

WOODBIDGE

PRIDE IN ACHIEVEMENT

Buzzy

MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER: SPRING TERM

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INCLUSION

KINDNESS

EXCELLENCE

RESPECT



HEADTEACHER'S LETTER

We've reached the end of another term at Woodbridge and goodness me, it was a busy one! So much gets packed in to every term, and this one has been no different, as you will see from the newsletter. We definitely need a holiday now, I can tell you that much! It is, as always, a total pleasure to see what our students are up to in and outside of their lessons every day. From the moment the bell goes in the morning, to well beyond the end of the school day, our school is filled with busy young people getting involved in anything and everything. The students you will see in these pages are just some of those who put themselves forward for every opportunity there is. They are leading fulfilled and happy school lives, and I know for certain that that will lead to fulfilled and happy future lives when they leave us.

At the Achievement Evenings last week, I spoke about our values and how important it is that our students use them to guide them in their current and future decisions. In a complex world, and one which has many things wrong with it, they will need their education, and the values that underpin it, to become the leaders of the future. Marian Wright Edelman, an American civil rights activist, said that if we don't like the world as it is, then it is our duty to change it one step at a time. That is the task that lies ahead for our children. It is our privilege and our responsibility as parents and educators to get them ready for that task. Our Woodbridge students very certainly will be ready.

As always, our busy term has been filled with things that excite, entertain, educate and enlighten, and provide our students with the knowledge and skills they will need to grow as people and become future leaders. Students have been getting involved in World Book Day celebrations, getting involved in and winning prestigious competitions in sports, as well as once again participating enthusiastically in the Jack Petchey Speak Out competition! They have been taking part in Holocaust Memorial Day events and celebrating the diversity of our school through faith and culture activities, getting involved in British Science Week, and listening to acclaimed speakers from so many walks of life. Yet again, money has been raised for so many charities, sports clubs have thrived and are on their way to victory, and we have taken trips to some far flung places. And who could forget the



outstanding production of the Musical Time Machine – with three sell-out nights of singing, dancing, performing and just joyous fun. All of this, and so much more, you will see in the pages that follow.

As a Headteacher you always have to big up your school. It's one of the fundamentals of the job. But as I write this, I am genuinely convinced that we have the best school there could be... so many visitors tell me so, including those who come for jobs and those who know the area well. It is also shown in the higher than ever number of first-choice applications for admission to year 7. It is our students that do that – with their superb energy, their amazing enthusiasm and their total commitment to making the world a better place. They are truly superstars.

For now, it just remains for me to wish all in our community a happy holiday. Whether you are celebrating Easter, Passover or Vaisakhi over the coming weeks, or simply catching some down time with family and friends, I send very best wishes to all of you. Have a great break!

Mr S Hogan



Jack Petchey's "SPEAK OUT" Challenge!

REDBRIDGE REGIONAL FINALS

Jeremy A and Tsvyatko M, in Year 10, recently took part in the Redbridge Regional Final of Jack Petchey's Speak Out Challenge!

By Mr A Faisal
English Department

We were lucky enough to host this event at our school this year! There were 15 entrants in total and we were able to enter two students, being the hosting school. This event, the largest public speaking programme in England, is managed and delivered by Speakers Trust, the UK's leading public speaking charity. It is supported and funded by the Jack Petchey Foundation.

The aim of the Speak Out Challenge is to amplify the voices of young people. It does this by building confidence, developing skills, and creating platforms for young people to share their stories and ideas. This empowers not only the individuals themselves but also their peers. The Speak Out Challenge provides free communication skills training to Year 10 students in every state school in London and Essex. Through its workshops, it empowers over 30,000 young people each year.

Jeremy's speech was titled "Breaking the chains of racism". The speech advocated for unity and collective action as essential tools in dismantling racism. Jeremy urged his audience to take personal responsibility in the fight against racism, encouraging them to engage in difficult conversations, challenge their own biases and support initiatives that promote social justice. The overarching message was one of hope and empowerment as Jeremy stated that by working together, society can break the chains of racism and create a more inclusive and equitable world.

Tsvyatko's speech was titled 'Shackled in silence'. Tsvyatko confronted the harrowing reality of modern slavery, a pervasive issue that affects millions across the globe. He shared some alarming statistics and true stories which emphasised that this is not a distant problem but a pressing crisis that exists in many communities. Tsvyatko said by raising awareness, educating others and holding perpetrators accountable, society can work together to dismantle the systems that allow modern slavery to thrive and ultimately free those who are 'shackled in silence'.

While both Tsvyatko and Jeremy performed really well and did make us proud, sadly they did not win on this occasion. However, it has been a great experience for the both of them, allowing them to develop their communication skills for use in education, employability and social change.





International Women's Day

By Ms L Evans, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion

This year, International Women's Day (IWD) was marked by the theme 'Accelerate Action,' and at Woodbridge we are committed to taking meaningful steps towards making a difference. One way we're accelerating action is by providing free period products to any girl who needs them—no questions asked. Simply head to any office in the school displaying the red box symbol to pick up what you need. Tragically, nearly two million girls in the UK (62%) have missed school due to a lack of access to menstrual products.

At Woodbridge, we firmly believe that no girl should miss out on her education because she doesn't have access to basic necessities. Our goal is to ensure every girl has what she needs to stay engaged and empowered, regardless of financial barriers.

This International Women's Day, we also celebrated the achievements of some remarkable women within our own community:

Grace Breen: Talented defender for Tottenham U21 team.

Emma Grede: Entrepreneur, a 'dragon' on Dragon's Den.

Elle McIntosh: Founder of Twipes, a successful company while prioritising sustainability.

Alexandra Wilson: Trailblazing lawyer, an advocate for diversity and inclusion in the legal profession.

Their stories inspire us to break down barriers and aim higher.



IWD assembly displaying the red box symbol for period products



Prefects packing free period products

Finally, we raised money for the Malala Fund, which works tirelessly to advocate for girls' education globally. Supporting causes like the Malala Fund reminds us of the importance of looking beyond our own community and making a positive impact on women and girls around the world.

