



As part of our winter festivities this week, students were invited to showcase their musical talents through our busking scheme. Throughout the week students were given the opportunity to perform during break and lunchtimes. Audiences were encouraged to show their support for our performers by donating money, which will be collected and given to Winter Night Shelter, a local charity supporting homelessness in Milton Keynes. So far our performers have helped to raise £75.

*Mr Gibbs*

**Words from Mr Bacon  
Head of School**

Wow, what a term it has been! It doesn't seem that long ago that we all arrived at Watling for the first time, both staff and students eager to see what lay ahead. Well I think we can say that after 14 school weeks we are well and truly up and running and have begun to develop our distinctive ethos and culture focusing on Respect, Responsibility and Kindness.

During the last three weeks we have been running an Academy advent calendar in tutorial with a door opened each day and a new theme, challenge or gift for the students. The highlight has been the golden tickets for demonstrating our three values. Students have been awarded extra house points and chocolate. There has been fierce competition amongst the students for house points and the final totals for this term are:

- 1st Place: Leyh —1867**
- 2nd Place: Laine—1765**
- 3rd Place: Marshall—1760**
- 4th Place: Rutherford—1715**
- 5th Place: Turing—1679**

The students have also been working with Mrs Piper to design the House logos and the ones selected are on page 3. Well done to the students and thank you to Mrs Piper for supporting with the designs.

Our English teacher, Miss Bell, has been working on the theme of kindness using the book "Wonder" by R.J. Palacio that the students have been reading in English. Their work culminated in every student writing a postcard to a member of staff to thank them for something they had done for them.

On that note, I'd like to thank all the students for their respect, responsibility and kindness and hope that you all as families are able to have a safe and happy Christmas break.



**Mr I Bacon**  
**Head of School**



At Watling Academy we are part of the Milton Keynes Youth Council (MKYCAB), This is an organisation that was set up to work with Milton Keynes schools to enable young people to use their voice to change Milton Keynes for the better. The MKYCAB focusses on a range of pertinent issues to support the development of Milton Keynes for young people.

In Tutorial sessions this half term, students have been asked to support the MKYCAB by considering a range of potential issues and areas that the MKYCAB could become involved in. Students were asked to consider ten local issues and ten national issues that they would like MKYCAB to campaign for during the 2020/2021 academic year. Having watched presentations that showed the merits of each case, students were required to vote for one national and one local issue.

In our first vote as members of MKYCAB our students voted to tackle homelessness in the Milton Keynes area. As a school we have begun to develop our support for this issue through raising money for a local homelessness charity, the Winter Night Shelter. At a national level, our students at Watling Academy voted overwhelmingly for the provision of free university education. We were extremely pleased with the mature and responsible way in which our students engaged with this democratic process. We look forward to building our relationship with the MKYCAB to provide our students with opportunities to make a difference.

*Mr Gibbs*



All of Year 7 had fun attending **Merry Mathsmas**. It was an afternoon filled with problem solving activities all with a festive theme. We were able to join several schools and run the session virtually. It was a great session and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

*Mrs Wall*



## BEBRAS COMPETITION

Students in STEM lessons took part in a computational thinking challenge called Bebras in the week commencing 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020. The competition was aimed to raise the awareness of Computer Science in a fun and rewarding way. The competition involved solving problems using computational thinking skills. Students had 40 minutes to answer 15 multiple choice questions which were varied in difficulty.

Computational thinking involves using a set of problem-solving skills and techniques that software engineers use to write programs and applications. Examples of these techniques would include the ability to break down complex tasks into simpler components, algorithm design, pattern recognition and abstraction. Sets of techniques have been taught to as part of the new Computing curriculum which is being delivered to students at Watling Academy in Key Stage 3.

There were 8 students who stood out amongst the crowd and earned distinction certificates: Amelie Adams, Elisabeth Ajibola, Samuel Carter, Fечи Ejikeme, Jago Lawrence, Ruby Taylor, Camila Todeschini and Olli Turvey. The overall winner of the competition who scored 138 out of 200 was Khadija-Rehman Memon. There were also 5 students who should earn a gold certificate for receiving a score of over 130: Samuel Carter, Simina Geanta, Jago Lawrence, Khadija-Rehman Memon and Jenefa Repuri.



## LATEST ECO COMMITTEE NEWS

### Oaktree Update

Back in September, Watling Academy was approached by the Parks Trust to support them, along with other Milton Keynes schools, in planting acorns as part of a wider tree planting scheme across the town. In total, 48 acorns were planted in pots by Josh, Lily, Malika and Olivia from 7JCY. These acorns have been placed in our staff room and have been nurtured by Mr Williams since September.

