



End of Term Letter

Headmaster

Dear Parents, Carers and Friends of Wallington County Grammar School,

Life in a school progresses at various paces. Some weeks feel like they are slowly drifting by with the usual rhythms of academic life including lessons, assessments, house competitions, rugby fixtures, music recitals and such like. Other times it feels like the year is galloping away with you with change coming so thick and fast that one can barely take it all in. This term certainly feels like the latter and it has been truly exhilarating seeing the developments across the school that have been led by our wonderful staff and students.

I must start by mentioning our new programme of clubs and societies that have completely reshaped our school day. Staff and students have worked tirelessly to put on sessions that will interest, engage and inspire those that attend them. Mr Barwick has led the charge and gives us regular updates on which clubs are securing the highest attendance which currently includes the flagship Hutchins Society in which students present academic papers of interest, African Caribbean Society in which important cultural issues are discussed and debated, Christian Union, Comic Book Club, Artificial Intelligence Society, Physics Enrichment, our very own Football Podcast Channel, Foreign Cinema Club as well as the enormously popular Duke Of Edinburgh Awards Scheme. We also have our first cohort of students completing the Extended Project Qualification this spring and our new Scout Troop, the XV Wallington, is set to launch just after Christmas. This is all enormously exciting and my thanks to staff and students for all that they are investing in making it such a success.

Teachers and students have now all settled in to our DT and Music Block. Mr Western, Mr Pointer and Mr Cameron have worked tirelessly to fit all the benching, extraction and machinery whilst Mrs Martin and Mrs Spendlove have been setting up their five new practice rooms as well as their main teaching space. Mrs Tutt, our Site Manager continues to work with our site team to resolve the last few teething problems and it was a joy to see the building officially opened by the Rt Hon. Lord Barwell, former Chief of Staff at 10 Downing Street. My thanks to all the staff for their hard work and perseverance, as well as to the PTFA who helped deliver the project. Looking forward, with PTFA support, we are currently preparing a bid to the Education and Skills Funding Agency for a two story extension between the English and DT & Music Blocks that will see a significant expansion of the WCCGS Café with a much larger serving area to reduce queuing time and more indoor seating. Upstairs we are looking to increase the size of our library whilst creating a large open space for drama lessons that currently cannot all timetabled into our Drama Studio. This will of course support our introduction of Drama A Level next year. In sport, we are also exploring funding streams for a Multi Use Games Area and the renovation of the current Scout Hut into a Sports Pavilion. This is all tremendously exciting and I hope to be able to write to you at Easter with good news on whether these projects have been funded.

Changes to our pedagogy are also gathering pace with increasing numbers of staff experimenting with forms of 'retrieval practice' to support students to recall and retrieve key information from across the course that they are studying from their long term memories. This is vital, not just to support students to be successful with the knowledge rich specifications they are studying at GCSE and A Level, but also to ensure they are equipped with the necessary knowledge and concepts to be able to engage in our democracy, in further education and civilised general life in general. Going hand in hand with this is the close focus that Subject Leaders are paying to the curricula that they are offering to our students, ensuring they are both broad and deep in scope, rigorous and sequenced in a way that will allow students to accumulate knowledge and skills progressively and securely.

It has been a whirlwind of a term and all that remains for me to write is to wish you a very Merry Christmas and thank our staff, students and parents for all their support with these developments.

Yours faithfully,

Jamie Bean



PTFA Update by Katherine Herrick, WCCGS PTFA

As we head towards Christmas, it is nice to look back upon another busy and successful term for the PTFA.

Our most notable events this term have been the year 7 and 8 disco, which as always was very successful and our fabulous Murder Mystery evening. For the disco, our boys were joined by girls invited from a number of local schools and everyone, students and helpers alike, seemed to have a great time. We would particularly like to thank our sixth formers who gave up their time to help make this event run so smoothly.

