



# The Westcliff Diary

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# FROM THE DESK OF THE HEADMASTER

## CELEBRATING ONE HUNDRED ISSUES OF THE WESTCLIFF DIARY

As we begin a new academic year, I offer a warm welcome to those pupils and parents new to the WHSB community, as well our returning pupils, their parents, the staff, Old Westcliffians, and friends of the School.

This is a particularly special edition of *The Westcliff Diary*, as it represents our 100th issue. In marking this special issue, we have taken the opportunity to look back over some of the reports and articles included in previous editions, including those first issues in the early 1990s, and have shared some of the content with you through these pages. These exercises are always fascinating, as they serve to remind us of the speed with which our world, society, and politics can shift, as well as the many important developments which have taken place within our own School. Equally, these reviews can feel rather frustrating as, through just a few pages, it is impossible to convey the breadth of material included over the years. However, we have begun to share some of the material more fully through displays in our Centenary Room, and those are to be reviewed and refreshed periodically.

### *The Development of our School Magazine*

In his book *Westcliff High School for Boys: A Centenary History*, Dr Alan White records: "From 1920 through to the 1980s, life at Westcliff in its various dimensions was chronicled in the School magazine. In its first incarnation the magazine was called *The Gateway*. In 1931 it became *The Quest*, and remained so until 1964, when it was renamed *The Westcliffian*. Over the first fifty years of its existence the appearance of the magazine changed scarcely at all. Its cover was white, blue or (most frequently) battleship grey, unadorned by any illustration other than the School crest. The typeface used was a sober Times New Roman. In 1971, however, a new-look magazine appeared, its style and content radically changed. On its cover was a photomontage depicting different aspects of School life. Inside far more space was given over than had previously been the case to pupils' creative writing and art work. Excluded were the notes on the activities and achievements of the School's four houses which had previously been one of the magazine's main features, an omission defended by its new editor on the grounds that the house system now played only a 'minor role' in the life of the School. The decision to give the magazine a facelift is not hard to understand. It had fallen behind the times. It may not have looked particularly dated during the 1950s, but by

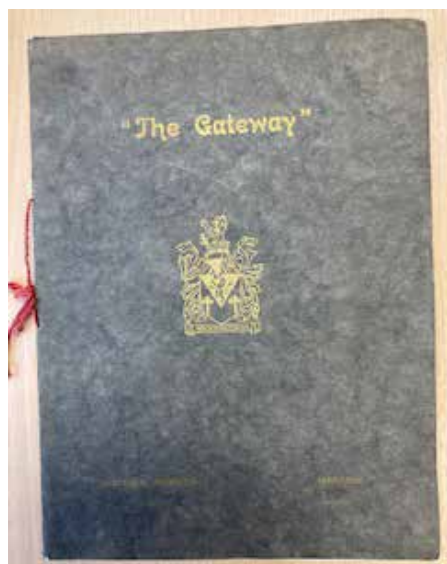
the end of the 1960s, thanks to a decade of fast-paced social and cultural change in Britain, it did."

By the late 1980s, it became clear that *The Westcliffian* had been wavering in its relative success, and the need to revisit and develop the School's magazine was evident.

*The Westcliff Diary* was introduced under the leadership of my predecessor, Mr Andrew Baker, in September 1990. The development was intended to bring a more focused commentary on the life and development of School matters. It became the principal means by which the School communicated with parents, and of course that remains so today.

Throughout the one hundred editions of *The Westcliff Diary*, the calendar of events (included on the back cover) has remained an important means for sharing the termly programme of events and activities with pupils, parents, Old Westcliffians, and friends of the School. Whilst the content has necessarily shifted and developed over the years, it is interesting to note that a programme of well-established activities and events has endured throughout the School's 104 years, and this programme remains relevant and important to us today. Although we continually review and update our programme and the format of many activities, our traditions remain important and firmly embedded, and that is reflected throughout the annual calendar across the years.

With improved access to printing and publication facilities, and with the need to continually review and update to facilitate effective communication through a lively and attractive format, *The Westcliff Diary* has continued to evolve into the format we recognise today.



*The Gateway*, 1920



The First Issue of *The Westcliff Diary*, September 1990

In 2012, I chose to revise the format to increase opportunities for staff and pupils to contribute articles and other items, whilst retaining the commentary on School news and events, alongside our termly calendar. Further adaptations to the format were made in April 2017, resulting in the format with which our current School community will be familiar.

As noted above, we consider *The Westcliff Diary* one of the most important means of communication with parents concerning School updates, reminders, news, and, importantly, the calendar of events for the forthcoming term. Pupils and parents are continually reminded of the importance of participation in the wider life of the School, and this is central to our Learner Profile. Through regular and varied participation, pupils gain self-confidence, extending their knowledge, skills, understanding, and friendship groups. Without doubt, balancing academic commitments with involvement in extra-curricular activity can have a profound impact on good mental health, and academic and future achievements. The importance of participation is reinforced through each edition of *The Westcliff Diary*.

I hope you enjoy the news, and summaries of events and activities taking place this term, as well as the pages we have prepared in celebration of this, our 100th issue of *The Westcliff Diary*. I am pleased to welcome you to the start of this new term, and to bring you up to date with some exciting developments which have taken place during July and August.

### **Extra-curricular Activities and Events in the Summer Term**

Those readers who follow our School News and Facebook pages will be aware of the frequency with which our pupils, through the application of their hard work, skills, and talents, succeed at the highest level. A quick review of the Summer

Term news highlights pupils succeeding in regional and national competitions in Languages, Mathematics, Debating, Biology, Public Speaking, Essay Writing, Rugby, Tennis, Warhammer, gaining powerboat qualifications, and the list goes on.

Equally, with thanks to Mr Barber, the Heads of House, and House Captains and Vice-Captains, our House System goes from strength to strength, providing our pupils with a broad range of opportunities for participation, and I am proud of the many pupils who engage with the House activities programme in support of their House.

Clubs and societies offer pupils further opportunities to explore new and varied interests and hobbies, and I am delighted at the continued high levels of attendance at, and participation in our clubs. I am ever grateful to our dedicated staff who support this programme, and to those students who also put forward their ideas for new clubs and societies, to keep our offer relevant and stimulating, and to those students who also run and supervise the clubs.

The summer term also saw the continuation of a lively programme of trips, field trips, Duke of Edinburgh expeditions, and CCF field days. Furthermore, many of our dedicated pupils and staff gave their time to participate in charity events, both in and out of School, to help raise funds for charities such as Havens, and HARP. I am proud of them all for their efforts in making a difference to the lives of many in our local community.

On the athletics field our pupils continue to excel, and on Saturday 6 July I was delighted to attend the ESAA National



Athletics Final, this year in Stoke-on-Trent, to see the WHSB Inter Boys, and Junior Boys Athletics Teams perform at an astonishing level. Impressive performances from our Intermediate Boys Team earned them the podium position of Third in the country, with 571 points, which is an exceptional achievement at this level. No less impressive were the performances of our Junior Boys Team, who exceeded their own target for the day, gaining 548 points and placing them fourth nationally. Within these pages, we have included some of the official photographs of these performances, so that our readers can share in that occasion.

The School was also thrilled to win not one but two National Schools Theatre Awards (NSTA) for our production of *Les Misérables* in March this year. Following five-star reviews of the production, the School was shortlisted in a number of categories, winning Best Actor in a Musical, and Best Male Musical Solo, at the Awards Ceremony in London in June. Jacob Guyler (last year's Upper Sixth) won Best Actor in a Musical, for his performance in the vocally demanding role of Jean Val Jean. In an NSTA review, Jacob's rendition of *Bring Him Home* was described as "particularly moving, showcasing the raw emotion and vocal prowess required of the role." Best Male



Mr Barber, House System Coordinator (centre) with the Heads of House, Mr Madrid, Mr Rayment, Mr Sexton, and Mr Marrant



WHSB Inter Boys and Junior Boys Athletics Teams, ESAA National final, Stoke-on-Trent (July 2024).

Musical Solo winner was Gabriel Williams (Lower Sixth), for *Master of the House*, which was brilliantly performed with Edith Jefferson (Upper Sixth), earning recognition from the NSTA in its review as “a comic highlight”, and “a standout performance”.

These opportunities would not be possible without the dedication, commitment, and encouragement of our superb staff, and I wish to record my gratitude to them for their ongoing support and hard work towards our extra-curricular programme, which is second to none.

I cannot emphasise strongly enough how important it remains for pupils to engage with as broad a range of activities as possible, for their personal development, and future success.

### **Replacing the Main School Roof**

A major project has begun to replace the original roof on our main School building, which dates back to the mid-1920s, and this is now well underway. Pupils, and those visiting the School, will have witnessed the arrival of the extensive scaffolding which, following weeks of construction, now surrounds our main School building. The main School roof has been failing for a number of years, and we have been fortunate to secure grant funding in excess of £1 million from the Education and Skills Funding Agency to enable the School to complete this much needed project.

Replacing a roof on such a large scale is potentially highly disruptive, and we have sought advice and support from a firm of experienced construction and property consultants in planning and overseeing the progress of this project, to keep disruption to a minimum. As in previous years, we have maximised use of the School closure period during the summer break to carry out some of the most disruptive aspects of this work. I am delighted that good progress had been made and we are on target for completion of this project in December. Much of the work is, naturally, weather dependent, and therefore we shall need to monitor progress carefully, and to work around any related difficulties.

The presence of the scaffolding and contractors on site inevitably impacts on the appearance of some areas of the site, and I apologise that the School environment will not be looking its best this term! However, the prospect of a new, watertight roof for Christmas is very good news indeed.



*At the National Schools Theatre Awards, London, June 2024.*

I would like to record my thanks to Mr Rothon, Director of Finance and Accounting, for his outstanding support to me in connection with oversight and monitoring of this major project.

### **Maintaining School Facilities**

Despite the disruption to the site created by the roofing works, our general programme of maintenance and refurbishment continues within the School buildings. However, we have had to be more conservative in releasing funds for such work this year, due to the significant financial challenges faced within our sector. With many schools now recording deficit balances, annual expenditure must be scaled back and that could impact on the School site and facilities over time.

One of the most pressing projects in connection with our sports facilities, is the need to replace the ‘tartan’ specialist

running / long jump track, as this has been badly damaged by regular flooding from the road adjacent to the lower School field over many years. To replace this facility and associated equipment, we have set a fundraising target of £50,000. This is clearly a significant sum, and we cannot achieve the replacement without your support. There are a number of ways in which parents, Old Westcliffians, and friends of the School can contribute towards addressing these difficulties, and Mr Rothon has provided further information on how you can help on page 12. Should anyone wish to discuss with me any potential support they may be able to offer, please contact Mrs Holley, my Personal Assistant. Thank you for any support you are able to offer.

On the matter of fundraising, I would like to record my thanks to our wonderful Parents’ Association who continue to support the School in so many ways, through their presence at events, and



*Replacing the Main School Roof*

through other activities, to raise much needed funds for WHSB and its pupils. I am most grateful to them for the financial support they have provided this year, which has included a commitment to fund the purchase and/or recommissioning of pottery equipment for the Art Department.

## STAFF CHANGES IN THE AUTUMN TERM

I am pleased to have the opportunity to record my thanks to those staff members who left us in August for their service to the School.

Mr King and Mr Chalis gave superb service in their roles as Teaching Assistants. As Old Westcliffians, they related well to the students and gave splendid support to the staff.

We also say farewell to Mrs Smith who leaves us at the start of this term. We are immensely grateful for her superb oversight of the School's medical administration, as well as providing excellent support for subject departments, particularly Physical Education.

Miss Peel was with us for just over one year. She made a most valuable contribution towards the teaching of

English and gave intelligent leadership to our Lower School English Curriculum. She did much to encourage and inspire our pupils during her time with us. We thank her for her work and wish her every success in her new teaching position in London.

We said farewell to Dr Nolan who joined us as a highly qualified mathematician. During his time with us he demonstrated impressive knowledge of and enthusiasm for Mathematics. We have no doubt that many pupils gained much from his lessons, and we wish him every success in the future.

Mr Greaves served at the School from September 2019. He joined us as a successful sportsman and a highly enthusiastic and committed teacher, and made an enormous contribution to our Physical Education curriculum and our extra-curricular programme. Mr Greaves left us to take up a Physical Education leadership position at a school in London. He goes with our best wishes and our thanks for his service.

We are pleased to welcome a number of staff new to the School this term. Miss Aunkumar joins the English Department. Miss Jackson (Old Westcliffian) joins the History Department, Mr Alexander (Old Westcliffian) joins the Mathematics

Department, and Miss Clayton (Old Westcliffian) joins the Biology Department. In addition, Miss James will join the Modern Foreign Languages Department, and Mr Soares Davies returns to the School (part-time) to teach Mathematics. We are also delighted to welcome Mr Bowles who joins us as a Sports Coach, and Mr A Williams who will join us later this term to teach Biology. We give Mrs Shankster our best wishes for her maternity leave and look forward to her returning in the Summer Term next year.

We also welcome Mr Courtney and Mr Shulton (both Old Westcliffians) who join the School as Sixth Form Supervisor and Teaching Assistant respectively. We welcome back Mrs Radford from maternity leave and she will share her position as Lower School Pastoral Tutor with Miss Lambert. Miss Lambert will also take up Medical Administration and Teaching Assistant duties. Later this term we shall be pleased to welcome Ms Torres, Ms Kollinger and Ms Saad as our new Modern Foreign Language Assistants.

I am also delighted to inform parents that Miss Fairfax (Deputy Head) has taken over the leadership of the Lower School, supporting Mr Baggs (Director of Lower School) and the Lower School Pastoral Team.

*Headmaster*

## MR JONATHAN BLEAKLEY

*Assistant Head and Contingent Commander, WHSB CCF*



Earlier this year, it was with great sorrow that I accepted the resignation of Mr Bleakley following his exceptional service to the School over a period of 15 years. Mr Bleakley has decided to leave the teaching profession to pursue a new venture, this being a great loss to WHSB. Mr Bleakley has been a loyal and dedicated colleague, who has contributed greatly to many different areas

of School provision across those 15 years, and our School community is richer for those contributions.

Mr Bleakley is a highly talented and respected schoolmaster and it has been a privilege to work with him since I returned to the School in 2010, and since taking on my position as Headmaster in 2012. Pupils over the years have benefited immeasurably from his thorough command of Chemistry; he has inspired confidence in them because they know he believes in them, and he will always go the extra mile on their behalf. At the same time, they have been in no doubt as to Mr Bleakley's expectations of them; the commitment he expects from them in relation to their studies, and their responsibilities in holding themselves to a high

standard when it comes to their conduct and character. That is why Mr Bleakley has consistently commanded their respect and admiration.

Mr Bleakley has been enormously industrious during his time at WHSB. I was delighted to offer him the opportunity to take on a pastoral role in the early days of his career, as it was evident to me that his commitment and work-ethic were second to none. As the record attests, this proved to be the case, as I have been delighted offer him further promotions, to the position of Progress Leader, then to Head of School, Director of School, and latterly Assistant Head. He has developed into a highly experienced pastoral leader and brought that experience to bear on significant improvements in our SEND and Safeguarding provision.

Standing tall amongst Mr Bleakley's outstanding contributions to the School is the invaluable support he gave to me when setting up the CCF, and his own significant role in its development. I have often reflected that it almost appeared fated that I should find such a kindred spirit in matters CCF upon returning to WHSB. Having recently departed from a grammar school with a thriving CCF, I believed this would be a good fit for WHSB. Such was my impatience following appointment, that before taking up my post I was already in communication with the Ministry of Defence and had gained the Governing Body's support for a CCF. That, however, was the easier part, as ensuring an effective implementation and development was quite another matter. The prospect of a CCF at WHSB was quite a culture shift for

many and there was much to be done to successfully embed this unfamiliar offer. In this regard, Mr Bleakley's shared passion for the CCF was invaluable, and indeed necessary, and I remain indebted to him for his unfailing support in taking this provision forward with such skill and diplomacy.

I recall our early meetings with the Ministry of Defence's 'powers that be', and navigating their then labyrinthine bureaucracy to launch the WHSB CCF with, at the time, just one officer (Mr Bleakley!) and 25 cadets. We now have a hugely successful three Service CCF which is amongst the best in the land. It is enormously popular and contributes greatly to the positive culture of the School. Many former pupils who have benefited from service in the WHSB CCF since 2012 have remained in touch with Mr Bleakley and his colleagues in the CCF; indeed, many return to CCF events to keep in touch. Surely that is great

testament to Mr Bleakley's commitment, warmth, generous character, and the high regard in which they hold him.

I hope that Mr Bleakley will take with him considerable pride in the enormous contribution he has made towards the CCF at WHSB, and I am delighted that he shall be remaining an adult volunteer with our CCF, alongside our other colleagues who also volunteer.

My senior colleagues and I marked Mr Bleakley's departure with a farewell dinner, and we were also pleased to make a well-deserved and special presentation to him at our staff social event at the end of the Summer Term. We wish him every success in his next venture, working alongside colleagues we know are most fortunate to have him on board.

*Headmaster*



*Major J Bleakley, pictured with Major AC Baggs.*

Major AC Baggs has been promoted to the role of Contingent Commander at WHSB from September 2024. Major Baggs is highly experienced in the CCF, having volunteered with the WHSB CCF for several years, and he plays an active part in the CCF and Cadet organisations. Major Baggs was also a cadet during his own school years. We wish him well in this new role.

## ANNUAL SPEECH DAY

Thursday 7 November 2024



Our annual Speech Day provides pupils, parents and staff with an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of pupils throughout the School during the past academic year. The evening is a compulsory attendance for all students in Year 11, and the Lower and Upper Sixth, and we anticipate that more than 900 pupils, parents, staff and other guests will be in attendance.

This year, we are delighted to welcome Vice Lord-Lieutenant, Rear Admiral Roy Clare CBE as our Guest of Honour for our special evening. Admiral Clare became Vice Lord-Lieutenant in 2022.

Admiral Clare was born in London and joined the Royal Navy as a Junior Seaman. He served at sea on the lower deck before entering Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth (BRNC). He passed out as a Sub Lieutenant in 1972, winning that year's

Queen's Sword. He was First Lieutenant of HMS Bronington in 1976 (Commanding Officer: HRH The Prince of Wales) and had five sea commands, including HMS Invincible. He was Commodore BRNC before serving in NATO as a Rear Admiral.

In 2000, Admiral Clare retired early from the Royal Navy to become Director of the National Maritime Museum and Royal Observatory, Greenwich. He was made CBE 'for services to museums' in 2007 and became Chief Executive of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. Between 2010 and 2017 he was Director of Auckland War Memorial Museum, New Zealand.

Admiral Clare and his wife, Sarah, have three adult children and two granddaughters. They have lived in Essex for more than 20 years, in the coastal village of Tollesbury. He is a non-executive Trustee in charities in the fields of the arts, heritage, digital inclusion and social welfare. President of SSAFA in Essex and a Councillor on Tollesbury Parish Council, he has been a Deputy Lieutenant for Essex since 2018.

We look forward to welcoming Admiral Clare to Westcliff High School for Boys in November, and to celebrating our pupils' outstanding achievements.

## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

As we begin a new academic year, once again I remind parents and pupils of the importance of full and sustained attendance at School each day, and to emphasise the impact of the continuity of education on a pupil's attainment.

The majority of our pupils continue to maintain superb attendance records and they, their parents and the staff at WHSB take appreciable pride in the commitment and determination of all involved in maintaining strong attendance records.

Despite national reports of falling School attendance since the months of lockdown in 2020 and 2021, and the impact of the virus since, I am pleased to say that attendance at WHSB has remained strong. We do, however, notice a dip in the attendance of a small number of individuals, and such a pattern must be avoided at all costs.

