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## **A Message from the Head Teacher**

As we prepare to embrace the magic of the holiday season, I am filled with gratitude and joy as I reflect on the incredible year we've shared. It has been a year of growth, achievement, and the unwavering spirit of togetherness that defines our school community.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to you all! May this festive season bring you warmth, love, and moments of pure joy with your loved ones.

I am immensely proud of the dedication and hard work demonstrated by our students, parents, and staff throughout the year. Together, we have achieved remarkable milestones, both academically and in various extracurricular pursuits. As we celebrate these achievements, let us also take a moment to reflect on the core value of togetherness that binds us as a school community.

One aspect of our shared commitment is the importance we place on attendance. Attending school regularly not only contributes to academic success but also fosters a sense of community and belonging. The connections formed in the classroom and the friendships cultivated during school days play a crucial role in shaping our students' overall development.

As we celebrate the joyous holiday season, I want to emphasise the significance of prioritising attendance. Every day missed is a missed opportunity for learning, growth, and connection. I encourage all students to make a commitment to attend school regularly, ensuring that they benefit fully from the enriching educational experiences and opportunities we provide. Parents, your partnership in reinforcing the importance of attendance is invaluable. By working together, we can create an environment where every student feels supported, engaged, and motivated to attend school consistently.

Looking ahead to the new year, I am excited about the possibilities that await us. Let us continue to prioritize attendance as a fundamental building block of success for our students. By doing so, we lay the foundation for a bright future filled with learning, achievement, and a strong sense of community.








Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to making TWS a place where every student thrives. Wishing you all a blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with promise and prosperity. We look forward to seeing everyone back in School on **Monday 8 January 2024**.

**Mr O M Flowers**  
Head Teacher



# Meet the Westies

The WESTIES team has been established this term to provide support and guidance for staff and pupils through providing pastoral care, developing supportive strategies and helping with challenges pupils may face. They provide intervention and mentoring individual pupils and groups to support and develop positive mental health. If you would like to contact a member of the team, please email [headteacher@westminster.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@westminster.sandwell.sch.uk)

	<p>I'm Jade Allen. I'm a HLTA and a Psychotherapeutic Counsellor. I work with staff, students and parents to help create a healthy and positive environment. I work closely with students and staff to improve emotional well-being and provide mental health support. Through working alongside students, I help them to reach their full potential, provide care and support for them and help them overcome any issues they face. The students love coming to visit my pet fish, Spotty and Dave!</p>
	<p>I'm Sam Coffield, I am your resident HLTA, located in the West room in post 16, as part of our new WEST team. My duties include supporting emotional well-being, teaching First Aid and other topics, off-site visits, mentoring and of course I play the CHRISTMAS ELF each year.</p>
	<p>We are Kirsty Evans and Kathryn Lynch and we are Educational Psychologists. We work with students, parents/carers, staff and sometimes outside agencies to think about how we can support learning and well-being for our students and students. Pupil voice and well-being are at the heart of everything that we do.</p>
	<p>My name is Abbie Gilbert and I am one of the mentors here at Westminster. As mentors we have the best interests of the students at heart, we care for their wellbeing, mental health and learning here at Westminster as well as yours as parents/carers. Over the past four years I have worked in schools in Sandwell gaining valuable pastoral experience that I can now apply here at Westminster, I will endeavour to support, advise, and assist with any needs for the children and families. I hope to build many friendly relationships with families - we are only a phone call away.</p>
	<p>My name is Leeanne Hocknull, I'm an HLTA and my role includes many things such as teaching parenting classes and care and independence. I spend time building relationships with all students and staff to support a pastoral and nurturing approach throughout the school. I also offer support and advice for staff, representing our Staff Voice team.</p>
	<p>My name is Fitz Storrod, I have recently been appointed as one of the Learning Mentors here at Westminster School. We work together with our staff team and children to help devise fun, exciting and engaging activities to support their social, emotional and academic learning. We really value all that you do as parents and carers and we endeavour to work together to provide strong positive relationships with our children, so we'll have teas and coffee on the ready with some nice fancy biscuits so we can share best practices.</p>
	<p>I am Denise Taylor, I am Family Liaison Officer, Attendance and Deputy DSL. My role is about developing positive relationships with the students and families, building parental engagement with the school and other agencies. I take a holistic approach and reflect on the importance of emotional wellbeing, supporting parents and students with social, emotional, health and behavioural concerns. I am here to help in any way I can and happily chat to families and students with a cup of tea and a biscuit! 😊</p>

