

Westlands School

A group of dancers in maroon dresses are performing a backbend in a dance studio. They are on a wooden floor, with their hands on the ground and their heads tilted back. The background shows a large mirror reflecting the dancers and a wall with various notices and a sign that says "DANCE".

Expect More

*Newsletter Issue 2
December, 2024*

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Student Leadership

Head Boys, Head Girls, Ambassadors



As we embarked on this academic year, Westlands School proudly introduced its new Student Leadership Team. Through an inspiring election campaign, we sought to elect a Head Boy, Head Girl, and several Student Ambassadors from Years 7 to 10. The response to the call for student leadership positions was truly remarkable, and we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the applicants.

The students of Westlands exercised their right to choose their Head Boy and Head Girl to represent each year group. With great joy, we announce the appointment of Head Boys and Head Girls for every year group in Years 7-10. They will be ably supported by our exceptional Student Ambassadors, who truly embody the spirit of Westlands School. This marks a new chapter in our journey, and we are excited to witness the positive impact of our Student Leadership Team.

Should your child have missed the opportunity to apply for a student leadership role, feel free to contact me. They can still be considered for future chances.
(alicia.weekly@swale.at - Student Leadership Coordinator)

Student Rewards



Recognising and appreciating students' efforts is a top priority for all Westlands School staff members. We actively promote positive behaviour and regularly acknowledge our students' accomplishments. Our students receive recognition through various means, including earning positive points, redeeming rewards from our dedicated shop, receiving verbal praise, as well as receiving postcards and phone calls and emails home.

Throughout this term, our students have been acknowledged during Message Monday, rewards assemblies, and through the purchase of items from our positive point's rewards shop, all in celebration of their attendance, positivity, and achievements.

Students have the opportunity to earn positive points both inside and outside of lessons, which they can then exchange for items from our rewards shop.

Congratulations to all the students who have earned rewards and used their points to make purchases this term. We are excited to maintain this positive momentum as we move into the new year.

As a part of our rewards system, pupils are rewarded for 100% attendance, good attendance (97%+) and improved attendance on a weekly and termly basis.

***Respect, Achievement,
Diversity, Aspiration, Resilience***

Daphne

Westlands Therapy Dog



Daphne has found immense joy in her role as a Dog Mentor at Westlands. She has seamlessly become a part of the school community and has excelled in aiding Mrs May in the library during reading sessions. Dog Mentors play a vital role in promoting reading, especially for those who are less confident. Daphne has engaged with numerous students, eagerly listening to their thrilling adventures and tales. Furthermore, she has been instrumental in providing valuable support to the students. Daphne's outstanding efforts with the students have led to her successfully achieving the prestigious Gold Award standard of the Dog Mentor scheme. This remarkable achievement is a testament to the exceptional guidance provided by her handlers, Mr Packman, Mrs May, Mrs Dolling, and Miss Dufnall, in preparing her for her work with the students. We eagerly anticipate carrying on her wonderful work in the coming year.

Meet Our Team



My name is Mr. Corrente, and I am responsible for overseeing school attendance and punctuality as part of the Senior Leadership Team.

Attending school is crucial for the success, happiness, and growth of our students. Being present each day enables them to form positive relationships with their peers and teachers, acquire essential social skills, and gather knowledge to advance and achieve their educational objectives.

Punctuality at school is equally significant as it sets the tone for the students' day. Just a friendly reminder, classes start at 8:30am, and students should be on the school premises before that time. If your child will be arriving late, please make sure to notify the Attendance Office before 8:30am.

I hope you have a joyful and healthy break, and I eagerly await the return of our students on Tuesday, 7th January.

90% attendance is the equivalent of missing...

100 days, or 20 weeks, or 3 terms, or half a year!

Parents' Forum

Attendance

At our recent parents' forum, we exchanged numerous ideas on improving our rewards program for attendance and punctuality. We're excited to share the progress we've made since then. Stay tuned for the updates!

You said:

- Pupils with 97-99% attendance should be included in rewards the same as 100% pupils, as they cannot help some appointments being during school time.
- Awarding positive points at the end of each term for those that have 97% and 99% attendance and not just 100%.

We did:

- We have added a weekly and termly reward for pupils who have between 97% and 99% attendance.
- Pupils are recognised in Message Monday as well as in the end of term assemblies and are considered for awards for good attendance.
- Positive points are now awarded at the end of each term for pupils that have 97% and 99% attendance to school.
- Pupils can spend their positive points at our rewards shop throughout the year.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 9th January, from 5pm to 6pm and will be focussing on Teaching and Learning. The session will be led by Mrs Cox, Deputy Headteacher and Mrs Costello, Assistant Headteacher.