Let's continue to accelerate action for women, ensuring that progress is not just a moment, but a movement.

Students making their IWD pledge for equality



MUSICAL JOURNEY

By Eden, Year 7

I can't remember the first time I knew I loved making music. According to my mum, I decided I wanted to be born mid-way through a Christmas choir concert, so I think maybe I was keen to get making music even then. Performing runs in our family - my grandma was an actress, my mum is a singer in a band, and my dad is a drummer, so there's always music in our house (and sometimes it can be quite noisy!).

I started having singing lessons a few years ago and began working towards my grades, which has been quite hard at times, especially as I have dyslexia (which can make it a bit harder for me sometimes, though I also think it's my secret superpower!). For my grade three exam a few years ago, I had to sing a song in German. I found learning the long words quite challenging, so I found another way. I learned all three verses by using printed pictures of each syllable. I now draw little symbols for each syllable to help me remember how words in different languages are pronounced.

In 2023, I competed in the Stratford and East London music festival for the first time. It is the oldest music festival in the UK. That first year I felt really nervous but also really excited as I'd never competed in any kind of tournament before. When it was my turn to stand up and sing it was quite nerve-wracking because I didn't know what to expect from the examiner or the people in the crowd. But when I finished, I felt so proud I had done it and everyone was really supportive and I got some good feedback to help me improve. I couldn't believe it when I won two first place cups that year, and I was even more



Eden with her trophies

surprised when I won two cups again the next year!

Best of all though, I made some new friends who I see again every year and we always cheer really loudly for each other, even when we're competing in the same category!

This year, I moved into the 12-15 year old category, so I was not

expecting to win anything. I decided to just have a go at some really different pieces, some of which I am doing for my Grade 5 exam in the summer. I sang two folk songs, a piece from the musical My Fair Lady (with a cockney accent!) and a piece in Italian from Mozart's opera The Marriage of Figaro. I was completely shocked when I got a highly commended for my musical theatre piece and then won two first place cups for my folk songs! The examiner said one of the songs I sang made her cry - which I think is a good thing.

I love singing folk songs because they often tell good stories. Every year we go to a folk festival in Wales and last year I sang in the open mic tent and got selected to sing on the main stage on the last day, which was frightening but exciting. We're going back again this summer, so I am really hoping to sing again if I can.

Over the next few months I am looking forward to doing lots more music and drama. I'm doing a residential course with the Redbridge Youth Choir, who I sang with at the Royal Albert Hall this year, doing my singing and LAMDA exams in the summer and, of course, being part of lots of after school clubs and performances at Woodbridge.

MFL

From Classroom to Armenia

By Mrs R Clark and Ms R Tann, MFL

The Russian department has taken students on a trip to Armenia. In the past, we would travel to Moscow and St. Petersburg. However, due to the current political situation, we have recently been travelling to former Soviet republics. This has included Georgia, Uzbekistan, and now Armenia, which is located just east of Turkey. Here, we have learned a great deal about Armenian culture, as well as the country's ex-Soviet past and its connection with Russia.

Students have had the opportunity to speak Russian with locals, including at markets, restaurants, cafes, and with tour guides. Everyone had a fantastic time. Stay tuned to see where we end up next year!





ALUMNAE SUCCESS STORIES

From the Classroom to the Cutting-Edge of Design and Engineering!

By Ms M Rivers, Head Of D&T

The Design and Technology Department were very happy to welcome back alumnus Sami Mustafa on Monday to speak with our students about Civil Engineering and Architecture. Sami is in the final year of his Civil Engineering and Architecture Master's degree at the University of Bath and came in to speak with students about his time at Woodbridge, his A Level in D&T, and how it led to where he is now.

He went through the pros and cons of university versus apprenticeships, student loans, and all the amazing experiences he has had while studying Civil Engineering and Architecture, as well as what his next steps are. The students had plenty of questions and really enjoyed the careers talk.

Recently, Mr Allen and I had the wonderful opportunity to visit the Royal Institute of British Architects to see Yasmin Taylan, one of our talented Product Design A-level alumnae, speak about her architecture project. Yasmin, who is currently studying architecture at Greenwich University, shared her innovative project on sustainable design. She has been exploring ground-breaking ways to use recycled paper in the creation of new, eco-friendly building materials. It was truly inspiring to hear her passion for sustainability and her remarkable work.

We also caught up with two more fantastic D&T alumnae, Ifsah Chowdhery and Bolu Adeyemo. Ifsah is taking a gap year from her architecture degree at UCL to do amazing voluntary work with the charity Beyond the Box, where she's also running workshops at the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). Bolu, meanwhile, is in her final year at Greenwich University studying Civil Engineering and is making waves in her field.

We're so proud of what our former students are achieving, and we're thrilled to announce that they'll be returning soon to share their journeys and insights with our current D&T students. Their stories are sure to inspire the next generation of designers and engineers!



Sami speaking to students



Staff with Yasmin and Bolu at RIBA



Ifsah with Beyond The Box

Who wants to talk about race?

*By Ms K McNamee-Obi
Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Co-ordinator*

It is challenging to dismantle racist ideologies or talk about race when the mere mention of the word often makes some people feel uncomfortable. Another difficulty is, how do we dismantle something if there are people who don't believe it exists? And how do we dismantle racism when we can't seem to talk about race without people becoming defensive or feel the need to declare that they are not racist?

Part of the difficulty also lies within how racism is engrained within systems and in everyday interactions, making it easy to pass by without notice. It is often disguised as harmless comments or prefaced by disclaimers meant to absolve the speaker of blame. For instance, have you ever heard someone preface a comment with the disclaimer, "I don't mean to gossip, but..."? If you have, you know that the next thing to come out of the person's mouth will be gossip. The same is true for the bigot who says, "I'm not a racist, but..." Without exception, those words indicate the imminent utterance of a racist comment, acting as a shield against accountability, even as they perpetuate harm.

