



October 2022  
Issue 1  
2022-2023  
watlingacademy.net

# Newsletter

## WORDS FROM MR BACON, HEADTEACHER

A warm welcome to the first Watling Academy Newsletter of this Academic Year. It has been a pleasure to welcome back all students and a special well done to Year 7 who have settled in well and are now finding their feet and their way around the school.

The beginning of a new school year is always busy with students and staff establishing new routines and ways of working, but as this edition shows, it has also been jam-packed full of activities for our students. Reading programmes, a trip to the theatre, sports fixtures, tournaments and after school clubs are just a flavour. I hope the students involved have enjoyed these as much as the staff involved have done. Personally, I have been overwhelmed with the demand for clubs which has been tremendous to see. I realise there were a few teething problems with bookings, so we are now looking at ways of making the booking process more efficient to meet the needs of so many interested students. I hope you enjoy reading about some of the events that have taken place so far.

It has been wonderful to also meet so many families in person over the last couple of weeks at our information evenings – Learning Pathways for Year 8 and our Open Evening for potential new students to experience what the Watling Community has to offer. We now have 840 students on roll and expect another 300 to join us next year.

As British Summer Time ends and we change the clocks back on 30<sup>th</sup> October, the darker nights are approaching. I would like to remind everyone of the safety of our students and ask that you please ensure if your child walks or cycles to school that they have lights and wear appropriate clothing so that they can be easily seen.

We are all looking forward to the next half term, which will be just as exciting and busy, with lots more activities planned, but in the meantime, I wish you and your families a very enjoyable and safe half term break. A reminder that students return to school on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November, following a staff INSET day on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> October.

Mr I Bacon  
Headteacher



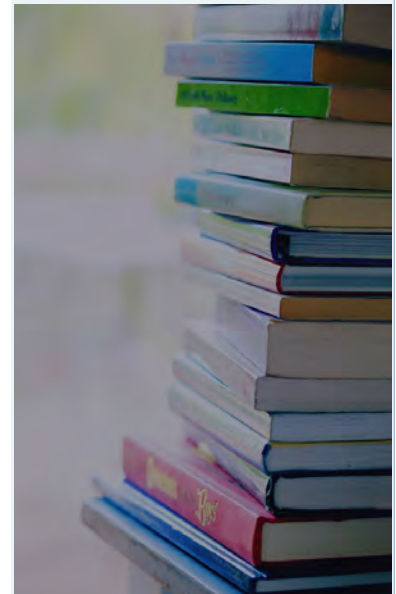
Respect



Responsibility



Kindness



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Open Evening.....	2
Black History Month.....	2
V&A Innovate.....	3
Modern Foreign Languages.....	4
Cycling to School – Media.....	5
Theatre Trip.....	6
Physical Education.....	7
Library.....	8
Art on Instagram.....	9
Bookbuzz.....	9
Parent Teachers Association.....	9
Notice Board.....	10

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- End of Half Term - Fri 21 October
- INSET Day—Mon 31 October
- School Reopens—Tue 1 November
- Learning Pathways Y7— Thu 3 November
- PTA— Mon 7 November
- Tutor Consultation—Thu 24 November (starts 13:45)
- End of Half Term—Fri 16 December
- INSET Day—Tue 3 January
- School Reopens—Wed 4 January

## OPEN EVENING 2022

On the evening of Thursday the 20<sup>th</sup> October, Watling Academy hosted its annual Open Evening for prospective students that will be starting Secondary School in September 2023. Watling Academy staff have worked incredibly hard to plan and prepare an engaging and exciting evening for our prospective students that would showcase the Watling Academy experience to our visitors. This preparation was supported by our amazing student helpers on the evening. We strongly believe that there is no better way to promote our growing school than using our students to exhibit all that Watling Academy has to offer.

The evening was an amazing success with over 1,250 visitors coming through the gates of the School. Our students and staff enjoyed the evening and the opportunity to demonstrate how proud we are to be part of the growing Watling Academy community. I spoke to many parents and prospective students and the feedback I received was excellent. There was a great atmosphere within the school as current staff and students interacted with potential future students through engaging activities within classrooms.

