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Newsletter

WORDS FROM MR BACON, HEADTEACHER

Dear Parents & Carers

Last year at this time, we were approaching the end of our first year of being in this fantastic school building on the Barrosa Way site. Another year on and as we continue to grow, there is much to celebrate. This week every year group has had their end of term Celebration of Success Assemblies where achievements within subject areas, for attendance, homework, for House Points, competitions were recognised. In every Assembly I attended I was blown away by the sheer number of students that are demonstrating just how much they put into life at Watling. I am proud of them all.

Staying on the theme of pride in our students, I wanted to share with you some of the comments that OFSTED made about them following the inspection last week:-

- During lessons, students were engaged and demonstrated excellent behaviour for learning
- Students collaborated well in lessons and were able to clearly articulate their learning
- Exercise books showed students pride in their work and achievement, often above age related expectations
- Students were positive about their learning and their relationships with their teachers
- Respect, Responsibility and Kindness were clearly demonstrated by students across the school
- The culture of success amongst students was clear and they loved their badges
- Students showed a pride in the school and were a credit to the school

As soon as the final report is published, sometime in early July, it will be shared with all parents, carers, and students.

Despite the slightly shorter half term with two Bank Holidays, there has still been a lot going on at Watling. We hosted the Local Election Day using our Sports Hall as a Polling Station, held a 6th form consultation evening, end of year exams, ran Year 7 school trips to Whipsnade Zoo, held our Cultures Day, Maths Challenges, subject consultation evenings, numerous sports fixtures, and athletics events and much, much, more! A big thank you to all those students and members of staff involved.

Therefore, with the half term upon us and a welcome break for students and staff alike, we look forward to the next half term with many more activities to enjoy. In the meantime, however, I wish you all a very safe and restful week. Enjoy the Bank Holiday (and hopefully the sunshine) and we look forward to welcoming everyone back on Monday 5th June.

Ian Bacon
Headteacher

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- End of term—Friday 26th May
- School reopens—Monday 5th June
- Afterschool clubs end w/c Monday 26th June
- Tutor Consultation Afternoon Thursday 13th July
- End of Term Thursday 20th July



Respect



Responsibility



Kindness

SCHOOL COUNCIL— EFFECTING IMPACTFUL CHANGE

Our role is to support and effect positive change which aims to be impactful for all students and staff at Watling Academy. To do this, we need constructive suggestions on how to improve what is good, as well as reasonable requests to change what might be perceived as not so good.

To improve our communication channels, we recently purchased a Suggestion Box. The box, as well as suggestions slips, are in Reception (just inside the student window). These slips can also be obtained from House Council Representatives in each Form Group. Suggestions/ concerns can be shared anonymously – however, without a source, we cannot give feedback.

For those who prefer to communicate in person, a chat with one of our Student Councillors is an option too: chat to **Raghav, Fletcher, Jess, Lenora** or **Delia** (in Y7), **Charlotte, Nihaal** or **Zaina** (in Y8), and **Yaseen** or **Janelle** (in Y9).

The Student Council also launched a logo design competition with a goal to create an eye-catching original symbol that we can display on our noticeboard and elsewhere. A prize, as well as house points, are up for grabs. The design needs to have a Watling flavour (link to our logo) and incorporate the words Student Council (or the letters SC).

Sustainability is a key element of our ethos at Watling with walking / cycling being our preferred transport mode. We were recently asked to do a bicycle count for Cycling Citizens and tallied exactly 100 bikes on site on the 11th May. This figure is 10 more than what was counted in September 2022.

Mrs Dixon



Pictured: **Yaseen, Zaina, Janelle, Charlotte and Fletcher.**

PERFORMING ARTS — GAME OF TIARAS

We are thrilled to share with you the excitement that has been brewing over the past few weeks. Our talented students have been diligently rehearsing for the first school play at Watling and we simply cannot contain our enthusiasm any longer!

