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Newsletter

WORDS FROM MR BACON, HEADTEACHER

Dear Families

Another half term has gone already with lots of events happening and news to pass on. We hope you enjoy reading about some of them in the following pages.

It was wonderful to see so many students and their families at Watling for our first GCSE Options Evening for Year 9 on 26th January. It is an exciting time for us all at Watling Academy as we reflect on how far we have come together.

We waved goodbye a couple of weeks ago to Mr Quin (Head of English) who has left us to pursue new adventures in Australia. At Half Term we also say goodbye to Mrs Fuller (Head of DT) and Mrs Piper (Food & DT Teacher). Mrs Kitching from our Making a Change provision is also leaving for pastures new. They have all been instrumental in setting up their departments here at Watling Academy and they will be greatly missed. However, we would like to extend a very warm welcome to Mrs Clawson who has now taken up the reins as Head of English and wish her all the very best.

We have also said a temporary farewell to Mrs Wall (Head of Maths) and Mrs Cox (Assistant Headteacher) who have now gone on maternity leave and we look forward to hearing news of the safe arrivals of their little ones. Mrs Webster will be stepping into Mrs Wall's shoes until she returns.

In other staff news, we have been recruiting for new teachers to start in September to support our growing number of students and for a Deputy Headteacher. Mrs Barford will be moving to a new post, supporting students progress in Key Stage 4.

As signs of Spring are finally starting to appear, it is always a good time to start looking ahead and we are looking forward to many exciting events and opportunities over the next few months at Watling.

I wish you all a safe and enjoyable half term break and look forward to welcoming all the students back on Monday 20th February.

Ian Bacon
Headteacher

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- End of Term — Fri 10 Feb
- School Reopens — Mon 20 Feb
- Y7 Progress Reports — Fri 10 Mar
- Y7 Subject Consultation Evenings—
Wed 15 and Thu 16 Mar
- Non Uniform Day — Fri 17 Mar
- End of Half Term — Fri 31 Mar
- School Reopens—Mon 17 Apr



Respect



Responsibility



Kindness



CELEBRATING THE GOOD STUFF!

At Watling we believe in acknowledging our students' achievements, which includes meeting the high expectations we have set for them.

Awarding House Points is what we do here every day, whether this is for homework completed and submitted on time, for contributions to learning during lessons, or for modelling the Watling Way by demonstrating respect, responsibility, and kindness. Every house point earned is an achievement to be celebrated.



For more significant contributions, a positive email or a Praise Postcard might find its way home to celebrate a young person being truly amazing – the latter, we hope, are proudly displayed on a fridge door or pin board somewhere.

The highlight of each half-term is our Celebration Assembly. Prior to this event, teachers from each subject team collaborate to nominate one student from the whole year group to receive a Subject Award – this is a truly prestigious award, given that there is less than a 1% chance of receiving it. Form Tutors also agonise over deciding on who has made the greatest positive contribution to their form or demonstrated significant personal growth to be the recipient of their Tutor Award. Our Watling values are incredibly important to us all, any student or Watling member of staff can nominate a student to receive an RRK award (Respect, Responsibility, Kindness), those who are chosen are also recognised during our celebration assembly. Our assembly usually culminates in the awarding of Bronze (100 house points), Silver (200 house points) and Gold (350 house points) badges achieved that term. The monumental effort that each student puts into achieving each of these badges is commendable. They are worn with pride, and we love to bear witness to this.



This term we introduced new awards in the form of two prizes per year group. We have set the bar high on these, with a 100% target. The first achievement we acknowledge is for homework, those students who have been superbly diligent and organised in completing all assigned homework will be recognised; the second is to identify the students who have demonstrated resilience and perseverance in attending school every day – those with full attendance. At our final assembly, the names of these students are put into a lotto draw, the wheel is spun, and the winners will be rewarded with a prize.