For the ever popular Murder Mystery event this year the teachers staged 'Who Killed the Soap Star'. A huge thank you goes to the brilliant cast of WCCGS staff for a funny and spirited performance as well as to everyone who came along and helped make it such a great evening.

This term we have been holding our second hand uniform sales at parents evenings. These sales are very popular, so please, if you have any uniform or sports kit in good condition that your son has grown out of, we would be very grateful if you could donate it by handing it into the School Office in a bag clearly labelled 'PTFA uniform.'

PTFA Annual General Meeting

We held our annual general meeting at the beginning of November. After two and a half years I stood down as Chair and was thrilled that Shaq Arif was elected unanimously to the role. We also unanimously elected Vinai Haria as our new Treasure as Tecla Godhino stood down. Both Tecla and I remain as trustees and we welcome Sarah Shah who was also elected as a trustee to the charity. We were thrilled to welcome Shaq, Vinai and Sarah to their new roles and I am confident they will help take the PTFA from strength to strength.

We were delighted to be able to hold the AGM in the fabulous new DT and Music block which was made possible by a £150,000 donation from the PTFA. The Headmaster, Mr Bean also ran through some possible future projects and the PTFA members voted to support the new canteen extension bid with a further £150,000 contribution. We will now have to wait and hope the project gets the central government funding needed to proceed.

Upcoming events

As well as holding social events such as the Murder Mystery and the ever popular Quiz, which will be held next term, the PTFA also provide refreshments and often a bar at a number of school events. If you would like to volunteer to contribute to any of our activities in some capacity please just drop us a line at, info@wccgsptfa.org

In addition, we will once again be holding familiarisation tests in the new year. Test places will go on sale on our webpages on 1st January and in the spring, we will start looking for volunteers to help out on test days. If you think you would like to volunteer to help, please look out for more information coming soon, or email helpers@wccgsptfa.org

Our next PTFA meeting will be held at 7.30pm on 8th January at the School and we would love to see you and hear your views. However, if you can't make it to meetings (and not all of us can) but would still like to volunteer please do get in touch. If you would like more details about the PTFA or to find dates for our uniform sales you can visit us online at <http://www.wccgs-sutton.co.uk/PTFA1>

The PTFA would like to wish everyone a happy festive season and New Year.

Old cricket equipment / kit required

In July 2020 WCCGS are going on a cricket tour of Sri Lanka. Part of this tour is combining with a sports charity called Charity Pranav. This charity provides sports equipment (particularly cricket) to less fortunate children in Sri Lanka so they can participate in cricket and not be excluded because they cannot afford to play.

If any students have any old cricket equipment or kit that they no longer need, from shirts and jumpers to trousers and boots,

please bring it in and hand it to Mr Legg in the Sports Hall.

It will then be forwarded through our travel company to Sri Lanka to the disadvantaged children of Sri Lanka who will benefit greatly from your generosity, thank you.





Introducing **Bel Stublely**, our **Poet Laureate for 2019-20**, below is the first of two poems by Bel in this edition.

New Beginnings by Bel Stublely (L6MA)

It's frightening how staying in the shadows can affect you:
translucent skin, cold limbs, darkness everything.

Do I miss the warm of the sun
kissing the corners of my mind,
speeding up time, feeling perfectly combined.

Or do I miss not feeling left behind?

There's a thin, fine line between where I stand and
the magnificent shining brightness that I could become
if I could just stop hiding myself away
in the comfort of the cold.

"Don't look into the sun," he said, "it'll blind you."
I know the sun is dangerous.

"Don't stay out too long," he said, "it'll burn you."
I know the sun is dangerous.

To forget the burning and the cold
and step out just more more time, to just stop
being see through, invisible, afraid.

To just stop, breathe and learn to live
between the two worlds to which I have become
so attached.

The first steps from darkness will always be blinding.
The first steps from home will always be defining.
I'll take my first steps
into the sun.