And here's the thing, if you're on the receiving end of hearing these utterances, it can feel uncomfortable, and that discomfort in itself can be quite complex. At best it could be an open door for reflection, growth, understanding and perhaps even empathy – allowing us to challenge with grace and move towards meaningful change. At worst it might reveal something far more troubling and damaging, and such utterances find common ground, bolstering age-old systems of prejudice and ignorance.



But acknowledging the discomfort is merely the initial step. The real challenge lies in holding the weight of that discomfort – whether it is the pain of hearing harmful words or the fear of unintentionally causing harm. With both these perspectives in mind, it is understandable why conversations about race feel heavy, as they weigh on the balance of fear, defensiveness or uncertainty. And with that in mind, who wants to talk about race? I certainly don't, and yet here I am, talking about it.

But...

- What if the discomfort that arises during these conversations isn't something to avoid but something to embrace?
- What if the discomfort isn't the enemy and is the very thing we need to face to move forward?
- What if it's the discomfort of vulnerability - the kind that feels unsettling but is necessary for genuine change?

One could argue that talking about race often requires some level of vulnerability, and that can feel very threatening, believe me, I know. But, if we want to have meaningful, transformative conversations about race, we should allow ourselves to be vulnerable.

So, how do we talk about race, while embracing vulnerability without letting it be poisoned by shame and guilt? Perhaps the answer lies in accepting that discomfort is part of the process. That it is okay to feel uncertain; to not have all the answers and accept that mistakes will be made along the way.

Vulnerability will demand that we acknowledge some uncomfortable truths about the systems within our society. It will force us to confront our own biases; understand our complicity, take accountability for mistakes and commit ourselves to change. And though vulnerability is often seen as a sign of weakness, this vulnerability isn't weakness but a sign of courage. It is the willingness to be uncomfortable in the pursuit of growth, knowing you won't always get it right, but you are willing to listen, learn and make amends when you get things wrong. Because we are humans, we are not perfect, no matter how much some of us would like to think otherwise. Besides, the thing that truly matters when talking about race, is our willingness to listen and, as one of my grandmothers would say, it's being willing to "learn and grow from mistakes".

Let us not be afraid of getting things wrong. And let us not shy away from conversations about race because it's uncomfortable. Doing so only serves to protect harmful systems and shield others from taking accountability. Avoiding such conversations allows the discomfort of growth to be replaced by the comfort of ignorance. Furthermore, growth very rarely happens in places of comfort, where we are defensive or where the goal is to shame others. It happens when we approach these conversations from a place of empathy and accountability, where the goal isn't perfection, it's progress.

Conversations about race are never easy, but that doesn't mean they shouldn't happen. Truth be told, their difficulty is precisely why they must. Because if we allow our discomfort to silence us, we are choosing to uphold the very system we claim to want to dismantle.

So again, I ask, how do we dismantle racist ideologies and talk about race even though it feels uncomfortable? By choosing to lean into the discomfort. By letting go of the fear of getting things wrong and fueling our desire to make things right. Be willing to feel uncomfortable – yes, I know it's hard. But that willingness to be uncomfortable is a testament to your commitment to growth. And that is where real change begins.

So, who wants to talk about race? Perhaps the better question is, who can afford not to?

Stay engaged, stay open and lean in.

Conversations about race are never easy, but that doesn't mean they shouldn't happen.

Truth be told, their difficulty is precisely why they must.



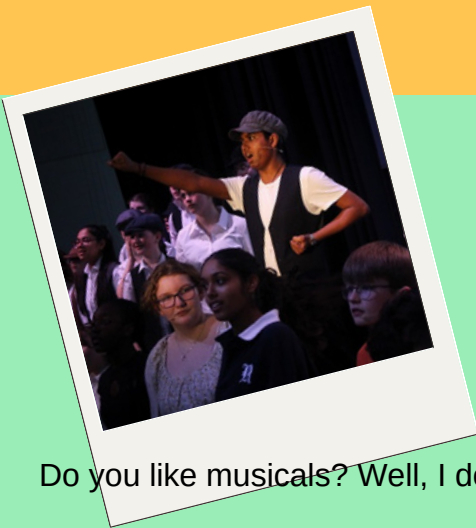
Anti-racist workshop

I've always found talking about my truth, my race and my feelings towards racism difficult, having not had support. The DEI community, with wonderful teachers there to support us, means that students like me do not have to fake being okay with the way the world is set. Having a safe place where students can come together and speak about such vital topics like systemic racism and discrimination has opened my mind so much more. The committee has given me the voice to feel more confident when speaking against bullying, racism and homophobia. As a group, we are working towards helping and encouraging people to understand and learn what anti-racism is and how they can implement it in their daily lives to help shape this school into an even better place. As a society, it is important that we encourage younger people to learn these values from now so that this generation can do better.

Hasa Year 12

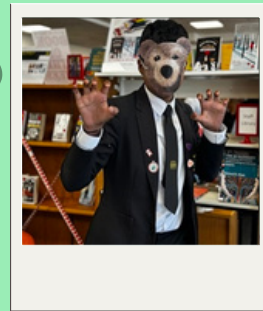
Being in the DEI committee has allowed me and many others to see the importance of diversity within all environments. The meetings are beneficial and we talk about our own experiences and opinions without judgement, as well as conversations on how to make our school a better place for students, guests and staff members by creating an inclusive environment for everyone. It's such a safe place to express yourself. I am proud to be a part of a community that advocates for underrepresented voices.

Juanita W, Year 12



VITESH'S VOICE!

By Vitesh S, Year 10



Do you like musicals? Well, I do and here's why!

I played so many roles in the musical and also took part in many songs like 'Jacob and Sons' and 'Joseph's Coat'. I loved playing the role of Jacob.

Other parts I had a role in were: Radio Gaga, Hamilton, Les Mis, Mary Poppins, Jersey Boys, Rent, Matilda and Hairspray ofcourse! The songs I took part in were; 'You'll Be Back', 'At the End Of The Day', 'Step In Time', 'Oh, What A Night', 'Seasons Of Love', 'Revolting Children' and 'You Can't Stop the Beat'. I loved my solo roles in 'Jacob and Sons' and 'Step In Time'.