Thanks to all staff and students who made this evening such a memorable event. I hope all visitors enjoyed the opportunity to experience life at Watling Academy through our Open Evening. Now we look forward to National Offer Day for Year 6 students in March, when we can start the transition process to introduce 300 more students and their families to the Watling Academy community.

Mr Stormer

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH



The History Department has celebrated Black History Month. Here is a selection of what we have been doing.

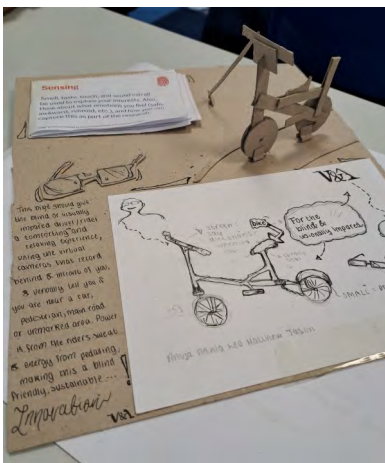
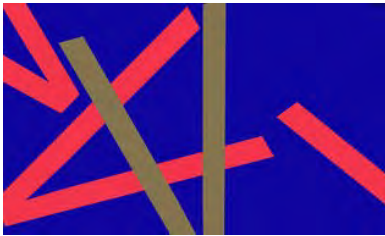
- 1 – Looking at Black History and its importance in History Club
- 2 – History Club have made a display on Black History
- 3 – History Club have designed postcards that can be used by teachers to send to students
- 4 – Asked all teachers to display a black person in their field on their doors e.g. the History Department has David Olusoga who is the author of the history book Black and British
- 5 – History teachers have taught students about black people related to their lessons e.g. mentioning Mary Seacole when talking about public health in Victorian Britain
- 6 – There were assemblies on Black history firsts in Britain
- 7 – There has also been a Secret Cinema held at lunch times, showing black cinema
- 8 – Tutorials this month have had a BHM focus, learning about black culture and history in Britain.

We, in the history department, feel that Black History is important, this is why at Watling, our historians will continue to study and celebrate Black and Ethnic Minority history in every topic which we teach. This includes looking at the Walter Tull, Windrush and the British Civil Rights Movement to name but a few.

The website <https://www.bhmmk.co.uk/> hosts the Hidden Stories Film Series of the first Black professionals to arrive in Milton Keynes – these are worth watching.

Mr Malloy

## V&A INNOVATE



V&A Innovate is an annual National Schools Challenge, asking students to work in teams of 4 – 6 to design a solution to a real-world problem.

Students were asked to work in teams to follow a human-centered design process and respond to one of the three challenge themes inspired by V&A collections:

**Adapt:** How might we adapt the world around us? How might we adapt everyday items, buildings and spaces to make them more inclusive of people's needs?

**Care:** How might we create objects that care? How might we create environments that show or provide care for others?

**Disrupt:** How might we use design to introduce new perspectives on issues we care about? How might we challenge stereotypes through design?

Students submitted their ideas on two A3 design sheets and finalist teams were invited to pitch their ideas to expert judges at the annual Pitching and Awards Day at the museum.

On Wednesday 12th of October, Year 7 had the fantastic opportunity to participate in the V&A Innovate competition.

Last year Watling Academy reached the finals of this competition with Team Moffle. This year, the standard of entries was incredibly high.

Students worked incredibly well together, creating innovative and inspiring solutions to problems. There were radios for the deaf, glasses for the blind which told the user what was around them. There were cuddly toys which helped diabetic children monitor their blood glucose levels, roller-coasters for wheelchair users, superhero characters which challenged racial and gender stereotypes to name just a few examples.

All of the ideas will be submitted to the V&A judges, and we will hear in the new year if we have been selected as finalists again.

Very well done to Year 7!

