRANSLATION BEES

## YEAR 8

During the first term all students have been practising translating a series of key present tense sentences into Spanish as part of their preparation for the Foreign Language Translation Bee House Competition.

The competition itself took place in their Spanish lessons during the week beginning Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021. Students had to correctly translate and spell as many of the present tense sentences as possible in a minute.

Two winners from each House were then selected to take part in the next stage, which is a School Competition that will take place shortly after February half-term. The winners of the School Competition will potentially then compete in a regional/national competition.



The winners of the House Competition were.:

Kiera Gray – Leyh (10)  
Cindy Odiba – Leyh (6.5 and won tie-breaker)  
Jenisha Chandravathanan – Marshall (10.5)  
Eleanora Awetam – Marshall (10.5)  
Brenny Pearl – Rutherford (9.5)  
Joshua Memery – Rutherford (8.5)  
Gabriel Madureira – Laine (16.5)  
Scarlett Page – Laine (12)  
Shreya Machireddy – Turing (11)  
Bayleigh Stone – Turing (10.5)

The total number of present tense sentences correctly translated in a minute by each House was:

5th – Rutherford 114.5  
4th – Leyh 116.5  
3rd – Turing 139  
2nd – Marshall 153.5  
1st – Laine 159



Foreign Language Spelling Bee 2022

## YEAR 7

During the first term all students have been practising translating and spelling in Spanish up to 50 new words as part of their preparation for the Foreign Language Spelling Bee House Competition.

The competition itself took place in their Spanish lessons during the last week of the Autumn Term. Students had to correctly translate and spell as many of the 50 words as possible in a minute. The students with the highest scores were then selected to take part in the next stage, which is a School Competition that will take place just before the Easter Holidays. The winners of the School Competition will potentially then compete in a regional/national competition

The winners of Stage 1 were.:

Agnes Grey Flack – 17 words correctly translated and spelt within a minute  
Jotham Tarfa – 16  
Freya Kyd – Marshall 16  
Halima Ahmed – 14  
Liana Hayfron – 16  
Rabiya Raja – 15  
Millie Ashley – 19  
Rumana Karamali – 18  
Nihaal Mohammed - 15  
Ayaan Asif – 14  
Trishiv Parsotam – 14  
Marley Riley – 14  
Zaina Shaik – 14

Well done to everyone in Year 7 for taking part. It is great to see everyone spelling words in Spanish

*Mr Scott*



# WATLING NOTICE BOARD

## NEW TIMETABLE AND GROUPINGS

There will be a new timetable in place for ALL students after Christmas. This will be a TWO-week timetable (week A and week B). The timetable for students will be different in each week. To help you support your child with the weeks, for the next half term weeks A and B are as follows...

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| • w/b Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> January | Week A |
| • w/b Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> January  | Week B |
| • w/b Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> January  | Week A |
| • w/b Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> January  | Week B |
| • w/b Monday 31 <sup>st</sup> January  | Week A |
| • w/b Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> February  | Week B |

The main change will be that Year 7 are no longer taught in tutor groups and will be taught in sets for some subjects and mixed ability for others. Year 8 groups will remain broadly the same with a few changes for individual students.

## **Uniform**

Following suggestions by some parents and students we have decided to introduce a new Watling Academy jumper that can be worn underneath students' blazers. The jumper can be worn at any time during the school year and is entirely optional.

The jumper will be available from Maisie's Clothing superstore in Wolverton from early January. Please note that the jumper is in addition to the academy blazer and not an alternative to the blazer. The jumper will cost £21.99 or £23.99 depending on the size.



## SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS OVER CHRISTMAS

The school office will be closed during the Christmas holidays from 5pm on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December through until 8am on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> January. If there is anything urgent then please email to [admin@watling.academy](mailto:admin@watling.academy) and we will aim to respond as soon as possible.

# WATLING NOTICE BOARD

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## Dates for your Diary:

### End of Term

Friday 17th December  
(School closes at 3:15pm)

### INSET DAY

Tuesday 4th January

### COVID-19 testing

Wednesday 5th January

### Start of new Half Term

Thursday 6th January

### Parent Drop-in

Thursday 27th January  
3:15 pm - 4:15 pm

### Last Day of Half Term

Friday 11th February  
(School closes at 3:15pm)

### School Re-opens

Monday 21st February

### Coronavirus (COVID-19)

During these unprecedented times we encourage students and parents to look after yourselves and others by adhering to the Government guidance.

Advice is available on protection measures, employment and financial support, education, travel and public services.

Together we can make a difference. Follow the guidance, support each other and take care. The latest advice and information can be found here

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

## LOST PROPERTY



This is the latest photo from our lost property cupboard. All these items are unnamed so cannot be returned to their owners. Can you please ensure all school items are clearly labelled with your child's name.

Please remind your child to look in this cupboard as soon as an item goes missing.

Thank you!

## ATTENDANCE

A polite reminder for parents to please advise our Attendance Officer of any student absence before 8:00am each day. Can you also please advise in advance of any appointments for students made during the school day.

Either email [attendance@watling.academy](mailto:attendance@watling.academy) or call 01908 794094 choosing the attendance option.

*Mrs Gaughan*



*With our very best wishes  
for a Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year*

*From  
All the Staff at  
Watling Academy!*

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**RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY  
and KINDNESS**