Attendance is closely monitored by our Pastoral Teams and we continue to evaluate and follow-up any concerns. Every year, our data indicates a strong correlation between absence and lower levels of progress. It is one of the most significant variables affecting a pupil's academic progress and final grades. An absence of just one day can present a pupil with significant challenges in catching up on missed work whilst endeavouring to keep up in lessons, as the pace of lessons at WHSB is fast.



There is, of course, sometimes an exceptional case to the general rule, however I wish to remind parents that requests for leave of absence for holidays during term time will not be granted. Given its impact on educational performance, maintaining outstanding levels of attendance for every pupil remains a priority for the School. It is also important that parents and School are as one in emphasising this message to pupils.

We are grateful to parents for their continuing support in prioritising full attendance in order to maximise the opportunity for their son/daughter in reaching his/her full potential.

## INTRODUCING THE WHSB LEARNER PROFILE TO PUPILS NEW TO WHSB

The purpose of education at WHSB is to nurture and support pupils in unlocking their full potential through academic and personal development. The School's Learner Profile outlines how we endeavour to achieve this by promoting and developing its seven attributes in our pupils. The Learner Profile helps ensure that pupils, parents and staff all understand what we strive to do at WHSB, supporting a consistent and coherent approach to our work each day.



The WHSB Learner Profile

## SUMMER 2024 EXAMINATION RESULTS

In a record-breaking year for A Level results at Westcliff High School for Boys, our students achieved the School's best ever examination results with 21% of entries graded A\* and 56% of all entries graded A\* or A. In addition, a remarkable 83% of all entries were graded A\*, A or B. There were many superb individual performances, with 30% of students achieving A\* and A grades in all their subjects. Eighteen students achieved three or more A\* grades, including Gerald Ayittah, Teddy Bulpett, Rory Keeble, Jacob Mellor, Will Midwinter, and Quddus Okunola who achieved four A\* grades. Nine students obtained places at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and the overwhelming majority of students will be undertaking courses at prestigious Russell Group Universities.

Our GCSE pupils also deserve our congratulations this year with 75% of all results being graded 9-7. A remarkable 26% of all results achieved grade 9 (the top grade). This is an outstanding performance, with pupils rising brilliantly to the challenge

presented by the GCSE examinations. 126 pupils (70% of all Year 11 pupils) achieved 8 or more 7-9 grades, 36 pupils achieved a total of 12 or more 7-9 grades, and 14 pupils (Aakaash Jonathan Arul Dhinakar, Varun Ayyappan, Adam Belhaj, Conan Chen, Divij Gupta, Frank Highmore, Sriniketh Prabhu, Sebastian Puddick, Lawrence Stone, Vincent Varney, Aaryan Vatsa, Ethan Wan, Daksh Yadav, and Aqeel Zaman) achieved 12 9-8 grades. Varun achieved a remarkable 12 grade 9s, and Aaryan was the highest performer in the country in GCSE Economics.

These results are well deserved and reflect the pupils' hard work and commitment. The staff have provided terrific support for the pupils and they also deserve congratulations and recognition for the outstanding teaching and guidance they have provided for our pupils. Collectively, our A Level and GCSE results place Westcliff High School for Boys among the highest performing schools in the country. I congratulate all our pupils and staff on their success and thank our parents for their support.

*Headmaster*







## WELCOME AND CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW SCHOOL CAPTAIN AND VICE-CAPTAINS

It is a pleasure to introduce to pupils, parents, staff, Old Westcliffians and friends our new School Captain, Rafael Gamma, and his Vice-Captains, Freddie Dawson, Edith Jefferson, Jamie Knights and Quinn Williams.

Once again, the quality of the candidates interviewed for the positions of School Captain and School Vice Captains was enormously impressive. We had a large field of highly capable candidates who all demonstrated outstanding personal and academic qualities. The competition for these positions is demanding and I congratulate our new team on their outstanding records of participation and contribution towards their School community. Between them, these students have made an enormous contribution to the life of the School across a wide range of activities. They have also demonstrated a desire and capacity to encourage their fellow pupils to participate in the life of the School and to endeavour to make a positive contribution.

Rafael, our new School Captain, has participated in a broad range of activities at School. Many will know him for his superb performances on stage, most recently in *Les Misérables*. He also holds the senior rank of Cadet Training Sergeant Major within the Combined Cadet Force (CCF), and completed his Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh Awards through the School. He is a talented musician too and has performed in several School Chamber Concerts. Rafael also enjoys debating and has represented the School at competitions, as well as being an active member of the School Council, Law Society, and Economics Society. He also enjoys mentoring younger pupils.

Rafael has already demonstrated superb leadership of the prefects during recent events such as our Open Evening and I know he is keen for all pupils to feel comfortable seeking support from the Prefect Body.

Rafael is supported by four Vice Captains.

Freddie has participated in just about every activity the School has to offer, from Sport to Drama, to the CCF. His breadth of participation reflects his impressive ability and commitment. He is a talented sportsman and has led our rugby teams to great success during his time at School. The scale of Edith's contribution in such a relatively short space of time is quite exceptional. A talented musician and actor, she has already played leading roles in several School productions. She is also a formidable debater and public speaker.

Jamie is an outstanding musician and pupils will have seen him perform with the Symphonia, Big Band and student bands. Despite his enormous commitment to School music, Jamie also makes a positive contribution as a senior cadet within the CCF. Quinn is a highly talented student who has never given less than 100% commitment to his School. As an outstanding sportsman, he has been at the heart of many of our successful teams. He is a highly talented musician, with a record of performance that is second to none. He is involved in many other School activities such as the CCF and Law Society. Many pupils will also know that Quinn has participated in and led on several of the School's recent charitable activities.




We congratulate Rafael, Freddie, Edith, Jamie and Quinn and wish them every success in their new positions.

*Headmaster*



*The School Captain Team 2024 - 2025*

## Our New School Captain and Vice-Captains

					
	<b>Rafael Gamma</b> School Captain	<b>Freddie Dawson</b> School Vice-Captain	<b>Edith Jefferson</b> School Vice-Captain	<b>Jamie Knights</b> School Vice-Captain	<b>Quinn Williams</b> School Vice-Captain
<b>Primary School</b>	St Michael's School, Leigh on Sea	West Leigh Junior School, Leigh on Sea	Chalkwell Hall Junior School, Leigh on Sea	Stifford Clays Primary School, Grays	Glebe Primary School, Rayleigh
<b>Subjects at A Level</b>	Economics, History, German, Politics	Economics, English, French, History	English, History, Politics, Religious Studies	Computer Science, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Music	German, History, Physical Education, Religious Studies
<b>The most positive aspect of being a student at WHSB</b>	The diversity and range of activities the School has to offer its pupils.	The academic and extra-curricular support from staff	The wide range of events in which to participate and attend, particularly in Music and Drama	Highly knowledgeable and expert staff who are approachable and supportive	The opportunity to learn and make positive connections within such a diverse community
<b>What I would most like to achieve in my new position at WHSB</b>	To uphold and enhance the School's excellent reputation	To encourage pupils to participate in a range of School clubs and activities	To promote an inclusive and supportive community	To inspire pupils to realise their potential and to be Open to Opportunity	To be a positive role model for pupils. To be approachable and supportive of all pupils
<b>My message to our new Year 7 pupils</b>	Never be afraid to ask for support with your studies or wider matters	Immerse yourself in the School's life and take advantage of its many opportunities	Involve yourself in a wide range of School activities and never be afraid to try School activities new to you	Do not be afraid to challenge yourself by stepping out of your academic and extra-curricular comfort zone	Actively involve yourself in School and never hesitate to approach prefects for support



## SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDRAISING

As the content of each edition of the Westcliff Diary clearly demonstrates, WHSB pupils participate in a wide range of deeply enriching activities, both curricular and extra-curricular. The School considers these activities core to its mission of developing both intellect and character in each of our young people. This mission is represented by our Learner Profile, which underpins everything the School delivers. It is important that we all understand that financing such activities, in particular extra-curricular provision, presents an increasing challenge to State Schools, and WHSB is no different; our budget is under significant pressure and, inevitably, it will be in the areas of extra-curricular activity that the pressure is most felt. The School is therefore seeking alternative sources of income to relieve the impact of already stretched budgets. The following are ways in which our parents, alumni, friends of the School, and local companies may be able to assist. Thank you for any support you are able to offer.

### Donating to the Pupil Fund

The School should like to thank all those parents and others who have previously donated, or continue to donate, to the School's Pupil Fund. As well as funding equipment for classrooms and laboratories, together with books for the Library, the Pupil Fund has supported activities and pursuits including Engineering, Computing, Sport, Music, Drama, and the School's Combined Cadet Force. Donating to the Pupil Fund is a straightforward way of making a regular, general (or one-off) contribution towards these enriching activities. Further information can be found at: [www.whsb.essex.sch.uk/useful-information-for-all-parents/pupil-fund](http://www.whsb.essex.sch.uk/useful-information-for-all-parents/pupil-fund).

Donations should preferably be made by setting up a standing order via your online banking, using the account details below:

Lloyds Bank Sort code: 30-97-84  
 Account number: 34480360  
 Account name: Westcliff High School for Boys

Alternatively, you can download a standing order form which can then be completed and submitted to your bank: [www.whsb.essex.sch.uk/finance](http://www.whsb.essex.sch.uk/finance). Any questions regarding these arrangements may be sent to the School Bursar at [darbyn@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:darbyn@whsb.essex.sch.uk).

The School is also able to accept donations directly by cash, cheque, ParentPay, or bank transfer, preferably accompanied by a Gift Aid form (if applicable). Gift Aid enables the School to benefit by a further 25% of voluntary donations given, so do please remember to complete the Gift Aid Declaration form if you are an eligible UK taxpayer: [www.whsb.essex.sch.uk/finance](http://www.whsb.essex.sch.uk/finance).

It is important that parents understand that there is no obligation to make donations, and that all pupils can access our provision equally, regardless of whether or not their family choose to contribute.



## Targeted Appeals

In the Summer Edition of the Westcliff Diary, we announced our intention to launch targeted appeals, to enable parents, alumni, or other supporters of the School to donate a sum for a specific activity or project. The following much-needed areas of provision have been identified:

### Athletics Facilities & Equipment

In order to maintain the School's outstanding record of achievement in regional and national athletics competitions, significant investment in our athletics facilities will be required. The 'tartan' specialist running / long jump track requires full replacement and, together with associated equipment replacement, our fundraising target is £50,000. This is clearly a significant sum, and sizeable donations (from whichever source) can be discussed with myself, or with the Headmaster by contacting his Personal Assistant.

### Playground Facilities

The School would like to install shelters (for use in rain and sunshine) and increase seating provision around playground areas, improving the break and lunchtime experience of our young people and promoting a positive, social ethos. The School is investigating options and anticipates that a sum of £20,000 to £30,000 will be required.

The School can facilitate donations from parents via Parent Pay. Please look out for Parent Pay notifications, and when selecting an appeal for your donation, please choose the appropriate Gift Aid preference (with Gift Aid, or without).

Anybody without a Parent Pay account and wishing to donate should please contact Mr Rotheron [rothons@whsb.essex.ach.uk](mailto:rothons@whsb.essex.ach.uk) directly or via Reception – arrangements for donations can be made very easily. If you prefer, you may wish to contact the Headmaster, through Mrs Holley, PA to the Headmaster. All enquiries are treated in the strictest confidence, and any donations can be respectfully publicised or kept anonymous, as the donor may wish.

### Our Thanks to the Parents' Association

It had also been our intention to raise an appeal for Pottery Equipment. However, our Parents' Association has kindly offered to support any initial 'holding' expense while the School investigates the costs involved in re-commissioning the kiln and purchasing the necessary potter's wheels and materials. We would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to our Parents' Association for this further example of their splendid ongoing support.

### Corporate Sponsorship

The WHSB community now has almost 1,300 pupils and their families, around 140 staff members, and thousands of "Old Westcliffians" who read our publications, attend our events, and follow us on social media. We would like to offer your business or organisation the opportunity to advertise in this termly School Magazine *The Westcliff Diary* (distributed in both hard copy and digitised versions), and in the programmes printed for the multitude of events taking place throughout the School Year, including Annual Speech Day, Sports Day, and numerous dramatic and musical productions and concerts.

Annual advertising costs, to feature in each of the three termly issued editions of *The Westcliff Diary* throughout the academic year, are as follows:

#### Corporate Advertising

Quarter Page Advert: £275

Half Page Advert: £500

Full Page Advert: £800 (three-year commitment £2,000)

In addition, our corporate sponsors will be prominently name-checked in each of our event programmes. For further information, please contact Mr S Rotheron (Director of Finance and Accounting), Mrs D Holley (the Headmaster's Personal Assistant), or Mrs J Clarke (Community Development Assistant), on 01702 475443.

### Parents' Association Amazon Wishlist

There is one further method of giving your financial support to the School. The WHSB Parents' Association has very kindly offered to host a wedding-style "Wish List" of items, available to purchase on behalf of the School, on Amazon.

Certain items are 'nice to have' and provide students with that richer educational experience that WHSB aims to provide. They are, however, difficult to fund out of core department budgets. Therefore, liaising with Heads of Department, we have identified, and listed on Amazon a number of such items.

Please see page 118 for further details.

*Mr S Rotheron, Director of Finance and Accounting*



*Daniel in the triple jump, ESAA National Final, Chelmsford (July 2023)*

## SAFEGUARDING: SMOKING, VAPING, CANNABIS USE AND ALCOHOL

### World Health Organisation

The School seeks to educate its students about the dangers of substance abuse in all its forms. This article which looks at smoking, vaping and alcohol use draws on a recent global report on the behaviour of young people and the decisions that they make and how those decisions affect their health, both in the short-term and long-term.

Research from the World Health Organisation (WHO) suggests that tobacco smoking among children is much less common than it used to be - one in five 15-year-old girls said they had never smoked a cigarette - but smoking rates are still higher among girls than boys in England and Wales. However, there is an upward trend in young people taking up vaping. The WHO report confirmed that vaping rates have overtaken cigarette smoking in most countries, with nearly one in ten 11-year-olds (Year 7) saying that they have used a vape at least once, rising to 26% of boys and 40% of girls by age 15. It appears that what starts as experimentation at an early age can lead to habitual use by the time that young people enter their GCSE years (Years 10 and 11). Vaping rates in the UK are above average, compared to other countries. Even though vaping is thought to be much less dangerous than smoking, the risks of children breathing chemicals into their lungs are not yet fully understood.

It is evident that the rapid emergence of youth vaping has completely changed the landscape of adolescent substance use in the United Kingdom. While nicotine remains the most common substance encountered in vaping devices, cannabis vaping is now reported by one-third of youth who vape, and is on the rise within Essex according to information received from Essex Police. Although cannabis vaping is thought to generate fewer toxic emissions than cannabis smoking, it has been associated

with several cases of acute lung injury and often involves high-potency forms of cannabis, exposing youths to several acute and long-term health risks. The low perceived risk of cannabis as a substance, and of vaping as a mode of consumption, may bring a false sense of security and be particularly appealing for youth who may be looking for a 'healthier way' to use substances.

Worryingly, England also has the highest consumption of alcohol within young people globally. According to a recent World Health Organisation (WHO) report, a third of 11-year-olds and more than half of 13-year-olds in England have drunk alcohol - putting it top out of 44 countries examined by global health experts. Girls in England, Wales and Scotland were found to be more likely than boys to be drinking and getting drunk aged 15. The World Health Organization (WHO) report said alcohol, which can damage children's brains, has been normalised. Research shows that the earlier children start drinking, the more serious a problem it can become when they are older. At age 13, the report found 12% of girls and 9% of boys in England had been drunk at least twice in their lives. At 15, that had risen to a third of girls and a quarter of boys. More than a half of girls said they had drunk alcohol in the past 30 days.

Vaping, smoking, alcohol use and drugs abuse are topics covered at an age-appropriate level in PSHEE lessons, within Form periods, and through whole School and Year Group Assemblies. Parents should be aware that the rates of vaping within Essex are rising as the availability of cheap, disposable (and often illegal) vapes increases. Whilst the School will always seek to work with its students to educate them, parents should be aware that students who bring prohibited items (such as vaping products) into School are likely to face significant sanctions in line with our Substance Misuse Policy. We ask parents to please reinforce these important messages at home.

*Mr W Williams, First Deputy Headmaster*



## CAPTAIN'S LOG



I am honoured to be writing my first Captain's Log as the newly appointed WHSB School Captain. I would like to thank my predecessor, Will Midwinter, for his advice and support as I take on this role, and for his impressive contributions to the School in the past year. He will be warmly remembered and much missed amongst staff and pupils alike. I very much hope to see him again at future School events, and I wish him all the

best in his forthcoming endeavours. It is a real privilege to be supported in my role by an outstanding team of Vice Captains; Quinn Williams, Edith Jefferson, Jamie Knights, and Freddie Dawson have all been passionate and consistent champions of School life. We have already hit the ground running, supporting events such as the Pirates of Penzance drama production, and Year 5 Open Evening. I look forward to working with them and our enthusiastic Prefect team to support the numerous school events over the coming year. Together, we will continue to promote and advance our school's exceptional reputation within the local and wider community.

This is the 100th Edition of the Westcliff Diary since its inception, with each edition chronicling the incredible achievements of the School and its pupils. I am extremely proud of our School, as I am sure you all are too. Our 'Outstanding' status by Ofsted last year reflects WHSB's belief that we, the pupils, can achieve anything and everything we want, provided we work hard enough for it. It is also a fitting tribute to the School staff's tireless dedication to supporting and nurturing our interests, skills and talents.

As School Captain, I would like to promote pride in our School, and respect and gratitude for our teachers. I would like to

foster inclusivity amongst all pupils and encourage you to take full advantage of all the incredible opportunities WHSB offers you. Do not put limits on what you can achieve, and work hard to achieve your goals and aspirations. The School will always support you.

I am in awe of the talents of my fellow pupils and, collaboratively, we achieve amazing results. A recent example of this was the school's Drama company winning not just one, but two awards at the National School Theatre Awards ceremony in London, for its production of Les Misérables. I enjoyed playing the role of Javert enormously, alongside the indomitable Jacob Guylar in the winning lead role as Jean Valjean. Congratulations too to all of those who participated in the HARP24 running event, and to the deserving winners in the Phoenix Cup House Assembly and the CCF Pass Off Parade for their impressive achievements.

My own long-standing involvement in Drama and CCF has been enjoyable and rewarding, and has helped me become adept at essential skills such as self-organization, teamwork, and public speaking. Be it in Drama, Music, Sports, or the CCF, I would encourage all of you to engage and participate in whatever extra-curricular activities interest you. I am sure that you will find them immensely rewarding, and you will also build incredible friendships and form memories that will stay with you for the rest of your life.

Ambition, hard work, and strength of character, as well as compassion and respect for one another are the attributes that define us as true Westcliffians and will hopefully enable us to go on and make a positive impact on the world.

Finally, I look forward to seeing all of you around the School, and to a busy and exhilarating year ahead as we embark on yet another round of exciting School events and well-earned achievements.

*Rafael Gamma, School Captain*



*Freddie Dawson, School Vice-Captain mentors pupils in the Lower and Middle Schools*

## LOWER SIXTH EDUCATION EVENING

Thursday 12 September 2024, 7.30pm - 9.00pm

Our Education Evening provides students in the Lower Sixth and their parents with the opportunity to hear more about the aims and expectations of the Sixth Form. Parents will be invited to ask questions, and there will be a series of presentations covering matters such as:

- Attributes of a successful learner and how to develop these skills;
- Preparing for the future of work, including the planning for face-to-face work experience in the Summer Term;
- Research-based study routines;
- Preparing for work in the 21st Century.

All students in the Lower Sixth are expected to attend alongside their parents. This important evening will include critical dates and fundamental information for students' success in the Sixth Form.