A school without Drama and Music is not a school at all is it? The audience, which included Mr Hogan, loved the musical. I would love to be an actor in the future!

We'll see what's next!

I am also grateful to be able to share my thoughts on World Book Day. I decided to dress up as 'Little Charley Bear' as it's imaginative and because I like to explore different stories and ideas.

I loved the PE department's costume, they all dressed up as elephants from 'That's Not My Elephant!' There were other staff dressed up as great characters; Mrs. Evans dressed up as Mrs. Fox from 'Fantastic Mr. Fox', Mr. Wingfield was Sherlock Holmes and Mrs. Brock-Carey was 'Little Red Riding Hood'.

I enjoy reading books by Roald Dahl and Dickens. My favorite book is 'A Christmas Carol' which I studied in Mr. Wingfield's class.

I can't wait for next year!



WORLD
**BOOK
 DAY**
 6 MARCH 2025

By Mr A Faisal
English Department

During the week commencing 3rd March, we engaged in a variety of activities to celebrate World Book Day, including a door decoration contest, a story competition, and teachers dressing as their favourite book characters on 6th March.

World Book Day highlights the joy of reading, which aligns perfectly with the school's commitment to fostering literacy. It was fun to watch the teachers in costumes while the students eagerly guessed who they were. Some even noted down the books the characters were from, eager to read them later.

The celebration of World Book Day was a great success, and I'm excited to see what next year's event will bring!



Woodbridge Bee Club

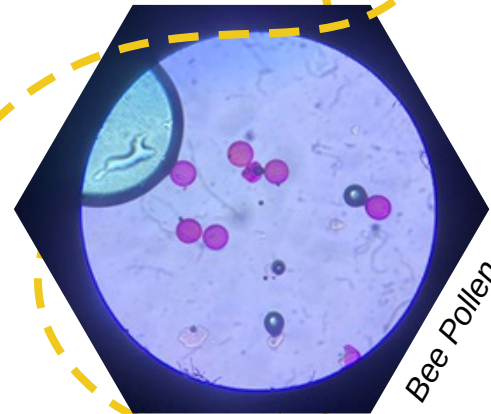
Spring News

Ms M Rivers, Head Of D&T

Bee Club returned at the end of February with a couple of weeks of theory lessons to start us off. One of the sessions was spent creating slides of pollen to look at under microscopes (kindly lent to us by the Science Department). It was fascinating to see the different colours and shapes of the pollen grains. These wonderful photos were taken by our club captain, Zayn.

The weather improved, the sun started shining, and we got outside for our first hive session on 18th March. Sadly, we lost one colony over the winter – it was quite a small colony, and this could have been the reason it did not make it through.

We spent the session checking to see how one of the other hives was doing, and thankfully, it is thriving. We saw brood in all stages (BIAS) with eggs, larvae, and sealed brood. We even got to watch a brand-new bee chew its way out of its cell and emerge to join the rest of the colony. The bees have been collecting pollen and nectar to feed the colony. Hopefully, the warm weather will continue to make it all easier for them.



**CARE 4
CALAIS**

Fundraiser

Mr S Shaw, Head of Sociology

Last year, Woodbridge Year 12 volunteers were able to present a cheque for £400 to Care4Calais. This year's Year 12s are attempting to smash through that total by selling cakes to sixth formers and staff every other Thursday. They are well on target.

All the money raised goes to support asylum seekers in this country and northern France. These are mainly young men who are escaping from war, the climate crisis, and persecution in the Horn of Africa, Sudan, Syria, or Kurdistan.



Care4Calais Bake Sale

TEACHING HISTORY AND HUMANITY

Holocaust Memorial Day

By Mrs R Begum, Religious Education

Last term, in preparation for Holocaust Memorial Day in January, we were honoured to welcome John Hajdu MBE at Woodbridge, where he shared his powerful testimony as a Holocaust survivor with our students.

John was born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1937, and lived through the horrors of both Nazi occupation and Communist rule. As a young child, he was forced into the Budapest ghetto, where he and his aunt struggled to survive while many of his family members perished. His story is one of immense hardship but also of resilience, hope, and the importance of remembrance.

During his visit, John spoke about his experiences in wartime Hungary, his escape from persecution, and the life he built after surviving these unimaginable events. His message was one of education and awareness, ensuring that the lessons of the Holocaust are never forgotten.

Our students were captivated by John's words, listening intently and asking thoughtful, insightful questions. Many expressed how moved they were by his courage and honesty. The session not only deepened their historical understanding but also encouraged them to reflect on



John Hajdu with staff and students

the importance of tolerance, respect, and standing up against discrimination in today's world. We are incredibly grateful to John Hajdu MBE for sharing his story with us, and we look forward to continuing our work with John.

Holocaust Educational Trust

Students had the unique opportunity to take part in Testimony 360, an immersive VR experience run by the Holocaust Educational Trust. This powerful event allowed students to engage with the testimony of a Holocaust survivor using cutting-edge virtual reality technology.

Through this interactive session, they not only heard a survivor's story but also explored key locations linked to their experiences, helping them connect with history in a deeply personal way. As part of our commitment to high-quality history and religious education, this experience supported our students in developing a greater understanding of the Holocaust, its impact, and the importance of remembrance.



VR Session

It also encouraged empathy, critical thinking, and reflection on the lessons we can learn from the past. They found the experience deeply moving and insightful, further reinforcing the importance of learning from history.

HISTORY *Department*

By Miss A Latino, Head Of History

This term our Year 9 historians have engaged in their scheme of learning on the Holocaust with sensitivity and maturity. Some Year 9 historians had the experience of taking part in the Holocaust Educational Trust's virtual reality workshop. Students, with their headsets, were able to see key places that were pivotal to Manfred Goldberg's survivor testimony. Students could hear Manfred's own words and ask him questions that were answered through virtual reality! It really was an amazing experience that gave our students an unforgettable learning experience! Thank you Mrs Begum for organising!