Mr Gibbs & Mrs Dixon

CAREERS INSPIRATION TRIP—MK COLLEGE

On Monday the 6th of February we took advantage of the amazing opportunity to take a small group of students to Milton Keynes College to engage with a Careers Inspiration event. This event allowed our students to find out more about the growing employment sectors in our region of Milton Keynes. This was a hands-on session allowing students to meet employers and learn about the skills needed in the areas of employment currently considered priority sectors. This included the following areas:

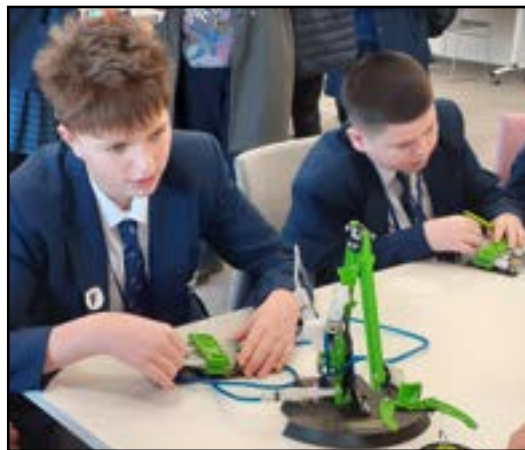
- Sustainability & Future Technologies
- Life Sciences
- Care Professions

All the activities that students participated in were underpinned with digital skills, which are critical to all industry sectors.

It was amazing to witness our students engaging with the activities with enthusiasm and maturity. It was evident that our students used the event as a chance to consider how their GCSE options choices may lead to a variety of future careers. Mrs Lewis and I had a number of career conversations with students identifying their strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes, and interests and passions. Some of these areas of interest took students by surprise and helped them to explore education/ career pathways that they had not considered before. The students particularly loved engaging in the practical components of the event, with the Nifty Lift and Electronics challenges leading to a high level of competition.

Well done to all the students who attended this event. While on the trip you exemplified our core values and made the most of the opportunity.

Mr Stormer





House Champions

The past couple of months have been very busy in terms of house competitions and for the house councils, who have been meeting weekly. Each house has had an assembly, running through the new house point standings, and finding out their selected house charities this half term. Since the previous standings, all but one house changed position, showing the students just how important each of their house points earned in lessons, homework and competitions are for their houses' success.

Some of the house competitions that have been running include; netball, basketball and benchball tournaments in PE, Anime and eye designs in Art, Castle creations in History and a knife crime rap competition through Well Being. Well done to the hundreds of students who got involved!

The current house point standings are as follows:

Position	House	House Points Total
1 st	Leyh	22895
2 nd	Turing	22306
3 rd	Rutherford	22067
4 th	Laine	21947
5 th	Marshall	21155

A huge congratulations to the following students who have the leading house points in the school:

1st – Adhvika, 338 (7YZO – Leyh)

2nd – Meryem, 337 (8KPR – Laine)

3rd – Nyah, 324 (8JSY – Rutherford)

Cont.



Charities:



The students in the house councils have been meeting with their house champion weekly, to select their house charity. Over the next term, the house councils will work with their forms to arrange some exciting fundraising activities, providing opportunities for the school community to donate to help these amazing charities!



Laine – Willen Hospice

Leyh – The Parks Trust

Marshall – Harry's Rainbow

Rutherford – Mind BLMK

Turing – Winter Night Shelter



School Council Representatives:

Laine – Zaina (8KPR), Jessica (7SFT)

Leyh – Janelle (9KCS), Raghav (7SBI)

Marshall – Charlotte (8JHE), Delia (7RWS)

Rutherford – Nihaal (8JSY), Lenora (7MDS)

Turing – Muhammad (9BBS), Fletcher (7AES)



Some of the house competitions coming up in are; designing a house mascot, create a house song, Valentine's card designs, Mandarin character designs, Storytelling week competition, Monarch from Memory competition, Spanish translation and spelling bees, to mention just a few!

