

Newsletter

WORDS FROM MR BACON, HEADTEACHER

Dear Parents & Carers

Welcome to another Watling Academy Newsletter – the penultimate edition before this academic year comes to an end. How time flies! We have had another very eventful half term, jam packed with trips, sports tournaments, competitions and a couple more 'firsts' for Watling.

Our very first overseas residential trip took place at the end of April, to Barcelona. During the trip, students visited famous sights, watched a display of Flamenco dancing and impressed the hotel staff with their Spanish speaking skills. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the experience – well done to all involved.

58 of our Year 10 students embarked on their Duke of Edinburgh qualifying expedition which entailed walking 12km and a night camp – a fantastic experience.

A big "well done" from us all to our Year 9 and 10 students who have completed their exams over the last couple of weeks. We are very much looking forward to hearing how our Year 10 students have got on at their work experience placements this week, we know the students had set themselves up with some interesting and beneficial placements.

We have welcomed new members of staff and are sadly saying goodbye to Ms Webster (Maths teacher), Mrs Smith (Deputy SENDCo) and Mrs Boreham (Library Assistant). We would like to thank them for all their hard work and support and wish them all the very best for the future.

When we return to school after the half term break, we will be planning for the new intake of Year 7s and so the cycle of school life continues. May I wish you a very relaxing and safe week, enjoy the Bank Holiday and we look forward to seeing everyone back on Monday 3rd June.

Ian Bacon, Headteacher



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

House System	2-3
EAL Young Interpreters	4
MFL Spelling Bee	5
Duke of Edinburgh	6-7
Bletchley Park	8-9
Barcelona Residential	10-13
Dodgeball Tournament	14
ESAA Athletics	15
Walk a Mile	16
Library	17
Culture Day	18-19
Parent Consultation	20
House Captains	21
Parking	22
Safeguarding	23
Watling Notice Board	24

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Year 7 & 8 end of year assessments— 3-14 June
- Year 10 Exam results day—Fri 14th June
- Year 10 Language speaking assessments—17-21 June
- Buggy Malone Production—25-27 June
- Sports Day—Fri 5th July
- Reserve Sports Day—Wed 10th July
- End of term—Fri 19th July @3:15pm





HOUSE UPDATES

Watling House System Thrives with Newly Elected Representatives

Greetings to all in the Watling Academy community! This term has been particularly eventful, with a range of activities that have brought both competition and cultural exploration to the forefront.

Double House Point Week: A Triumph of Collaboration

We launched our first-ever Double House Point Week, sparking excitement among our students. Throughout the week, students eagerly awaited the sound of the tannoy system, signalling a brief window to earn double house points. We extend a special commendation to Rasheed, Yaseen, Oliver, and Nicole, who demonstrated exceptional courage by speaking over the tannoy, motivating their peers to participate.

In the closely contested race, Laine House emerged as the victors, demonstrating remarkable dedication and teamwork. Leyh House secured a commendable second place, closely followed by Turning House in third. The competitive spirit exhibited by our students during this event was truly commendable, fostering a sense of camaraderie and pride throughout the school.

Culture Day Door Competition: A Celebration of Diversity

At Watling Academy, we embrace and celebrate diversity, as exemplified by our recent Culture Day Door Competition. Each form was tasked with transforming their classroom door into a vibrant display inspired by a different country. From the sun-kissed shores of the Seychelles to the vibrant streets of Nigeria, from the rich cultural heritage of Poland to the dynamic energy of Qatar, over 35 nations were represented in our school.

Continue on Page 3



HOUSE UPDATES



As students explored the corridors adorned with these cultural displays, they embarked on a journey of discovery, gaining insight into the traditions, customs, and landscapes of various countries.

This competition not only fostered creativity and collaboration but also served as a powerful reminder of the rich tapestry of cultures that enrich our school community. Just have a look at the fantastic door belonging to 7BEN, created mainly by their House Representative Anya-Grace!

Coming up next...

As we approach the end of the academic year, it's astounding to reflect on the collective efforts of our students since September. Together, we have amassed an impressive total of 452,622 house points, showcasing the dedication and commitment of each and every member of our school community. With only two months remaining, the anticipation builds as we wonder: Which house will emerge victorious and claim the coveted trophy? The competition is fierce, but with determination and teamwork, anything is possible. Let's continue to strive for excellence as we race towards the finish line!