*Mrs K Revell, Director of Sixth Form*



## THE WHSB PARENTS' ASSOCIATION: YEAR 7 WELCOME TO WESTCLIFF EVENING

Monday 16 September 2024, 6.30pm - 7.00pm

On Monday 16 September, the Parents' Association will be hosting its Annual "Welcome to Westcliff" Evening for all those parents and carers who are new to Westcliff High School for Boys. This will take place immediately prior to the School's "Helping Parents to Help Their Son" (Year 7) Education Evening.

Existing Parents' Association members will be serving refreshments in the Screens area, adjacent to the Main School Hall. This will be an informal and enjoyable evening during which you can meet the Headmaster, members of staff and other new parents. In previous years, this Welcome Evening has proved very useful in helping to answer practical questions which may have arisen since pupils have joined the School. Parents will have the opportunity to connect both with other parents whose children are in the same Form Group, and with those who live in the same locality.

The evening is free of charge to attend, and we look forward to meeting you. RSVP via [TicketSource](#).

*Mrs J Clarke, Chair of the Parents' Association*



*Members of the WHSB Parents' Association*



## YEAR 7 HELPING PARENTS TO HELP THEIR SON EVENING

Monday 16 September 2024, 7.00pm – 8.30pm

All parents of new Year 7 pupils at WHSB are invited to attend our *Helping Parents to Help Their Son* meeting. Moving from a Primary School to a Secondary School can be a daunting experience for both parents and pupils. Routines are new, the environment is different, expectations are different, and new Year 7 pupils now have a level of independence which is greater than they have previously experienced in their Primary School environment.

The purpose of the *Year 7 Helping Parents to Help Their Son* evening is to help smooth that transition and give some helpful advice to parents who will be supporting their son in making the best possible start to his career at WHSB.

In this meeting, presentations will cover a variety of topics and these will include:

- Recommended routines for maintaining good Health;
- Managing organisation and homework;
- Ways to maximise progress in academic disciplines;
- Helping your son when things go wrong;
- Mechanisms for support in and out of School;
- Safe and sensible use of technology and the link between the limited and responsible use of technology and your son's well-being.

We invite and encourage all parents of our Year 7 pupils to attend this important evening.

Mr A Baggs, Director of Lower School



## PARENTS' ASSOCIATION AGM

Monday 16 September 2024, 7.00pm – 8.00pm

The Parents' Association AGM will be held on Monday 16 September at 7.00pm in the School. A summary of our fundraising efforts over the previous year will be set out for those attending, together with a presentation of our annual accounts. The meeting is open to all members of our School Parent Community, and we look forward to welcoming you to this event.

Mrs J Clarke, Chair of the Parents' Association

**AGM**  
Annual General Meeting

**Everyone is welcome.**  
Stay informed and get involved.

## NORWAY TRIP INFORMATION EVENING

Wednesday 18 September 2024, 7.30pm – 8.30pm

Between Monday 28 October and Friday 31 October, 40 pupils from the Middle School and Sixth Form will be embarking on a wonderful trip to Norway. In anticipation of this exciting opportunity, and in order to help ensure parents are kept informed and the pupils are well-prepared, we shall be holding an Information Evening on Wednesday 18 September 2024. We encourage all parents of pupils involved in the trip to attend this session.

*Mr L Norman, Teacher of Geography*

## MENTAL HEALTH INFORMATION EVENING

Thursday 19 September 2024, 7.30pm – 9.00pm

The growing recognition of good mental health as an integral part of our overall well-being is a positive development. However, alongside this increased prominence, mental health services face historic pressures and unprecedented demand. At WHSB, we remain committed to providing substantial resources for mental health support, ensuring that our pupils comprehend this vital area.

Our comprehensive PSHEE (Personal, Social, Health, and Economic Education) and pastoral provisions have been thoroughly reviewed to enhance pupils' understanding. We aim to empower pupils with knowledge on maintaining good mental health while addressing potential challenges that may arise. Mr Dean (Senior Master Sixth Form) serves as our qualified Senior Mental Health Lead, overseeing mental health arrangements within the School.

As part of our commitment, we invite all pupils, parents, and staff to attend our Mental Health Information Evening. During this event, we will explore the following key areas:

- Maintenance of Good Mental Health and Protective Factors: Understanding how to nurture mental well-being and identify protective factors;
- Recognising Mental Health Issues: Distinguishing between normal mood fluctuations and potential mental health problems;
- Seeking Help and Self-Help Strategies: Identifying reliable sources of assistance and effective self-help techniques;
- Awareness of Harmful Practices: Addressing practices (such as social media abuse, technology-related impacts, sleep habits, and social interactions) that can adversely affect mental health.

The session will conclude with an opportunity for questions and discussion.

*Mr A Dean, Senior Master Sixth Form*



## ENRICHMENT DAY

Friday 20 September 2024

### Enrichment Day Overview

What an interesting person is Alison Louise Kennedy of Dundee. Consider the diversity of her achievements, works, and interests. The writer of a number of published novels that revel in the darkness and difficulty of life, these having secured her a string of prestigious awards including the Costa Prize, the Somerset Maugham Award, and the John Llewellyn Rees Prize. It has been said of A L Kennedy that she “knows grimness the way some novelists know music or food”. At the same time, she is a highly successful comic on the tough Scottish comedy circuit. Not just a comic but also a teacher (not an unusual combination), Kennedy is an Associate Professor at Warwick University, and a teacher of Creative Writing at the top-performing University of St Andrews. She certainly writes interesting and thought-provoking material, arguing for example that “if ever the difficulties of your life seem overwhelming, consider the prospect of being eaten alive by savage penguins and rejoice that such horrors are unknown to you”. Or “breathing is supposed to keep you calm, but also it keeps you alive and so you are not calm, because you are alive and being alive is never calm”.

Perhaps her most pertinent point, however, is the following: “Have more humility. Remember you don’t know the limits of your own abilities. Successful or not, if you keep pushing beyond yourself, you will enrich your own life – and maybe even please a few strangers”. Pushing beyond yourself in new areas is at the heart of our Enrichment Programme at WHSB, and the plethora of opportunities to do so continues this Term with our September Enrichment Day. Pupils in Year 7 will have the opportunity to learn more about themselves and their new classmates through a Teambuilding Day, while other pupils will be visiting Duxford (Year 9), the Battlefields (Year 11), and Nuclear Races (Year 11). Those studying in Year 8 can push back the boundaries of Science, and those in Year 10, journalism, while there will also be a range of interesting opportunities for our Sixth Form students. In all these cases, we encourage our Westcliff pupils to follow the guidance of our Learner Profile in being Open to Opportunity, Collaborative and Supportive, and Intellectually Curious, while also having a jolly good time.

*Mr B Jeffreys, Associate Assistant Head*



## Year 7 Trip to Thriftwood

On Friday 20 September, pupils in Year 7 will enjoy an Activity Day as they visit the Thriftwood Scout Camp Activity Centre in Brentwood. This special day is an important and enjoyable element of our provision arranged to help Year 7 pupils to settle into WHSB, and to have fun getting to know other members of their Year Group.



This exciting Activity Day is filled with fun and is always a popular event with our Year 7 pupils. Aside from being an enjoyable day, this visit represents a further important opportunity for pupils to develop their confidence as they transition into Year 7.

*Mr A Baggs, Director of Lower School*



## Year 8 Enrichment Science Day

Enrichment Day activity for pupils in Year 8 will once again focus on Science, with an opportunity for them to further develop their scientific thinking and practical skills. These are vital skills for any young scientist, as they equip pupils for greater success within their wider scientific studies at School.

Activities for the day will include understanding the Scientific Method, and pupils will enjoy engaging in both practical and research tasks. The Scientific Method has formed the backbone of scientific development since at least the 17th century.

Within this activity, pupils will aim to:

- Understand what the Scientific Method is;
- Draw scientific diagrams accurately;
- Identify hazards, risks and controls;
- Apply the Scientific Method to practical experiments in order to be more robust and objective; and
- Understand that the Scientific Method is important for the global scientific community.

In the practical tasks, pupils will aim to:

- Handle practical equipment safely and correctly;
- Work safely in the laboratory;
- Work collaboratively with other young scientists;
- Learn new areas of Science beyond the scope of the examination curriculum;
- Apply their knowledge to the wider world; and
- Be more confident in conducting practical experiments.

The ability to conduct research is an important transferable skill, whether that be for a project or for one's own personal interests. Within this activity, pupils will aim to:

- Be more computer literate, including using basic software such as Microsoft Word;
- Understand how to research effectively;
- Understand how we determine which sources of information are reliable and which less so; and
- Use sources to influence their own work, rather than adopting a passive 'copy and paste' approach

*Miss B Negus, Teacher of Chemistry*



## Year 9 Trip to Imperial War Museum Duxford

On 20 September, the Year 9 cohort will again have the opportunity to visit the airfield and aircraft collection at Duxford, near Cambridge, part of the Imperial War Museum. This is a world-class collection of aircraft, mostly military, along with the Royal Anglian Regiment Museum and the new Airborne Assault exhibition, at a WWII airfield that still retains a number of its original features. It will give pupils in Year 9 an opportunity to put into perspective their studies of WWII in History by seeing some of the technological developments leading up to, and during, the Second World War, and to examine the technological progress from the early days of flight up to supersonic transport and high-altitude reconnaissance.

A number of ground-breaking aircraft are represented, including:

- Concorde pre-production MSN 101 with its flight-test equipment still installed;
- Several Spitfires, some of which are air-worthy, alongside its nemesis the Messerschmitt Bf-109 and the stories of some of the people involved in crucial roles and events of the 2nd World War;
- More modern aircraft and helicopters: Avro Vulcan and York, Shorts Sunderland, English Electric Lightning, Hawker Hunter, Westland Wessex and Sea King;
- American aircraft, including A10 strike aircraft and SR71 Blackbird, alongside a B-52 bomber.

Last year, we were treated to flying displays by Spitfires and a Yakovlev display team, and we would hope to see other aircraft movements, along with aircraft maintenance and restoration projects in progress. We are grateful to the Imperial War Museum, who make available this type of opportunity to school groups free of charge.

*Mr S Hudson, Teacher of Physics*



## Year 10 Humanities Enrichment Day

Following the overwhelming success of last year's launch of our School's very own reporting outlet – WHSBBC News – we return once again to the crucible of journalism that is the Humanities Enrichment Day.

American author Andrew Vacch's words immediately sprung to mind when planning the English Department's Enrichment Day this year: *"Journalism is what maintains democracy."* In the shadow of the upcoming General Election, it is more important than ever for our pupils to be globally aware and effective communicators, and we intend on achieving just that.

Following on from their Lower School education containing stimulating political and rhetorical works, pupils in Year 10 will now have the chance to put their own non-fiction skills to the test in order to persuade and inform their audience. Pupils will rotate between activities that centre around current affairs,

philosophical debate, and, of course, masterclasses in how to craft the written word. At the end of the day, pupils will then get the chance to 'report' on their findings in the next installment of the WHSBBC News.

The day will offer Year 10 pupils an opportunity to practice their GCSE English Language skills, as well as encouraging them to read non-fiction and journalism fastidiously, perhaps even considering their own future in journalism so that they go on to maintain our democracy in their own words.

*Miss C Bailey, Head of English*



## Year 11 and Upper Sixth Trip to Nuclear Races

Pupils in Year 11 and the Upper Sixth will have an exciting opportunity to experience Mathematics in Real Life this autumn through a trip to the Nuclear Races site in Kelvedon Hatch.

The Nuclear Races activity centre has been awarded the quality badge by the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom, and our students enjoy further developing their confidence and teamworking skills through this memorable visit.

The students will begin the day with a Mathematics Lecture that sets the scene, exploring how different variables are involved when calculating "How Far Will I Fly from the Death Slide?". They will then have the chance to experience this in person, along with many other activities at the Nuclear Races Site, exploring whether their Mathematics has stood up to the practical testing. They need to be prepared to get muddy as well!

*Miss A James, Director of Mathematics*



## Year 11 History Battlefields Trip Friday 20 - Sunday 22 September 2024

The History Department is delighted to return to the Battlefield sites of the First World War with a new Year 11 cohort, to demonstrate the ongoing significance of these emotive sites, and to explore what they might tell us anew.

The first day will involve a trip to Essex Cemetery, where Canadian doctor John McCrae wrote the well-known poem *In Flanders Field*. Pupils will also be able to see the grave of Valentine Strudwick, the 15-year-old rifleman thought to be the youngest casualty commemorated with a Western Front gravestone. On the second day, we will look forward to another day with historian Andy Robertshaw, historical adviser on 1917

and War Horse, as we explore the Somme and the Thiepval Memorial. We will attend the moving daily ceremony at the Menin Gate, which has been held every day (where possible) since the end of the First World War. On our final day, we will explore trench life at the Zonnebeke Museum, visit Tyne Cot Cemetery, and buy up most of the chocolate in leper.

The History Department at WHSB has been delighted to run this trip for more than twenty years, and we continue to find these sites powerful and emotive, vital pieces of history with which our young Historians can engage.

Mr B Jeffreys, Head of History





## Lower Sixth Mental Health Day

In preparation for the rigours of A Level study, Lower Sixth students will embark on a comprehensive programme designed to equip them with the essential skills for academic success. This programme, informed by the VESPA mindset model (Vision, Effort, Systems, Practice, and Attitude), will employ a variety of engaging activities to foster the development of effective time management practices and a positive learning environment.

Furthermore, to cultivate a strong sense of community within this new cohort, the programme will incorporate team-building exercises, solidifying the friendships forged through their decision to pursue A Levels at Westcliff High School for Boys. This holistic approach not only equips students with the academic toolkit, but also nurtures a supportive and collaborative learning environment, laying a strong foundation for their A Level journey, and fostering a culture of academic excellence within the Year Group.

*Mr A Dean, Assistant Headteacher*

## Upper Sixth Trip to the Science Museum and Kensington Palace

This autumn, we are delighted to open up new opportunities for our Sixth Form students, with the organisation of a new Enrichment Day trip to London. This trip is designed to link and explore the worlds of Science, Mathematics and History. Students will spend the morning at the Science Museum and take time to explore the Mathematics Gallery. From war and peace, to life, death, money, trade, and beauty, the objects in Mathematics: The Winton Gallery reveal how mathematics connects to every aspect of our lives.

Following our visit to the Science Museum, students will walk over to Kensington Palace to explore the birthplace of Queen Victoria and home to young royals for over 300 years. This trip aims to appeal to a cross-section of students and takes advantage of the world-leading exhibitions at our doorstep. Mr Lo will also be supporting with the organisation and management of our trip, and we would like to thank him for his support with what should be a tremendous and exciting series of visits.

*Miss A James, Director of Mathematics*



*Kensington Palace*

*The Science Museum, London*

## Upper Sixth Trip to Sizewell

Once again, the Physics department has organised a trip to the Sizewell B Nuclear Power Station for Upper Sixth Physics students as part of our September 2024 Enrichment Day on Friday 20 September.

Sizewell B is a Pressure Water Reactor nuclear power station on the Suffolk coast. Students will be studying nuclear power station design as part of their A Level in Physics, so visiting and touring a working nuclear power station will be a tremendously beneficial experience for them. As part of the visit, students will attend a lecture about how nuclear power stations operate and will have a tour of the facility. They will also visit the turbine room and see – and hear – the enormous turbines spinning at 3000 rpm and transferring enough energy to supply 3.4 million homes on average (the equivalent of nearly every home in the East of England).

*Mr K Dalby, Head of Physics*



## 11+ ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

*Saturday 21 September 2024*

Our 11+ Main Test Day will take place this year on Saturday 21 September. We would like to extend our thanks in advance to all our staff involved in this key event for the School, in addition to our Prefect Team (who will be integral to the smooth running of this day), our Invigilators, and our Markers.

## ALTERNATIVE 11+ TEST DAY

*Tuesday 1 October 2024*

The alternative 11+ Test Day will take place on Tuesday 1 October. The School will, however, remain open as normal. Most pupils can expect to experience a normal School day, although pupils in Year 9 will be engaged in the Take Your Child to Work Day on that day, or involved in career-related learning activities in School.

*Miss Gail Fairfax, Deputy Headteacher*



## UPPER SIXTH FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

*Monday 23 - Friday 27 September 2024*

These in-class assessment tests will follow a variety of formats and cover a range of topics. This round of assessment provides an excellent opportunity for students to monitor their progress since the Lower Sixth Examinations, and to gauge the effectiveness of their revision strategies.

This is an opportunity to “space practise”. Spaced practise, developed initially through Ebbinghaus’ 19th century study on “forgetting”, helps to create long-term memory, which is essential for success across the two-year A Level programme of study. Data has shown that, where students are managing their learning effectively, these students are likely to achieve the strongest outcomes in their A Level results.

Any student who feels concerned regarding these assessments, or any other aspect of School life, should contact the Sixth Form Pastoral Office for guidance and support.

We wish our Upper Sixth students good luck for their assessments this Term.

*Mrs K Revell, Director of Sixth Form*



## YEAR 9 HELPING PARENTS TO HELP THEIR SON

*Thursday 26 September 2024, 7.30pm – 9.00pm*

Year 9 is a most important year in a pupil's education at WHSB. As pupils complete this the final year of their Lower School studies, they are preparing for the commencement of GCSE courses in Year 10.

In the Spring Term 2025, our Year 9 pupils will be making their GCSE Option choices. Therefore, pupils' performance during Year 9 can determine a pupil's future study, as it directly shapes the decisions which are made regarding GCSE Options. If good study habits are not firmly established by the end of Year 9, pupils can struggle to cope when they begin their GCSE studies in the Middle School.

Parents are invited and encouraged to attend the Year 9 *Helping Parents to Help Their Son* event, at which Mr Baggs (Director of Lower School), Mr Tresidder (Year 9 Progress Leader), and representatives from various academic departments will give presentations on a variety of topics, which will include:

- Recommended routines;
- Managing organisation and homework;
- Helpful routines and habits for study;
- Re-establishing expectations;
- Specific ways to maximise progress in academic disciplines;
- Helping when things go wrong;
- Mechanisms for support in and out of School.

All Year 9 pupils are expected to attend this event, and we encourage all parents of Year 9 pupils to also attend.

*Mr A Baggs, Director of Lower School*



## LOWER SIXTH GEOLOGY TRIP TO FOLKESTONE

*Friday 27 September 2024*

This Term, Mr Cooper and I will lead a Lower Sixth field day to study the geology of the coastline in and near Folkestone.

The aim of this trip is to introduce AS geologists to field techniques, with a view to describing and identifying the Folkestone Beds, Gault Clay, and Chalk. From such studies, the rocks can be interpreted in terms of their origins, not least from their rich fossil content, such as ammonites.

The three rocks represent a marine sequence in the region of 100 million years old, which has since been uplifted to form land by the Alpine Orogeny (still going on as Africa collides with Europe). The Mediterranean Sea is being eradicated, but will be safe for a few million years yet!

The Chalk at the Warren, near Folkestone, will also be investigated with respect to engineering geology techniques related to slope stabilization, so that the infamous collapse of the Dover to Folkestone railway line in 1915 will not be repeated.