The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe at the Bridge Theatre

On Thursday the 28th November, Year 9 Drama went to see a production of *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, a retelling of the classic novel by C.S Lewis. The story follows the four Pevensie children, as they embark on a journey through the magical land of Narnia and face the White Witch, a tyrannical ruler who promises to bring eternal winter to Narnia.

Director Sally Cookson and writer Ryan Peck do a wonderful job adapting the novel to the stage, and masterfully creates a juxtaposition between the mundane and the magical, one of the key reasons why the original still remains a treasure trove of nostalgia. The evening itself was joyous, Year 9 especially loved the performance and were immediately infatuated with the characters, realms and stories. Major characters like Aslan the Lion are brought to life with grace and power, a contrast to the cold, merciless nature of the White Witch. The puppetry is entrancing, the visuals are captivating, the characters are engaging, all of which culminates in a feel good production which everybody can enjoy.



By Harit Saravanan, Year 9.



Year 8 Anti-Bullying WCCGS Campaign:

On Sept 11th WCCGS hosted Aaron Hearne from the Liam Charity who shared his moving story and promoted his own anti-bullying campaign and charity. The Year 8 forms were then assigned the challenge of creating their own anti-bullying campaign that they wanted to focus on i.e. anti-cyberbullying. They would have 5 weeks to create their own campaign, logo, slogan, promotion material and fundraising initiatives. The weeks passed and I was incredibly impressed by the enthusiasm, commitment and dedication to their campaigns; they created videos, charity events to fundraise i.e. bakesales, incredible posters and more.

When the due date came around (6th November) and the final presentations were to be delivered, groups of young men from each form worked collaboratively to construct very impressive powerpoints. Once again we invited Aaron to be part of the judging panel, alongside Riyaad Ali (Deputy Head Boy), Mr Jones (Year of Key Stage 3) and myself. They boys showed very admirable composure, courage and delivered very impressive pitches that were mature, sensitive and very well-considered. Highlights included:

Ruskin: Excellent research. Lots of different types of discrimination explored with maturity and care. Such courage for only Jack Simpson and Stefan Kolaczyk to present!

Radcliffe: Overall outstanding presentation: the video was a highlight and Keethishankar wins 'Best Actor'. The presentation overall was incredibly well structured, and very engaging.

Woodcote: Loved the colours and engagement: Tom Kofe's logo is excellent and we were impressed with the focus on one type of very prominent bullying that is apt for young people = cyber-bullying.

Bridges: Very strong. Such compassion exhibited. We loved the video: Josh Powell was best supporting actor. It was very motivational. Very good public speakers.

Mandeville: Excellent efforts! Such diligence! The focus on a specific and unknown type of bullying mean it was educational, insightful, well researched and really hit home.

Carew: Loved the camaraderie between this group who all helped each other. Andrew Twomey led a very emotive pitch and we loved the catchphrase being a new twist on the old 'sticks and stones': very clever!

Furthermore, I want to take this opportunity to thank the parents for their ongoing support in these independent projects – through your patience, baking, encouragement and more you are helping our young men to have a well-rounded and engaging experience whilst in Wallington.

Well done all of the year group for getting involved and for being true Wallington Gentlemen throughout- it was really great to see you all step up and raise over £350 for charity. Special mention to 8Ma (Mandeville) who were the fundraising champions, raising over £106 for the Liam Charity and came a close second in the competition. However, all aspects of the campaign taken into consideration, the overall campaign winners were 8Ra (Radcliffe); their anti-bullying posters will be used across the school to help spread the message of kindness and inclusiveness in our community. I am incredibly proud of all of the students that committed time, energy, and themselves to this project – I hope that they found it meaningful and valued the opportunity to create something so powerful. You truly are an excellent year group. Well done everyone!!!!

By Miss Ball



ARTiculation
The Roche Court Educational Trust New Art Centre.