As you may know, school plays provide an exceptional opportunity for our students to showcase their creativity, boost their confidence, and develop a wide range of skills. From acting to set design and stage management, these productions offer a multifaceted platform for our budding performers to flourish and leave a lasting impact on our school community.

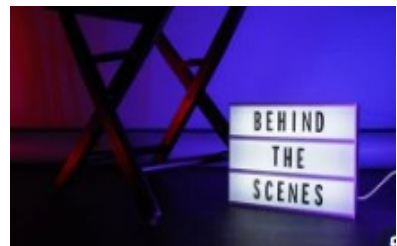
Staff are currently working tirelessly with the students, guiding them through the intricate process of bringing the play to life, encouraging our young actors to explore their characters deeply, fostering a sense of authenticity and emotional connection in their performances.

Behind the scenes, our dedicated crew has been hard at work. From the artistic minds meticulously designing set and props, to the skilled musicians who are mastering the music and sound for the performance. It is through their collective efforts that our stage transforms into a captivating world that will transport the audience.

We would also like to acknowledge the incredible commitment and enthusiasm displayed by our student performers. Balancing academic responsibilities and extracurricular activities is no small feat, yet these remarkable individuals have shown extraordinary dedication to their roles.

As parents and guardians, your unwavering support plays a crucial role in nurturing the artistic talents of our students. We encourage you to engage in conversations with your children about their experiences during rehearsals, as their journey in the world of theatre can provide valuable life lessons and shape their aspirations for the future.

Thank you for your continued support in making our school play a resounding success. Together, let us celebrate the creativity, resilience, and collaborative spirit of our students as they embark on this extraordinary theatrical adventure.



Mrs Brooks and Mr Frost

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Foreign Language Translation Bee Update

As you may remember, two of our Year 9 students, **Shreeya** and **Gabriel** qualified for the Regional Final of the Routes into Languages Foreign Language Translation Bee. This will take place at the University of Bath on Monday 12th June. They are working really hard in preparation for this. Please wish them luck if you see them, as if they are successful at this stage, they will qualify for the National Final.

Mr Scott



LIBRARY INSIGHTS

New Books!

In response to student requests and recommendations, this term has seen new books being added to the shelves daily. It has been wonderful to see the excitement as students discover the books they have requested are now available in the Watling Library. The reservation system is working well for the most popular books, with notifications being delivered to students in registration when the books are ready to collect.



Pictured: NEW books for the library.



Continued....

LIBRARY INSIGHTS (CONTINUED)

Watling Summer Term Reading Challenge

The Summer Term Reading Challenge is underway and stamp cards are available in the Library, allowing students to earn stamps for each book they have read, whether that be school books or ones from home. Once completed, stamp cards can be entered into a prize draw at the end of term. The deadline to enter completed cards is **Friday 14th July**.



Book Donations

Huge thanks to all those who have donated books to the Library. This has helped immensely with building our collection. Any further donations are always welcome, either directly to the Library or in the donations box in Reception.



Milton Keynes Library Summer Reading Challenge

Are you up for a challenge?

Milton Keynes Library is looking for volunteers aged 13 to 25 to become Summer Reading Challenge Champions. If you love books and reading, want experience working with children and enjoy talking with people, then why not sign up?

For more information visit: <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/libraries/young-readers/src>



Miss Williams

CULTURE DAY - WEDNESDAY 3RD MAY 2023

We are thrilled to share the exciting highlights of our recent Culture Day, a vibrant event that showcased the rich cultural diversity within our school community. With the aim of fostering appreciation and understanding of various heritages, Culture Day was a resounding success, leaving lasting memories and strengthening our collective sense of belonging.

One of the highlights of Culture Day was the Cultural Mufti Day, during which students proudly displayed their cultural identities through their attire. It was a remarkable sight to witness the colourful array of traditional clothing and accessories that represented the diverse backgrounds of our students. The event truly highlighted the beauty of cultural exchange and appreciation.