*Mr P Marlow, Head of Geology*



## YEAR 11 FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

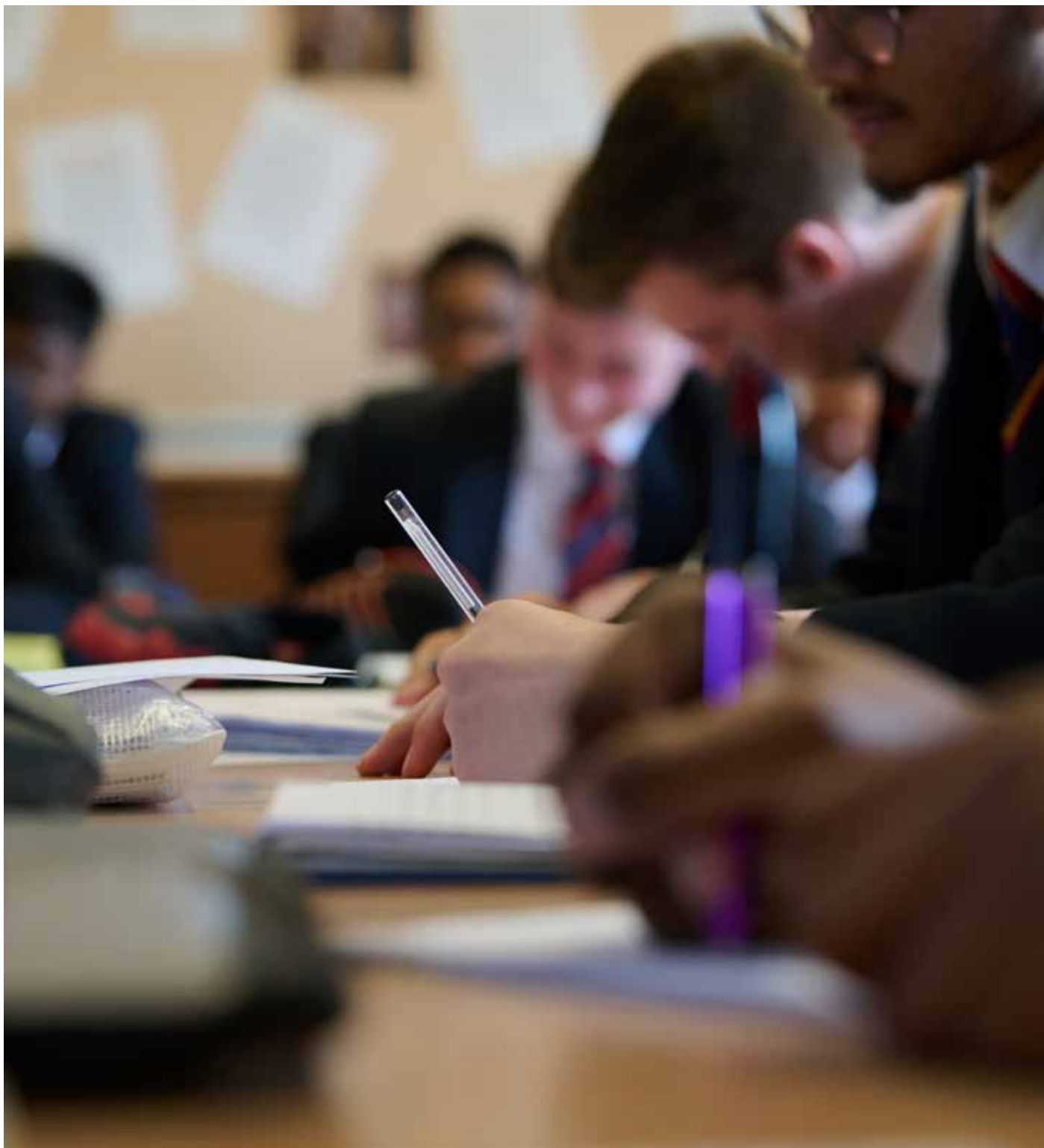
Monday 30 September - Friday 4 October 2024

In the week beginning Monday 30 September, pupils in Year 11 will sit formative examinations in many of their subjects. These informal, in-class, low-risk assessments are an excellent opportunity for pupils to demonstrate the progress they have made through their summer work, building their confidence, and providing a springboard into their critical second-year GCSE studies.

For those pupils who did not perform as well as they had hoped in their Year 10 End of Year Examinations, this is an invaluable opportunity to demonstrate to all interested parties that they can indeed succeed. Where pupils have performed more confidently in the Year 10 examinations, these formative examinations offer the opportunity to maintain momentum and measure further progress.

We wish our Year 11 pupils the very best of luck in these examinations.

*Mr A Barnett, Director of Middle School*



## THE LAYING OF THE SCHOOL'S FOUNDATION STONE: 100 YEARS ANNIVERSARY

This September marks 100 years since construction began on the site of Westcliff High School for Boys as we know it today. The School was established in 1920 as the co-educational Commercial School, with original premises known as "Belsfield" (a large house with outbuildings) located in Victoria Avenue, Southend. These were quickly outgrown, with buildings designed for 200 pupils in 1920 housing nearly twice that number in 1922, as the demand for secondary education in the town increased with its growing population. Indeed, Southend saw unprecedented growth between 1880 and 1920, close to London as a new commuter town.

Dr Alan White, in his book *Westcliff High School for Boys, A Centenary History*, explains that it had never been Southend Borough Council's intention for the cramped Belsfield site to be the Commercial School's permanent home. Between 1920 and 1922, plans were afoot to relocate the Commercial School to farmland adjacent to what was then known as Eastwood Lane, WHSB's current site. This land had been purchased in 1914 by the Council, originally with the aim of developing it into a public park. The location of this new site was deemed appropriate for an additional secondary school in the borough, with the most need being for children living to the west of the town. Indeed, the majority of the Commercial School's pupils in the early 1920s lived in Leigh and Westcliff. Also at that time, Southend High School for Boys and Southend High School for Girls were located in Central Southend, either in or around Victoria Avenue. As the planned move gained pace, in August 1922 the Commercial School's name was changed to Westcliff High School for Boys and Girls, in readiness for its new location.

Beset with limited resources and ever tightening central government funding, the original plans for a large new building that was able to accommodate both the boys and the girls had to be scaled back. The final go ahead was given for a slightly smaller design which only the boys would move to, thus determining the future of the two schools in becoming single-sex as opposed to co-educational from that point on. The girls remained at Belsfield

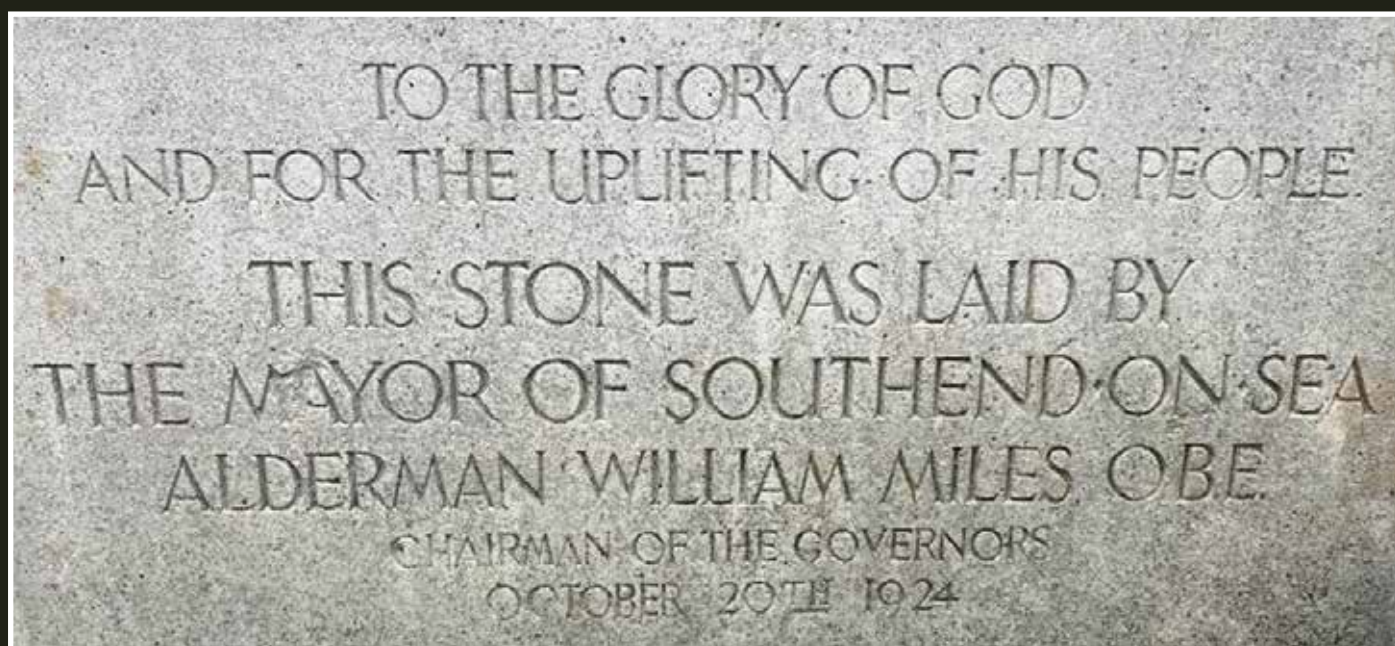
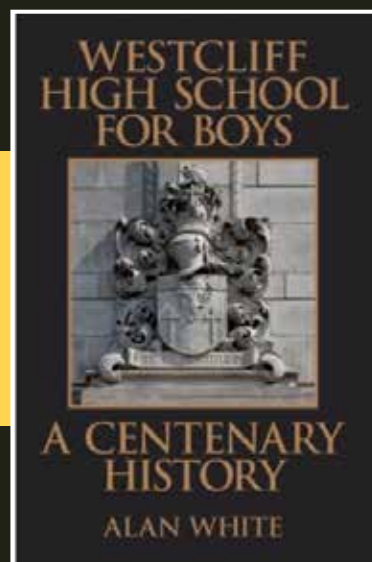
for a further 14 years, moving into their separate purpose-built new school next door in 1938.

In his book, Dr White describes the construction of the new Westcliff High School for Boys building as commencing in September 1924, with the Foundation Stone, still visible today to the east of the Main Entrance, being laid on 20 October 1924 by William Miles, the then Mayor of Southend and the Chairman of the Westcliff Governing Board. Bad weather, resulting in the lower field becoming waterlogged, hampered progress and, although remedial work was carried out at the time, this occurrence is not unfamiliar even today! The new School building was officially opened on 19 July 1926.

*Westcliff High School for Boys, A Centenary History*, by Dr Alan White, is available from the School's online Shop <https://whsforboys.shoptill-e.com>. Not only is it a fascinating read about the School's origins and timeline, but also a vivid commentary on the local and social history relating to the first 100 years of the School.

*Mrs J Clarke, Community Development Assistant*

*Westcliff High School for Boys, A Centenary History, by Dr Alan White*



*Our Foundation Stone at the Main Entrance to the School, laid on 20 October 1924*



*The original School site at Belsfield, central Southend, 1920*



*Digging the Foundations of Westcliff High School for Boys, 1924*

## COMBINED CADET FORCE: THE AUTUMN TERM 2024

Through our tri-service Combined Cadet Force (Army, Royal Navy, and Royal Air Force), we are proud to provide a range of opportunities and experiences from military themed activities to adventurous training. These include Sailing, Expeditions, Fieldcraft, Flying, Shooting, Camps, and Competitions, all of which provide our cadets with enhanced skills such as Leadership, Discipline, Teamwork, Communication and Problem Solving. There are also opportunities to gain qualifications, develop resilience, improve self-efficacy, and even travel abroad through courses and international exchanges.

The CCF continues this term with an exciting programme of activities for all three sections, Royal Navy, Army, and Royal Air Force, encompassing military skills, personal development, and community engagement. These take place on our weekly parade nights each Thursday (3:45pm to 5:45pm), field days and residential camps.

### CCF Interest Evening

Thursday 3 October 2024, 7.30pm – 8.30pm

Pupils in Years 9-11 and the Sixth Form may apply to join the CCF, and it is strongly encouraged that anyone wishing to enrol in Years 10-11 and the Sixth Form do so early in September. Pupils in Year 9 wishing to become a member of the CCF will have the opportunity to attend an interest evening with their parents on Thursday 3 October at 7:30pm. This will provide background information on the aims and ideals of the CCF, details on the three Service Sections, and an opportunity to ask questions. Interested pupils will then be able to sign up for a series of taster sessions, during which they can experience a typical CCF parade night. This will help pupils to decide which Service they would like to join.

There are a number of expected events taking place this term, alongside other short-notice opportunities that arise from our parent formations.

## Royal Navy Field Day

Saturday 28 September 2024

The Royal Navy Section will spend Saturday 28 September at Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre in South Ockendon, where Cadets will learn to sail and paddleboard. This is a fantastic opportunity for our Royal Navy Cadets to put their training into practice and learn new skills.

## Army and RAF activities planned for Autumn 2024

During the week of Monday 7 – Friday 11 October, Cadets from the Army and Royal Air Force Sections will be undertaking military skills training at Bassingbourn Cadet Training Centre in Hertfordshire. Junior and Senior Cadets from each of the sections will attend for one or two days of the week to further their core training in areas such as Skill at Arms, Shooting, or Fieldcraft.

## Remembrance Services and Events

Remembrance is an important part of the Annual Programme for our CCF; often the Cadet Forces are the visible representation of the Armed Forces at local events, and WHSB CCF supports a number of remembrance events in the local area, and at School. This year, our CCF shall be supporting events including the Orpheus Singers' Remembrance Concert on Saturday 9 November, the Southend-on-Sea Civic Remembrance Parade, and the Remembrance Service at Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome on Sunday 10 November. The cadets will support at our School's Remembrance Service on Monday 11 November, and as in previous years, they will also attend and assist with the Remembrance events held by local Primary Schools.

We look forward to an exciting programme of CCF activities this term, and I am grateful to all my colleagues who volunteer their time with the CCF to make these opportunities available to our pupils.

Maj AC Baggs, Contingent Commander, WHSB CCF









WHSB CCF PASS OFF PARADE AND DINNER JULY 2024















## YEAR 9 TAKE YOUR CHILD TO WORK DAY

**Tuesday 1 October 2024**

As part of our extensive Careers Provision, our Year 9 pupils will once again have the opportunity to accompany a parent, carer or trusted friend to their workplace on 1 October.

Pupils can look forward to experiencing a day in a professional working environment, as they are beginning to consider more closely where their future career interests may lie. Furthermore, this chance to hear from and work alongside professionals in the workplace, should support pupils in beginning to appreciate the importance of transferrable soft skills such as time management, networking, teamwork, creative thinking, and conflict resolution; skills we are nurturing through our *Careers Across the Curriculum Project* in conjunction with Mr Adam Berry of HSBC, the School's Enterprise Advisor.

In our experience, pupils find this day extremely enlightening, as they are starting to map out their own career aspirations, and routes into subsequent education and/or training.



Those pupils who are unable to secure a day's placement will be able to remain at School, where the opportunity to participate in a carousel of career-related learning activities will be available.

*Mr M Atkinson, Careers Adviser*



## YEAR 10 EDUCATION EVENING

**Thursday 3 October 2024, 7.30pm – 9.00pm**

On Thursday 3 October, pupils in Year 10, along with their parents, will attend an important event which outlines the School's expectations for the pupils' next two years at WHSB. This compulsory Education Evening provides an opportunity for pupils to hear from staff and senior students about the GCSE experience, and for parents to see how they can best support their children, together with the sort of tasks they will be undertaking.

Parents will be able to meet the new Pastoral Team who will be supporting pupils throughout their time in the Middle School, as well as hearing more about the positive correlation we see between those pupils who have excellent attendance and engage beyond the classroom, and their academic success.

*Mr A Barnett, Director of Middle School*

## SIXTH FORM PHASE 1 REPORTS

**Lower Sixth: Friday 4 October 2024**

The Lower Sixth Phase 1 Report indicates how your child has settled into their A Level studies. The Report consists of a single numerical grade that represents an attitudinal indicator – a Grade 1, for example, represents an excellent start and highly suitable subject choice, whereas a Grade 4 represents a poor start, and potentially an unsuitable subject choice. Where there are concerns, these are explained further by the relevant Subject Teacher within a short written report.

If necessary, your child can talk to subject teachers and members of the Sixth Form Pastoral Office for further advice and support. The issuing of the Phase 1 Report represents the final opportunity to process subject changes, ensuring that all students have a combination of subjects that best suits their interests and potential.

**Upper Sixth: Friday 11 October 2024**

The Upper Sixth Phase 1 Report will contain attainment and attitudinal grades for each subject studied. Time should be spent comparing these results to those achieved in the Lower Sixth



Phase 3 Report, and any changes should be carefully reflected upon. The Sixth Form Pastoral Office can offer support and will provide strategies to assist in rectifying any issues before the January 2025 Trial Examinations.

*Mrs K Revell, Director of Sixth Form*

## WESTCLIFF CENTRE FOR GIFTED CHILDREN: ALL THINGS CREATIVE DAY

*Saturday 12 October 2024*

The Westcliff Centre for Gifted Children *Go for Grammar!* Programme for local Year 5 pupils is well established and remains popular with local families. Last academic year, over three hundred local primary school pupils signed up to participate in one of our three themed *Go for Grammar!* days. The format is tried and tested, with each of these days including English and Mathematics lessons designed to stretch pupils, and to aid their familiarity with 11+ style work. In addition to the English and Mathematics lessons, teaching staff from the School deliver four lessons on the theme for the day.

On Saturday 12 October, we will host our first session of the academic year, on the theme “All Things Creative”. This day will see pupils engaging with activities relating to Art, Music, Technology, and Languages.

During these exciting sessions, the Year 5 pupils have the opportunity to engage with our Sixth Form students as they chaperone them around the School. These Sixth Form students also join their younger counterparts for some of their lessons.

In the afternoon, parents are welcomed into the School for a seminar with the Director of Lower School, to discuss how parents can best support their child through the 11+ examinations.

Further themed days, our “Lively Laboratories Day” and a “Sport, Adventure, and Leadership Day”, will be offered during the Spring and Summer Terms respectively.

*Mr A Baggs, Director of Lower School*



## AUTUMN CHAMBER RECITAL

Thursday 17 October 2024, 7.30pm – 9.00pm

The Autumn Chamber Recital will feature Westcliff's most talented solo and ensemble musicians from across the School community. The concert will showcase pupils from the youngest in the Lower School, all the way through to those in their final year. The concert promises to include performances of music from a range of different styles: Rock, Pop, Classical, Musical Theatre, Film Scores, and many more. Expect to see several of our most gifted pianists performing various well-known works.

Returning performers include Upper Sixth cellist Quinn Williams and Upper Sixth pianist Rafael Gamma. Also, expect to see new performers take to the stage, such as Year 9 and Year 10 vocalists Oliver Street, Conor Lynch-Wyatt, and William Holley performing an exciting medley of Musical Theatre. The String Ensemble and other small groups will also make an appearance.

Tickets are available via *TicketSource* and are priced at £5.00 for adults and are free for pupils.

*Mr A Wood, Teacher of Music*



## YEAR 11 PHASE 1 REPORT

Friday 18 October 2024

On Friday 18 October, the Phase 1 Reports for pupils in Year 11 will be issued. This Report should act as a catalyst to focus pupils on their preparation for the fast-approaching Trial Examinations. Reflecting on their strengths and areas for development will allow pupils to tailor their revision appropriately, and this should spark productive conversations with their teachers on how best to improve.

Should any pupil require guidance or support he should contact a member of staff in the Middle School Pastoral Office. Similarly, Pastoral Office staff are on hand to offer guidance to parents as may be required.

*Mr A Barnett, Director of Middle School*



## CHARITY EVENTS

Friday 18 October and Friday 13 December 2024



Get ready for an unforgettable Autumn term at our School! Mark your calendars for two spectacular events that you will not want to miss. First up, on 18 October is our Charity Culture Day, a vibrant celebration of the diverse backgrounds and traditions that make our community unique. Immerse yourself in a day filled with colourful displays, and captivating performances from around the world. Whether you are showcasing your own heritage, or showcasing or learning about others, Culture Day is the perfect opportunity to broaden your horizons and build lasting friendships.

Then gear up for the excitement of Sixth Form Basketball on 13 December! Witness the high-energy showdown as our top athletes compete for glory on the court. This thrilling event promises intense action, teamwork, and school spirit at its finest. Come along to support your classmates, enjoy the lively atmosphere, and perhaps even join in some half time fun.

