

Headteacher's Newsletter

February 2020

Welcome back

I hope that you all had a wonderful half term break, despite the stormy weather. I'm sure many of you enjoyed time away, possibly skiing and I hope that our Year 11 and Year 13 students used the time available to prepare themselves properly for the PPE Examinations that have continued this week. These are an important milestone for the school but also for the students in really knowing where their gaps in knowledge are so that they can prepare properly for the final exams which start in 76 days. Our staff will be working tirelessly to support the students over the coming weeks and months and I'd like to thank them all in advance for their efforts.



At the start of this term I sent a letter to parents requesting they no longer phone staff to complain about detentions. I just wanted to write a note of thanks to you all for your support in this matter. The number of calls have dramatically dropped and staff feel far more supported and able to deal with poor behaviour in their lessons. As I say in every speech I make, I will not allow students to disrupt the learning of others and parents support in this matter does make a huge difference.

There is a lot going on this term so please check the dates for your diary below to make sure you don't miss any important events, particularly Parents Evenings and Options Evenings which will help you and your child make the right choices for their futures.

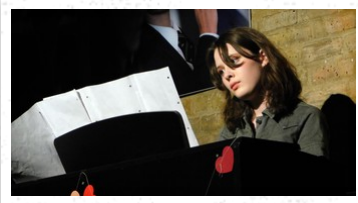
Thank you for reading my newsletter and to those parents who have shared their child's successes with us. I had feedback from one parent stating that reading these successes really made them feel part of the school community and I am delighted to celebrate the achievements of our amazing, talented young people both inside and outside of school.

Graduation day

Our annual Year 7 Graduation Day will be held on Saturday 4th July and we hope that our Year 7's families have the date saved in their diary.

Before half term a number of letters went out to students who needed to improve either their behaviour or their attendance. Our aim is to ensure that all students attend the Graduation, and in the meetings I had with students I set them all very reasonable targets for the next 6 weeks. I want to thank parents for their support in this matter. If students meet the targets I have set they will be invited to attend the celebration of their first year.

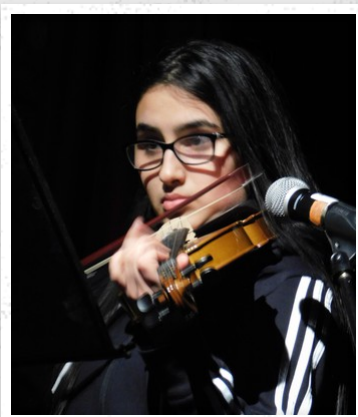
For those of you that haven't received a letter, no news is good news and we will be sending out formal invitations to the event after the Easter holidays.



The Love Lounge

On the Thursday before half term we were treated to an amazing showcase of our students' talents at the annual Love Lounge.

We had poetry readings, instrumentals, show stopping songs as well as a Beatles Tribute Band to complete the evening. It really was a fantastic show, thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended and I would like to say thank you to all the performers and staff who worked so hard to put the show on.





Parking

This is my six weekly moan about parking and driving at the start and end of the school day. Parking was raised specifically by parents at the most recent Parents Voice meeting and I was asked to once again request that parents consider how and where they park outside of school. Parking on the pavement causes potential danger for the students as they walk down the road, and inconsiderate driving such as 3 point turns on the main road causes danger for both pedestrians and other motorists. Please consider how you park and drive when collecting and dropping off your children so that everyone remains safe.

Cross Country Queen

West Hatch High School competed in the annual Year 7 and 8 County Cross Country Championships in February. The 16 students performed extremely well in perfect, cold but sunny cross country conditions on the afternoon. The 3km and 3.5km course was contested by approximately 250 students in each age and gender category from the very best state, grammar and private schools in the Essex County. Although all students performed very well on the day, a particular mention for Year 7 student Molly Sherrin (below) who placed an amazing 4th in her race. This position qualified her to run for Essex County in the Inter-Counties event in March which will take place in Kent. Molly, who runs for Woodford Green and Essex Ladies is a very keen and strong runner. She competes regularly and has recently performed well in regional events as well as securing a time under 21 minutes in her local Roding Valley 5k Park Run, a feat that would be difficult to surpass at any age. Mr D'Silva and Miss Huggins Team Coaches said that 'Molly is certainly one of the strongest runners we have had a West Hatch in recent years and we wish her well having qualified for the County. Well done to all who ran in the prestigious event'.