We aim to show parent/carers our school "House Style" and discuss the rationale behind it. The "House Style" is used by all of our teachers in lessons. We will also discuss how homework is set, the different online platforms used and how this is used by teachers to make adaptations in lessons.

If you would like to attend, please complete Google Form that will be emailed in due course.

Westlands Careers Fair



Careers

The first term in the Careers programme is a thrilling mix of guiding former Year 11 students onto their chosen paths and preparing for the new academic year. The highlight was the Careers Fair, with 24 exhibitors attending - BAE Systems, KNAUF, MidKent College, LSE (The London School of Economics and Political Science), and the Royal Navy. It was a bustling time for students to explore and connect with exhibitors. Capturing our Alumni at the event was a special moment. This term brought growth, exploration, and inspiration to all our students.

In our Employer Encounters Series, it was truly inspiring to have James Lawrence, a Westlands Alumni from Jaguar Land Rover, visit and engage with students. He displayed a Land Rover, showcased his roles, and discussed pathways to employment with JLR.

Term 2 saw Rosy from CXK making great progress with group careers sessions for Year 11 students, especially with the opening of KentChoices.

Term 3 promises diverse activities, including National Apprenticeship Week, additional Employer Encounters, and informative sessions for Year 13 students as they finalise their choices for university or higher apprenticeships. Let's keep inspiring and empowering our students!

Young Farmers



Since October, the Young Farmers have been preparing their cattle and lambs ready for the winter fatstock exhibition. On 2 December, we journeyed with the animals. It was a chilly, lengthy day, but the students did exceptionally well. We achieved 2 second places and 3 third places. Remarkably, we even secured first place for our scarecrow! On 3 December, we returned to prepare our animals for sale. It was bittersweet, as we are proud of their performance but also saddened to see them leave. Congratulations to all the Young Farmers, and a big thank you to Mr. Howland for his support.

Focus on Reading

The library has been buzzing with activity, and the new school year at Westlands has kicked off with an amazing enthusiasm for reading and literacy among the students. The Reading Ambassadors have been hard at work creating a calendar of events to promote reading, and their first event was a big hit. The students had a blast making their own bookmarks, and their creativity led to some truly fantastic results. We've also had the pleasure of hosting several Virtual Author events, including an insightful session with Deborah Meaden from Dragon's Den. She shared valuable lessons on financial sensibility while promoting her new book 'Deborah Meaden Talks Money'.



The homework club has been fully booked this term, and it's been heart warming to welcome so many new faces seeking support and experiencing the joy of accomplishment. Ms Bean has been delighted to recognise and reward students for outstanding classwork and acts of kindness towards others. We want to express our gratitude to our incredible Reading Ambassadors for their dedication and fantastic plans for the upcoming year. Stay tuned for more!

Extra-Curricular Activities

Students from all year groups were invited to take part in the Art Department's Christmas card competition



The school offers a wide range of clubs and excursions, covering activities such as physical education, music, dance, art, and more. During lunchtime, students can use the Boom Rooms and the Library. The excursions vary based on the subject and season, providing additional insight into topics and the enjoyment of visiting interesting places. We commend the students who consistently participate in these clubs, as it demonstrates their dedication to the school and their engagement with both staff and peers. Introducing new and creative ways to keep students occupied during unstructured times will enhance social interactions across all age groups. If you have any enquiries about the clubs and activities at the school, please do not hesitate to contact me at mike.watson@swale.at.



Trips & Social Media Round-Up

National Anti-Bullying Week saw our students wearing odd socks to celebrate each individuals uniqueness



U14's girls football team got through to Round 3 of the Kent Schools Cup.



Congratulations to Tom in Year 10 for gaining his solo gliding pilot status



The Geography Department took 187 Year 10 GCSE students to Reculver as part of their fieldwork studies



We celebrated European Day of Languages with a week of exciting events



Cambridge National Sports Studies visited the Olympic Park and had the opportunity to try out BMXing at The Velodrome

Open Evening



Year 7



Mr Cregeen, Miss Little, Mrs Major, Miss Fletcher

As the term ends, Year 7 students are now fully part of the Westlands community. Transitioning from July feels like a distant memory as we embrace a new routine of 30 periods per week.

