Welcome to the Newsletter!

This term
Students have been working very hard this term, both in lessons and in extra –curricular activities. We have seen fantastic attendance in Session 3s, as well as some outstanding achievements from our students outside of school. This has been a very busy and rewarding term for students and staff alike, so enjoy reading all about what we have been up to here at Walsall Academy!

Elsewhere across the school
Performing Arts, STEM, Careers and Physical Education have so much going on that they deserve their own newsletter. Please find the links to the more subject specific newsletters on the Walsall Academy website, under the “Parents’ Information” heading, or alternatively, follow this link:

http://www.walsallacademy.com/parents-information/school-communications/

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Key Stage 3

Just before Christmas some of our brilliant Year 7 and Year 8 students ventured to the Birmingham Repertory Theatre to watch the spellbinding Peter Pan. Directed by Liam Steel and adapted by Georgia Christou, we were transported into a modern-day reimagining of J.M. Barrie’s adored tale. Many of our students commented on the exciting visual effects and there were even gasps in the audience when we saw acrobatic actors literally flying above the stage! Well done to all students and staff who made this such a magical morning out…

Key Stage 4

On Thursday 23 January, author Bali Rai visited Walsall Academy and ran creative writing workshops for Year 10 students. Students were given a range of titles to choose from and asked to think about applying emotions to their writing. Bali gave lots of good advice which students will be able to put to good use in their English Language GCSE in the summer.
Modern Foreign Languages

Key Stage 3
Year 7 have finished their introductory module to German and have since moved onto studying Festivals, getting a deeper cultural insight into holidays and past-times in German speaking countries. In French, students have begun to develop a deeper knowledge of the language, with an emphasis on expressing themselves in writing and orally about the topic of home and area.

Key Stage 4
In Key Stage 4, Year 11 have now covered all of the topics and have begun revisiting the work they have done over the previous three years. Preparations for their upcoming speaking examinations is currently the main focus in French, German and Spanish.

In Year 10, German students had a visit from a native speaker, Tobias Ahlers. Originally from Gelsenkirchen in North West Germany, Tobias is a Head Chef in the UK. 14 students were selected to participate in a cooking event which put both their cooking ability and their linguistic skills to the test. The students had to make a Swiss Roll following a demonstration by Tobias. Ms Weston and Mrs Milkamanavicius provided support. It was a fantastic event which the students thoroughly enjoyed!

Key Stage 5
In Key Stage 5, several Sixth Form students visit Lower Farm Primary School on a weekly basis to lead language lessons. A recent lesson was all about Greek Dancing!
**Humanities**

**Key Stage 3**

In Humanities this term, the Year 7 students have been exploring the impact of the Norman conquest. Year 7 have investigated how the Normans used harsh punishments, such as the removal of eyes and limbs, to maintain control over England.

**Key Stage 4**

The Year 10 Historians have now began to study the ‘Making of America’ GCSE course. Within this, the students have had the opportunity to discover how the Mormons came to settle in Salt Lake City, following the assassination of their leader, Joseph Smith.

**Key Stage 5**

A level Geographers have spent the last few weeks learning about regeneration in preparation for a field trip to Tamworth shopping outlet. Here, they will collect research on a specific topic of their choosing. Having studied the reign of Henry VIII, A level Historians have discovered the major impact the reformation had on England. By reading the historiography surrounding the events, the students have made judgements as to the reasons behind Henry’s break with the Catholic church.

**Trips**

Prior the Christmas break, the Year 12 Historians travelled to Poland, to visit the concentration camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau. All students and staff found the trip particularly moving.

The Year 12 and Year 13 politics students benefitted from a visit from Eddie Hughes, Member of Parliament for Walsall North and Ellie Chowns, member of the European Parliament. Both spoke about their experiences in politics, with Ellie Chowns also highlighting the impact Brexit will have on UK politics.
Hospitality and Catering

Key Stage 4

Year 9 have been completing their induction programme that includes kitchen and serving skills. They have been preparing to run a mini event to show off their serving and customer care skills after half term and are very excited to do so!

Year 11 students have been planning a two course healthy meal that they are due to prepare and cook after half term. This will count towards their final grade.

Year 10 students have been learning about the hospitality industry, including job roles and laws. The unit includes practical elements providing a broad introduction to the vocational sector in a way that is purposeful and develops a range of transferable skills.

Breakfast Event Menu

Waffles and maple syrup - £1.50
American pancakes and maple syrup - £1.50
Bacon 20p extra
Fruits of the forest parfait - £1.00
White coffee - £1.00
Cappuccino - £1.20
Latte - £1.50
Tea - £1.00
Art

Key Stage 3

KS3 have rotated to start a new project. Year 7 are working on Portraits, Landscapes and clay in the Flower Power project. Year 8 are working on Architecture, clay in the Tea Cups project, and cardboard construction in the Totem Poles project. Through these projects they will develop skills in 3D modelling and construction, observation and drawing skills.

Key Stage 4

Year 9 have started to develop their coursework based on either objects, portraits or birds. Students have been experimenting with colour pencil, watercolour paint and Photoshop. They are exploring the work of artists who focus on their chosen topic and creating their own work in response.