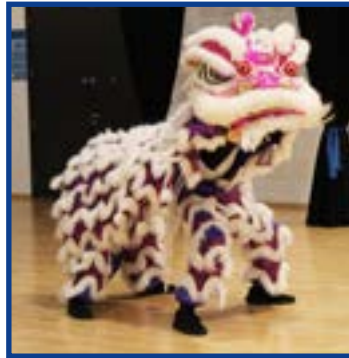


Miss Okutu and Mrs Combs

LUNAR NEW YEAR LION DANCE PERFORMANCE

As part of the Lunar New Year celebrations, Year 7 students had the opportunity to watch a traditional lion dance performed by Kudos Combat. The students thoroughly enjoyed the performance and there was also an opportunity at the end to also discover more about the tradition with a question and answer session with students asking lots of insightful questions.

Mr Scott



ROUTES INTO LANGUAGES — FOREIGN LANGUAGE SPELLING BEE

During the second term, the winners of Stage 1 of the Spanish Spelling Bee have been practising translating and spelling in Spanish up to 150 words in Spanish as part of their preparation for Stage 2. The competition itself took place during assembly with the rest of their year group. Students had to correctly translate and spell as many of the 150 words as possible in a minute. The students with the highest scores were then selected to take part in the Regional Competition where they will compete for a place in the National Competition.

The winners of Stage 2 were:

Somia – Laine

Raghav – Leyh

Emma – Turing

Well done to everyone who took part. It is great to see everyone spelling words in Spanish using the Spanish alphabet. This will really help you with your learning in general.

Mr Scott

AFTERSCHOOL CLUBS

We continue to offer an extensive afterschool club provision to enable students to extend their education beyond the timetabled school day. Students take part in a broad range of activities including Sports, Music and Art clubs. All clubs are well attended, particularly on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. We continue to see a huge number of students creating a buzz around the Academy engaging in learning new skills, exploring passions and extending themselves within a friendly and fun environment.

Clubs this term have prepared students for upcoming events, such as the Science Fair and Maths competition. Students have rehearsed for our upcoming Performing Arts Showcase through Drama and Music clubs. An increasing number of students have had the opportunity to represent the school in sports fixtures after engaging with our Sports clubs. Our first ever paid clubs have been a resounding success with students receiving the opportunity to take advantage of well qualified external coaches to stretch and challenge them further within this provision.

During the next half term, we will be contacting parents/carers with information regarding our extracurricular provision for Term 3. Please keep an eye out for this letter that will arrive via ParentMail. You will then be able to discuss the new club offer with your child/children and encourage them to continue to take part in clubs or for those who have not yet taken part to get involved.

Mr Stormer



Foreign Language Spelling Bee





INTRODUCING OUR SCHOOL COUNCIL

We are excited to announce that each House Council has elected two representatives to serve an additional leadership role within the student body of Watling Academy – these ten young people are our School Council.

Congratulations to **Nihaal** and **Lenora** (Rutherford), **Muhammad** and **Fletcher** (Turing), **Zaina** and **Jessica** (Laine), **Janelle** and **Raghav** (Leyh), and **Charlotte** (Marshall) and **Delia** (Marshall).

We've already had our first official meeting, where we learnt a little about the whys and hows of agendas and minutes of meetings, as well as highlighting two initiatives which we plan to investigate and might just pursue.

Did you know? The word 'minutes' within the phrase 'minutes of meeting' has absolutely nothing to do with time but rather the Latin word 'minutia' which translates to trifles or details.

We hope to share more School Council 'minutia' with you in newsletters to come.



Mr Stormer

YEAR 9 OPTIONS EVENING



On Thursday 26th January we welcomed Year 9 students and their parents/carers to the Key Stage 4 Curriculum and Options Evening.

This was a chance to learn more about the courses and qualifications students can study in Year 10. There were displays of information from all the courses on offer, and a presentation about the process from Miss Scarr and Mr Brown.

Choosing options preferences is an exciting time, and the Year 9 students have really engaged well, asking lots of questions, finding out about the courses on offer and enjoying 'taster lessons' which have given them a real insight into what GCSE, BTEC and Cambridge National courses will be like.

It's great to see our first cohort moving onto the next phase of their educational journey at Watling.