Mrs Fuller



## MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES—HOUSE COMPETITIONS

There are two exciting competitions taking place during Spanish lessons shortly before the Christmas holidays.

### Year 7 – Foreign Language Spelling Bee (week beginning Monday 28 November)

Students at Watling Academy have been really successful in this competition. For the past two years, the Regional Champion for the Southeast of England has come from this school. We have also had two students (Liana, now in Year 8 and Jenisha, now in Year 9) reaching the National Finals on both occasions. This is because of their hard work and dedication when preparing for the competitions. Part of their success is also arguably because the overall strength of the year group pushed them to do so well. We hope their success inspires our current Year 7 students in this competition.

During the competition, students will have one minute to correctly translate into Spanish and spell in Spanish as many words from their list as possible from memory.

There will be two winners for each house, who will go on to compete in a school competition. The three winners of the school competition may also go on to a regional/national competition.

To prepare there will be a series of challenging home learning tasks. We strongly encourage students to have a go, as it will help with pronunciation, spelling, and knowledge of key words.



### Years 8 and 9 – Foreign Language Translation Bee (Week Beginning Monday 5 December)



As mentioned in the above section, our students enjoyed a lot of success in the Spelling Bee competition in Year 7. Last year one of our Year 8 students, Gabriel reached the National Final in the Foreign Language Translation Bee. Again, we hope his success inspires others to do the same this year.

Students will have 1 minute to correctly translate as many short sentences into Spanish from their list as possible. At Stage 1, students will be using the present tense 'I' and 'we' forms of the verb. They will be practising a section each week until the class competition. The competition will take place in Spanish lessons week beginning 5 December. There will be two winners from each house who will move onto the school competition. This competition will really help students with their knowledge of forming important sentences using key verbs and vocabulary. This will ultimately help them in their assessments.

Mr Scott

## WATLING ACADEMY STUDENT CYCLING TO SCHOOL



This article appeared on the Citizens:MK website on 4 October.

Pictured are Headteacher Ian Bacon and students Ethan and Megan.

Watling Academy is MK's leading school for the proportion of its students who cycle to school. One in nine students make the journey from home to school by bicycle.

This is the result of a recent survey of all MK secondary schools based on counting the number of bicycles on school premises. Kents Hill Park School and Oakgrove School came a close second and third – see [results](#).

"I cycle to school because it helps me stay fit and healthy," said Megan, Year 9 student at Watling Academy. "Once you get into it, it's part of your daily routine."

"My parents don't like using the car," said Ethan, another student. "My parents don't like using the car and I live close, so why wouldn't I?"

"With our school focus on sustainability and being part of the MK community, I'm proud to see so many Watling Academy students on their bikes or walking to school," said Headteacher Ian Bacon. "I want the headache of where exactly to build another set of bike sheds for our staff and students, we have only just had more installed over the summer and now they are almost full too!"

The results of the schools cycle count raise questions about the different factors affecting cycling at different schools, including access and facilities. But more and more schools are encouraging their students to cycle, and the Cycling CitizensMK project is helping them share best practice.

Watling Academy and other top cycling schools will receive awards at the [Mayor's Cycling Breakfast, hosted by Network Rail, on 10th November](#).



## THEATRE TRIP—BUGSY MALONE



In the penultimate week of this half term 35 of our students were able to attend the first Theatre trip arranged at Watling Academy. The students attended a production of *Bugsy Malone* at Milton Keynes theatre on 13 October 2022 for a 7pm showing.

We are really pleased that the students represented Watling Academy impeccably showing their respect, responsibility, and kindness to members of the public, their peers, the coach driver, and members of staff who attended the trip.

It was a fabulous trip where the students enjoyed clapping and dancing along to the songs and watching the performers intently. All the students who embarked on the trip expressed their enjoyment of the show and how they "Did not want the show to end".

A special thank you from the Drama department to these students who continually support Drama by attending Drama club and being involved in extra curricular Drama activities.