Another delightful aspect of Culture Day was the sharing of cultural recipes. Students enthusiastically participated in this initiative, contributing traditional recipes from their respective cultures. These recipes will soon be compiled into a special book, allowing us to embark on a culinary journey around the world from the comfort of our homes. We hope that this compilation will not only inspire culinary adventures but also serve as a testament to the unity that can be found through food.



Pictured: **Mason, Lawrence, Lewis, Jordan, Jay and Charlie.**



Culture Day was not limited to our students alone; our dedicated staff members also actively participated in celebrating their cultural backgrounds. Posters displaying information about their heritages were proudly showcased outside their classrooms. This gesture created a sense of connection and mutual respect among staff and students alike, fostering an inclusive environment within our school.

We are immensely proud of the students' engagement and enthusiasm throughout Culture Day. Their willingness to share, learn, and embrace different cultures exemplifies the spirit of unity and tolerance that we strive to cultivate at Watling Academy. It is through such events that we promote cultural appreciation, acceptance, and understanding among our students, preparing them to be global citizens in an increasingly diverse world.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the students, staff, and parents who contributed to the success of Culture Day. Your participation and support made this event truly memorable. Let us continue to celebrate our cultural diversity, cherishing the richness it brings to our school community.

Continued....

CULTURE DAY (CONTINUED)

Adding an element of excitement, we organised a captivating competition that involved our beloved Watling bear travelling to various destinations around the world. Students eagerly took on the challenge of identifying famous landmarks and the countries they were located in. This educational quest brought together geography, research, and the joy of exploration, making learning an enjoyable experience.

The design-a-door competition brought out the creative talents of our form classes. Each class was assigned a specific country and tasked with designing their classroom doors accordingly. The level of effort and attention to detail displayed by our students was truly commendable. Congratulations to the winning classes, **7KLI**, **8AOU**, and **9KCS**, for their outstanding creativity and enthusiasm.

Mr Parks



Pictured: winning 'design a door'. Left to right **7KLI**, **8AOU** and **9KCS**.



CULTURE DAY



HOUSE CHAMPIONS

This term has seen huge movement in the house competition standing, with all 5 houses changing position since the last half term. With one term remaining competition is really heating up with the knowledge that every house point counts and help your house strive towards the title. This year to date there have already been over 160,000 house points issued and this will continue into the summer term. To support your house students, need to get involved in all house competitions, as well as continue to work hard both in and out of lessons, display Respect, Responsibility and kindness, while engaging with the fantastic opportunities that Watling Academy presents them.

Some of the house competitions that have been running include; House Football, World book week competitions, Mandarin Character competitions, British Science week, Ramadan and Easter competition, House Mascot Competition, Spanish Spelling and Translation Bee, House colours non-uniform day. Well done to the hundreds of students who got involved!

An update on the house points will follow at the end of term.....

CHARITIES:

Our House Councils have been working hard to create fundraising opportunities for the designated charities. There will be charity events to support and raise money for these amazing local charities within the Milton Keynes area. We also believe that it is hugely important for our students to not just raise funds for these organisations, but also to develop an understanding of the amazing work they do in our local area. To support this our House Champions and Councils are arranging for visits during assembly from these charities to help educate our students to develop empathy, understanding and passion for these great causes.

Laine – Willen Hospice



Leyh – The Parks Trust



Marshall – Harry's Rainbow



Rutherford – Mind BLMK



Turing – Winter Night Shelter

MATHEMATICS – UKMT CHALLENGE CHAMPIONS

Once a year, mathletes from far and wide take on the gruelling United Kingdom Maths Trust (UKMT) Challenge. This year just under 100 Watling students took part.

The challenge is a mathematics test made up of rather complex problems – a quest which assesses one's resilience, creativity and acumen. A Watling participant described these problems as requiring "a lot of steps to get to the answer", others used words like "mind-blowing" and "catastrophic."