Holocaust VR Workshop

Our Year 9 historians also visited the Imperial War Museum in central London. Students engaged positively with the Holocaust workshop offered by the museum. Museum educators commented on students' maturity and focused approach to their time exploring the Holocaust galleries with their iPad to find out more about the Holocaust through objects and survivor testimony. It was even said that they had been the best group they have worked with all year! Well done Year 9 historians!



Imperial War Museum

Let's not forget that our Year 12 historians had the opportunity to watch Hamilton at the Victoria theatre this term. Year 12 historians were exemplary, and were able to see an interpretation of the history that they are studying for the Birth of America unit. Students were really in the room for this history (apologies for the terrible Hamilton pun!).

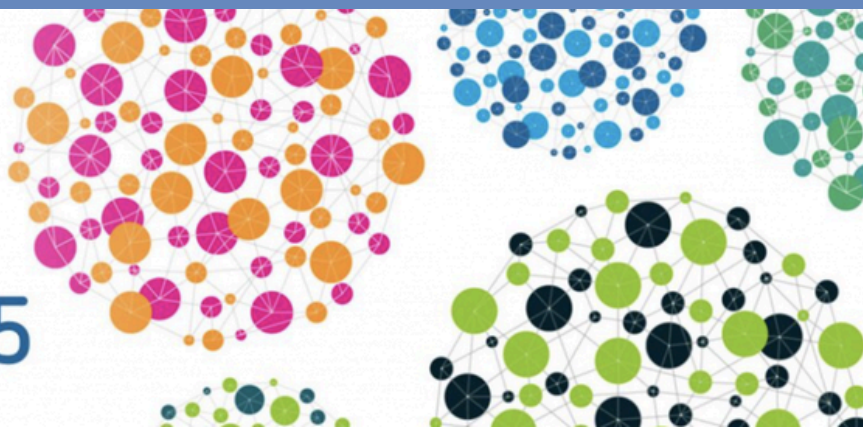


Hamilton Trip

Next term, Year 10 historians will be heading off to Berlin with the German department! We are very much looking forward to this!



BRITISH SCIENCE WEEK 2025



By Mr M Williams, Head Of Science

It was British Science Week in March, and Woodbridge High School kicked it off with a bang! Year 7 and Year 8 had assemblies showcasing the many fantastic discoveries and inventions made by British scientists, and we even had a practical demonstration of how the jet engine works!

Teachers in the Science department ran workshops during lunchtimes and after school, with activities including 'Maggots and Choice Chambers', 'Matchstick Rockets', 'Whiz and Bang Chemistry', and 'Making Bath Bombs'.

During form time, we celebrated some of the diverse people and jobs in STEM careers, and students were given the opportunity to research many different profiles for PPR. This aimed to challenge long-standing stereotypes of who scientists are and what kind of careers young people can pursue using Science qualifications.

In lesson time, Year 7 completed a 'Whodunnit?' fingerprint activity, and Year 8 discovered whether they were Super Tasters, celebrating the differences between us. A big thanks to all the Science teachers who helped out and to our fantastic Year 7 and 8 students who engaged in the activities throughout the week.



There were a number of science trips this term. These included the 'Science Live!' conference for Year 11 students considering A-level science next year and a trip for Year 10 and Year 12 students to the Royal Veterinary College.

At 'Science Live!', students had the chance to see and hear from five of Britain's top scientists, all working at the cutting edge of their specialisms, as well as receiving top tips on examination success from an experienced science examiner.

One of the highlights was a highly engaging talk by Professor Robert Winston, who pioneered new treatments to improve in vitro fertilisation (IVF).



Woodbridge at 'Science Live'

Medical Careers Day

By Ms F Mohammed, Science

Students were invited to attend a Medical Careers Day event, where they had the amazing opportunity to meet medical students and doctors.

The event included three activities:

1. The Emergency Medical Assistance Activity, where medical students explained the different actions that are needed to assist a person in an emergency. These include the Recovery Position, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), and Choking Technique.

2. The Diagnostics Activity, where our students took on the role of a doctor assessing patients in A&E. Under guidance, they questioned the 'patients' to determine their symptoms. They also examined blood pressure, oxygen levels, and considered how they would have treated the patients.



Medical Careers Day

3. The Medical Ethics Activity, which was by far the most popular, where teams were presented with real-life situations in which doctors have had to make ethical decisions. The medical students guided the students in discussions and encouraged them to consider how they would have responded as the situation developed.

Achievement Evening

We were excited to hold our Achievement Evening in March, a special occasion where we celebrated the outstanding accomplishments of our students. A heartfelt congratulations to all the students who were invited to this prestigious event! Your hard work, dedication, and perseverance have truly shone, and we are incredibly proud of each of you.

Keep up the fantastic work, and we look forward to seeing even more achievements in the future!

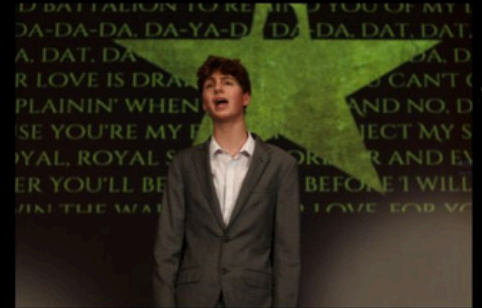


THE MUSICAL TIME MACHINE

By Millie J, Year 10

In my opinion, the musical has always been one of the lifebloods of our school. It's always amazing, fun, and character-building, and this year was no exception. First of all, the rehearsals, although long, are 100% worth it. They not only keep your brain working but also mean you get to perform with and meet people you didn't know before.

This show was a wonderful opportunity to showcase the skills of students in the drama and music departments. It had such a lovely sense of community, and so many of us were devastated that it had to end. Personally, I loved the storyline and plot, and I enjoyed performing in Les Misérables, Step in Time, and Jersey Boys. It truly is an amazing, one-of-a-kind experience to be part of, and I'm so glad I did it this year!







ATTENDANCE MATTERS

By Mrs W Smith

Lead for Family Support and Education Welfare

Woodbridge High School continues to work hard to build an effective whole school culture of day to day attendance. Our aims are to bring the best to our students. Absence remains the single and most important factor for lowering student outcomes and aspirations.