Mrs Brooks



---

*"Did not want the show to end".*

---

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

We have had a busy start to the term in the Physical Education department. Year 7s have been completing their physical literacy project and Year 8 and 9s have been recapping all the sports they have previously learnt focusing on the values of sport. We have had a successful start to extra-curricular and fixtures with already over 500 students attending a club after school. The Year 8 boys football team has made a great start to their league games with a 10-1 win over a local secondary school. A special mention goes to Kane and Maxwell with their hattrick of goals. Our U13 girls football team competed in the EFL regional tournament and placed 3<sup>rd</sup> overall which is an incredible achievement.

Also, the Year 9 girls netball team attended a start of season tournament with a special mention to Janelle for player of tournament with her amazing interceptions. Next term Year 7s start their fixtures and we look forward to more success stories and students taking part in PE.

Mrs Willison



## LIBRARY NEWS



### **Library Reading Advocates**

Students have the exciting opportunity to apply to become a Library Reading Advocate.

#### **What does the role involve?**

Assisting with general library tasks for one break and at least one lunch time a week, including issuing and returning books, helping students choose or locate books, creating reading displays, and involvement in half-termly meetings to discuss ideas and give feedback on all things related to the library and reading.



#### **What are the benefits for students?**

Students will be given training on the library software, they will gain a broader knowledge of children's literature and will have the opportunity to develop valuable skills, including organisation, presentation, communication, team work and customer service. There will also be rewards and book borrowing privileges!

**The deadline for applications is Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November.**

Mrs Williams





## WATLING ART ACADEMY ART DEPARTMENT ON INSTAGRAM—CHECK IT OUT

Follow the Watling Academy Art Department!

[wa\\_art\\_dept](https://www.instagram.com/wa_art_dept)



Don't miss out on seeing some amazing artwork!!



Bookbuzz is a reading programme from BookTrust that aims to help schools inspire a love of reading in 11 to 13-year-olds. Participating schools give their students the opportunity to choose their own book to take home and keep from a list of 17 titles. They are all carefully selected by a panel of experts to ensure quality, suitability and to encourage reading for pleasure. Watling Academy are participating in this scheme involving our Year 7 and 8 students. More information to follow in the next edition of the newsletter.



### Parent Teacher Association

#### Dates for the PTA meetings are:

Monday 7 September  
Monday 16 January  
Monday 27 February  
Monday 24 April  
Monday 12 June

## WATLING NOTICE BOARD

### Lost Property

We still have a large amount of Lost Property.



None of the items are named so we cannot reunite them with their owner. If your child has lost anything, please ask them to go and check the Lost Property cupboard and clothes rail.

Please note that we do not have the capacity to house such a large amount of lost property so it is recycled, and disposed of at the end of each half term.



### Polite Reminder for Parents and Carers

In the event your child is unable to attend school please advise our Attendance Officer of any student absence before 8:00am each day. Can you also please report in advance of any appointments for students made during the school day, however we do ask that you try and book your appointments outside of school time where possible.

**Absence can be reported by telephone 01908 794094 option 1, Parent Mail app or by email to**



### Arriva Bus Services—some changes



From 30th October 2022 we'll be making a few changes to the Milton Keynes bus network to help speed up some journeys and keep buses running on time. We'll update our timetables as soon as possible. In the meantime, here's what we're changing:

#### Service 1 - Newport Pagnell to Whitehouse

Service 1 will now operate between Newport Pagnell (Market Hill) and CMK Rail Station, with service 2 extended from Grange Farm to Whitehouse.

Renny Lodge and Tickford End will continue to be served by Uno service C10 and MK Connect.

#### Services 2/2A - Newport Pagnell to Grange Farm

Service 2 will now run along Danstead Way, Watling Street, and Portway to Grange Farm, then continue along Longhorn Drive and Barosa Way around Whitehouse and back to CMK.

Lodge Lake and Kensington Drive will continue to be served by our X60 route every hour Monday to Saturday.

Watling Academy, Barrosa Way, Whitehouse, MK8 1EP

Phone: 01908 794094

Website: [watlingacademy.net](http://watlingacademy.net)