The ARTiculation prize is the Roche Court Educational Trust's national public speaking competition for art students aged between 16 and 19, and participation is regarded as the primary purpose of entering the event rather than winning.

Students deliver a ten minute presentation on a work of art, architecture or an artefact of their choice. Regional Heats take place in front of an audience and an adjudicator at museums and galleries. The competition encourages first-hand experience with the work of art being discussed, and the presentation should reflect their own approach and personal response.

The WCCGS Internal Heat was held on 13th November 2019 with five participants from Year 13: Louis Goodman, Seamus Cazabon, Emily McLauchlan, Qabir Alli and Adam Drewett. Qabir was chosen to go through to the Regional Heat which will take place in January 2020 at the Courtauld Institute of Art.

Here is what Adam had to say:

" I believe that ARTiculation was a beneficial experience for us as art students. It allowed us an opportunity to explore different aspects of art that interests us and to discuss that with our peers. It also allowed us to develop our researching skills as well as our public speaking ability which will help us later in life. I found the presentations by my classmates interesting and informative and it provided a forum for us to discuss and question different aspects of art. "



In October 2019 Year 10 students participated in a hugely successful trip to Paris with their teachers Mrs Gabriele, Ms James, Mr Lescault and Mrs Mortreuil.



House drama 2019 by by Luke Shaw U6RU

On the 15th of November, WCGS held one of its most famous house events of the school year: House Drama. Each year the houses write, direct, and perform a 15-minute-long piece of theatre to the friends and family of the WCGS community. Each house leadership team were given the theme "CONNECTIONS" off which to base their plays, each house interpreting this in a variety of unique ways.

Carew took to the stage first, performing a spectacular piece about the son of a superhero called Super Speed, and their journey through love, conflict, and betrayal, concluding with a lovely sentiment about mother-son relationships. Up next, Radcliffe brought to life the story of a young man struggling to afford an adoption, having to choose between betraying a co-worker or having a child. Following on from Radcliffe, Ruskin stole the spotlight with their beautifully moving performance on the lives of two gay politicians, forced to choose between their love and their careers. Following a short interval, Mandeville told a woeful tale of a group of friends who suffer the loss of a friend, and how we need to be careful with whom we lay our trust. Woodcote portrayed the events that unfolded after all the internet connectivity on Earth went down, and the voyage of a young man trying to find his true love amongst the chaos. Last but not least, Bridges' board game came to life in their piece, as we watched the actions in the game foretold the events in real life.

An absolute success, the hard work by everyone involved definitely paid off, with House drama 2019 full of laughs and entertainment. To conclude the night, and in recognition of some of the excellent performances, Head teacher Mr Bean had the honour of commending certain students with the best actor and actress awards, the students called on stage to receive a very sought-after handshake. The Best Actress award was shared by Bibi Fox-Harris of Ruskin house and Bel Stubbley of Mandeville house, both young women proving their artistic capabilities. Following this, the award for Best Actor went to Luke Shaw (yours truly) of Ruskin house for his artistic maturity and moving portrayal of a conflicted homosexual. But in the end, there had to be a winner! Congratulations to Ruskin who came out on top and took the victory!

In my final year at WCGS, and after having participated in my seventh and final house drama, I'm glad to say this was one of the best displays of young talent I've seen to date. Massive congratulations to everyone who took part! I'd like to say a huge thank you to Ms Hackett and all of the WCGS staff who helped make House Drama happen, and I can't wait for the rest of the upcoming house events in 2019.