Mr Green, Mrs Hardie, Mrs Hollingsworth, Miss Kennedy and Miss Palmer

YOUNG INTERPRETERS

The Young Interpreters Scheme is a nationally recognised peer-buddying scheme that trains young people to welcome and support newly arrived pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL).

Young Interpreters' role is to act as mentors to new students, so they can feel part of the school as quickly as possible.

At Watling Academy, we have a very diverse community with students and staff members speaking nearly 50 different languages. Ten monolingual and bilingual pupils were nominated to participate in a four-week training to prepare for this role.

Congratulations to our first Young Interpreters at Watling Academy: Cora, Daniel and Unye (Y7); Delia, Maria and Neel (Y8); Gabriela, Madalyn and Meryem (Y9); and Joshua from Y10, who successfully completed their training and are ready to support our new arrivals.



Mrs Sadowska



ROUTES INTO LANGUAGES: FOREIGN LANGUAGE SPELLING BEE

During the 3rd term, the 3 winners from Stage 2 of the Spelling Bee (Aiden, Venisha and Eliza) have been practising for the Regional Finals which was held at Southampton University on May 2nd.

For the event, participants had to learn 200 words and spell as many as they could at random in 1 minute. The competition took place in front of a large audience and the participants were 41 out of 3453 participants who originally took place.

All students were extremely close to first place and Eliza secured 2nd, narrowly missing the opportunity to progress to the national final at Cambridge University. They battled it out multiple times and showed a great deal of resilience and courage.

Well done to these students and everyone who supported them, they have put in a huge amount of effort over the last term.



Foreign Language Spelling Bee

Mrs O'Dell

Duke of Edinburgh

YEAR 10 DUKE OF EDINBURGH EXPEDITION

Following our successful practice day, the students embarked on their qualifying expedition in April. The expedition entailed two days of walking and a night camping, demonstrating they could work well in a team and be self-sufficient for this time.



They walked for around 7 hours, covering a minimum of 12km on both days whilst carrying their equipment for the expedition. We were lucky with the weather staying dry all weekend but we did have to endure a very cold night.

It wouldn't be a DofE expedition without getting lost, which one group managed spectacularly within the first couple of miles, getting them back to camp several hours after the first group, but before sunset thankfully!

The instructors again commended the attitudes of the students, in particular Saadiya, Lily, Summer, Kara, Holly, Sofia, Tegan and Camila for working well in their groups and going above and beyond during the weekend.



Continued on page 7

YEAR 10 DUKE OF EDINBURGH EXPEDITION

The students will now aim to complete their sections in their volunteering, skill and physical activities to finish off the Award, hopefully by the end of the year.

Well done to all 58 students who successfully passed their expedition!

Mrs Combs



Bletchley Park Trip

A HISTORY OF CODEBREAKING FOR OUR YEAR 7s AT THE FAMOUS BLETCHLEY PARK

Our Year 7 students embarked on an unforgettable journey to Bletchley Park, immersing themselves in the rich history and cutting-edge technology that defines this iconic site. Stepping into the shoes of World War II codebreakers, they delved into the past while also gaining insights into our present-day digital landscape.

The adventure began with a guided tour led by knowledgeable experts who vividly painted the picture of life at Bletchley Park during wartime. Students were transported back in time, imagining the urgency and intensity of the efforts to crack enemy codes. The historical context provided a deeper understanding of the significance of Bletchley Park in shaping the course of history.

After the tour, students had the opportunity to explore the park independently, armed with activity booklets designed to enhance their learning. This hands-on approach allowed them to delve deeper into the intricacies of codebreaking and cryptography, reinforcing their understanding of this pivotal period in history.