It's Good to Talk

We recognise that a West Hatch family can only be successful if there is a successful marriage between parents and school. Together we can play a crucial role in helping to ensure that our children are as happy, healthy and successful as they can be. Evidence suggests that effective parental engagement can lead to learning gains of +3 months over the course of a year. Let's do this for them!

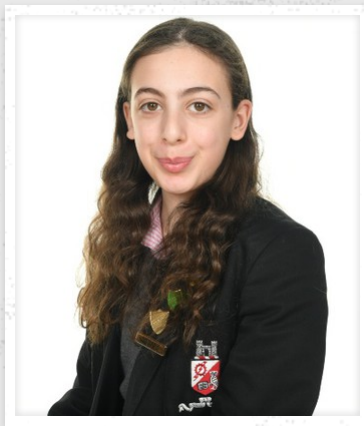
Why not take 15 minutes a day to talk to your children about what they have done in school that day. Always #itsgoodtotalk

Poetry Success

Congratulations to Ethan Cartwright (Year 11), Stella Georgiou (Year 9) and Charley Sands (Year 9) (below) who successfully had poems published in the Young Writers' Anthology *Through Their Eyes*. This is the first external competition we've entered this year, and to have three students selected for publication is something we can be very pleased with. We'll be entering more competitions over the course of the year and look forward to seeing how Mr Bundred's poetry disciples get on.



Ethan Cartwright



Stella Georgiou



Charley Sands

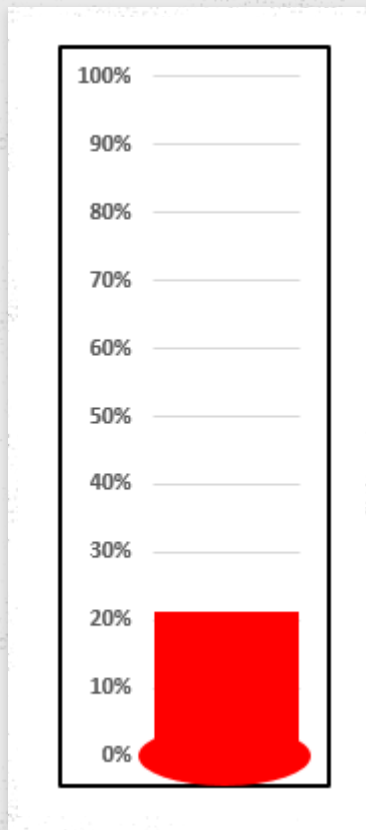
PFA

We are delighted to have been approached by one of our parents who has offered to start a West Hatch Parent and Friends Association with the aim of raising money for the students at the school. Many schools raise significant funds via PFA's and this enables the school to fund things that would benefit the students but cannot necessarily be justified from our funding, particularly with the Governments cuts to schools funding over the last few years.

If you are interested in getting involved in any capacity for the benefit of your children, please make contact via the email below:

pfa@westhatch.net

With that in mind, over the last 3 years we have been saving the donations made by parents each year to try and raise enough money to purchase a large canopy for the new snack shack area which will be put in place after the expansion work is completed. The cost of a canopy the size we require, is approximately £70,000. Below you can see the percentage we have raised to date. I know money is tight for many but if you are able to donate via parentpay it will make a big difference to your children.



Lambwood Heights VIP Event

In February Joshua Lord (Year 10) and Aaron Gelkoff (Year 9), two of our wonderfully talented performers at the school were invited to represent West Hatch at the Lambwood Heights Care Home VIP Event. The boys did the school proud as they sang four songs, and the audience who were made up of residents, Councillors, VIP guests and journalists were astounded by their talent. Well done both of you. The boys can be seen below along with our Chair of Governors John Haley, who accompanied them to the event on behalf of the school.



Christmas Food Bank Donation

I received the following message after Christmas and wanted to share it with you all;

I just wanted to say a massive thank you to you and the school for donating a whopping 649kgs of food to us just before Christmas, we were quite overwhelmed by the generosity of your students! This food will go a long way to helping people in need in our community and it is very humbling when we receive such a generous contribution to the Foodbank.

Once again, many thanks for your kindness and generosity.

Epping Forest Foodbank

It's Been A Long Stint!