The Family Support Team aims to achieve high levels of communication, trust, support and transparency with our students and families. Please reach out to the team if we can assist.

Woodbridge High School provides warmth, personalised support and enrichment that encourages positive social interactions and wellbeing. We all worry about young people and their mental health, and school can be a daunting space for many. Working together, we can provide the reassurance and support students and families need to overcome the challenges. You are not alone.

Keeping your child off school if they are struggling is not the best solution to take and often exacerbates the issues. Please contact us to talk about your concerns, we can support. Routines, distractions and people also enable us to keep well and reduce anxiety. Rest assured, we will work together to support your child to attend whilst managing health.

**ATTEND TODAY,
ACHIEVE TOMORROW
- EVERY SINGLE DAY MATTERS**

As we look ahead to the start of the Summer term, identifying new goals with your child/ren prior to the start of every new term is a positive action to take. Improving attendance and reducing absence may be one of the goals for your family. Consistent attendance builds resilience, reduces anxiety, improves key skills and ensures that students are not missing their learning or pastoral support.

It can be difficult at times to know whether your child is too ill to attend school. Please contact us and we can discuss and make decisions together. The NHS guidance is clear that it's fine to send them in with a cough/sore throat/common cold/headache and with all other minor ailments.

Please do not hesitate to contact the team if we can assist in any way. It is essential that you notify the school each day of absence. Our safeguarding practice means that if we do not hear from you, or we feel concerned, we will make contact and at times home visit. This is for support and safeguarding.

INCLUSION *Department*

By Mr B Dooley, Inclusion

Neurodiversity Week

Neurodiversity Week was celebrated with assemblies delivered by the Inclusion Team about the huge opportunities that arise when we embrace difference and diversity. Students were encouraged to consider how we all experience the world differently, and yet we all want many of the same things; to feel respected, to learn, to feel safe, to have friends, to be recognised for the things we're good at and to feel valued. Students were encouraged to continue being respectful, looking out for each other, maintaining a calm environment and, most importantly, being kind.

Horse Riding at Wanstead Community Riding Stables

The Inclusion Team took a group of students from Years 9 and 11 on a four-week riding course at Wanstead Community Riding Stables (WCRS). Our students experienced a range of emotions, from sheer terror to utter jubilation, as they progressed from being nervous approaching the horses to riding confidently. The staff at WCRS were incredibly kind to our students, but the real stars of the show were the beautiful horses, who were very patient and helped our students build confidence with every trot of the way.

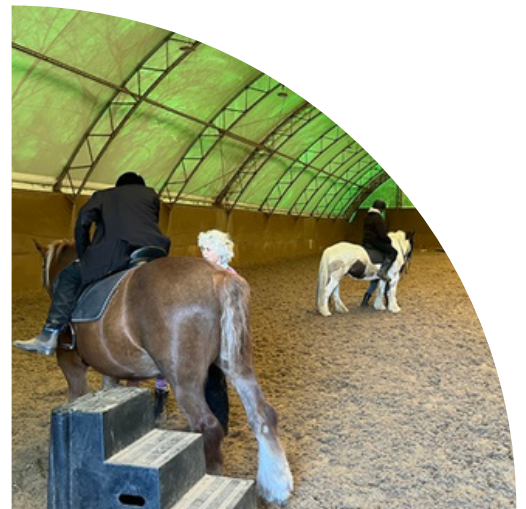
Activities In The Hub

This term saw Mr Dooley speak with each form group in Years 7 and 8, having spoken to Year 9 forms before Christmas, about mental health and wellbeing. These sessions gave students the opportunity to recognise what makes their lives fulfilling and to consider strategies they could use to reduce stress and anxiety as well as deal with challenging situations.

How can we support each other?

Show	Show respect
Ask	Ask if everything is okay
Give	Give space
Reduce	Reduce noise
Be	Be kind

Support Tips!



Wanstead Stables

Mr Dooley shared his top tips for staying well, to give ideas about what works for him personally, that students may want to try:

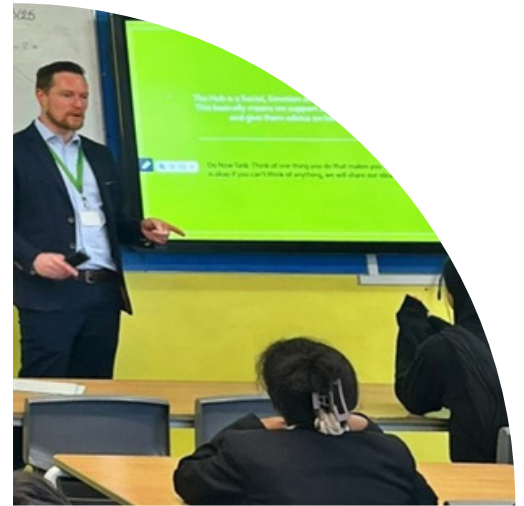
Get organised - Keeping on top of my work and having routines mean I don't have to worry, I just need to take action.

Sleep routine - Getting 8 hours sleep every night means I have energy for the next day. I have the same bedtime every night and I don't use my phone after 9pm.

Be kind - I don't need to worry about anything I've said or done if I'm kind to everyone.

Talk to people - I will tell someone if I am annoyed or upset, and saying it out loud means I don't need to keep it in my head.

Set goals - If I set small achievable goals I feel good about myself once I've met these goals.



The Hub

Mr Dooley also shared techniques on how to deal with stressful situations, including square breathing, meditation, counting to 10 and the 5-4-3-2-1 grounding technique.



By Miss J Sanderson and Mr A Allen
BET Team

With all three levels rolled out last term, the new cohorts of each level are all working hard behind the scenes to complete their sections, ensuring they complete an hour a week of volunteering, physical and skill sections.

This year has seen amazing numbers again in the uptake of Bronze and Silver ... oh and don't forget Gold. We have an amazing 57 students completing their Bronze this year and 48 completing Silver. It's really nice this year to see some new faces on the Silver award, as well as returning faces from Bronze.