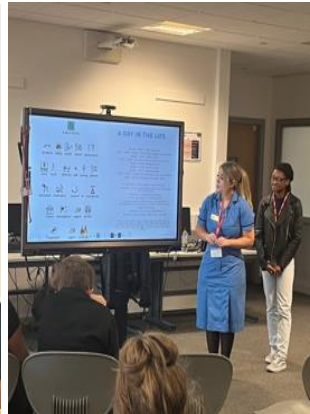


## Refillable Water Bottles

We have water coolers installed in almost all classrooms and other areas of school and students should bring in a refillable water bottle, clearly marked with their name, which can be refilled throughout the day. This promotes pupil self-care and independence, as well as being good for the planet!



## My Care and Independence Speakers



We had a great day learning about safety and personal care. Visitors from the police, fire brigade, nurses, and dentists came to do activities with the pupils about how to stay safe and look after themselves. We also learnt about job roles and special uniforms in the different professions!

## Hazel Class Visit Blackheath

Hazel Class had an amazing time in Blackheath. They visited the library, where they were invited by staff to help create the window display for Remembrance Day.

They also visited the Salt and Pepper Pot Café for breakfast, where staff complimented our pupils and said they were a credit to the school and would be welcomed back anytime.



## Sensory Play Career Day

Construction company Tilbury Douglas came into school in November to support our Sensory Play Career Day. Students got to take part in lots of activities and hear about careers in construction.



## Santa's Little Helpers

The elves from Rowley Class have been busy helping Santa out! They've been making toys for the pupils in Pine Class to play with.





# Work Experience at the Black Country Living Museum



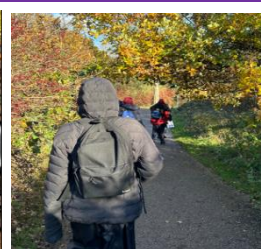
Students have been taking part in work experience to develop their employability skills at the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley this term. They have been involved in a range of different activities including working in catering, gardening and maintenance, admissions and retail. They have even been playing historical characters in different areas of the museum, talking to visitors about how people used to live in the past.

We would like to thank the Black Country Living Museum for these very valuable experiences which our students have thoroughly enjoyed. One student said “Some of the skills I have developed whilst at the BCLM include listening, building my confidence, communication, motivation, teamwork, following rules and meeting and talking to new people. My views about work experience have changed, working at the BCLM has inspired me to get a job”.

## Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Haden and Wrekin have been learning about the Countryside Code in their Duke of Edinburgh sessions at Woodgate Valley.

What a beautiful day!





# Farm to Fork

Groups of students have been learning about where food comes from and how it gets to us through a Farm to Fork project. They visited Lower Drayton Farm. Thank you so much to all the staff at the farm and The Country Trust for providing our young people with such wonderful experiences! They have enjoyed learning about where their food comes from, digging for carrots and potatoes, picking corn and pumpkins, meeting lots of animals and exploring the farm on a trailer ride. We can't wait to go back!!





# Maple Class at Malthouse Stables



Massive congratulations to students in Maple Class who have been visiting Malthouse Stables in Tipton this term to take part in a range of exciting activities including indoor rock climbing. All students were able to get to the very top of the climbing walls, which is a fantastic achievement.



# Games Design Careers Session

Thank you to Paul from Playground Games who can into school to deliver a talk to our students on jobs/careers in Game Design. Students were really interested to hear about Paul's journey into Game Design and were also able to showcase some of their own games they have been working on in school.

## Who am I?

Paul Hickman  
Associate Lead Systems Engineer @ Playground Games  
Favourite Game: Final Fantasy/Legend of Zelda  
Hobbies: Game Jams, Electronics, Reading

FINAL FANTASY THE LEGEND OF ZELDA



## Macmillan Coffee Morning

Thank you to everyone who came to our Macmillan Coffee Morning in September. We enjoyed welcoming parents and carers for coffee and cake, whilst raising money for an excellent cause.