Our Junior (Y7/8) and Intermediate (Y9) participants have done us proud, achieving a haul of:

- 5 Gold Awards (**Charlie A, Quentin W, Tudor G, Jay L, Patryk K**),
- 7 Silver Awards (**Malika R, Aria P, Marley R, Karim H, Denis D, Zahra K, Rayhan M**)
- 21 Bronze Awards (**Emran A, Dayaan A, Ernesto B, Reggie F, Pranav R, Rabiya R, Shayan N, Jotham T, Anuja D, Adhvika K, Jak M, Zaina S, Talasya C, Kori I, Johnny L, Humza A, Joshua B, Ryan M, Noah B, Shreeya M, Gabriel M**).



Three of our silver medallists : **Aria, Karim & Denis** .

CHALLENGE CHAMPIONS OF 2022/2023

Top Achiever (Y9 - Intermediate Challenge): **Malika R**

Top Achiever (Y8 - Junior Challenge): **Charlie A**

Top Achiever (Y7): **Tudor G**

UKMT HOUSE OF 2022/2023

To determine the winning house, participation points were awarded, and bonus points added for gold, silver and bronze 'medals', resulting in the following outcome: **Marshall (1st), Rutherford (2nd), Turing (3rd), Leyh (4th) and Laine (5th)**.



Mrs Dixon

NETBALL SPORTS LEADERS

At the end of last half term, we were lucky enough to host the Regional Netball Finals for Year 5,6 and 7. This was a fantastic day where we hosted 200 primary and secondary school students on site to take part in the Regional finals.

We had 20 Year 9 sports leaders host the day where they were allocated a team each to run warm-ups, drills, scores for their games and some umpiring. The leaders were exceptional and represented Watling impeccably. Visiting staff members commented on how professional and polite the girls were. Well Done!



Miss Willison



Year 9 Girl's Netball Sports Leaders::

Ella, Sophie, Liv, Scarlett, Jada, Tulin, Bayleigh, Tegan, Erin, Macy, Zezi, Janelle, Mia, Simina, Jenefa, Oyin, Summer, Lily, Layla and Jess.



CRICKET SUCCESS!

Last term the Bucks Cricket Association came in and run cricket trials for our Year 7-9 students. Over 40 boys tried out and the Head Coach commented on how high the standard of cricket is here at Watling Academy.

We had the great news that 12 of our students were successful in receiving a place in the 'Secondary Schools Hub' programme where they will now receive 6-weeks training, kit, and the opportunity to become part of the regional cricket pathway. Congratulations to all the boys: Year 7 - **Max** and **Ethan**, Year 8 - **Ayaan, Raece, Trishiv, Kamran** and Year 9 - **Jake, Zain, Ehsan, Ayaan, Jamal, and Yaseen**.



SUMMER SPORTS

This half term we have started summer sports in full swing and have not let the rain affect us! Our sports clubs have started, with over 200 students attending extra-curricular clubs. We are offering boys' cricket, athletics and rounders within the department and then are working with external coaches to provide sports clubs in rugby, girls' cricket, basketball, Commercial Dance and Tennis. All of the coaches are linked to community clubs so students have the opportunity to play outside of school at: EM Dance Coaching, Wolverton Tennis Club, Bucks Cricket and MK Breakers Basketball.

Summer fixtures have also started with students playing in the MK schools cricket leagues. A special mention goes to the Year 7 boys' team who played and won their first cricket match of the season! The team: **Marley, Akash, Qasim, Arjun, Max, Ethan, Isaac, Adan, Mushin, Raghav**. We also competed in the first Athletics event of the season – The English Schools Athletics Track and field Cup. A Watling team of 56 students represented the school and did very well against strong opposition from all round the County. A special mention goes to the Year 8 boys relay team for winning their race in record time (**Abiola, Eli, Robert, and Maxwell**), **Olivia** in Year 9 for winning the 1500m by a long way, **Abiola** for winning the 300m in a great time. We are looking forward to the next Athletics event after half term.