Students in Year 10 continue to work on their coursework, building a range of work in response to their artists and developing their work with critical thinking.

In Year 11, students received their exam paper in January. They have researched their selected question and found artists to inspire the direction of their work. Students are focusing on questions such as Hot Weather, Confectionary and Aquatic Life. They are now working to create a wide range of pieces to develop ideas for their final piece to be completed in their 10 hour exam.

Some of the artists Year 7 have been using as inspiration for their Flower Power Project.
**Business Studies**

**Key Stage 4**

Year 9 students completed their induction to Business by looking at how businesses calculate profit and the effects of interest rates and inflation on success. They have now started to complete either their GCSE course or BTEC. Year 9 and Year 10 BTEC students are working towards their first assignment and looking into micro-enterprise ideas. They will then be developing business plans ready to present their ideas to a team of ‘dragon’s’. Year 11 students have taken their promotion and finance exam, with results due in March. Best of luck!

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**Key Stage 5**

AAT students have been celebrating their successful results in December’s exams. Year 12 achieved the best set of results so far since we introduced the qualifications, with many achieving merits and distinctions. Year 13 were not to be outdone and returned a 100% pass rate in their Foundation Certificate in Accounting synoptic assessment. Amazing results.
Computer Science

Key Stage 3

This term, Year 7 have been looking at the hardware software inside a computer and looking at the history of computing. Students have found it fascinating to find out how such complex technology began. Meanwhile, Year 8 have been studying algorithms and pseudo code and have now all started to program in Python. This is an incredible skill!

Key Stage 4

Year 9 are developing their Python programming skills and they have been looking at syntax errors and developing looping techniques. Students in Year 10 have been recapping on their developing Python programming skills ready for the NEA controlled assessment, they have been revisiting, syntax errors and efficient coding techniques.

This, term, Year 11 have completed their COM1 theory work, they have been looking at logic gates, truth tables and currently looking at how images, sounds and textual information is stored in binary.

Key Stage 5

Year 12 students have been working on their second examination unit and have now sat their January external examination. They are looking at how IT is used within businesses.

As of January, Year 13 have now all completed external examinations and now are awaiting their results. In lessons they have been developing their ideas surrounding a new product on the market for the internet of everything. Best of luck for those results!
Outward Bound

A collection of brave Year 8 students embarked upon a winter residential at Ullswater in January. Their resilience was put to the test when Storm Brendan met them on their five-day adventure and challenge course. Students experienced camping in the wild and climbing waterfalls with great opportunities to learn, adapt and fail—whilst also having fun!

Pupil comments

"I was allowed to sleep out under the tarp snuggled up in a warm sleeping bag looking at the stars. It was the most amazing night I have ever had"

Dan, Year 8

"I wanted to climb the waterfall on the last day of the course. I was really pleased in rained so hard, so we had a challenge with the water rushing past us as we climbed"

Chloe, Year 8
The Bronze, Silver and Gold Duke of Edinburgh students have continued to gain hours towards their awards for the physical, skill and volunteering sections. A number of students are giving back to the community by volunteering at local charity shops, old people homes, animal shelters, brownie and cub groups among many other things. Many of our students are learning to cook for their skill section by cooking one meal a week at home with their family. There has been some great evidence of some interesting meals cooked which is great to see and will give the students an important skill they can go on and use when they go to university or move out of home.

Silver and Gold groups developed their navigation skills during a training day in December based in the Shropshire Hills. All groups worked well together to develop their map reading and compass skills. The instructors they worked with were impressed with their progress and ability to work together in their expedition groups. These groups have also been using Session 3 time to plan their practice and final expedition routes of which they will undertake in the summer term. We look forward to tracking their progress!
Star students

Every week, teachers nominate students to be celebrated for their outstanding achievements both in and out of school. Take a look at some of our stars from this term!

Chloe: Participating in the Warwick Sutton Scholars Programme

Thomas: Participating in the European and World Championships for Brazilian Jujitsu

Grace: Winning an award at her dance show

Jeevan: Achievement in the Cadets Excalibur competition

Prabh: Achievement in his English Assessment

Holly: Outstanding achievement in the world of trampolining
At the end of 2019, the school came together to collect items to donate to local food banks in the run up to Christmas. Students and staff members collected a brilliant total of 4,056 items! It was a fantastic way to help the local community.

Children’s Mental Health Week

Student and staff have been encouraged to ‘find their brave’ for Children’s mental health week. Here are some amazing staff stories!

Mr. Ankell

Last year I performed in a Queen tribute band as Freddie Mercury in a charity festival. It was a nerve-wracking experience in front of lots of people!

Mr. Lubin

I am a High Jumper for Birchfield Harriers and consistently jump over 2.00 meters. There is a lot of pressure from the competition and crowd.

Mr. Philpott

In the picture I was riding to Wales for a charity toy run with a bike group. It was -1 degree for most of the journey and never got above 2 degrees. All day. Cold and icy. What fun !!!!!

Mrs. Johnson

The Santorini cable cars are my issue with heights! The cliff has been cut away to let the cable cars pass through. Hair raising to say the least! I was so relieved to get off at the top but then got told I had to take it back down again at the end of the day.