**1st-Ruskin 170pts,
2nd-Carew 154pts,
3rd-Bridges 145pts,
4th-Woodcote 130pts,
5th-Mandeville 124pts,
6th-Radcliffe 98pts.**



Year 7 Public Speaking Challenge by John Stokes 7BR

The Year 7 Public Speaking Challenge has been a huge success and all Year 7 students had the chance to enter. We had 25 participants in the whole day of coaching led by Jack Barwell in 6th form. On the day we had lots of fun, playing confidence building games and discussing controversial topics. We received lots of tips and advice from Jack and his judges on how to present a good speech and how to improve our current speeches which we had written on a topic of our choice. There were lots of opportunities for us to have one to one feedback as when we handed our speeches in Jack gave us a mark out of 100 and some tips to improve. We all performed our speeches to the rest of the group, Jack and the judges. We then all got immediate feedback from the judges. The 6 of us who got the most points went through to the next round. These people got to have more time improving their speeches with Jack in preparation for performing in a year group assembly. Our year group, Ms Turner, our leader and Jack Barwell, have voted for the top three. We are awaiting the results now. The top three will go on to represent the school in a debating competition. Overall I think that the Year 7 Public Speaking has been a huge success and all of us have learnt a huge amount and gained a lot of confidence.

Breaking News, The winners of the Year 7 Public Speaking Challenge,
John Stokes, Bridges.
Siddarth Deb Roy, Mandeville.
Riley Jein, Carew.

These student will now be partaking in the Folio Trust speaking competition which will include three pupils from St Peters, Park Hill Juniors and Coombe Wood School. We will be working with Jack over the next half term to improve our speeches and our ability to answer questions about our chosen topic.

Huge thanks to Jack Barwell in the 6th form who created this event.

Visiting artists by Miss Oram

This term we have had the pleasure of having ex WCCGS student, Ralph Clifton who is studying architecture at Kent, and two external visitors studying at Camberwell and Kingston, come to speak to our Sixth Form art students about possible artistic futures.

As well as this we had practising architect in training Urangua Sodjombants lead a workshop in model making, followed by a talk on opportunities within the field.





**WCGS – The valedictory address delivered by Mr W T Hutchins,
the first headmaster on his retirement sixty years ago in 1959.**

“Thirty two years is a long time, half of the whole of my life to date. Half of my whole life I’ve been making and running the School. In my opinion, if a man sticks to a job so long and hasn’t something to show for it, there must be something wrong with him. Especially if his work is his hobby, as the School has been with me. Moreover, I have always had one critic who was never satisfied. Whatever I have done, he has always faults to find. And when I was by myself, especially in the small hours, he would be on to me, showing me what I had done wrong, how stupid and lazy I was. When you possess a nasty nagging mind like that, you get spurred on in spite of yourself.

Of course I should be dishonest if I did not admit that the School has built a reputation for itself and is well thought of. But, at the same time, I have been very lucky. I might have been appointed Headmaster to a well-established school, an old foundation, where I should have been just one in a long line of headmasters. I shouldn’t have liked that at all. I should have found myself hampered by time-hallowed ways of going on, by tradition. I should have had to out-manoeuvre a large staff well entrenched in its positions, and I should have had to overcome the suspicions of generations of Old Boys. As it was, starting the School I had things all my own way; I could make them as I wanted them. And one thing I can say in my favour is that, even in those early days, I knew quite well what I was going to do, as in fact I nearly always have.

But knowing what one wants to do and knowing how one does it are two different things. I had been a schoolmaster only five years when I came to Wallington, and I was still pretty green, and the men I gathered round me were mostly young fellows straight from University. Between us we hadn’t much idea of how the wheels go round. And that was a splendid thing. Every problem as it came along was new to us; we had no precedents to lean on. We worked them out from first principles. Our solutions had to satisfy us that they were reasonable and efficient. And so it has come about that, in many ways, we had got our own methods and standards. I’ve been pressed several times to write a book about the School, describing what you might call the Wallington way. I haven’t done so and I don’t suppose I shall. I find the excuse for my laziness in the fact that already up and down the country there are seven or eight schools that have consciously modelled themselves on this place. Either their heads were at one time on the staff here, or some Old Boys are prominent members of their staffs. A headmaster told me not so long ago that, if I came to his school, I should see so much that was familiar that I should imagine that I was at home.