Both Charity events are organised to raise funds for the School's chosen charities, and offer a chance to experience the best of our School's vibrant community, celebrating our diversity and collective passion for sports. Do not miss out, as these dates are set to be enjoyable moments in the School year, filled with fun, excitement, and a strong sense of unity.

*Ifeoma Nwabueze, Upper Sixth*



*Charity Culture Day, October 2023*

## TRIP TO HAMILTON

Tuesday 22 October 2024

The Music and Drama Departments are delighted to join together this autumn in offering a trip into London's West End to watch the hugely popular *Hamilton*. This celebrated show tells the tale of America's Founding Father Alexander Hamilton, a migrant into the Colonies from the West Indies who became George Washington's right-hand man during the Revolutionary War and helped shape the very foundations of the America we know today. The score blends hip-hop, jazz, blues, rap, R&B and Broadway - the story of America then, as told by America now. We also look forward to enjoying the wonderful "You'll Be Back", although we are not expecting a performance quite as memorable as that of Jacob Guyler in a recent Chamber Concert. One day, perhaps, London audiences might have the opportunity to enjoy that too!

*Hamilton* has book, music and lyrics by Lin-Manuel Miranda, is directed by Thomas Kail, with choreography by Andy Blankenbuehler, and musical supervision and orchestrations by Alex Lacamoire, and is based on Ron Chernow's biography of Alexander Hamilton. The show was the winner of 11 Tony Awards including Best Musical, 7 Olivier Awards including Best

New Musical, the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, and the 2016 Grammy Award for Best Musical Theater Album. The evening promises to be an entertaining and exciting event for those who enjoy this type of production, with *Hamilton* being something of an obsession to certain young performers. Those for whom the show will be a new experience will be well placed to make their judgement on this phenomenon after attending the trip!

*Mr B Jeffreys, Director of Drama*



## LOST PROPERTY RECLAIM

Friday 25 October and 19 December 2024



Where named and unnamed clothes, bags, and other items are found around the School, these are placed in the Lost Property Area located in the East Basement, opposite the Reprographics Office.

Each term, the Lost Property Area is cleared, and pupils have the opportunity to reclaim their lost belongings from the Main Hall. Full details and timings are provided in advance of these occasions.

Any unclaimed items left at the end of each term are recycled locally.

*Miss E Lewis, Facilities and Premises Manager*

## SIXTH FORM GEOGRAPHY TRIP TO NORWAY

Monday 28 - Friday 31 October 2024

Between Monday 28 and Friday 31 October, 40 pupils from the Middle School and Sixth Form will be embarking on a wonderful trip to Norway.

Over four exciting days, the students involved will visit the Steinsdalsfossen waterfall: one of Norway's best known and most photographed attractions. The waterfall is particularly popular as you can walk behind it and experience its beauty and force from inside the waterfall. This will be followed by a hike at Husadalen, known as the "Valley of Waterfalls" and among the most beautiful walks in Norway. The region is filled with spectacular viewpoints, including four impressive waterfalls. Students will have an opportunity to learn about the natural landscape, local culture, and nature as they make their way through the rugged landscape. The second half of our day will be an exciting kayaking trip up the fjord. Students will paddle their way up the fjord to see the local area from a completely different and unique perspective.

On our third day, we will go on a wild, breath-taking tour of the Folgefonna National Park. The landscape is one of blue-green glaciers and quintessentially picturesque Norwegian scenes. Equipped with snowshoes and walking poles, we will have a guided tour of the snow-covered slopes on the magnificent, third-largest glacier in Norway.

We will finish our trip in Bergen. Despite being Norway's second largest city, Bergen retains a small-town charm. Known as the 'City between Seven Mountains', Bergen is the gateway to Bergen's fjords. It is one of the best-known urban settlements remaining from the Middle Ages. Today, the wharf is home to an array of museums, galleries, shops, and a fish market.

*Mr L Norman, Teacher of Geography*



*Steinsdalsfossen Waterfall, Norheimsund, Norway*



*The beautiful city of Bergen, Norway's second largest city*

## DEAD END: A ROAD SAFETY PLAY FOR YEAR 11 PUPILS

### Collingwood Learning

During the Autumn Term, we will again be inviting Collingwood Learning into School to deliver their road safety play entitled Dead End. At the time of writing, the School is awaiting confirmation of the date, which will be announced at the start of term.

This educational theatre and workshop experience for our Year 11 pupils is a key part of our Personal Development Education and is a thought-provoking performance.

The play supports key learning objectives, helping pupils to understand the Fatal Four and how each of these impact on road safety, the disproportionate risk to young drivers and passengers, the consequences of risky behaviour on safety, and how to analyse one's own attitudes and behaviour and manage social influence and pressurising situations effectively.

Below is a summary of the play which is provided in advance of the production by the theatre company.

### Synopsis

'Dead End' is designed to help young people engage with the topic of Road Safety from the perspective of both driver and passenger and explores causes and consequences of Road Traffic Incidents. It portrays the horrific consequences of three characters' actions on the roads.

- After one night out with Harrison, Molly must deal with the aftermath of grave injury to herself, and coming to terms with both her actions and the death of a friend.
- Harrison, who crashed the car Molly was in, claims he was not at fault and that he could take drink and drugs and still drive. As the dialogue develops, attempts by Harrison and Molly to deny responsibility are turned on their head. Only then do we realise Harrison's fate that night...

- Tony, who caused death due to distraction, explores the causes for his crash in graphic detail, along with the pain of responsibility for the death of a pedestrian as the result of his lack of concentration whilst driving.

Delivered through incredibly powerful monologues interspersed with theatrical action, and imagery via a projection screen, the audience is guided powerfully through the key messages. We see the build-up to, and consequences of, the crashes.

Designed for this age group, the performance uses a 'talking heads' style approach with graphic descriptions of the accidents and the emotional scars. This performance has been particularly effective as a means of communicating powerfully with Year 11 pupils, who have proved highly receptive to this more sophisticated and emotive approach.

The performance is only one half of the learning experience. Lasting 30 minutes, it moves directly into the workshop which lasts a further 30 minutes.

The workshop helps young people to consolidate and clarify all the issues raised in the play, question the actions and motivations of the characters, and consider what they might do differently in real life.

It is the combination of the engaging theatre and interactivity which creates such a powerful learning experience and empowers young people to make sensible decisions around their own and others' road safety.

We are aware that this play may be distressing for some pupils. If you have concerns about your child participating in this event, please contact the Middle School Pastoral Office in advance.

Miss G Fairfax, Deputy Headteacher



## CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

We are pleased to report that Clubs and Societies at WHSB have continued to grow, and we now have approximately 60 different activities to choose from, with more new clubs being set up all the time. Most clubs meet during lunch breaks and are led by staff and students on a voluntary basis. Most of our clubs and societies are free of charge to all our pupils.

Please read through the table below and try to join at least one club or society; you are most welcome to come along on your own, or with others. This is a superb way of making new friends. Participating does not have to be a long-term commitment; you are welcome to try new activities, and to then join different clubs or societies if you change your mind.

Clubs are advertised on the Form Group and House noticeboards around the School. Please listen to the most recent announcements in registers through the Daily Notices, as the dates and times of clubs and societies can sometimes change at short notice.

AI and Machine Learning	Monday	Lego Club	Wednesday
Art Club	Tuesday	Maths Help Club KS 3 and 4	Monday and Thursday
Astronomy Society	Wednesday	Maths Help Club KS 5	Thursday
Big Band	Tuesday	Mathematics Society Year 8 and 9	Tuesday
Brass Ensemble	Thursday	Mathematics Society Year 10 and 11	Thursday
Board Games	Monday	Medical, Dentistry and Vet Society (MDV)	Tuesday
CCF Army	Thursday	MDV Society Junior (Medics, Vets, Dentists)	Wednesday
CCF Navy	Thursday	Model UN Society	Wednesday (not all year)
CCF RAF	Thursday	Moral and Ethics Committee	Thursday
Chess Club	Thursday	Oxbridge and Medics	Monday
Concert Band	Tuesday	Politics Society	Monday
Crochet Club	Monday and Tuesday	Pokémon	Friday
Countdown Club	Monday	Psychology Society	Thursday
Creative Writing Club	Monday	Puzzler Club	Tuesday and Thursday
Debating Society	Wednesday	Robot Engineering Challenge	Tuesday A, Wednesday A
D and D Campaigns	Thursday	Salvage Crew	Various Lunchtimes
Dungeons and Dragons	Tuesday	Science Key Stage 3 Help Club	Thursday
Economics Society	Thursday	Star Wars Society	Monday
Engineering Society	Thursday	String Ensemble	Wednesday
Film Club	Friday	TMUA, MAT STEP	Tuesday and Thursday
Geography Society	Tuesday	Morning Technology T3	Mornings, Daily
Gym for Female Students	Monday	Technology Club	By Appointment
Horn Group	Wednesday	Treble Choir	Wednesday
Investment Society	Friday	Wargaming Club	Friday
Japanese Society	Thursday	Westcliff Choir	Friday
Jazz Band	Monday	Westcliff Economist	Various Lunchtimes
Jurassic Park Society	Thursday	Westcliff Sinfonia	Wednesday
Key Stage 3 and 4 Maths Help Club	Monday and Thursday	Yu-Gi-Oh	Friday
Latin	Friday		
Law Society	Friday		

We believe that participation in the wider life of the school is just as important as academic life – so please have a go! If you have an idea for a new club or society, or you would like to help organise one, then please do speak to us.

*Mr R Barber, House Coordinator and Head of PSHEE*



Medical, Dentistry and Vet Society (MDV)





CCF Royal Navy Section



Warhammer



Pokémon Club



Astronomy Society

## THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD AT WESTCLIFF HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS



As many pupils and parents will know, the Duke of Edinburgh Award (DofE) is a prestigious and highly regarded programme designed to challenge and inspire young people through a series of activities that promote personal growth, teamwork, and leadership. At Westcliff, we are proud to offer our pupils the opportunity to participate in this enriching experience, and currently offer Bronze to Year 9 pupils, and Silver to Year 10 pupils.

### **Benefits of the Duke of Edinburgh Award**

Participation in the DofE Award provides numerous benefits for WHSB students. It helps develop essential life skills such as resilience, problem-solving, and self-motivation. Additionally, the programme encourages physical fitness, community involvement, and a sense of adventure. These experiences are invaluable for personal development and are highly regarded by universities and future employers.

### **Participation Levels and Age Range**

At Westcliff, we offer our pupils the opportunity to complete the Bronze and Silver levels of the DofE Award. Each level requires participants to engage in activities across four sections: Volunteering, Physical, Skills, and an Expedition. We typically start our pupils on the Bronze Award in Year 9 and progress to the Silver Award in Year 10. This academic year, we will begin recruiting 48 Year 9 pupils for the Bronze Award and 28 Year 10 pupils for the Silver Award early in the Spring Term. This ensures they have ample time to prepare and train for the Expedition section, as well as complete the required documentation for the other three sections.

### **Importance of the Physical, Skills, and Volunteering Sections**

The DofE Award is structured to provide a balanced and comprehensive experience through its four sections. Each section plays a crucial role in the development of our pupils:

**Physical:** This section encourages participants to engage in physical activities, promoting a healthy and active lifestyle. It helps improve fitness, resilience, and overall well-being. Pupils choose an activity they enjoy, ranging from sports to fitness training, ensuring they stay motivated and committed.

**Skills:** The Skills section allows pupils to develop new talents or hone existing ones. This could be anything from learning a musical instrument to mastering a new language or developing cooking skills. It fosters creativity, perseverance, and the pursuit of personal interests.

**Volunteering:** Volunteering is a cornerstone of the DofE Award, emphasizing the importance of community service and social responsibility. Pupils volunteer in various capacities, such as helping local charities, assisting in community projects, or mentoring younger students. This section cultivates empathy, leadership, and a sense of civic duty.

### **Autumn Term Activities**

This Autumn Term plans to be particularly eventful for our Bronze DofE participants. The final training sessions will be conducted, culminating in the much-anticipated Assessment Expedition around Hatfield Peverel and Danbury, which takes place from Friday 20 - Saturday 21 September. During this expedition, pupils will utilise their navigation skills, teamwork, and endurance as they trek through the scenic routes of the Essex countryside, whilst also being responsible for setting up camp and cooking dinner.

*Mr H Tresidder, Duke of Edinburgh Award Coordinator*



ESAA NATIONAL FINAL: JUNIOR BOYS



















ESAA NATIONAL FINAL: INTERMEDIATE BOYS























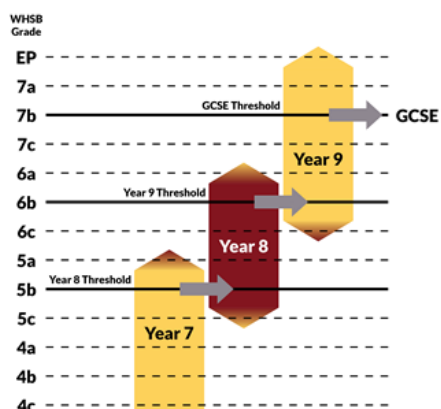






## LOWER SCHOOL PHASE 1 REPORTS

### Year 7 Reports: Friday 18 October 2024



On Friday 18 October, parents of Year 7 pupils will receive their son's Phase 1 Report. This is an important report as it is the first indication for parents regarding how their son has adapted to academic study at the School. Using the School's

internal grading system, parents will receive an initial indicator in the form of a grade from each of their son's teachers.

As shown in the diagram, most pupils are graded 4a (developed performance), 4b (secure performance) or 4c (foundation performance) in the first half term. This helps parents, pupils and teachers to understand a pupil's current level of understanding, and to identify areas of strength and areas for development.

### Year 8 Reports: Friday 8 November 2024

The Year 8 Phase 1 Report is designed to inform parents how their son has begun his studies at the start of this new academic year. Once again, gradings from each of their son's teachers will provide parents with a current attainment indicator. It is expected that pupils will achieve a grade 5a; grades which vary from this will indicate whether a pupils is performing above or below this level.

This report also contains the pupil's Lower School target grade. The average target grade is 7b at the end of Year 9; therefore, if a pupil has a target above this, the School would anticipate that he would be achieving above a 5a. If the target grade is below a 7b, a grade 5a would be considered a strong result. This helps parents, pupils and teachers to understand a pupil's current level of understanding, and identifies areas of strength and areas for development.

The report also contains attitudinal indicators; these are awarded on a scale of 1 (Exceptional) to 4 (Unacceptable). The expected indicator grade is a 2 (Good). Grades of 3 or 4 require a change in the pupil's attitude, and a grade of 1 is awarded when a pupil has exceeded the already high expectations of this School. Parents should consider the indicators received against the explanatory table on the back of the report.

### Year 9 Reports: Thursday 24 October 2024

Pupils in Year 9 will receive their Phase 1 Reports on Thursday 24 October. Another important Report, this communication informs parents how their son began this academic year, and it will be critical in influencing GCSE Option Choices, which start to be considered in January 2025.

Again, parents will receive a current attainment indicator in the form of a grade from each of their son's teachers, using the School's internal grading system. It is expected that, at this



stage of Year 9, pupils will achieve a grade 6a; grades which vary from this will indicate whether pupils are performing above or below the target level.

This report too contains the pupil's Lower School target grade. The average target grade is 7b; therefore, if a pupil has a target above this, the School would anticipate that he would be currently achieving a grade higher than a 6a. If the target grade is below a 7b, then a grade 6a would be considered a strong result. This helps parents, pupils and teachers to understand a pupil's current level of understanding, and to identify areas of strength, and areas in need of additional attention.

As noted for the Year 8 Reports, The Year 9 report also contains attitudinal indicators; these are awarded on a scale of 1 (Exceptional) to 4 (Unacceptable). The expected indicator grade is a 2 (Good). Grades of 3 or 4 require a change in the pupil's attitude, and a grade of 1 is awarded when a pupil has exceeded the already high expectations of this School. Parents should consider the indicators received against the explanatory table on the back of the report.

### The Next Steps

Following the distribution of the Phase 1 Report, Form Tutors will dedicate time within Form Periods for pupils to reflect on their grades and to develop their goals for the rest of the year. Where a foundation performance has been recorded across a number of subjects, Form Tutors will also discuss strategies to help individual pupils to improve their grades.

Parents should discuss the report and the goals set with their sons, those goals having been recorded in their son's planner. Should there be any further concerns, parents should contact their son's Form Tutor via the Lower School Pastoral Office. There are many mechanisms in place to support pupils, including Pastoral Support, Subject Support, and Mentoring.

*Mr A Baggs, Director of Lower School*

## ONE HUNDRED ISSUES OF THE WESTCLIFF DIARY 1990 – 2024

In 1990, *The Westcliff Diary* replaced *The Westcliffian* as the School's termly magazine. Since the foundation of Westcliff High School for Boys in 1920, the School has sought to maintain regular communication with its own community through its various termly publications, keeping pupils, parents, staff, alumni and friends updated on School news, activities and events.

The School's first magazine, *The Gateway*, was replaced by *The Quest* in 1931 which, in 1964, was renamed *The Westcliffian*. In 1990, through *The Westcliff Diary*, former Headmaster Mr Baker wished to introduce a more focused commentary on the life and development of the school and, some 34 years on, we are still distributing our *Westcliff Diary*.

With the ongoing need to remain current, and improved access to printing and publication services, *The Westcliff Diary* has continued to evolve over the years. When taking up the role of Headmaster in 2012, Mr Skelly, being an advocate of *The Westcliff Diary* as an effective means for regular communication,

chose to retain the termly publication. He sought to open up opportunities for staff and pupils to contribute articles and other items, and to use this publication as a means for promoting the importance of participation in the wider life of the School. This necessitated a change in format in 2012 and, since that time, the format has continued to develop to address shifting requirements, and the format we recognise today was introduced in 2017.

The School considers *The Westcliff Diary* one of the most important means of communication with parents concerning School updates, reminders, news, and importantly, the calendar of events for the forthcoming term. Pupils and parents are continually reminded of the importance of participation in the wider life of the School. Through regular and varied participation, pupils gain self-confidence, extending their knowledge, skills, understanding, and friendship groups. Without doubt, balancing academic commitments with involvement in extra-curricular activity can have a profound impact on good mental health, and academic and future achievements. This message is central to our *Westcliff Diary* today.

### The First 20 Issues, 1990 - 1997

Looking back at past issues of the School's magazine not only prompts reflections on the differences, and indeed similarities, between life at WHSB then and now, but also highlights some fascinating shifts in recent decades, in society, and in national and global affairs. It would be impossible to capture this to any great extent in these few pages, but we hope readers enjoy these extracts and accounts from the first 20 issues.

#### ISSUE 1: SEPTEMBER 1990

##### Grant Maintained Status

At a meeting on 1 August, the Governing Body confirmed its decision of 4 July to initiate proceedings to enable Westcliff to make a transition to Grant Maintained Status by 1 September 1991.

*Grant-maintained (GM) schools were state schools in England and Wales between 1988 and 1998 that had chosen to opt out of local government control. They were funded directly by a grant from central government, much like academies are now. GM status was created by the Education Reform Act 1988, as the then Conservative government sought greater diversity in educational provision, and to weaken local authority control. This status applied to WHSB for eight years.*

*Following the Government's reforms to Education, the School's Grant Maintained Status was removed on 1 September 1999, and WHSB become a Foundation School. As a result, the School had a closer relationship with the Local Authority, but was still able to retain a measure of independence.*

#### ISSUE 2: JANUARY 2021

##### School Trips

Three staff and twenty-five boys were preparing themselves for a well-established cycle tour of Holland during the Easter holidays. They followed a route from the Hook of Holland through The Hague, Delft, Gouda, Utrecht, Amsterdam, Alkanaar, Harrlem, Noordwijk and back to the Hook.