## Nevis Play Tennis

Well done to Nevis taking part in tennis enrichment at Tipton Sports Academy. They have completed 6 sessions delivered by the Prince's Trust and they were presented with medals and their own tennis rackets and balls. We hope this is just the start of their tennis journey! Well done all involved!





## Wrekin Word Art

This term, Wrekin took a twist on the Samba theme and looked at an artist who has their origins in Brazil. They focused on word art inspired by the Brazilian artist Romero Britto and designed their own words using clay, patterns and contrasting colours just like their chosen artist.



## Clent Care for Animals with HugglePets

Clent have been learning about caring for their pets with HugglePets this term. The students looked at different animals and how to care and look after them.



## World Mental Health Day

A group of students from Bredon took a trip to celebrate World Mental Health Day at Wolverhampton Art Gallery in conjunction with Reflexions. They enjoyed taking part in dance workshop, singing karaoke, arts and crafts, VR experience and exploring the brilliant artwork.





The Snowman  
By Mulberry Class

At Christmas there was a snowman...  
And then one night he came alive!  
This magical force that brought him to life,  
Had one purpose, to find him a wife.  
His search took him high and low  
Until he found a distant glow.  
As he got closer he saw a magical tree,  
It was as big as he thought, as big as can be!  
At the top of the tree he found an elf,  
The elf said "follow me!"  
"I'll take you where there's wonders glee!"  
"A land of Christmas glow,  
Follow the footprints left in the snow."  
So the snowman followed,  
and the wind bellowed.  
He followed far and wide,  
and felt excitement grow inside!  
The snowman found a house and knocked on the door,  
the door opened, a man, red coat, white beard to the floor!  
"Ho Ho Ho! You found me" he said  
"What are you looking for?"  
The snowman smiled "a wife to spend the rest of my days,"  
"Please Santa, help me! I know you have your ways!"  
With a smile and a wink, Santa waved his hand.  
There appeared a Snow Woman, so grand!  
"To bring her to life you need Christmas spirit,"  
"Close your eyes, think hard, just feel it!"  
The Snow Woman began to glow,  
and what do you know?  
His wish became true!  
And now we have a Christmas Wish for you!  
Have a safe and happy Christmas,  
from all of us at Mulberry!



# The Westminster School Calendar 2023/24

September 2023								October 2023								November 2023								December 2023							
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
35					1	2	3	39							1	44			1	2	3	4	5	48					1	2	3
36	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	40	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	45	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	49	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
37	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	41	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	46	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	50	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
38	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	42	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	47	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	51	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
39	25	26	27	28	29	30		43	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	48	27	28	29	30				52	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
								44	30	31																					

January 2024								February 2024								March 2024								April 2024							
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
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4	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	8	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	12	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	17	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
5	29	30	31					9	26	27	28	29				13	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	18	29	30					

May 2024								June 2024								July 2024															
Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Wk	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
18				1	2	3	4	5	22					1	2	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	28	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
19	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	23	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	28	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	29	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	24	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	29	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	30	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
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22	27	28	29	30	31			26	24	25	26	27	28	29	30																

School Holidays

INSET Days

## Attendance Matters

The Westminster School continues to strive for excellence for all its pupils. In order to achieve this the school takes attendance very seriously. We firmly believe that good attendance leads to:

- Make friends and feel included.
- Learn new things and develop skills.
- Increase confidence and self-esteem.
- Improve social skills.
- Have better career prospects.
- Achieve their potential and fulfil their aspirations.



The school is working hard to raise awareness of the importance of regular attendance and our newly formed Attendance Monitoring Group, chaired by the Head Teacher, meet weekly to discuss attendance and develop strategies to support students and their families improve attendance.

We will be updating parents and carers regularly on their child's attendance.

Our Attendance Policy is available by scanning the QR code.

If you would like to discuss any issues regarding attendance please complete the google form link below and a member of the attendance team will be in contact with you.

<https://forms.gle/cEwUjKXZGQwmnNZf8>