Mr Brown

STUDENT VOICE

Student voice refers to the opinions, perspectives, and ideas of students that are shared and valued at Watling Academy. It gives students a say in their own learning and the decision-making processes that affect them across the school. This term students have had the opportunity to share their views, opinions and feedback in a number of ways:

- **House and Student Council:** We continue to gather feedback and collect student views through our elected student leadership roles. They have also explored key areas such as charity links and safer travel routes to school.
- **Student Voice Surveys:** In January, all students had the opportunity to complete our annual Student Voice Surveys, ensuring every student had the opportunity to provide feedback relating to their experience at Watling Academy. This has been a valuable tool for gathering feedback and will help guide our development moving forward. The survey showed us clearly that students feel safe and listened to while at school, while being encouraged by teachers to do their best. Feedback also reinforced the developing culture guided by our core values of Respect, Responsibility and Kindness.
- **Student Voice panels:** Each half term, members of the Senior Leadership team are meeting with student panels to discuss student voice in a number of key areas of the school, this includes – Curriculum, Personal Development, Behaviour, Teaching and Learning. These meetings have been a valuable tool to support and guide the work of the senior leadership team.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all students for their involvement in Student Voice to make sure that Watling Academy is a place we can all be proud of, where no child is anonymous and we strive to give students amazing experiences of Education, Care and Opportunity.

Mr Stormer





YORK HOUSE CENTRE

Mixed Age Clubs **Wednesdays**

**First Session
FREE**

**7-14 Years
From 5.30-7.30 pm
Entry: £1**

DURING TERM TIME

sign up at
www.ynmk.org.uk

York House Centre
London Road
Stony Stratford
MK11 1JQ

Enjoy activities ranging from
cooking, crafts, sports and
socialising under the supervision
of experienced staff

Info@ynmk.org
07483 107016

facebook.com/youthnetworkmk

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Contact Debra Simpkins



CLASSCHARTS UPDATE

In September 2022 we launched ClassCharts. ClassCharts software allows us to communicate behaviour records and homework with students and parents and carers alike.

After we return from the February half-term break we are extending the use of ClassCharts to include the following functions:

- All positive and negative behaviour notifications will be visible on the activity feed within the ClassCharts app.
- Notifications that your child has earned their bronze, silver and gold award badge will be sent directly to parents and carers e-mail addresses.
- Any positive praise comments that teachers have written will be visible on the activity feed within the ClassCharts app and an email will be sent directly to parents and carers email addresses with a link to view the what praise the teacher has given
- If a student receives a W2 (warning 2) in lesson this will be communicated directly to the parent / carer via e-mail.
- If a student is removed from a lesson due to poor behaviour this will be communicated directly to the parent / carer via e-mail.
- All detention notifications will now be communicated to parents and carers via e-mail.

Can I remind parents and carers to sign up for the ClassCharts Parent App if you have not already done so. We are aware that some parents and carers are using their child's account to access information, please can I make you aware that the new information outlined above will only be visible in the parent App.

Mr Gibbs



SPORTING SUCCESS!

This half term Watling's PE department have been very busy once again despite the cold weather and the need to cancel fixtures and events. Watling have competed in 12 fixtures this half term and 5 tournaments.

Highlights of results are:

Year 7 Girls Football team beating St Pauls 4-1 and Shenley Brook End 10-0

Year 9 Girls Football team beating St Paus 6-0 and Shenley Brook End 4-3

Year 9 Boys Basketball Team beating Denbigh 33-18

Year 7 Boys Football team beating Walton High 9-3



Next half term we are hosting a number of Milton Keynes sports events including the Girls Bucks Indoor Cricket competitions, Year 7 County Netball tournament and the second round of the Junior NBA basketball tournaments. We also have over 20 league game fixtures to compete in as well. We are hoping as many students as possible can represent the school.

Miss Willison

YEAR 7 AND 8 JUNIOR NBA TOURNAMENTS



This half term Watling have hosted the Year 7 and 8 Junior NBA tournaments for the West side of Milton Keynes. Both have been intense matches against 4/5 other schools. The students have represented Watling well and worked hard. Students had the chance to work with MK Breakers Basketball Club who ran the tournament as well as refereeing the matches.