In the February half-term three staff and twenty-four boys were to visit Les Deux Alpes, in France, for an intensive week of skiing.

##### Work Experience

The fifth year [Year 11] had the opportunity to find their work experience placements, with Project Trident, using a directory which was recently included on the Nimbus computer.



## ISSUE 3: APRIL 1991

### Appeal for Tuition in Typing and Keyboard Skills

The School sought assistance from any parent who would be interested in becoming involved in the teaching of typing and keyboard skills as an extra-curricular activity, to follow up on the work of Mr Boreham (responsibility for co-ordinating IT provision) and Mr Priestley in enabling the pupils to develop Information Technology capabilities.

### Student Accommodation Swap Service

The School had recently joined the Student Accommodation Swap Service, an agency established to help first year undergraduates with their accommodation problems during their first year away from home. It hoped that parents living near universities, polytechnics and colleges would be prepared to offer accommodation to another first year undergraduate.

## ISSUE 4: SEPTEMBER 1991

### Reshaping Speech Day

The formal Speech Day ceremony was introduced, moving away from the previous format of distribution of prizes on the occasion of the autumn concert. Speech Day took place on 23 October 1991 at Crowstone St. George's United Reformed Church. The Guest of Honour was Professor Sir Graham Hills, the Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Strathclyde, and Old Westcliffian.

*Our formal Speech Day remains in our School calendar today, and the format is largely unchanged. We consider this one of our most important annual occasions, when our School community gathers to celebrate the outstanding achievements of our pupils, and to award certificates and prizes.*



Speech Day, November 2022

## ISSUE 5: JANUARY 1992

### Visit of Rt. Hon. Paul Channon M.P.

Paul Channon MP, former Secretary of State for both Transport and Trade and Industry and the Conservative MP for Southend West visited the School to speak to the Sixth Form on 'A Perspective on the Thatcher Years'.



## ISSUE 6: APRIL 1992

### A New School Library

Parents were informed that the old gymnasium (considered too small as a gym) would be converted into the School's library. This was an ambitious project, involving installation of a mezzanine floor, and the conversion of the corridor outside the gymnasium into a library administrative area with two floors. The new library would offer 1800 square feet of accommodation on the ground floor and an additional 650 feet on the mezzanine floor, giving provision approximately twice the size of the School's then library and resources centre.

*This space become the School Library as we know it today. Aside from major refurbishment works, undertaken in both 2009 and 2021 to update the facilities, the layout of this space remains similar to the original design in 1992.*

## ISSUE 7: SEPTEMBER 1992

### Centenary Celebrations in Southend-on-Sea

The County Borough of Southend-on-Sea had reached its Centenary. Many occasions had been arranged over the past nine months in celebration and the School was planning its own contribution - 'The 1892 Show' - between 12 and 14 November. This was to be an occasion to remember, with music, poetry, prose, and commentary from the late Victorian period. The production had been written and directed by Mr Dyer, and involved staff and pupils from WHSB and WHSG.

## ISSUE 8: JANUARY 1993

### Staffing

Mr Marlowe joined the full-time cleaning and maintenance staff. We are delighted that, following more than 31 years of outstanding service to the School, Mr Marlow is still supporting us all at WHSB in 2024, as a member of the Premises Maintenance Team.

### Civil War in Yugoslavia

Mrs Marlow had sent a letter to parents inviting donations to help the stricken people of Yugoslavia. The response was overwhelming with clothing and blankets being the items most frequently donated. Within the four weeks collection period, a total of 166 parcels weighing 1031 kilograms was collected and sent to Yugoslavia.



## ISSUE 9: APRIL 1993

### School Trip to Russia

The School noted, "Russia – the former Soviet Union – has been going through a period of immense political and economic change and we were delighted when Mr. Clark and Mr. Culley together with 22 pupils were able to visit Moscow and St Petersburg over the half-term period." The staff and pupils were all impressed by the friendliness of the Russian people, and remarked on their poverty. Ian Holroyd (Year 11) remarked: *"The legacy of communism for many Russians is very bitter and the road to economic recovery, development and prosperity promises to be a very long one"*.

## ISSUE 10: SEPTEMBER 1993

### Report on Implementing the National Curriculum

Sir Ron Dearing had been asked by the Secretary of State to make recommendations on the future of the National Curriculum and its associated assessment arrangements. Sir Ron, it was noted, had acquired a reputation as a political 'fixer' and he was reporting to the Government on progress towards the implementation of the National Curriculum and the development of curricular and assessment arrangements for the benefit of pupils of different aptitudes and abilities within, and possibly outside the years of compulsory school age. Sir Ron was seeking arrangements which were rather less prescriptive and mechanistic and which would be easier for teachers to administer. He wished to retain national testing, but perhaps not in all subjects.

*Lord Dearing (1930-2009) was, it was later reported in the Times Educational Supplement, "Often referred to as education's "Mr Fix-It", Dearing was responsible for cutting back the national curriculum, introducing university tuition fees and, most recently, suggesting an overhaul of language learning."*

## ISSUE 11: JANUARY 1994

### The Russian Exchange February 1994

Although contemporary Russian life continued to be relatively hard, seventeen boys and girls, aged 13-18, and four members of staff from School 231, Moscow, were to visit Westcliff for a fortnight from 13 February. They were to stay with pupils and members of staff, and attend School in the week immediately following half-term. The Modern Languages Department had arranged a programme of events, including visiting the sights of London. On the last night, 26 February, a concert was held in the School Hall.

## ISSUE 12: APRIL 1994

### Extension to Science Building

An extension to the Science Building had been completed and a formal opening was planned for 24 April. This successful development provided two new laboratories (one for Chemistry and one for Physics/Biology), an additional preparation room, an office and a much larger reception area.

## ISSUE 13: SEPTEMBER 1994

### Staffing

Mr Michael Skelly, having just arrived from Dublin, Ireland, joined the School in his first year of teaching, as Teacher of Economics.

*In September 2003, having by then also worked as Director of Sixth Form Studies and senior leader at WHSB since 2000, Mr Skelly took up a promotion as Deputy Headmaster at Calday Grange Grammar School in the North West of England. He returned to WHSB in 2010, and became Headmaster in 2012.*

Mr Bevan also joined the School as Head of Mathematics. *Later, Mr Bevan became Headteacher at Southend High School for Boys where he remained for 17 years. He recently retired from this role, in August 2024.*

Mr Jimmy Harrison, the well-respected teacher of Physical Education of 36 years at WHSB came out of retirement to teach part-time to support the School. Mr Harrison's (Old Westcliffian) associations with the School had spanned almost 60 years.

*It was with great sadness that we learnt that Mr Harrison passed away during the Summer 2024, and many people joined his family to pay their respects at his funeral on 30 August 2024 (see page 144).*

## ISSUE 14: JANUARY 1995

### Tuition in Bridge

The School had received an offer from a local, and accomplished, bridge player who was offering tuition to boys willing to learn the game of Bridge. Lessons would take place on one evening each week during the Spring Term and the probable cost of tuition across the ten weeks of the course would be £25.



## ISSUE 15: APRIL 1995

### The Information Technology Appeal

An appeal for £60,000 had been launched by Mr. Priestley, the Director of TVEI, on 20 March 1995. The School wished to ensure that pupils had the skills to meet the challenge of an increasingly technological world and had, therefore, decided that every pupil from the age of 11 to 16 should have Information Technology lessons from September 1995. Pupils were also encouraged to use Information Technology to analyse problems in Mathematics, to control equipment in Technology, to log data in Science, and to use the wonderful opportunities presented for research by CD ROM.

## ISSUE 16: SEPTEMBER 1995

### An Expanding School

The School had begun the new academic year with more pupils on roll (886) than there had been for many years. Due to the large number of applicants for entry to Year 7, the School had admitted an extra Form into the first year, which then totalled 145 pupils. Additionally, 26 students were welcomed into the Lower Sixth from outside the School.

### Ecuador Expedition

*“One of the more remarkable School visits in recent years came to an end on 15 August when a School party of five boys, fourteen girls from Westcliff High School for Girls, two members of staff and one Expedition Leader returned having been on an expedition to Ecuador for 30 days. The Expedition was a huge success and all members of the party enjoyed the challenge and excitement of the visit, the opportunity to test themselves in extreme conditions, the danger and, at times, the sheer exhilaration of exploring so different an environment in circumstances which were very far removed from the civilization of western Europe.”*



## ISSUE 17: JANUARY 1996

### Dining Hall and Music Centre

On 8 January work commenced on the new joint Dining Hall and Music Centre which WHSB and WHSG were jointly taking forward. This project had been planned for some time, and was a substantial capital development. This resource provided, on the ground floor a well-proportioned Dining Hall, generous and well-equipped kitchen accommodation, and toilets. On the first floor, the suite of music rooms comprised three full-sized teaching rooms, six practice rooms, three store rooms, and an office.

*These facilities remain similar today, although WHSB now has its own dedicated Music Rooms and no longer shares the original teaching spaces with WHSG, whilst both schools still share the dining facilities.*

## ISSUE 18: APRIL 1996

### Education Evening: The Ofsted Award

In February the Headmaster had written to all parents advising them that the School had been designated 'outstandingly successful' by OFSTED. He offered a brief review of the factors which he believed might have contributed to the Award and, in particular, emphasised the School's belief in offering leadership to pupils, the quality of staffing, the detail of the curriculum planning, the range of experiences offered, public examination success, and the nature of the School's pastoral support systems.

*This designated status (awarded remotely) was based on the outcome of the School's formal Ofsted Inspection in September 1994, in which it received the top grade.*

### Visit to the Royal Festival Hall

On Friday 19 April Mr Moth (Head of Economics) and Mr Skelly (Teacher of Economics) had arranged a special visit for Year 7 pupils to the Royal Festival Hall to hear the London Philharmonic Orchestra perform Elgar's Cello Concerto and the Organ Symphony of Saint-Saëns. Support from the youngest boys in the School was most encouraging, and the School hoped to provide other opportunities for the youngest pupils to hear and develop an appreciation of great works.

## ISSUE 19: SEPTEMBER 1996

### Booming Sales at the School Bookshop

*"The School Bookshop was established over ten years ago by Mr. Lewis and is now enjoying a period of expanding sales. For the second year running, the turnover has exceeded £1,000 and while the revival in its fortunes is not easy to explain, it is undoubtedly true that the advent of cheap classics and reference books has attracted new customers. What is also clear is that the Bookshop's increasingly wide ranging stock of several hundred paperbacks caters for most reading tastes from Year 7 to the Sixth Form."*



## ISSUE 20: JANUARY 1997

### The West Quadrangle Development

*"On Tuesday 28 January at 7.00pm we shall open the West Quadrangle Development. The development affords a new room for Modern Languages, two rooms for Mathematics, a room for Sixth Form Information Technology, a 50 seater Lecture Theatre and two offices for staff engaged in pastoral work."*

*Delays resulted in the opening taking place on 15 May 1997, prior to a School Concert, and parents were invited to attend. This was a significant development, creating much needed additional teaching space, and improving the layout of our School.*



## Developing our School Site

Ensuring our pupils and staff have access to modern and fit-for-purpose facilities for their learning and teaching is a priority and requires a great deal of consideration, design and financial planning. As admissions to the School have continued to rise over the years, a great deal of work has been carried out to develop our facilities, alongside the significant projects undertaken during each year to ensure existing classrooms and other spaces are well maintained.

### SPORT

Issue 35, January 2002

Plans had been prepared and planning permission secured for a new Sports Hall facility. The plans allowed for four badminton courts, a spectator's gallery, a uniturf floor, and electronic scoreboard (provided through funds raised by the Parents' Association), and substantial specialist facilities, including cricket nets. Works were completed during a 12 month period, and the new Sports Hall was named after Mr Jim Harrison, Head of Physical Education at WHSB for 36 years.



*The Jim Harrison Sports Hall*

### MATHEMATICS AND MUSIC

Issue 55, September 2008

The £1.4m Mathematics and Music Block was nearing completion offering, on the ground floor, six large Mathematics teaching rooms, offices and storage. On the first floor, the accommodation included two Music teaching rooms, 5 practice rooms, a Sixth Form study area, and a recording room. This impressive development significantly improved our teaching spaces, and remains in use for the teaching of Mathematics and Music today.



## A FURTHER EXPANDING SCHOOL

Issue 70, September 2013

With a need to develop the School site to support an expanding School, plans to invest a total of £4.5million were reported, following success in the recent bidding round for funding from the Department for Education. The development was to include the construction of a state-of-the-art Sixth Form Building, and commencement of a complete overhaul of the Science Block to redesign and modernise both the interior and exterior of the building. The projects were to be phased.

## SIXTH FORM FACILITIES

Issue 71, January 2014

Works on the new Sixth Form Building at a cost of £3.5million had commenced. The new state-of-the-art building was to include two large study spaces, including an ICT room for Sixth Form students, a large open plan Sixth Form café and dining area, a large double height Forum area, and offices on the ground floor. The first floor was to include two large Sixth Form Science laboratories, a prep room, four Sixth Form classrooms, and further offices. The School sought to create a space akin to a modern university building, to provide students with an experience which might ease their transition to Higher Education. The new building opened for use in October 2015, and was officially opened by the Duke of Gloucester in 2017. Through this issue, the Headmaster thanked the Parents' Association for donating £10,000 towards high quality tables for the new building.



## SCIENCE

Issue 72, April 2014

Works on the first phase of the exterior of the Science Building had commenced, and had been planned to allow half of the Science laboratories to be used for teaching whilst the other half were taken out of use and developed. The first and second phases, focussing on the exterior of the building, included a new roof, curtain walls, glazing, and improved toilet facilities. The works to both phases were completed in the Autumn 2015.

Issue 77, January 2016

Following a further successful bid to the Education Funding Agency, £1.4million was secured to reconfigure and refurbish the interior of the Science Building to meet changing requirements and safety standards. This project, together with the first and second phase projects to refurbish the exterior of the building, completed the works to provide what was essentially a new Science Building for less than half the cost of a new build. Work to provide new laboratories and preparation facilities throughout, state-of-the-art equipment, technology, staff work and office spaces was to begin in September 2016. The project was completed and in use by January 2017.

## Our Provision Today

### ISSUE 28, SEPTEMBER 1999

#### A New House System for WHSB

The School Introduced a new House System, with the new House names being Harrier, Kestrel, Merlin, and Osprey. The new system was launched with a football competition for boys in Years 7-10. Mr Baker noted that whereas in the past playing football had been confined to those chosen to represent the School, now a greater proportion of boys would enjoy the challenge of competition. House Cross Country was also planned and this would involve every pupil in Year Groups 7 - 10. The competitions would serve to launch both the new House system, and a future in which competition in sport and other extra-curricular areas would be extended to many more pupils.

*The designer behind the new House logos was Joe Morris (Old Westcliffian, 1996-2003), being a pupil at the School at the time. In the Sixth Form Joe directed a feature length movie and, having later been employed in various producing roles, he founded his own film production company, Brass Moustache, in 2010. Filming for his projects, many of which had social or environmental intent, took him all over the world. Sadly, Joe passed away in 2019 and tribute was paid to him in our September 2020 issue of the Westcliff Diary. Joe left his mark on WHSB forever through his superb House logo designs.*



**OSPREY**



**MERLIN**



**KESTREL**



**HARRIER**

### ISSUE 62, JANUARY 2011

#### The Integration of Girls Into the Sixth Form

Until September 2010, pupils at WHSB had been exclusively boys. In the Autumn 2010, Mr Baker reported that 19 girls had been admitted to the Lower Sixth and, in this edition, their integration was reported to have been remarkable, with many of the girls already making a positive contribution to the wider life of the School, including as subject prefects. The girls were congratulated for making a strong impact on the School, as were the boys for welcoming and supporting them with this transition.

This was an important development for WHSB, which had a significant positive impact on the culture of the School. The number of girls in our Sixth Form has grown steadily and, in September 2024, 35 girls were admitted to the Lower Sixth, bringing the total number of girls in the Sixth Form to 75.



## ISSUE 67, SEPTEMBER 2012

### Establishing The Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Awards and the Combined Cadet Force at WHSB

Mr Skelly reported that both the DofE Award Programme, and a Combined Cadet Force would be established at WHSB following his successful negotiations with both organisations. Mr Depres was appointed DofE Award Coordinator, and Mr Bleakley was appointed Contingent Commander for the CCF. With superb support and drive from both members of staff, these provisions were underway and attracting pupils' interest in the Autumn 2012.

Thirty Year 10 pupils, led by Mr Depres (DofE Coordinator), began working towards their Bronze DofE Award, consisting of four sections: Skills, Volunteering, Physical, and an Expedition. This cohort later went on to complete their Silver Awards in Year 11. With thanks to Mr Depres for his commitment, the provision became firmly established and, in recent years under the leadership of Mr Tresidder, our DofE provision has gone from strength to strength.

In a parallel development, for the first time in over 60 years, a CCF was parading at the School. In September 2012, Mr Bleakly was appointed Contingent Commander, himself a former cadet and Cadet Forces Adult Volunteer. Mr Bleakley held responsibility for embedding and developing the CCF and this he delivered with tremendous success. Readers will know through these pages that Mr Bleakley left WHSB and teaching in August, having given outstanding service to both the School and the CCF.

In the early days of our CCF, the 25 WHSB cadets and Mr Bleakley, became the WHSB Section of the Brentwood School's CCF. Generously (and necessarily in the early days), Brentwood School agreed to support WHSB with its strategies for establishing and funding a CCF provision. Following the introduction of our CCF in 2012, much of the kit and field training opportunities were provided through the support of Brentwood School.

The first Passing Out Parade and Mess Dinner took place on 27 June 2013.

On 8 January 2015, with a special parade, our CCF became independent of Brentwood School, and the Westcliff High School for Boys Combined Cadet Force was inaugurated. WHSB was the first School to avail itself of the Government's Cadet Expansion Programme, and the first to achieve independent status. Just three years later, on 11 January 2018, the School was celebrating the inauguration of its Royal Navy Section, and Mr Hill was appointed Officer in Command. In 2021, the School received the exciting news that approval had been granted to add a Royal Air Force Section to our CCF, which then became a Tri-Service Unit – the first in the Government's Expansion Programme to do so. The RAF Section was launched in the Spring 2022 and the Inauguration Parade was held on 20 July 2022. Today, with thanks to our outstanding CCF staff volunteers and the commitment from our cadets, we are delighted that our contingent is around 250 strong.



## ISSUE 72, APRIL 2014

### The Development of our Learner Profile

The Introduction of the Learner Profile in September 2014, was reported in this issue as being an organised acknowledgement of what the School did well, and a means to help prepare pupils for the challenges and opportunities they would meet throughout their lives, both personally and academically. Our Learner Profile, shared by the Headmaster on page 7, is based on his experience of teaching the International Baccalaureate qualification and observing the similar concept successfully applied through that provision. With thanks to all our staff and pupils for their sustained commitment towards our Learner Profile over the years, it has become successfully embedded into every aspect of the School's provision and has been recognised by Ofsted (November 2023) and others as adding much to our pupils' education experience and personal development, and to the culture of the School.



## Celebrating 100 Years

### ISSUE 89, SPRING 2020

#### The School's Centenary Year, 1920 - 2020

On 1 January 2020, WHSB was celebrating 100 years since members of our community came together to drive the founding of our School. On the first day our School opened its doors, it was under the name of The Commercial School, based in a converted building in Victoria Avenue, Southend. This was a co-educational school for the town's expanding population. After just two years, the School's name was changed to Westcliff High School and, by 1926, the boys had moved to our present site to become Westcliff High School for Boys, whilst the girls (Westcliff High School for Girls) remained at Victoria Avenue until the 1930s when they moved next door to our current site.

Alan White's superb book *Westcliff High School for Boys: A Centenary History*, written to mark this important milestone, provides a detailed and interesting account of the School's history throughout its 100 years.