Continued on page 9

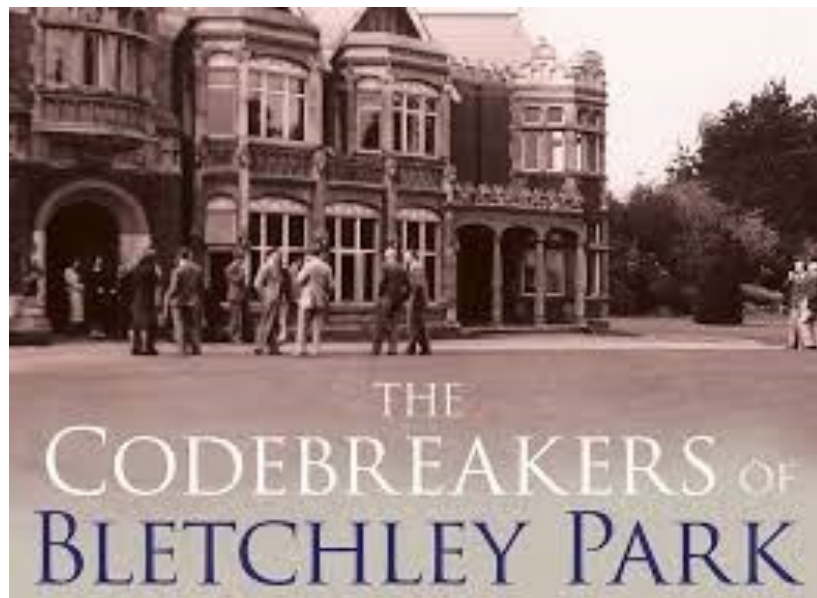
A HISTORY OF CODEBREAKING FOR OUR YEAR 7s AT THE FAMOUS BLETCHLEY PARK

However, the experience didn't stop at the past. Our students also engaged with the present and future of cybersecurity through an interactive workshop. In an age where digital literacy is paramount, they delved into the importance of secure passwords and the mechanics of face recognition technology. Putting their problem-solving skills to the test, they even had the chance to create a basic facial recognition model, bridging the gap between theory and practice.

Through this multifaceted experience, our Year 7 students not only gained a deeper appreciation for history but also developed critical skills relevant to our modern world.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the staff at Bletchley Park for providing our students with an enriching and memorable experience, one that will undoubtedly leave a lasting impression.

Mr Bartlam



Barcelona Trip

YEAR 10 RESIDENTIAL IN BARCELONA!

Between Friday 26th April and Monday 29th April, 30 GCSE Spanish students in Year 10 were part of Watling Academy's first ever residential trip abroad to Barcelona Spain.

Here is a snapshot of the itinerary:

Day 1 – Friday 26th April

Explore the Gothic Quarter of Barcelona, La Boquería Market, Las Ramblas and Port Vell.



Continued on page 11

YEAR 10 RESIDENTIAL IN BARCELONA!

Day 2 – Saturday 27th April

Visit Poble Espanyol, Olympic Stadium (temporary home of FC Barcelona), Ciutadella Park and the Sagrada Familia, followed by a Flamenco show in the evening.



Continued on page 12

Barcelona Trip, cont.

YEAR 10 RESIDENTIAL IN BARCELONA!

Day 3 – Sunday 28th April

Tarragona and the Roman ruins recognised by UNESCO. Port Aventura Theme Park.



Day 4 – Monday 29th April

Work study of Calafell before departing for the Museum of FC Barcelona.

Continued on page 13

YEAR 10 RESIDENTIAL IN BARCELONA!



Students were fortunate to visit some of the regions most famous monuments and sample traditional aspects of Hispanic culture. They were engaged throughout the guided tour of the Sagrada Familia – the iconic church designed by Gaudi. Staff and students were mesmerised by the talented Flamenco dancers who put on a spectacular performance at the hotel. Mr Scott was worried about having to attempt some of these steps, but fortunately they took pity on us and only made us dance the Macarena!

Staff were impressed with students' persistence at speaking Spanish whenever they had the opportunity – particularly during the work study where they had to speak to staff at the hotel, the supermarket and train station to find answers to the questions they had been set. Learning a language is all about having a go and not worrying about making mistakes. That is how you learn.

Students represented Watling Academy with distinction, demonstrating our values of respect, responsibility and kindness at all times. Our tour guide and the hotel staff were particularly complimentary about the politeness of our students.

Thank you to the students for upholding our core values, parents who supported the trip, staff who attended the trip (Mr Parks and Ms O'Dell) and the trips team supporting us back home. You are all pioneers!

Mr Scott

DODGEBALL TOURNAMENT

On Friday 26th April 16, Year 7's and 8's attended a dodgeball tournament held at Stoke Mandeville Stadium.

This was an opportunity for students to participate in an alternative sporting fixture and showcase their teamwork, communication skills and most importantly to have fun. Whilst attending, the students set a great example for our school through demonstrating respect, responsibility, and kindness both on and off of the court.