This term, students enjoyed rewards like a toy advent calendar, pop-up hot chocolate stations, and a new rewards shop where they can use their positive points to purchase various items. Rumour has it that Father Christmas may be visiting Year 7's to spread Christmas cheer, aligning with the Year 7 mantra of 'be kind and believe', similar to the principles in 'A Christmas Carol'.

Miss Fletcher joined the Year 7 team and has been working tirelessly to support pupils with attendance. The team also wants to thank pupils, parents/carers, and staff for helping settle the Year 7 pupils into Westlands School.

Wishing everyone a Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

Mr Cregeen
Principal of Year 7



A photograph of four school staff members standing behind a blue metal railing next to a pond. In the background is a large brick school building with arched windows. The staff members are: a man in a maroon sweater, a man in a grey suit and tie, a woman in a black top and glasses, and a woman in a green sweater. All are smiling.

Year 8

Mr Robbins, Mr Rochester, Mrs Hewitt, Miss Creasey

Our students have visibly acclimated to their surroundings, showcasing remarkable progress and accomplishments.

Throughout the first term, Year 8 amassed over 7000 positive points, a testament to their dedication. They have delved into learning new languages, honing culinary skills, crafting stunning celebration cakes, participating in school teams and drama performances, and tackling intricate and demanding tasks. I am keen on acknowledging the exceptional camaraderie within this year group, as evidenced by their outstanding attendance and academic performance. Their enthusiasm for learning and being present at school will undoubtedly yield great results in the future. Wishing everyone a joyous holiday season and a prosperous New Year.

Mr Robbins
Principal of Year 8



Year 9



Dr Clark, Mrs Embleton, Mrs Elms, Mrs Lyall

Year 9 students are settling well into the new academic year and actively participating in their lessons. They are eagerly embracing the challenges of their final year before GCSEs. The students are enthusiastic about various activities, including making Finnish plaits in food, creating bird feeders in DT, and trying trampolining during PE. The options process for all students will begin next term, allowing them to experience taster lessons for available subjects in Year 10 and 11. An Options Evening is set for Wednesday 19 March from 5-7pm, providing an opportunity for parents and carers to meet subject teachers. More information is available on the school website. We're excited to let you know that Mrs. Lyall has joined the Year 9 team as an additional PSM working with Mrs. Elms. Thanks for your continued support and wish you a restful Christmas break.

Dr Clark
Principal of Year 9



Year 10



Mrs Williams, Mr Bunce, Mrs Lynch, Mrs Silver

Year 10 students are off to a great start with their chosen subjects. Coursework is underway, and students are rising to the challenge. This year, we've introduced Head Boy and Girl and Ambassadors, with Lucy and Jack embracing their roles. They've welcomed new students and contributed to a positive school environment. School trips, including Shakesfest and geography field trips, have been successful, with students displaying impeccable behaviour. Since September, many Year 10 students have received rewards for attendance, demonstrating RADAR values, and teacher/community nominations. They enjoyed Fish & Chip Friday, Lolly at Lunchtime, and our annual Advent Calendar. It was impressive to see Year 10 students assisting with the Year 6 Open Evening, showcasing drama performances, solo singing, and serving as tour guides. We wish all Year 10 students and families a wonderful, restful break and a productive Term 3 ahead.

Mrs Williams
Principal of Year 10



Year 11



Mr Richardson, Miss Rivers, Miss Davis, Miss Delport

The first two terms in Year 11 have been filled with exciting activities. I want to commend the diligent students who are making excellent progress in all their subjects. It's truly inspiring to see so many students putting in their best effort as I move around the classrooms. As a community, we are looking forward to further rewarding these hardworking students. I also want to extend my congratulations to the entire group for their commendable performance during the mock exams. If you ever require the assistance of the Year 11 Team, please don't hesitate to reach out. Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to all the parents and carers for their ongoing support. Collaboration is essential for us to achieve the best results in Year 11. Wishing you a joyful Christmas.

Mr Richardson
Year 11 Principal



Sixth Form



Mrs Silvester, Miss Clayton, Mr Walsom, Mrs Dewberry

Year 12 have commenced their A Level studies with remarkable dedication, diligence, focus, and enthusiasm, both in their academic classes and independent study. They have wholeheartedly participated in school enrichment activities, including mentoring, hospitality, and supporting Teaching Assistants. Year 13 has consistently upheld this commendable approach, impressing us daily with their exceptional hard work, remarkable accomplishments, and kindness in both words and actions. Moreover, they have been actively engaged in preparing CVs, cover letters, and university applications. It has been a true pleasure to aid them in articulating their achievements in their personal statements and providing them with glowing references as they embark on the paths they truly deserve. We extend our warm wishes for a Merry Christmas to our students and their families.