Pictured: Winning Year 8 boys relay team

TRIPS—LIONS AND TIGERS AND BEARS (OH MY!)

This term we have seen year 7M and 7K visit Whipsnade zoo, The students had a great experience and spoke highly of the trip this week, which was fantastic to hear. It was a great experience for both staff and students to enjoy the fresh air and to see the animals. The students represented Watling Academy brilliantly and we look forward to enjoying future offsite trips.

The next trip will be the year 8's visiting Thorpe Park at the end of June / beginning of July and we hope this trip will be as successful as Whipsnade!"



AFTERSCHOOL CLUBS

Summer term clubs have started and this term we have introduced some new clubs: Tennis, Rugby and summer sports including cricket at Watling. Extra curriculum clubs have proven to be a real success again and many students have taken advantage of the afterschool activities.

Afterschool clubs will continue to run until w/c 26th June 2023.



FRIENDS OF WATLING ACADEMY (PTA)



On Monday 24th May, our most recent Friends of Watling Academy meeting took place, with a focus on how we can continue to recruit and grow the committee, as well as future fundraising opportunities.

Thank you to all of the parents and carers who have expressed an interest in volunteering at future Friends of Watling Academy events; it is an essential part of successful fundraising and ensures successful events take place.

We are always looking for more volunteers, so please do get in touch with our Chairperson, Fern, if you are interested in volunteering in the future.

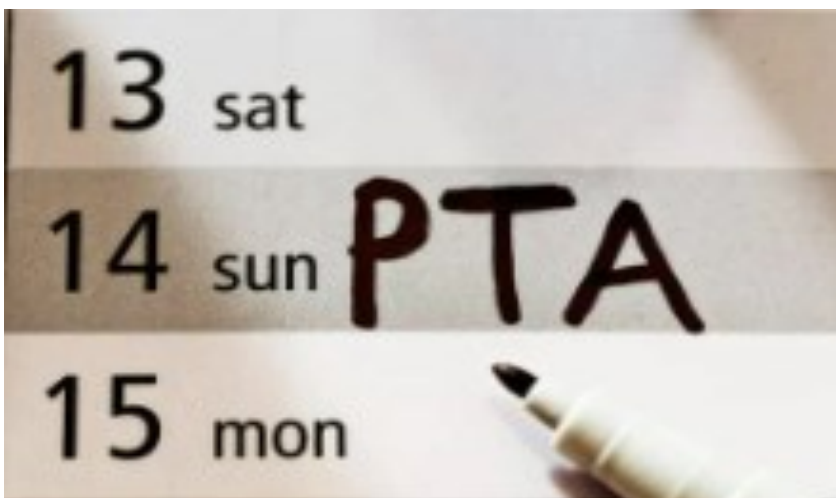
We are still looking for enthusiastic volunteers to join our committee as Secretary and Vice-Chair. Taking on a role within the committee is an exciting opportunity to shape the direction of Friends of Watling Academy and ensure all our students can benefit from the funds raised by our events. Please

We would like to extend an invitation for all parents and carers to attend the next meeting of Friends of Watling Academy on **Monday 12th June from 6pm-7pm**. At the meeting, we will be discussing:

- Recruitment to Friends of Watling Academy for September 2023
- Future fundraising events
- AOB

If you would like any further information about Friends of Watling Academy, a role on the committee, or are planning to attend our next meeting, please email Fern, Chairperson, at friendsofwatlingacademy@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing our Friends and new faces at the next meeting.



POLLING STATION—THURSDAY 4TH May 2023

We are delighted to share an exciting event that took place at our school on May 4th. Watling Academy had the privilege of hosting a polling station for the local elections held in Milton Keynes. It was a remarkable opportunity for our students to witness democracy in action and gain a deeper understanding of the importance of civic engagement.