And another wrote me that, when he got stuck with a problem, he sat down and thought how we would have solved it at Wallington. This in my opinion is the best way for the influence of a good school to spread.

We’ve been lucky, too, in the years of our existence. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to find in the history of the modern world thirty years more packed with happenings, more disturbed and difficult than these last thirty. And no activity has escaped the impact. Certainly we haven’t. We had hardly started when the great national emergency of the thirties was on us; a couple of years’ breather, and we began to prepare to run the School in war-time; and then the war with its problems galore, and that just suited me. We came through and thank goodness never had to leave our home, though it was in pretty poor shape at times. The ’44 Education Bill set us by the ears again, and we had some dark times. And all the while the School was growing and growing, and how to find places for our boys, and provide what they needed, taught us to scheme, to make do and seize the slightest chance when it came. And, unlikely as it seems, all this was so worthwhile. One of the biggest pieces of nonsense is to imagine that the easy life is the one to be sought. Any man who is worth anything wants to have to fight, he wants to face the apparently insoluble, and have the joy of solving it. There have been only two easy years, 1936-37, in the life of the School, and they are the only time when I found myself getting bored and wondered if I ought to find another job.

But the greatest piece of luck I have had is to be found in the group of men and women whom the Governors in their wisdom had appointed to the staff. It has been a good thing, I think, that I have remained here all the time as a sort of continuing influence; I think my habit of looking five years ahead has been useful, but many of the ideas have been theirs, and much of the planning, and, though I have tried to advise and encourage them, it is they who have carried the heat and the burden of the day.

Fortune has smiled on me in one way that has really amazed me, and, I confess, given me a very nice, warm feeling. Here am I going along in my own way, certainly hoping to convince by reason rather than by the exercise of authority, but anyway, going my way. And slowly I became aware that everyone is being very nice to me. As I walk round the School, I meet smiling faces and cheerful greetings. I find my colleagues heeding me as though I were an oracle and, out of School, I am aware of much goodwill and interest. It is a delightful atmosphere for a man to finish his professional days in.

Continued overleaf



**WCGS – The valedictory address delivered by Mr W T Hutchins,
the first headmaster on his retirement sixty years ago in 1959.**

People tell me they don't know how I will go on without the School, since it has been mine for so long. But I shall be rather ashamed of myself if things work out that way. Rather I hope for the satisfaction of having done what I set out to do, of having made a School. It is not wholly as I wanted it, but one never gets everything in this life. But beyond all doubt, it is a School a man can be proud of.

But of course there are going to be some things I shall miss. I shall find it a loss to have no longer the daily comradeship of the men and women I have worked with so long, people who over the years have become my friends. Yes! I shall miss them.

And I am certainly going to miss the boys, with their unending cheerfulness and good humour. But most of all I am going to miss my naughty little ones, with their angelic faces and their plausible but quite unconvincing explanations. They have given me endless joy and, even when I have had to be a little stern with them, we have remained on the best of terms.'

This is an extract from 'Wallington County Grammar School – The First Fifty Years' Copies of the book can be ordered from the author, bnicholls74@hotmail.co.uk

Frantic Assembly Workshop By Tommy Lam, Year 10.

On Monday 2nd December, year 10 drama GCSE students embraced a thrilling experience with Frantic Assembly. We were split into two groups of 15 and were led by Mark, from Frantic Assembly. We learnt about the secrets of good choreography, movement and encountered a wide variety of challenges, testing our drama skills (and physical endurance!). We all enjoyed learning about how to create unique drama pieces and worked beautifully together, likely leading to a better range of skills to apply in drama GCSE in future! We are all grateful that Frantic Assembly came in and allowed us to learn some of its many secrets for good drama pieces and choreography.