This term the students are busy not only completing their sections but preparing for expeditions too, as the expeditions will soon be upon us.



Students receiving their DofE Awards

House News

By Miss E Jamieson, BET

This year, the House Enterprise Captains have run a series of events to raise money for their House Charities: Clowns in the Sky, ELHAP, Honeypot, Haven House, and Lennox Children's Cancer Fund. These events have included the Midsummer Night's Dream production, Christmas Concert, Christmas Fayre, Valentine's Day, Children's Mental Health Week, International Women's Day, The Musical, and Brain Tumour Awareness Month.

The upcoming events will be The Great Woodbridge Bake Off on Wednesday 14th May and Sports Day on Friday 4th July.

The students have done phenomenally well in their efforts to create such amazing products to sell, such as Izzy and Evie's incredible Rocky Roads – Daniel and Jeremy will vouch for them! So far, the students have raised an outstanding £3,123.92, with over £600 raised individually for each house.



House Bake Sale

A BIG thank you to the wonderful House Enterprise Captains and to all of you who continue to support with your encouragement and generosity.

Prefects

By Miss E Jamieson, BET

As we say good bye and huge thank you to our Year 11 prefects, we are excited to welcome our Year 10 prefects! With a busy start to the term, the prefects have thrown themselves into their roles, fulfilling tasks in a timely manner, completing their duties, and planning the next round of initiatives and community outreach projects. This includes litter picking and the development of our wellbeing rainbow bench for future Year 7s.

To show our appreciation and showcase their amazing work, we have decided to introduce the POTTs Award – Prefect of the Term. In addition to your feedback, the Head Students will choose the Prefects of the Term. The decision will be based on the prefect who has completed the most tasks, made the most effort, or gone above and beyond. The chosen prefect will have their picture displayed on the prefects' board and will also receive an Amazon voucher.



Woodbridge Prefects!

Please continue to give us feedback and provide reasoning for who you think should be the POTT!

SIXTH FORM

Super Curricular Highlights

By Mrs L Khudeza, Sixth Form Super-Curricular Co-ordinator

Woodbridge Sixth Form prides itself on having a huge super curricular programme and presence within the school. This year, all students in the Sixth Form have contributed in one way or another to the Sixth Form and whole school community. This is just a little snippet of our highlights this term and the fantastic work of our students in making our Sixth Form enriching for themselves as well as others around them!

THE EDGE PROGRAMME

The Super Curricular programme aims to support students build crucial transferable life skills to enable them to stand out and have an 'Edge' over others in this ever-competitive world of Higher Education and Employment.

All students in Year 12 have a choice of Edge subject (LORIC, Debating, DofE, MOOCS, Maths Studies, EPQ or Sports Leaders) and here we want to share and celebrate the achievements and highlights of some of the students on this programme.

LORIC

In LORIC, students aim to demonstrate transferable skills through the planning and delivery of fundraising projects. This year, students in four classes have been raising money for charities such as British Heart Foundation, War Child, Centre Point and Great Ormond Street Hospital. Students have been extremely creative in their fundraising efforts, from selling teas and coffees to staff, to movie screenings, selling Valentines cards and even washing cars for staff members!



LORIC students fundraising for War Child



Debating Heats!

Debating

The Debating students this year have been phenomenal! The students fought tooth and nail and battled through the Semi-Finals and then this week during the final part of the in-school competition. The finalists included Ms Iyengar's class and Mr Portnoi's, who debated the motion 'The NHS should be privatised'. With such talented students on both the opposition and the proposition who articulated their points so well it was almost impossible to decide on a winning team. Mr Portnoi's class (Proposition) took away the victory by a small margin and are the Debating champions 2024-2025! Mr Portnoi sits smug with his second year in victory...can any group take him off the top spot next year?

The winning team will be entered into the oldest and most prestigious nationwide debating championships - English Speaking Union (Schools Mace). A huge congratulations to everyone involved!

A Message for You! YEAR 10!

By Ms R Gleeson, Head Of Year 10

As the Year 10 Coordinator, I am incredibly proud of the remarkable achievements and contributions our students have made so far this year. Our talented Year 10s have shone brightly in various school productions, showcasing their creativity and dedication on stage. I attended the most recent production, and we all loved it!

Their involvement in charity events has been equally impressive, demonstrating their compassion and commitment to making a positive impact on our local charities. From organising fundraisers to participating in

volunteer activities, they have shown great initiative and teamwork.

Additionally, our students have been diligently preparing for their upcoming mock exams, balancing their academic responsibilities with their extracurricular activities. Their hard work and determination are truly commendable, and I am confident that their efforts will pay off.

It has been a joy to witness their growth and enthusiasm, and I look forward to seeing what more they will accomplish in the coming months!



Our school gym urgently requires refurbishment, with repairs needed for the heating system and a replacement of the unusable gym floor. The gym is essential for both PE lessons and exams, making these repairs a top priority.

We've been raising funds in various ways, including a fundraising page kindly set up by a parent, which has now closed. While we still have a long way to go, we hope to hold another event, following the success of our quiz night organised by Governor Pank Pathak, to help reach our goal.

If you would like to contribute to the gym refurbishment, you can donate via Scopy, where there is an option for our gym fundraiser. Alternatively, if your workplace offers match funding, please contact our Finance Department at kjandu@woodbridgehigh.co.uk

Thank you to everyone for your continued support as we work to restore this vital facility.



PTA Quiz Night With Pank!

PTA AGM

Our PTA AGM will be held on Wednesday 30th April at 5:30pm.

Come along and meet us! It's a great way to get to know Woodbridge better and help support the school. Unlike primary schools, you do not need to commit much time.

Interested? Please contact:

JSanderson@woodbridgehigh.co.uk

By Mr D Mahoney, Head of PE

Competitions

Football

Woodbridge are still in two Boys' Redbridge Cup knockouts this year. The Year 7 and Year 9 teams have battled hard through the group and knockout rounds so far, with the finals awaiting to crown some district winners. We wish them both luck!