In this issue, the School was anticipating an exciting programme of celebration, and a formal event at the Cliffs Pavilion, Southend to launch the programme. On 1 February 2020, the School staged a spectacular official launch to the Centenary celebrations at the Cliffs Pavilion. This was a remarkable evening, during which pupils, staff and parents were joined by many Old Westcliffians from across the generations, dignitaries, and friends for a formal dinner and entertainment arranged by the School. With thanks to Mr Jeffreys (Director of Drama), Mr Derrick (Director of Music), Mrs Mumford (Assistant Head), and the many other staff who contributed so much to the planning of the event, this was an outstanding success. However, as Mr Skelly delivered his speech and remarked on the School's resilience over its 100 years in facing many challenges, for example its evacuation to the Herbert Strutt School, Derbyshire during WWII, he could not have anticipated that little more than one month later, the entire School would be in lockdown due to the spread of Covid-19.



*Pupils and staff mark WHSB's 100 years: On WHSB's South Drive, October 2019*

# ISSUE 90, SEPTEMBER 2020 CENTENARY EDITION

From March 2020, it was necessary for the School to move all its teaching, pastoral support, and extra-curricular programme online and this was delivered successfully throughout the lockdown periods. The Summer 2020 issue was replaced by *The Westcliff Week*, a weekly newsletter designed to keep pupils, parents and staff connected during this unprecedented period.

A much anticipated programme of celebratory events for the Centenary Year had to be scaled back due to the lockdown arrangements, but with thanks to so many staff for their creativity and support during this time, much of the 'show went on'. The September 2020 issue of *The Westcliff Diary* was not only a celebration of the School's 100 years, but also a celebration of the support and resilience of the WHSB community in its mobilisation to overcome the challenges of Covid-19 and the lockdown. This included recognition of the efforts of pupils, parents and staff in relation to supporting the wider community with the challenges presented by Covid-19, as well as reflections on the School's remote operation since March 2020.

Our challenges continued throughout 2021, with much teaching, pastoral support, and extra-curricular activity delivered remotely, and the circulation of *The Westcliff Week* continued, replacing the termly *Westcliff Diary*, until the Autumn 2021.

Whilst the challenges presented by Covid-19 were immense, and this was not the year we had planned for our Centenary, the strength, resilience and creativity of the School community throughout this difficult time was certainly worthy of celebration through this issue.



*The Westcliff Week* was circulated to members of the School community weekly throughout periods of lockdown and remote learning during 2020 and 2021 to facilitate communication during this difficult period, and to encourage pupils to continue to engage with extra-curricular activities. As a result, a Summer 2020 issue of *The Westcliff Diary* was not produced.

## ANNUAL SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

Monday 11 November 2024, 8.45am - 9.30am

Our Annual Service of Remembrance for the whole School will take place in the School Hall on Monday 11 November at 8.45am. During this important occasion the School community will gather to share hymns, readings, prayers and music to remember the fallen. Our School Captain, Rafael Gamma, will lay a wreath in memory of those former pupils from WHSB who gave their lives in both World Wars and in other conflicts.

The School's Combined Cadet Force (CCF) will also participate in the arrangements for the Service.

Parents are warmly invited to join us for this occasion, and for coffee in the Centenary Room after the Service. Seating should be reserved in advance via *TicketSource*.

Headmaster



## SIXTH FORM OPEN EVENING

Thursday 14 November 2024, 6.30pm - 9.00pm

Year 11 pupils and their parents are cordially invited to explore the diverse range of opportunities available within the WHSB Sixth Form. The event will feature talks delivered by individuals central to the running of the Sixth Form, including the Headmaster, Mr. Dean (Senior Master Sixth Form), and Sixth Form students. These talks will take place in the Main Hall.

During the presentation, attendees will gain insights into several crucial aspects:

- **A Level Curriculum Offering:** Learn about the breadth and depth of A Level subjects available;
- **Application Process:** Understand the steps involved in applying to the Sixth Form;

- **Enrichment Opportunities:** Discover extracurricular activities and enrichment programs;
- **Pastoral Support:** Explore the support systems in place for students' well-being.

Additionally, participants can visit subject departments to engage with staff and current students. This interaction provides valuable information about the transition from GCSE to A Level studies.

The evening also serves as an excellent opportunity to discover subjects unique to the Sixth Form, such as Politics and Psychology. We strongly encourage Year 11 pupils and their parents to attend this important event, ensuring they are well-informed for the critical decision-making process ahead.

Mr A Dean, Senior Master Sixth Form

## YEAR 10 PHASE 1 REPORTS ISSUED

Friday 15 November 2024

On Friday 15 November, the Phase 1 Reports for pupils in Year 10 will be issued. This is the first opportunity for them to measure their progress so far, through their GCSE journey. It is important that they also reflect on the work they have completed in the Form Period Programme, concerning organisation and study habits, and making the necessary positive changes to ensure their future academic success.

Mr A Barnett, Director of Middle School



## **YEAR 11 TRIAL EXAMINATIONS**

***Monday 18 November - Tuesday 26 November 2024***

On Monday 18 November, the Trial Examinations will begin. This will be the first formal examination experience for many pupils in Year 11, providing an invaluable insight into how to prepare for formal examinations, how to conduct oneself, and how to acclimatise to examination conditions. The Trial Examinations simulate the experiences and environment pupils will face during their actual GCSE Examinations in Summer 2025.

These examinations play an integral part in pupils' preparation for the GCSE Examinations, allowing candidates to measure how successfully they have revised so far, highlighting what, if any, positive changes need to be made. In treating these examinations as important practice, pupils should undertake appropriate revision to ensure their performance provides a true reflection of their potential in each of their subjects. Early revision is also much better practice than last-minute cramming at the end of the course.

We wish all our Year 11 pupils the very best of luck in their Trial Examinations.

*Mr A Barnett, Director of Middle School*

## **YEAR 7 PARENTS' CONSULTATION EVENING**

***Monday 18 November 2024, 4.00pm - 6.00pm***

This term, we hold our Parents' Consultation Evenings for Year 7 on 18 November 2024. This first Parents Consultation is extremely valuable as it gives parents the first formal opportunity since joining WHSB to discuss their son's progress with some of his teachers. These evenings are held remotely, using the online programme, SchoolBooking. This programme allows parents to book meetings with teachers they wish to see, and for teachers to book appointments with parents where these are deemed necessary.

Full instructions will be distributed nearer the time. It should be noted that time does not allow for all parents to meet with all teachers, so parents are asked to select subjects in which they believe a discussion would be most beneficial. The instructions will detail the total number of appointments parents can attend; this number will include requests made by teachers. Please also note that overbooking may result in cancellation.

*Mr A Baggs, Director of Lower School*



## UPPER SIXTH PARENTS CONSULTATION EVENING

Monday 25 November 2024, 4.00pm – 6.00pm

The Upper Sixth Consultation Evening represents an opportunity for parents to speak to teachers directly via the School's virtual conference platform. The purpose of the evening is to update parents on their child's progress since the start of the academic year, and the Phase 1 Report. In addition, teachers can offer subject-specific advice on how best to prepare for the Trial Examinations in January 2025, as well as answering any immediate queries.

Further details will be circulated to Upper Sixth parents later in the term.

*Mrs K Revell, Director of Sixth Form*

## CAREERS EVENING

Wednesday 27 November 2024, 7.00pm – 8.30pm

After successfully launching a new format for our popular Careers Evenings last year, our 'Audience with Industry Experts' will continue in this academic year. These evenings consist of a panel discussion with professionals from industry, followed by a Question and Answer Session for the audience, making the evenings more interactive.

On Wednesday 27 November, our first of these Careers Evenings will focus on careers in Finance. With reference to updated

reporting from the employment market, and feedback from our own pupils concerning their own potential career aspirations, we acknowledge that Finance is a sector of growing interest. We therefore look forward to welcoming a highly experienced panel of guests to the School for this event, and encourage pupils to seize this opportunity for valuable guidance and insights.

Our careers evenings are open to students from WHSB and their parents, as well as students from other local schools.

*Mr M Atkinson, Careers Adviser*







## AUTUMN SINFONIA CONCERT

Thursday 28 November 2024, 7.30pm – 9.00pm

This term's Sinfonia concert invites audience members on a journey to the wilds of central Asia with Alexander Borodin's *On the Steppes of Central Asia*. Part-time composer and full-time chemist, Borodin was commissioned by Tsar Alexander II of Russia to compose this piece, which was to provide background music to a 'tableau vivant' – an artform involving actors posing motionless for extended periods, like a living painting. Unfortunately, the piece was never performed in its intended context; the performance was called off after an attempted assassination. Now it is a staple of orchestra repertoire.

From eastern wildernesses to 19th century Italy, but through the eyes of a twentieth century British composer, Benjamin Britten's love for Gioachino Rossini's music led him to compose two suites modelled on his work, of which *Matinées Musicales* is the second. Composed in 1941, Britten originally wrote the music for a short film, but later rearranged it as a full suite.

Both compositions are evocative and emotional, featuring in a full orchestral programme of music performed by the School's own Sinfonia orchestra.

Tickets are available via [TicketSource](#) and are priced at £5.00 for adults and free for pupils.

Mr T Derrick, Director of Music

## HISTORY TRIP TO HAMPTON COURT PALACE

*Saturday 30 November 2024*

This autumn, the History Department is delighted to continue its programme of History Days Out with a visit to that historic centre of Tudor life and politics, Hampton Court Palace. Our Days Out provide those with a love of History with the opportunity to explore different historic sites in one day visits, and we have been delighted with the popularity of this offer.

On this occasion, we will provide an opportunity to uncover Tudor treasures, glorious gardens, and an iconic maze at this Grade I-listed royal palace on the banks of the river Thames, which is said to have been Henry VIII's favourite residence. Pupils can experience the magnificence of the Tudor palace from the ornate Base Court, marvel at the lavishly decorated State Rooms and Apartments, and see the sprawling Tudor kitchens that once produced more than 800 meals a day for the hungry household of Henry VIII. On this trip, pupils can dare to walk the infamous Haunted Gallery lined with Tudor portraits, where the ghost of Catherine Howard, Henry VIII's fifth wife, has been seen running its length. They will peak into the Fountain Court at Hampton Court Palace and its recognisable red and

white facade. Other palace highlights will include the Great Hall, which is adorned with magnificent tapestries, the Chapel Royal, home to Anne Boleyn's Book of Hours, and William III's State Apartments. After exploring the many fascinating areas of the palace, pupils can head outside to wander 60 acres of stunning gardens, which have played host to many popular films and TV shows including Netflix's *Bridgerton*. They can also

venture into the UK's oldest surviving hedge maze, which has been testing visitors since 1700! The visit promises to be another exciting and adventurous trip, and we look forward to another packed coachload of History tourists exploring yet more of our country's wonderful heritage.

*Mr B Jeffreys, Head of History*



## AUTUMN TERM IN THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

With the shelves bursting with shiny new books from our newly updated Departmental Reading Lists, our School Library continues to grow as a fascinating place to be for scholars of all ages, topics and subjects. All pupils and staff are automatically members of our Library, and able to borrow up to 6 books at a time for a three-week (renewable) period.

### But what to read?

We have all experienced that 'blank moment' where we are staring at shelves in a shop and, perhaps blinded by options, can be unsure what to choose to best suit our interests or requirements.

To encourage our pupils to continue in their commitment towards their own 'Lifelong Learning', and to pinpoint their interests, a recent Library lesson poll posed the following questions to pupils.

What was the most interesting conversation you have recently had over the dinner table?

What subject or topic interests you most?

Do you prefer fiction or non-fiction?

What has caught your eye in the news lately?

What subject or topic do you struggle with the most?

What was the last topic you googled?

The answers to these questions ranged from 'topical' or 'current affairs', such as online searches for tomorrow's weather, or sports results, to more probing queries on 'what is a White Hole in space', and 'what is the difference between a nautical mile and a land mile'; our wealth of Library books can provide so much information. The benefit of books is their very presentation, in easily laid-out chapters, which can introduce the reader to new information they may not have initially sought, and this broadens knowledge.

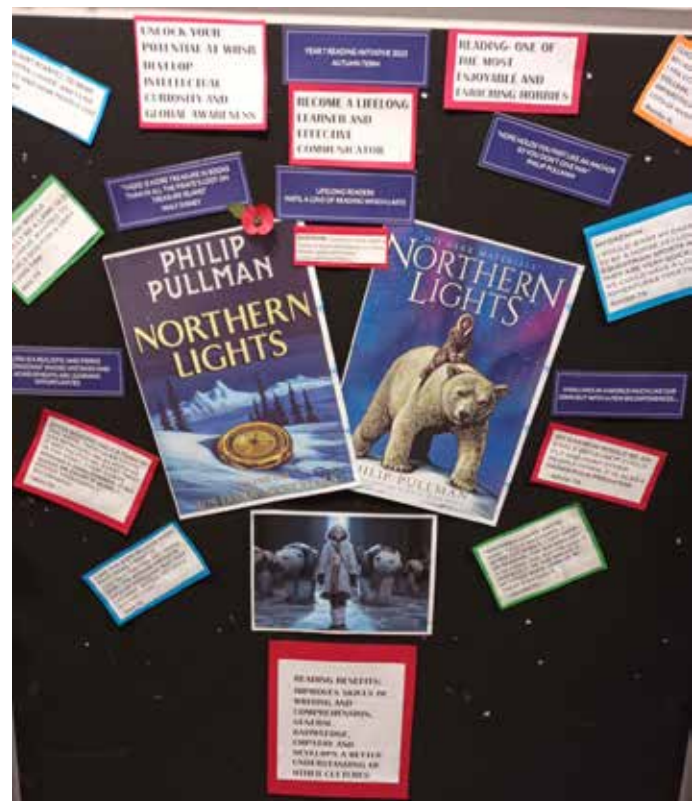


Why not ask your family and friends these questions? In doing so, you might even further your own interests and general knowledge. For example, Mrs Schofield prefers non-fiction, and has a special interest in the history of the 'Titanic' ship (we have several related books in the Library), whilst Mrs Oats, a former Detective, likes to immerse herself in a good thriller or 'whodunnit' from the fiction shelves.

In the coming months we shall be marking the following events in the Library:

- Book Trust 'Bookbuzz' free books for our new Year 7 pupils
- Macmillans Cake and Book Sale (second hand book donations welcome)
- Black History Month
- World Mental Health Day

Our Library Ambassadors continue to help keep the Library operating efficiently, with their one rota shift per week, and a roster of projects and parties to become involved in, as well as our annual awards!





Every pupil in Years 7, 8, and 9 continues to receive one Library lesson per fortnight with either Mrs Oats or Mrs Schofield. These lessons include silent reading time, spelling tests, quizzes, quickfire book reviews, Word of the Week, opportunities to see our new book arrivals, and much more.

Our most recent reading initiatives have included the Carnegie Book Awards 'Shadowing' Group, which read and voted on the shortlist of eight books, across an entire term, before watching the announcement of the winner which was live streamed from London during one lunch hour in the School Library.

The Summer Reading Challenge, ending in early September, has attracted many applicants, each on a quest to read a set number

of classic novels or books all on one theme, for example, sailing, or biographies. Housepoints and book tokens are awarded in recognition of success in the Reading Challenge.

The Library is open from Monday to Thursday 8.00am to 5.30pm, and Friday 8.00am to 4.30pm for silent, individual study and reading, and for perusing and borrowing books. Pupils may visit before and after school, and during break and lunchtimes. On Tuesday lunchtimes, the Library is closed for the running of a growing number of exciting Library based clubs.

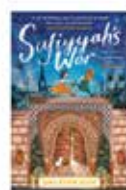
## The Yoto Carnegie Medal for Writing Shortlist 2024



**Away With Words**  
Sophie Cameron  
Little Tiger



**Choose Love**  
Nicola Davies  
Graffeg



**Safiyyah's War**  
Hiba Noor Khan  
Andersen Press



**Steady for This**  
Nathanael Lessore  
Bonnier Books UK; Hot Key Books



**The Boy Lost in the Maze**  
Joseph Coelho  
Otter-Barry Books



**Crossing the Line**  
Tia Fisher  
Bonnier Books UK; Hot Key Books



**The Door of No Return**  
Kwame Alexander  
Andersen Press



**The Song Walker**  
Zillah Bethell  
Usborne

## LIFELONG READERS INITIATIVE

Pupils join Westcliff High School for Boys with the aim of unlocking their potential. They want to develop their intellectual curiosity and global awareness, to become lifelong learners and effective communicators. They want to prepare themselves for a happy and successful future. There is no better way for them to achieve these aims than by becoming a Lifelong Reader. Extensive research has shown that reading provides a host of benefits: It improves skills of writing and comprehension, general knowledge, empathy, and develops a better understanding of other cultures. Being a Lifelong Reader grants you important cultural capital, and being a good reader makes you a good learner. But these are not the reasons a Lifelong Reader reads.

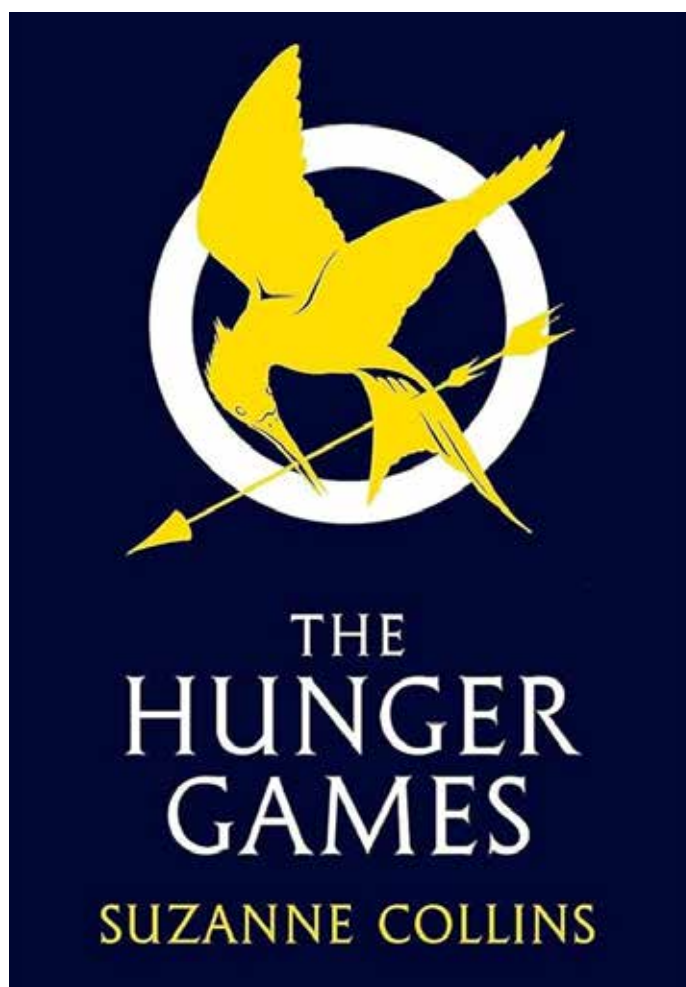
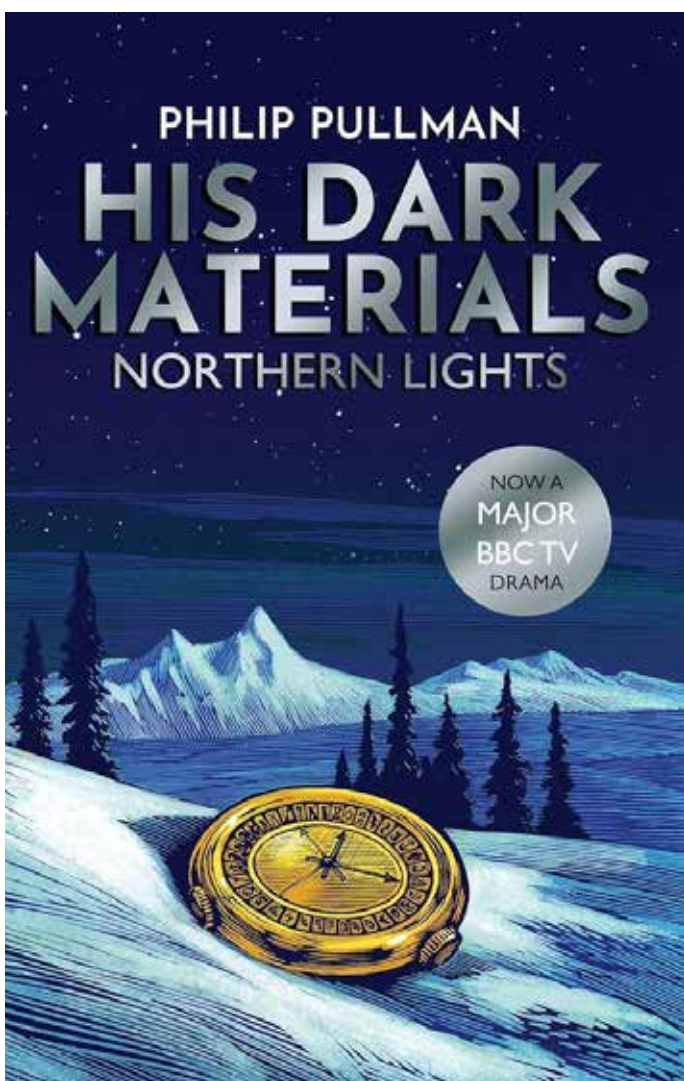
Reading is one of the most enjoyable and enriching hobbies a person can have. There is nothing like picking up a page-turner or finding an amazing new series of books to steam through. Lifelong Readers read because they love it. The aim of our Lifelong Readers Initiative is to instill a love of reading within the pupils of WHSB. Each term, every pupil in Year 7 and Year 8 will be lent a book. The books chosen are from the literary canon and have been picked for their variety of themes and topics, and because they are challenging. The books will introduce pupils to new vocabulary and develop their confidence as readers.