Out of the 10 schools who attended, both the boys and the girls team came a respectable 5th place, and a great day was had by all!



Miss Willison

ESAA ATHLETICS

On Wednesday 8th March we entered the English Schools Athletics Team competition held at Stantonbury Stadium. We took 54 students across 4 teams to compete in track and field events. This was our second year entering the competition but first year with Year 10s. Our students represented Watling with respect and pride.

We had some amazing individual performances:

Isaac winning 1500m (Yr 8), Jack winning 300m (Yr 8), Maxwell winning 200m (Yr 9), Evie winning the Javelin (Yr 8) and then Watling's relay teams winning every race! Overall our teams came:

Junior Girls – 4th out of 9

Junior Boys – 4th out of 7

Inter Girls – 6th out of 10

Inter Boys – 3rd out of 8 (only beaten by Stowe and Aylesbury Grammar school for boys!)

Well Done to all our teams of competitors and we are looking forward to the next athletics competition next term at the MK Federation Schools Cup and of course Sports Day.

Miss Willison

WALK A MILE CHALLENGE

Well done to all that attended the walk a mile challenge. Watling managed to walk 105 miles which were added to the world wide event. The PE department held the walk a mile challenge as a house competition, with the winning house being Rutherford!



...even the staff
joined in!



Miss Passfield

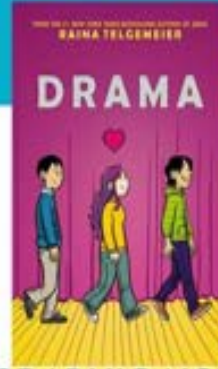
WATLING MOST BORROWED LIBRARY BOOKS 2024



MYSTERY



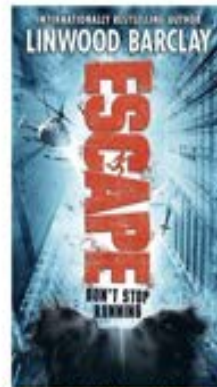
FANTASY



GRAPHIC NOVEL



DYSTOPIAN



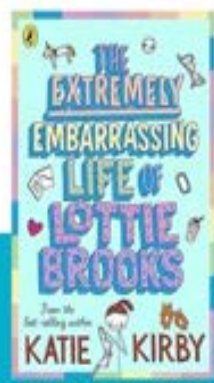
ADVENTURE



ROMANCE



SCI-FI



HUMOUR



REALISTIC

Library

Culture Day

WATLING ACADEMY CULTURE DAY CELEBRATION

On Friday 3rd May, Watling Academy was transformed into a vibrant tapestry of cultures as we celebrated our annual Culture Day. It was heartening to see such a large number of students embracing the



occasion by coming to school in their cultural dress. The enthusiasm was palpable, and the corridors were filled with colourful outfits, showcasing the rich diversity within our school community.

Students were visibly excited to share and celebrate

their heritage, and it was wonderful to witness the pride they took in their cultural identities. The day was a true testament to the spirit of inclusivity and respect that we cultivate at Watling Academy.

A highlight of the day was the cultural mufti event, where many students participated with great enthusiasm. It was delightful to see the variety of traditional attire and the joy it brought to everyone involved.

Another standout moment was the Henna design competition, which saw a remarkable number of students getting involved. The creativity and skill displayed in the designs were truly impressive, and it added a unique and beautiful element to the day's celebrations.



Continued on page 19

WATLING ACADEMY CULTURE DAY CELEBRATION

We were also honoured to welcome guest speakers from Under the Umbrella, who engaged our students with insightful talks during lunchtime. Their presence added depth to the day's events, fostering a greater understanding and appreciation of different cultures.



The "Design a Door" House competition was a fantastic success, with numerous entries showcasing the creativity of our students. The competition was fierce, but in the end, the USA-themed door emerged as the winning entry. Congratulations to all participants for their imaginative designs!



A huge thank you to everyone who contributed to making Culture Day a memorable event. Your involvement and enthusiasm were key to its success. We look forward to celebrating again next year and continuing to honour the diverse cultures that make Watling Academy a wonderful place to learn and grow.