Our Year 7 team was very successful in winning the tournament and therefore proceeding to the next round of the competition – well done to Robert, Fome, Dylan M, Dylan U, Ethan S, Elliot, Amir, Mason K-B, Jordan K-B, Fin, Mason C.

Miss Willison

BUCKS SCHOOL X-COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS



Watling took 4 teams of students to compete at the Bucks Schools X-Country Championships. This very competitive event was held in the grounds of Stowe School. The junior boys and girls team ran a very quick 2km race where Isaac in Year 7 qualified and was picked to represent Buckinghamshire at the National competition later in the year. Congratulations to Isaac! The Junior (Year 8 and 9) girls ran a competitive 3km race and the boys ran a gruelling 4km race. All students that took part represented Watling impeccably and it was fantastic to see the students supporting each other so well. We are looking forward to the athletics season after Easter.

Miss Willison



ARMY CADET FORCE

Buckinghamshire ACF, I
Company, The Rifles

Denbigh Alliance in partnership with the ACF, run a platoon every Tuesday at Denbigh school (1900-2130).

For more information, contact Mr Green.

Becoming an Army Cadet has heaps of benefits. The most obvious being that you get to take part in loads of exciting and challenging activities such as fieldcraft, adventure training, first aid, music, sports, and shooting, to name but a few.

When you join as a cadet you will make lots of new friends and get the opportunity to go on annual camp where you will meet cadets from other detachments in your county. You may even get to go on expeditions to amazing places in the UK and sometimes even abroad.

The Army Proficiency Certificate (APC) training syllabus will teach you leadership skills, discipline and give you self-confidence you never thought possible. You will learn a wide range of transferable skills such as: the ability to command tasks; make decisions under pressure; plan and organise tasks and work as an effective team player as well as independently. These skills will equip you for life and add an extra string to your bow at times when competition for college places and employment is fierce.

Through your cadet training you can also gain valuable qualifications such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, BTEC First Diploma in Public Services or Music or the ILM Certificate in Team Leading.

“For action and adventure, fun and friendship, the Army Cadet Force is hard to beat.”



MILTON KEYNES YOUTH COUNCIL (MKYC) - THINK IT! SAY IT! DO IT!

Milton Keynes Youth Council (MKYC) is a group of 11 to 18 year-olds from across Milton Keynes who represent young people in the city. MKYC elections will be held in schools, in February 2023. Being a part of MKYC means students learn new skills that they might not learn at school, through organising campaigns, trying to influence change, and helping young people in MK and the UK, all whilst meeting new people and having fun!

Nominations were open from the 3 January and closed at 4pm on Thursday 19 January 2023. Students wishing to be considered for election to the MKYC needed to complete their nomination form, this included being endorsed by ten other students and a teacher, as well as the students creating a manifesto outlining:

- How would you inspire more young people to get their voice heard?
- What social issues do you think effect young people in Milton Keynes?
- What skills and experience do you have that would make you a good Milton Keynes Youth Council representative?
- How will you balance your time to ensure you will be able to do MKYC activities?

We expected to have some student interest in this post but were absolutely blown away by the level of interest and the quality of student manifestos. We had 15 students in total nominated for the post on the MKYC.

On February 8th 2023, we hosted the MKYC Election for a representative from Watling Academy. To support the voting process, we were joined by a member from the council and our voting station was fully set up with voting booths and ballot boxes. During this day all students had the opportunity to take part in this democratic election and take the opportunity to have their voice in matters that impact the youth of Milton Keynes. This was an amazing opportunity for students to demonstrate their British Values and prepare them for the challenges of voting later in life. Our students took the process seriously with a high level of maturity. At the end of the voting we had 5 very full ballot boxes and these sealed boxes have been returned to the council for counting.

In our next Newsletter I look forward to announcing who has been successful in becoming Watling Academy's representative on the MKYC. For now, I would like a huge congratulations to the 15 nominees for their hard work and passion to drive change in Milton Keynes. I would also like to say well done to all students that engaged with the voting process. The whole process shows that the students of Watling Academy are very keen to play their part in shaping the development of Milton Keynes.