Death of a Salesman Trip on 20th November

On the 20th of November, 10D visited the Piccadilly theatre to watch a performance of the play Death Of A Salesman written in the early 20th century by Arthur Miller. The play is a social tragedy which highlights the sad reality of many working class men and women in post-war countries such as America. The performance was an outstanding display of raw emotion and theatrical drama which received a well-deserved ovation at the finale of its requiem.

By Syed Ali, Year 10

Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge

On the 29th of November, thirty Year 10 students participated in a day-long public speaking workshop, run by the Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge. The Speak Out challenge is an initiative run by the Jack Petchey organization, to give young people the invaluable life skill of public speaking and speech writing.

The day started with everyone standing up and giving impromptu speeches on either the meaning of their name, or something that they were passionate about, which inevitably led to some entertaining performances! It was really important to be honest with ourselves about our skill

level entering the workshop and what we had to build on. Throughout the day we learnt a plethora of new speaking skills, such as how to structure a speech effectively and how to use positive body language. At the end of the day we all stood up and spoke about something important to us. It was fantastic to see the progress everyone had made.

This irreplaceable experience would be something I recommend to everyone!

By Oscar Sims



First Give Awards Evening by Mr Rhodes-Brandon

On 2nd December, six Year 9 students accompanied Miss Richards and myself to Mulberry Academy Shoreditch and participated in the FirstGive awards evening. This was a charity project they undertook in English lessons last year. The students involved did two incredible things that night: they ran a social action stall, promoting the cause of climate change action to guests, and delivered a performance on stage in front of a hundred-strong audience in which they spoke about all the wonderful actions they took last year to raise money for charity, as well as delivering speeches and a song. Oh, and they won a large teddy bear by guessing the name of it.



The boys were outstanding; we had numerous people coming up to them and crediting them for their confidence, their politeness and their resolve in battling climate change. They raised just under £1800 to contribute to their chosen charity.



Congratulations to Adam Dean, Sai Gandepalli, Nayan Patel, Simon Sanusi, Rohan Sathyamoorthy and Thaksan Thurairajasingam on an amazing job.

Year 10 Mock Interviews, Wednesday 11th December

This term our Year 10 students have been busy in Wellbeing lessons preparing a CV and a covering letter for one of four jobs (all based on real school leaver job adverts) and on Wednesday 11th December had their mock interview.

We were lucky to have the support of eleven employers from companies including Subsea 7 and Peabody alongside our Learning and Enterprise Coordinator and our Enterprise volunteer who recruited four of his former colleagues to support the day. We were also delighted to welcome back three of our alumni.

On behalf of our students, thank you to everyone who gave up their time to come into school in order to give our students this valuable experience: Anni, Heather, James, John, Kelly, Kevin, Michelle, Shakunt, Simon, Stuart and Tony.





Languages week 2019: a retrospective of the successful week embracing and celebrating the cultural diversity of our community by Wiktor Budek.

From Monday 7th to Friday 11th October 2019, the WCCGS MFL community led a week of celebration and recognition of the richness that culture adds to the depth of our community. This annum we focused on aiding *Mani Unite per il Congo* (United Hands for Congo), a charity that has built and supports an orphanage in the heart of Africa.

Last summer, Mrs Gabriele (Head of the MFL dept.) and her family travelled to Locorotondo; a lovely village in the South of Italy (Apulia). Whilst enjoying the Adriatic cuisine, Mrs Gabriele felt it was only right to praise the local chef for her skill. As conversation passed from topic to topic, Mrs Gabriele came to discover that the "Cuoca" (Antonella Scatigna) had opened an orphanage for 34 children with a very noble wish; providing those who have less with what they need. These children had never before been provided with more than one meal a day. Innately, Mrs Gabriele was moved by the story and wanted to help the cause. She brought this ardour back to the MFL department at our school and alongside further educating our students on the beauty of various cultures and languages throughout the week, the department envisioned a week which would raise money for this trust whilst ensuring that the students enjoyed themselves when further exploring languages.