We aim to grow these acorns to sapling stage, which will take about two years, before they are then handed over to the Parks Trust to be planted in local woodlands. Thanks to the support of our students and Mr Williams, our acorns are now shooting stems out of the soil and are getting bigger each day. The last count is that 32 of our 48 acorns have solid stems growing above the soil. These trees will hopefully grow and flourish to long outlast us and benefit the future families of our current Year 7 cohort.

The next step for Mr Williams and our Year 7 students is to replot the saplings as they grow and to find a new home for these when we move to our main building in Whitehouse.

### Meeting Update

The Eco Committee has had its third lunchtime meeting. They have been productive and well attended.

Mr. Nixon, our Site Manager, has also attended and answered many questions about the sustainability of our site. Having carried out an audit on the school, investigating ten aspects relating to sustainability, five of these aspects have now been selected as our priority areas to progress further.



## HOUSE LOGOS



Here are the fantastic House logos for Laine, Leyh, Marshall, Rutherford and Turing that will be used going forward.

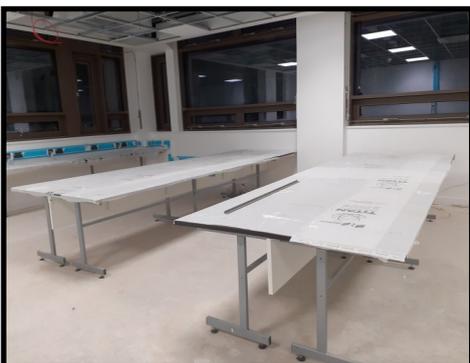
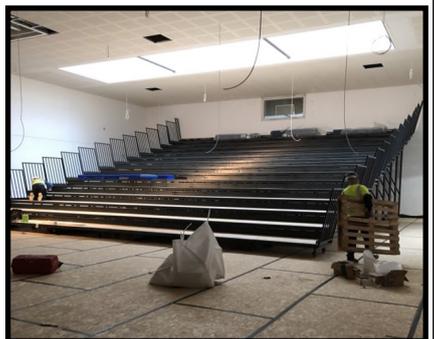
Once again thanks to Mrs Piper and the students for these great designs.



## WATLING ACADEMY MAIN BUILD UPDATE

On the 8<sup>th</sup> December the Senior Leadership Team visited our main school building over in Whitehouse to see how the build is progressing and to help inform our planning and preparations for our move later on in the spring next year. We have included a range of photographs within this newsletter to give parents and students a better idea of what our new school will look like. The photographs below include one of our science labs, the makings of a computing suite, one of our activity studios, a teaching classroom, an aerial view of our tennis courts, our 4G football pitch, our main school hall, along with retractable seating and an external view of our sports hall.

We are looking forward to moving into this brand new, bespoke building and becoming part of the Whitehouse Community. We will keep you updated with the exact date of the move and any other relevant information.



**Dates for your Diary:**

**INSET Day**

Monday 4th January

**Remote Learning Begins**

Tuesday 5th January

**Students Return to the Academy Building**

Monday 11th January

**PTA MEETING**

Monday 18th January

**Parent Drop-in**

Thursday 28th January

**Last Day of Half Term**

Friday 12th February

**Students return**

Monday 22nd February

**Talent Show**

Wednesday 24th February

**PTA Meeting**

Monday 8th March

**Year 7 Progress Reports**

Tuesday 9th March

**Year 7 Subject Consultations**

Wednesday 10th March

Wednesday 17th March

**Non-Uniform Day**

Friday 19th March

**Awards Evening**

Wednesday 24th March

**End of Term**

Thursday 25th March (3:15pm)

**REMOTE LEARNING**

Earlier this half term I sent a letter to parents detailing our Remote Learning procedures and expectations for students self-isolating or for long term absences. Parents and students also received a guide on how to access this Remote Learning provision.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents and students of our expectation that all work completed should be emailed to subject teachers on the day that it is completed. This will enable teaching staff to provide feedback to students and assess understanding of subject content completed remotely .

We are keen to support parents and students with remote learning. Any subject specific questions should be directed to class teachers in the first instance. Alternatively , please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or concerns at [cassidyj@watling.academy](mailto:cassidyj@watling.academy)

*Mr Cassidy*



We have a number of locker keys in the office that have been found and handed in that have not been claimed. Please can any students who have lost keys come to Reception and we can check if we have them. Replacement locker keys can be ordered on SIMS Pay.

*Mr Nixon*



Please remember to order your school lunches and breakfast club on SIMS Pay by midnight on the Thursday before the week that breakfast club and lunches are required.

*Mrs Gaughan*



Please can students be reminded to check Lost Property located at the main exit door for any misplaced items.

**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>.

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