Mr Parks

SUCCESSFUL YEAR 7 AND YEAR 8 SUBJECT CONSULTATION EVENINGS

At Watling Academy, we were delighted to host our Year 7 and Year 8 Subject Consultation Evenings on 25th April and 2nd May, respectively.

The evenings were a great success, marked by excellent communication between staff and parents/guardians. The exchange of information about student progress was both informative and encouraging, and there was a buzz in the atmosphere as everyone engaged in meaningful discussions.

It was a wonderful time for parents and guardians to meet the new members of our teaching staff, who have recently joined our school community. The opportunity to discuss achievements, next steps, and expectations for the future was invaluable.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all who joined us for the Year 7 and 8 Subject Consultation Evenings. Your involvement and dedication to the educational journey of our students are deeply appreciated. We are very grateful for your continued support, which plays a crucial role in the academic journey of the students at Watling Academy.

Looking ahead, we still have the Tutor Consultation Evening scheduled later in the year, and we are excited to see everyone in person then. Your participation helps us to build a strong, supportive, and successful academic community at Watling Academy.

Thank you once again for attending. It was wonderful to see you all.

Mr Parks

HOUSE CAPTAINS KEY FOCUS

This term Mr Mangan has taken over meeting with the House Captains, a key focus has been to look at the structure of the House Council and working with our catering partners to ensure that our students are getting the best possible deal.

Having implemented the change to our uniform policy this term the House Captains and reps have turned their attentions to the following.

Homework

A working group from the student council has been set up to work with Mr Cassidy (Deputy HeadTeacher). Together as a group their focus will be establishing what works well with the current system and what can be improved. A key part of this project will be based around how we recognise and reward students who complete homework to a high standard.

House competitions

Already we are establishing our offer of House events that will run in lessons, social times, after school and during tutor times for the next academic year. Working with House Champions the group will liaise with staff and students to identify the competitions and events that they want.

Clubs

Mr Stormer has asked that our House Council supports him in identifying the clubs our students would like in the next academic year. Students will be taking part in a questionnaire that each form group will complete. House Captains will then identify-

- Clubs that students enjoy now.
- Clubs they would like to add that we do not offer.
- Clubs that they currently attend outside of school.
- Clubs they enjoyed at Primary School that we do not offer.

This half term our House Captains have started to lead House assemblies, this was a great experience for our students, enabling them to stand in front of their entire House group, make themselves recognised and gain valuable experience in preparing for and delivering a speech in front of their peers.

Mr Gibbs

Parking

SAFETY OF THE COMMUNITY



Thank you to those parents, carers and visitors that support the safety of the Whitehouse community by parking and driving responsibly.

Further to recent messages about ongoing parking and driving concerns in Barrosa Way and the school car park, **we have been contacted by concerned members of the public about parents and carers parking and driving inconsiderately in Longhorn Drive.**

They have contacted the police to request additional support in patrolling these areas, as well as the areas immediately outside the school, as they are concerned about the risk of an accident.

Please consider the impact on the local community when parking, and let's work together to keep everyone as safe as possible.



Miss Rhodes

SAFEGUARDING



Safety Cycling to School

We are proud to be the school in Milton Keynes with the most students regularly cycling to school, supporting our commitment to sustainability.

Please can we ask all Parents and Carers to remind students who cycle to school to do so in a safe and respectful manner. There have been some instances where students have shown little awareness for Road users and Pedestrians—putting themselves and others at risk.

If you have any concerns regarding safeguarding, please speak to one of the following members of staff:

Adam Say, Designated Safeguarding Lead

Gabriella Nicholls

Naomi Thompson

Eliot Humphris

Natalie Bennett

Alternatively, contact reception on 01908 794094 or the Safeguarding team directly at dsl@watling.academy

Mr Say

Safeguarding

WATLING NOTICE BOARD

IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-24

- Y7 and Y8 end of year assessments –**3-14 June**
- Y10 exam results day—**14 June**
- Y10 Language speaking tests—**17-23 June**
- Sports Day—**5th July**
- Reserve Sports Day—**10th July**
- End of half term @ **3:15pm 19th July**



POLITE REMINDER ABOUT STUDENT ABSENCE PROCEDURE

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 of their absence**. 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, full details of the absence, and when you expect your child to return to school.

Watling Academy, Barrosa Way, Whitehouse, MK8 1EP

Phone: 01908 794094

Website: watlingacademy.net

Email: admin@watling.academy.