Mr Stormer

LIBRARY INSIGHTS

Library Inductions



Across the course of this half term, each class has taken part in a library induction lesson. During these lessons, students have been given access to their online Watling Academy Library accounts. This gives students additional ways to browse for books, whether that be by an author they love or a subject that interests them. There is also the facility to reserve books online, write reviews, create reading lists and make requests for books to add to the library collection. For any questions regarding student library accounts, please contact Miss Williams through the online messaging function or by email williamsp@watling.academy.

Miss Williams

The image shows a screenshot of the Watling Academy Library Catalogue website. At the top left is the Watling Academy logo. Below it is a navigation bar with links for Home, Search, and Register. A search bar and user account options are on the right. The main heading is "Library Catalogue". On the left, there is an "Announcements" section with "Tips" for searching. The central area features a search bar, a "Search where" dropdown menu, and a carousel of book covers including "Arctic Zoo" by Robert Muchamore, "Zoo of Dr. Moreau", and "Boy: A Biography". On the right, there are sections for "My Loans" (On Loan, Overdue, Reserved), "Ask the Library" (with a subject and message field), and "My Bookmarks".

LIBRARY INSIGHTS CONT

Watling Online Book Reviews

padlet.com/watlinglibrary/books

A new online book review page has been created for Watling Academy students to share their reading recommendations and see what others are reading. Students can access this through the above link and upload their own reviews by clicking on the yellow + button. Reviews will be submitted for approval before going live on the page.

Miss Williams



Library Competitions

Watling Reader Stamp Card

To celebrate some brilliant reading, those students who completed their Watling Reader Stamp Cards last term enjoyed a Krispy Kreme doughnut treat at the start of this term.

This competition has continued this term so students can continue to earn house points and work towards completing their stamp cards before Easter where more prizes will be on offer.



Miss Williams

LIBRARY INSIGHTS CONT



Bookbuzz Book Swap

Starting this week in the library, students in Year 7 and 8 will have the opportunity to swap their Bookbuzz book for another from the selection. To take part, students must:

1. Take their book to Miss Williams in the library where they will be shown how to swap their book.
2. The book must be in good, clean condition.

This is totally optional and is to allow avid readers the chance to sample other books.

Miss Williams



Free Access to Foreign Language Magazines Online

A Milton Keynes Library account allows free access to more than 7000 digital newspapers and publications from the UK and around the world in 60 languages. You can sign up for a Milton Keynes library account online here:

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/libraries/library-info/join-library>

You can use your library username and PIN number to access Press Reader resources here www.pressreader.com. This is a fantastic resource for students to practise their language skills or for those who speak additional languages at home.

Miss Williams





School Catering

New name, no change!

As your current academy caterer, we will be changing our trading name from Miquill to Stir, taking effect from 1st March 2023.

This will not change the student experience and we will continue to serve great, healthy food each day with the same catering team.

The only changes your students will see will be a dining room rebrand to refresh the catering area and, as Stir evolves, exciting new food offers and items on the menu.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our team and we will be happy to help wherever we can to make this as seamless a transition as possible.

Kind Regards,

The Stir Team

www.stirfood.co.uk

WATLING NOTICE BOARD



POLITE REMINDER FOR PARENTS & CARERS

In the event your child is unable to attend school, you must advise our Attendance Officer of any student absence before 08:00am each day. You must also notify us of any appointments made during the school day. However, we do ask that you book appointments outside of school.

Absences can be reported by telephoning 01908 794094 and selecting Option 1, using the ParentMail app, or by emailing attendance@watling.academy. Please include your child's name and full details of the absence, and when you expect your child to return to school.



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.

Thank you for your cooperation



Children's Flu Vaccination Clinics for Children in Reception to Year 9 only

If your child still needs a flu vaccination we have the following catch up clinics available:

Monday 13th February - Milton Keynes

Tuesday 14th February - Sandy

Wednesday 15th February - Luton

Thursday 16th February - Bedford

If you would like to book an appointment or require further information please call us on **0300 790 0594**, Monday – Friday 9am to 5pm.

Appointments are subject to availability.