The week began with an assembly targeted at the senior segment of our school. The sixth former MFL students informed their peers of the benefits of knowing another language. Despite having already chosen the general orientation of their education, the lecture reminded the students how desired and demanded Modern foreign languages are in the contemporary world of business in addition to the personal development one makes studying an MFL accentuating the joys of discovering new cultures when learning a new language.

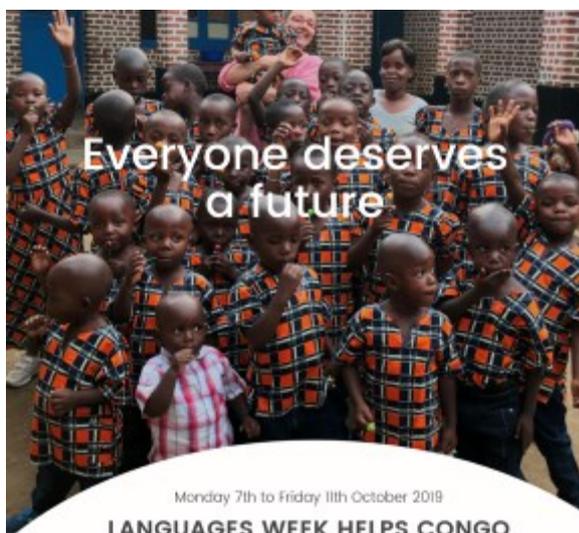
On Tuesday, Ks3 and Ks4 lessons revolved around the theme of foreign languages and cultures. Needless to say, from Geography to English, all aspects of our education and curriculum have been heavily influenced if not

constructed on foreign culture. Therefore, it was only natural to remind the students of this relation during the week. Wednesday was aimed at year 11 students who enjoyed a day of workshops (organised by Mrs Golam and Miss Colombo) displaying the heterogeneity of international cultures.

However, the most unforgettable events occurred on Thursday and Friday. Thursday lunchtime comprised an international food festival. For an hour, endless strings of students were all able to enjoy and discover new cuisines solemnly thanks to the incredible number of invested students who prepared dishes for their peers to try and the food-technology teachers who facilitated this. Without you, it wouldn't have been possible! Just the same, acknowledgement and praise is equally due to all teachers who the following day were brazen enough to perform their favourite foreign songs to the whole school while raising money for the worthy cause. Some of these performances are unlikely to be easily forgotten by the students.

On a more serious note, credit is also due to all sixth form MFL volunteers as well as all other volunteers who were the driving force of bringing these events to life from break time book sales of overseas literature to the security team at the food festival, we thank you.

In the end, the impressive week has definitely been one of the greatest so far this year, if not the best. Through our caring and engaged family we were able to raise £380 pounds to donate to the United Hands of Congo. The charity's new goal towards which this beneficence will go is the construction of a new hospital for both the orphans and others around. We are and should most certainly be proud to be part of a community which displays its care for the welfare of others, our passion for the beauty of diversity but also how we can seek for the embodiment of the values of courage, creativity, commitment and particularly compassion, exemplified by our teachers (Mrs Gabriele, Mrs Golam, Miss Colombo and Mrs Mortreuil, in particular) and students alike.



If you want to make a donation, please use the following website:

<https://www.maniunitecongo.org/>



Christmas by *Bel Stuble*

The very first frost of the season had begun to form,
Immune to the distant warmth of the fire,
Unbothered by the beauty of the soft illumination of fairy lights,
Deaf to the sounds of hope and happiness
Blind to small kindnesses.
It took hold of the ground and grew strong;
peaceful, and undisturbed.
Numb.

The frost penetrated the soil to its core,
holding life to ransom in its blissful ignorance.

But somehow in the deepest depths of winter, a light began to flicker.
Now, surrounded by the heat of the fire the frost became uncertain.
Slowly and unsurely, giving way to hope and happiness.
To kindness.

Maybe miracles do exist.