Netball

With the Netball season ending, we wanted to give all of our year groups a big well done for their efforts and determination throughout the year! Each of the teams came 2nd in every rally they competed in, except for the undefeated Year 8 team, who won every game in the Redbridge final with a 10-point lead. Big well done, ladies!



Basketball

This year in basketball, we have competed in the Redbridge League, Junior NBA, and friendlies against other local schools. Participation numbers have been on the rise, with many students working hard in both before and after-school sessions.

Rugby

The U16 Boys' Rugby 7's team attended Woodbridge's first Rugby 7's event in recent years. Some outstanding performances were on show, with Woodbridge winning the Essex U16 Shield Competition—a massive step into the sport for Woodbridge. What a team we have!

Last month, we took the girls to Wanstead Rugby Club for the Essex Schools' Rugby 7's tournament. After attending multiple touch festivals over the last two years, this was the first time they experienced contact in the game within schools.

The girls played brilliantly, showcasing a lot of resilience. After losing the pool group game to the overall champions, they managed to qualify out of the pool and went on to lose in the semi-final. Out of 16 teams, this was a fantastic achievement. Well done, girls!



Athletics

As we move into the summer term, the Woodbridge PE team hosts a weekly Athletics club on Wednesdays at Ashtons Athletics Track. All students are welcome to attend. Students make their own way there, walking with their friends and meeting the PE teacher at the venue. A minibus will also be provided for some individuals.

If you wish to be part of our Sports Day, come to the Athletics club. Priority will be given to those students who attend the club each week.

We also have the yearly Athletics District event. Again, come to the club to show us your talent.

If you are a member of a local Athletics club, Mr Mahoney wants to hear from you. Email him via the contact details on the school website so that you are not overlooked and so that we can field a strong team.

Swimming

We have some upcoming Swimming Galas in which we compete within the district against schools from Redbridge.

If you are a club swimmer, preferably with race experience, Mr Gillard wants to hear from you. His email can again be found on the school website.

Interland orienteering Championships

Brothers Luke and Jake, representing the England Junior Team, navigated their way to victory in the Interland Orienteering competition.

Congratulations!



British Orienteering Champions

PE Clubs

Rounders

In the summer term, our Rounders club returns. Why not come and join us and take in the sun as we play? With a large attendance, we will organise matches against some local schools.

Cricket

We also have our Cricket club starting. This will include both indoor netted sessions and outdoor games. If you are a keen cricketer, we want to see you there!

Volleyball

After numerous requests, we have reintroduced Volleyball into our extra-curricular programme. Speak to your friends and come along as we look to improve our volleying and digging skills.

The PE Clubs Timetable can be found on the school website [HERE](#) and under News & Events » Clubs and Activities

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
After-school 3:30-4:30 We ask all students to be aware of fixtures that are running. Should a fixture be taking place on the same night as your club it must be that the club is cancelled that week. Some clubs require only trainers, speak to the member of staff in charge to confirm this. All other clubs you need to wear your school PE kit. Students should speak to the PE Dept if they have any questions regarding clubs or fixtures.	Panathlon - All staff VARIOUS	K53 mixed cricket Matches - DSU ASTRO	Items 3:30-4:30 All Staff Ashtons Playing Fields Students change at school and walk down or get on the W34 bus. Different track and field events will run each week. Students who regularly attend this club will be given priority for District Sports and Sports Day. MS10 Students to be driven in the minibus	K53 mixed cricket - AGD ASTRO Mixed Volleyball - OIS SPORTSHALL	K53 Girls football - JSR Invite only ASTRO K54 and K55 Badminton - E1N SPORTSHALL
	K53 Badminton - CHS SPORTSHALL	K53 mixed cricket Nets - DMY SPORTSHALL NETS	MS10 	Dance for all - E1N ACTIVITY STUDIO	Table Tennis - DSU ACTIVITY STUDIO
	Rounders for all - SP COURTS	K54 GCSE Moderation prep - AGD VARIOUS			

Follow us on Instagram for more news!

@pewoodbridge

WOODBIDGE *Bites*

Wonderhood Studios

Sixth Form students had a tour of the studios and learnt about all the different professions within the industry, including what it is like to be a Producer, Designer, Strategist, Creative Director and Photographer, as well as other varying roles in the industry. The students had an amazing time and had a great opportunity to network with leaders in the industry. The CEO Aiden McClure also commented that Woodbridge students were by far the best school they have had in and were really impressed with the calibre of questions our students asked and their eagerness to learn more about what it takes to be successful in the creative industry!



Wonderhood Studios Trip

Live Cinema Workshop

Year 12 Drama pupils were exploring the working methods of practitioner Katie Mitchell, specifically her "Live Cinema", using the Practitioners in Practice resource from the National Theatre. Pupils were using performance and multimedia to create pieces that challenge perceptions of what theatre is.



'Live Cinema' Session

Study Support

It has been another excellent term at Super Study, with attendance at an all-time high. It is not unusual to have queues down the corridor in Roding after a busy school day – a wonderful example of the work ethic and focus of the students as we edge closer to exam time. Furthermore, students have been benefitting from the Sixth Form students being there to help with questions and provide guidance on revision techniques etc. Please do encourage your child to attend Super Study after school (3:10–4:10) if they would like help and support with their revision.



Study Support

Trainee Teacher Comments

We are delighted to welcome trainee teachers to Woodbridge and it is always lovely to hear their comments about our school.

Mr Abdi: "My time as a trainee teacher at Woodbridge High School was incredibly rewarding. The support from staff at all levels was exceptional, ensuring I had access to the guidance I needed. The high standards of teaching inspired me, and I was well supported to meet them. The school provided a safe and inclusive environment, with an exceptional behaviour system that fostered a positive learning atmosphere. It was an amazing experience that shaped my teaching journey."



Wishing all of Team Woodbridge and their families a wonderful Easter break!

Key Dates for your Diary:

The Summer Term will begin for all students on Tuesday 22nd April at 08:35.

Tuesday 22nd April – Friday 2nd May: Year 10 and 12 Mock Exams

Tuesday 22nd April - Tuesday 23rd May: KS3 Exams

Monday 5th May: Bank Holiday



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