The sports hall was transformed into a bustling polling station, open to members of the public throughout the day. This created a vibrant atmosphere within our school, as voters from the local community arrived to cast their ballots. The presence of the polling station within our premises allowed our students to directly observe and participate in this fundamental aspect of democracy.

The occasion proved to be an invaluable teaching moment for our students, as we took the opportunity to engage them in discussions centered around British Values, democracy, and the significance of voting. These discussions fostered a sense of civic responsibility and encouraged our students to reflect on their role as active participants in shaping the future of our society.

To provide a first-hand experience of the voting process, several classes visited the polling station. This allowed our students to gain practical insights into how elections are conducted, how ballots are cast, and the impact of these decisions on their lives and the broader community. A highlight of these visits was a talk delivered by the lead voting inspector, who provided invaluable information on the voting process, the rights and responsibilities of voters, and the future opportunity our students will have to exercise their democratic rights.

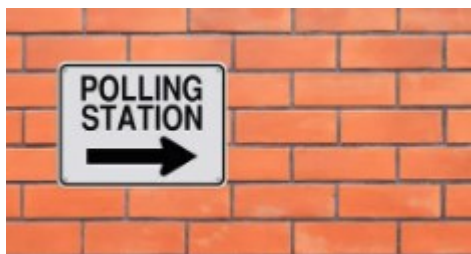
The enthusiasm and eagerness displayed by our students during these interactions were truly inspiring. They demonstrated a genuine interest in learning about the mechanics of democracy, the importance of informed decision-making, and the values that underpin our society. By immersing themselves in this experience, our students have taken an important step towards becoming responsible and engaged citizens.

We extend our gratitude to the local authorities for choosing Watling Academy as a polling station location and providing us with this invaluable opportunity. The experience of hosting the polling station not only enriched our students' understanding of democracy but also highlighted the close ties between our school and the wider community. It is through collaborative efforts like these that we can foster a sense of civic pride and create future leaders who are actively involved in shaping the world around them.

We are immensely proud of our students for their curiosity, engagement, and genuine enthusiasm in embracing this democratic experience. Their commitment to learning about British Values and the voting process sets a strong foundation for their active participation in society as they progress into adulthood.

As educators, it is our responsibility to instil in our students the importance of democracy, participation, and respect for diverse opinions. The local elections at Watling Academy served as a catalyst for these lessons, and we look forward to nurturing our students' understanding of democracy and encouraging their active involvement in civic affairs.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of this event, including the staff, students, and voting inspectors. Together, we are building a community that values democracy, empowers its members, and prepares our students for a future filled with opportunities for positive change.



WATLING NOTICE BOARD



DATES TO REMEMBER

Last Day of Term: Friday 26th May 2023

School Re-Opens: Monday 5th June 2023

Last week of clubs: w/c Monday 26th June

Year 8 HPV Vaccinations: Monday 12th June 2023

PTA meeting: Monday 12th June (PM)

Big Bang Fair: Thursday 22nd June 2023

School Production Dress rehearsal: Tuesday 27th June 2023

MK School Athletics Competition: Wednesday 28th June 2023

School Show: Wednesday 28th & Thursday 29th June 2023

Year 8 Thorpe Park trips: Friday 30th June AND Friday 7th July 2023 TBC

NEW Year 7 Induction: Monday 3rd—Wednesday 5th July 2023

House Festival Day—Non Uniform: Friday 7th July 2023

Tutor Consultations: Thursday 13th July 2023.
ALL students finish @ 1.20pm

Sports Day: Wednesday 12h July 2023

Job opportunities

We will shortly be advertising for a **Caretaker** and an **IT technician**, to join the team at Watling Academy. Please see the Academy website for further information on these posts over the coming days.

ALLERGIES—REMINDER

We have a number of members of the Watling Community with severe nut allergies. Please can we ask all families for the support in not sending items containing nuts into school with their children.

Thank you.



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 support.



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