Mrs L Silvester
Sixth Form Principal



Advice & Support

Homework

As you know, homework is vitally important for students to be able to practice and retrieve what they have learned. We have a two week timetable at KS3 and a weekly timetable at KS4/5.

We offer a homework club for our students on Monday and Thursdays after school. This takes place in both the Pyramid Centre and the library from 3.05pm until 4pm. Here with a member of staff, students can have a quiet place to complete their homework, internet and Chromebook access and support if needed.

Moving forward, you will be able to see how well your child is doing with their homework on their reports. In a similar way to 'Attitude to Learning', each teacher will now be giving a score from 1-4 for your child's homework completion (see below). We hope this will help you better keep track of your child's homework record.

1. Excellent and consistently completed to a high standard
2. Good and mostly completed to a high enough standard
3. Rarely completed or not completed to a high enough standard
4. Never completed

Advice & Support

Young Carers

What is a young carer?

A young carer is someone under 18 who cares for a family member with a disability, illness, mental health condition, or substance abuse issue.

If you believe your child falls within the above criteria, please click one of the links below to register your child as a young carer to get them the additional support they need.

All registered and engaging young carers of secondary/college age from 11-18yrs (including those moving up to Year 7 from September) are entitled to apply for a free KCC Travel Saver and 16+ Travel Saver bus pass as long as they will not be 18 or older at the start of the academic school year.

The link for parents/carers to apply for either Travel Savers is: [KCC Travel Saver - Kent County Council](https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-transport/KCC-travel-saver)
<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-transport/KCC-travel-saver>

Westlands School works closely with the support services of Crossroads (Swale) and Imago (Kent and London) to support our young carers.

Crossroads

<https://www.crossroadskent.org/service/young-carers>
Call 03450 956 701
Email enquiries@crossroadskent.org

Imago

<https://www.imago.community/Children-and-Young-People/Kent-Young-Carers>
Call 0300 111 1110
Email youngcarers@imago.community

For more information on what these companies offer, please visit their website.

Young Carers Lunchtime Club

Starting from January 2025 we will be hosting a young carers lunchtime club facilitated by Crossroads Young Carers. Rhona Dennis who is a young carers project worker, will be running this club at Westlands School.

The club is open to any registered young carer to come along and make new friends by meeting other young carers, socialise and gain additional support.

The club will be a safe space where young carers can be themselves and have fun! Activities will include: arts and crafts, board games and more.

We would like to invite all young carers on Wednesday 15th January 2025 to attend the lunch time club and following this, the first Wednesday of each month.

The young carers club will run from 12.40pm - 1.15pm in Room 7.

Upcoming Events



From December 2024
Collection of GCSE/A Level Certificates



9 January 2025
Parents' Forum

This forum provides our parents and carers with a voice and to actively contribute to making a difference to the educational and life experience of students



16 January 2025
Year 12 & 13 Parents' Evening

Booking for Parents' Evening will be available on 7 January 2025 via School Cloud. Details will be sent by email shortly.

Advanced notice of Results Days 2025

Even though it may feel like it's far off, we are eagerly anticipating the celebration of GCSE and A Level results next summer. A Level results will be announced on Thursday, 14th August 2025, and GCSE results will be revealed on Thursday, 21st August 2025. The school will be open from 10am to 12pm on both days for students to collect their results.

Term Dates

2024/2025

Term 3 Starts: Monday 6th January 2025

Term 3 Ends: Friday 14th February 2025

Holiday: Monday 17th February 2025 - Friday 21st February 2025

Staff Development Day: Monday 6th January 2025

Term 4 Starts: Monday 24th February 2025

Term 4 Ends: Friday 4th April 2025

Holiday: Monday 7th April 2025 - Monday 21st April 2025

Term 5 Starts: Tuesday 22nd April 2025

Term 5 Ends: Friday 23rd May 2025

Holiday: Monday 26th May 2025 - Friday 30th May 2025

Term 6 Starts: Monday 2nd June 2025

Term 6 Ends: Wednesday 23rd July 2025

Staff Development Day: Monday 30th June 2025