Janice Anderson who helped prepare more than 1.3 million hot school dinners during her near three decades at West Hatch, retired last term after 28 years service at the school.

Janice started as a Catering Assistant before becoming Assistant Cook and latterly Deputy Catering Manager. She said: "I've really enjoyed working with a great bunch of ladies and serving the pupils. Cooking has always been a pleasure for me and I've loved every minute working at West Hatch. It's a lovely school and it has been a lovely environment to work in." She added: "It's sad to be leaving but I'm 65 and it starts a new chapter in my life."

I'm sure I speak on behalf of all of you when I say thank you to Janice for her many years of service and we all hope she has a wonderful and restful retirement.



Important Dates for your Diary

March

Thursday 5th March - Yr. 9 Parents Evening (appointment system)

Thursday 12th March - Yr.8 Parents Evening (appointment system)

Wednesday 18th March - Yr.8/9 Transition Day

Wednesday 18th March - Yr.8/9 Options Evening

Tuesday 24th March - Yr.11 Transition Day

Thursday 26th March - Yr.12 Parents Evening

April

Wednesday 1st and Thursday 2nd April - Dance Show

Friday 3rd April break up for Easter at 1.25pm

Thursday 23rd April - Yr.7 Parents Evening (appointment system)

Our Students' other achievements



William Mason (Year 8)

Well done to William who made the Redbridge District Cricket Team and represented them at the London Youth Games in Harrow. They only just missed out on qualifications and the opportunity to play in the finals at Lord's. However, the standard was high and it was a great achievement to make the District Team which consisted of four Essex players.



Jjay Holyoak (Year 7)

Well done to Jjay who was awarded with his Chief Scout award last week. This is the highest award a cub scout can achieve and this means he has completed all of his challenge badges.

Jjay will be going to the award ceremony in March where he will be presented with a certificate.



Cara Lea (Year 7)

Congratulations to Cara who successfully auditioned and gained a role in Buggy Malone which is being put on by Vision Redbridge at the Kenneth Moore Theatre this April.

Grace Albone (Year 8)

Grace was nominated by her cricket club Bancroft Lions to attend a county trial for Essex at Chelmsford and was lucky enough to win a place in the Essex Development Squad. She began training at the beginning of January and will train each Sunday for 2 hours at Felsted School for the winter season until the end of March. It's a great opportunity, well done Grace.

Grace's club Bancroft Lions are keen to promote women's/girls cricket, so if anyone is interested in joining they should contact the club directly.





Hollie Martin (Year 7)

Hollie has recently started ukulele lessons after being bought one for Christmas, and is said to be a natural. Well done Hollie and we look forward to hearing you play in one of our school events in the future.



Jackson Nsofor (Year 7)

Jackson was signed recently for Protec Youth Academy under 12's first team and will be playing in the JPL (Junior Premiership League) which I'm told is the highest standard of youth football there is before professional. Again a wonderful achievement Jackson, I look forward to seeing you play for the school team in the future.



Aaron Gelkoff (Year 9)

Aaron spent 2 days this month at BBC Media City in Manchester recording a radio drama "The heart is a lonely hunter" for Radio 4, which will be broadcast on the 15th and 22nd March at 3pm. As you would have seen in previous Newsletters Aaron is a very talented young man and it's great to see him getting so many opportunities to showcase his talents.

Dance Troupe

Seven girls from West Hatch, who form a Dance Troupe at Footsteps Dance School, proudly won three Gold Dance Troupe trophies in the Modern, Lyrical & Tap categories at the Dagenham & Barking Stage Festival in January. A brilliant achievement, well done to you all.

Photo below.

Top Row: Luka Buinauskaite Year 8, Lily Chipperfield Year 9, Eloise Freeman Year 9

Bottom Row: Keira Garvey Year 9, Skye Morley Year 9, Billie Hughes Year 9

Inset: Nicole Goldberg Year 11



And FINALLY

I really do enjoy writing my newsletter and reflecting on the wonderful and talented young people we have at this school. Thank you again to all the parents who have shared their children's achievements with us.

I hope you've found the information in this newsletter interesting and useful. I'd also like to once again thank the staff at West Hatch for all the time they give in supporting the students to ensure they have the amazing experiences you hear about in these newsletters. I look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming Parents Evenings.

Daniel Leonard
Headteacher