This term's Year 7 book is *Northern Lights* by Phillip Pullman. The term's Year 8 book is *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins. It is

important that pupils read their Lifelong Readers book, as they will otherwise be left out of discussions and presentations that will take place throughout the year.

It is recommended that parents involve themselves with this initiative by reading the books along with their children. However, if this is not possible, pupils will be provided with an information booklet and their three books. This booklet is for parents to inform their son of the content of each book, along with ideas to prompt discussions around the book at home.

*Mr T Derrick, Associate Assistant Head*



## THE SCHOOL COUNCIL



Upon joining the Lower Sixth, I was keen to get involved and represent my Form in the School Council. As you progress from Middle School into the Sixth Form, your experiences in the previous years at WHSB make you aware of all the positive aspects of the School, but also highlight ways in which the School can be improved. The School Council is a fantastic way to make the voices of our

students heard. I also think that the new pupils joining the Sixth Form have an advantageous perspective, seeing the School with a fresh pair of eyes and having the benefit of comparison with their previous schools

The Council is split into Lower School (led by Mr Madrid), Middle School (led by Mr Moore) and the Sixth Form (led by Ms Niedziela), with Miss Fairfax overseeing each of these divisions. Each Form sends one to two representatives. The representatives take three 'Areas of Celebration' and three 'Areas of Concern' from their peers to the Headmaster and Miss Fairfax. This ensures the School receives balanced feedback on what students are grateful for, as well as constructive suggestions on how the School might be improved.

Form Groups dedicate a morning session every half-term to debate these six points, and it is always very enjoyable to hear the wide range of innovative ideas proposed, and how other members of the Form react to them. The representatives then meet to discuss which of the three celebrations and three concerns they believe are the most significant from all our Forms' decisions. The successes of extra-curricular activities in Sport, Music, the Charity Committee, and Drama are often celebrated, as are the Subject and Peer Mentoring schemes which forge close collaborations between different Year Groups.

Although many Form Groups often share similar concerns, there is usually a sizeable number of different issues raised. Hence, there needs to be a strict shortlisting process. The Lead Teacher for the Sixth Form, Ms. Niedziela, will nominate two students to meet with the Headmaster and Miss Fairfax during the following week to discuss the six points they deemed most important. After this meeting takes place, all the representatives are briefed on the outcome of the meeting, and which of the points raised can be addressed. We then relay this back to our respective Form Groups.

As a result of these meetings, we were successful in obtaining a second contactless card reader in the Sixth Form Café last year, as well as increasing the supply of chairs in the Forum area. These changes have significantly improved life in the Sixth Form, with shorter queues at lunchtime meaning more people can attend clubs and societies on time. The increase in the number of chairs has improved the social aspect of the Sixth Form Centre.

Last term, Lucas Willett and Maame Asare-Agyapong met with the Headmaster to discuss our latest proposals. We were keen to celebrate the success of the Lower Sixth work experience programme, the effectiveness of the Prefect duty system, and the positive encouragement from our teachers to apply for positions such as Senior Prefect and House Captain. Our areas of

concern included limited access to computers at lunchtime, a lack of artefact-based EPQs on offer, and some noise outside some examination venues during the Lower Sixth Trial Examinations. The Headmaster was enthused by the praise our Year Group had for the School, especially the work experience programme. He was also open to the idea of broadening the range of EPQs offered, and allowing the Lower Sixth students greater access to computers. He agreed that any noise in the corridors during examinations was an issue but explained that within the context of the School's day to day operation, this might be difficult to resolve.

This snapshot sums up the essence of the School Council. The Headmaster listens carefully to what we have to say. He takes our concerns seriously, and he is honest and transparent regarding what can be realistically achieved and what issues are more difficult to resolve. We are reminded to be practical in our suggestions and to understand the limitations, whether logistical or financial, of some of our proposals. For example, on Year 5 Open Evening, the Headmaster spoke about a suggestion he received for the creation of a swimming pool in the main playground! Logistically and financially impossible, to state the obvious, this is an extreme example of the importance of participants balancing the School's point of view with their own.

The School Council enables us to be team players who are proactive, creative, thoughtful individuals, who maintain a realistic approach to the feasibility of their suggested ideas. I am certain that the School Council will continue to achieve meaningful results for our school community. I would therefore urge you all to consider joining the School Council as early as possible, and get your voices heard.

*Rafael Gamma, School Captain*



SPORTS DAY JULY 2024















## GCSE MUSIC RECORDING

*Monday 2 – Tuesday 3 December 2024*

On Monday 3 and Tuesday 4 December, those pupils in Year 11 who are studying Music for the GCSE Examinations will record one of the final NEA performances, forming half of their requirements for Component 1.

This performance will be either an ensemble or solo performance. Pupils must ensure that this performance lasts at

least one minute, and that the combined total of their solo and ensemble performances lasts at least four minutes.

Pupils should already know what they intend to perform and should be practising regularly in preparation for this important recording. Those pupils who have yet to finalise their decision can, and should, seek further support from their music teacher at their earliest convenience.

*Mr T Derrick, Director of Music*



## CHRISTMAS WITH THE BIG BAND

*Friday 6 December 2024, 7.30pm – 10.00pm*

The festive lights may be twinkling, the tinsel may be sparkling, but the festive season has not really begun until the Big Band takes the stage for their annual Christmas show. This hotly anticipated event features the Westcliff Jazz Band and other groups, being headlined by the Westcliff Big Band.

Expect to hear a recognisable set of hits covering a variety of styles, from Herbie Hancock to Marvin Gaye, from The White Stripes to Carly-Rae Jepsen – this is an eclectic evening of funky music and Christmas crackers that should not be missed!

Reserve your tickets via *TicketSource* at a price of £8.00 for adults and £5.00 for pupils.

*Mr T Derrick, Director of Music*



## LOWER SIXTH FORMATIVE EXAMINATIONS

Monday 9 - Wednesday 18 December 2024

# MINDSET



Autumn Term 2024 will see Formative Assessment Weeks for students in both the Lower and Upper Sixth. These will include in-class tests based on several topics in a variety of question styles.

The aim of these assessments is to provide students and their parents with an idea of current attainment levels, together with the opportunity to apply the principles of the A Level Mindset, as developed by Steve Oakes and Martin Griffin in 2016. Students have been shown different revision strategies, and this allows them to assess their effectiveness prior to the Trial (and final A Level) Examinations. Data demonstrates that students who perform well in the Formative Assessments tend to achieve strong outcomes in their final A Level Examinations too.

The Sixth Form Pastoral Team will be available for support and advice. We offer all students our best wishes for success in their Formative Assessments.

Mrs K Revell, Director of Sixth Form

## YEAR 8 PARENTS CONSULTATION EVENING

Monday 9 December 2024, 4.00pm – 6.00pm



This term, our Parents Consultation Evening for pupils in Year 8 will take place on Monday 9 December. Research has shown that Year 8 is when some pupils experience an academic dip. This is not surprising given that work is more challenging and the novelty of joining a new school is no longer present. Therefore, this is a good opportunity

for parents to discuss with teachers how they best support their child's academic progress. As in Year 7, these evenings are held remotely, using the online programme, SchoolBooking.

As for Year 7, parents are asked to select those subjects for which a discussion is considered to be most beneficial. We shall distribute instructions to parents nearer the date of the meeting. These instructions will detail the total number of appointments parents can attend; this number will include requests made by teachers.

Mr A Baggs, Director of Lower School

## BOX OF DELIGHTS

Wednesday 11 – Friday 13  
December 2024,  
7.30pm – 9.00pm

What do Harry Potter, the Lord of the Rings, and the Chronicles of Narnia have in common? They are all books that became successful films. They all feature creatures of all sizes, such as the Balrog and the House Elf (a good title perhaps for a children's story). But most pertinently here, all three modern megahits draw something of their narrative from the seminal 1935 work, *The Box of Delights*. Few have heard of this great classic novel and it has rarely been in vogue, but its influence has been profound – the book was innovative in launching ideas of flying cars and battling wizards, and an orphan boy at the midst of it all (sound familiar?).



The book is the second in a series featuring orphaned schoolboy Kay Harker, stories written by literary great John Masefield. Masefield was a poet, novelist, dramatist and journalist. Born in Ledbury in leafy Herefordshire in 1878, Masefield was fascinated by the natural flora and fauna of this beautiful area, building this rural and pagan life into his novels. After a career at sea and some time in New York City, Masefield returned home already a published poet at the age of 24. Living in rural Oxfordshire, and keeping bees, goats and poultry, Masefield continued to write, his 1923 edition of *Collected Poems* selling 80,000 copies and bringing him an Honorary Doctorate of Literature from Oxford University. In 1927, he published his first book *The Midnight Folk*, following this up in 1935 with *The Box of Delights*. Masefield was made Poet Laureate in 1930, and held this role until his death in 1967.

The story in *The Box of Delights* has ingredients familiar to any lover of fantasy fiction. Strange things begin to happen the minute young Kay Harker boards the train to go home for Christmas and finds himself under observation by two very shifty-looking characters. Arriving at his destination, the boy is immediately accosted by a bright-eyed old man with a mysterious message: "The wolves are running". Soon danger is everywhere, as a gang of criminals headed by the notorious wizard Abner Brown and his witch wife Sylvia Daisy Pouncer get to work. What does Abner Brown want? The magic box that the old man has entrusted to Kay, which allows him to travel freely, not only in space but in time, too. The gang will stop at nothing to carry out their plan, even kidnapping Kay's friend, the tough little Maria Jones, and threatening to cancel Christmas celebrations altogether. But with the help of his allies, including an intrepid mouse, a squadron of Roman soldiers, the legendary Herne the Hunter, and the inventor of the Box of Delights himself, Kay just may be able to rescue his friend, foil Abner Brown's plot, and save Christmas, too.

This modern script adaptation was put together by Piers Torday, the children's author. Torday won the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize in 2014 for *The Dark Wild*, and followed this up with the completion of his father's unfinished novel manuscript *The Death of An Owl*. Torday first adapted *The Box of Delights* for performance at Wilton's Music Hall in 2017, and the show was recently revived by the Royal Shakespeare Company, as their Stratford Christmas play of last year.

We are very much looking forward to staging this Christmas Classic, and look forward to welcoming you into our converted Library Theatre for an early Christmas treat suitable for all the family.

Mr B Jeffreys, Director of Drama

## YEAR 11 TRIAL EXAMINATION REPORT

Friday 13 December 2024

The Trial Examination Report for pupils in Year 11 will be issued on Friday 13 December, and this Report will contain the Trial Examination grades. Whilst this does not represent a full written report, the provision of numerical data will provide a very clear indication of how successful pupils have been in their preparation for the Trial Examinations, and what further work will be required as they look ahead to their final full term of in-class GCSE preparation. For many pupils, this will be a cause for celebration and will offer motivation towards working for further success. Where pupils have performed less confidently, this data will help to provide a clear signpost of the work that needs to be done to ensure their full potential can be reached.

*Mr A Barnett, Director of Middle School*

## GEOLOGY CONFERENCE

Friday 13 December 2024



The Geology Conference is an annual event to which speakers are invited to present to our Geology students in Years 10 and 11, and the Upper and Lower Sixth, on a wide range of geological issues. Previous topics have revolved around Mining Methods and Hazards; Resources and Exploration; Natural Hazards and Volcanology; and the Permian Mass Extinction.

The speakers often pick up on strands of learning from Key Stage 4, and especially Key Stage 5, stretching and challenging the students whilst also giving them ideas for careers in geology. The speakers are lecturers from Leicester University, or geologists working in Industry, and they can provide information on the latest ideas and research. Old Westcliffians are also invited back to share their university experiences with our students, and to speak with them about university courses and university life.

The afternoon session will be given over to Year 9 pupils, and will include information on interesting aspects of geology, helping them in considering GCSE Geology as an option. Old Westcliffian and Imperial College geologist, Oliver Fuller-Field, attended last year and spoke to Year 9 pupils about his experiences in Geology at WHSB, and at university.

*Mr P Marlow, Head of Geology*

## YEAR 11 GEOLOGY TRIP TO THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Monday 16 December 2024

The Earth Galleries have several exhibitions of interest for GCSE pupils, including *Visions of Earth, Volcanoes and Earthquakes, Restless Surface, From the Beginning, Earth's Treasury, and Hominid Evolution*. During this visit, pupils will undertake written work relating to their GCSE studies; this will include describing and identifying minerals and rocks, investigating the evidence for plate tectonics, analysing surface processes in relation to the formation of sedimentary rocks, logging recent volcanic and earthquake activity, and evaluating the importance of geological materials to a modern industrialised world.



The Earth Galleries do, in fact, cover all major units of study within the GCSE specification, and much more besides. Also, within the adjacent Natural History Museum, pupils will be able to trace the history of the dinosaurs and investigate the origin of meteorites. It promises to be a most instructive and interesting visit.

*Mr P Marlow, Head of Geology*



*Leavers' Certificate Collection, December 2023*



## **LEAVERS' CERTIFICATE COLLECTION** *Monday 16 December 2024, 3.45pm - 5.00pm*

To coincide with the end of the first term at university, our Summer 2024 Leavers are warmly invited to visit the School to collect their A Level certificates from the Sixth Form Forum. This informal event offers our newest cohort of Old Westcliffians, and most recent cohort of School Leavers, an opportunity to

share with their peers and former teachers, stories about their new adventures. Teachers and members of the Support Staff will attend and are always keen to hear how their former students have settled into life after WHSB. Refreshments are served during the event, and the leavers are also most welcome to join us in the evening for our annual Festival of Lessons and Carols.

*Mr A Dean, Senior Master Sixth Form*

## **FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS** *Monday 16 December 2024, 7.30pm - 9.00pm*

This final evening event of the Autumn Term each year is a wonderful tradition at Westcliff High School for Boys and, for many, the start of Christmas. Our School community, together with friends and families, gather in the final week of the term to celebrate the season together, through our Festival of Lessons and Carols. Our Service is modelled on the annual Carols from King's service broadcast by the BBC, and features readings, and hymns sung by the congregation.

The Westcliff Choir will perform both traditional and modern carols, all illuminated by the warm glow of the Christmas tree. Pupils, parents, staff, Old Westcliffians, and friends are warmly invited to join us for this joyful occasion, and also to share in some mulled wine, mince pies, and coffee.

Seating should be reserved in advance via [TicketSource](#).

*Headmaster*





## THE HOUSE SYSTEM

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the student House Captains, House Vice Captains, and House Year Representatives for helping to provide such an engaging House Programme for pupils during the last academic year. Our House System has developed significantly during the past twelve months, and continues to do so, thanks to the support of those staff and pupils involved.

### Some of our House Events Planned for the Term Ahead

Chess	Games Quiz	Table Tennis	Cartography
Pokémon	Creative Writing	Cricket	German Crossword
Lord of the Rings	Riddles	Rowing	Star Wars
Public Speaking	Badminton	Marvel Film Quiz	Harry Potter
Hot Potato	University Challenge	Cryptic Clues	Robert Burns Research
Festivals and Cultures Display	Christmas/Festive Cards	Design an MFL Poster	Asian and Middle Eastern Quiz

I would like to express my gratitude to the Heads of House: Mr Rayment, Mr Sexton, Mr Madrid, and Mr Marrant for their dedication in organising such a wide variety of enjoyable and worthwhile activities.

Pupils are encouraged to participate in at least two House events this Term. House Points and Senior Commendations will be awarded to all pupils who participate. If you have any ideas for a new House event, then please do let a member of the House Team know.

At the end of the Summer Term, the total points gained by each House, both through competitions during the year, and on Sports Day in July, were announced and presentations were made in a whole School Assembly. Harrier House achieved an impressive 12,964 points to win the House Competition for the year, and the Phoenix Cup was presented to the Captain of Harrier House. Awards are presented in a variety of categories, and the four House Captains address the School community in the Assembly.



House Pokémon

Mr R Barber, House Coordinator and Senior Head of House



D-Day Photograph House Research



House World Oceans Day



House Sustainable Gastronomy Day



*Congratulations to Harrier House, winners of the Phoenix Cup 2024*



THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

























## PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

### Easy Fundraising

*Easyfundraising* is a shopping directory listing some of the UK's favourite online stores including Amazon, John Lewis, Marks & Spencer, and over 2,000 others. Just use the links on the *Easyfundraising* site whenever you shop online and, at no extra cost to you, the Parents' Association will receive a free donation of up to 15% from every purchase you make. It really is that simple, and it is completely FREE to register. You will not pay a penny more for your shopping when you use the *Easyfundraising* site. In fact, you can even SAVE MONEY as many retailers offer discounts, special offers, and even 'e-vouchers' exclusive to *Easyfundraising*.

If you shop online anyway, then why not raise valuable extra funds for us by using this fantastic scheme. All you need to do is visit [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) and, when you register, select Westcliff High School for Boys as the organisation you wish to support. <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/westcliffhighschoolforboys/>

The more members of our School Community who choose to support us in this way, the more money we can raise for the School. Our thanks in anticipation.



### WHSB Parents' Association Amazon Wishlist



From September 2024, in consultation with a number of subject departments and extra-curricular clubs and groups within WHSB, the Parents' Association will be trialing a new means of fundraising for the School with an Amazon Wishlist. The Amazon Wishlist will consist of low-cost items that have been carefully selected by staff including books, Physical Education equipment, Art materials and club resources, enabling parents, carers, and other members of our School Community to make voluntary contributions towards school supplies should they wish to do so.

It is anticipated that items will cost from as little as under £5 and will continue to be added throughout the School year as needed. Purchases can be dropped into the School Reception

or delivered directly by Amazon to WHSB, with donations being respectfully publicised or remaining anonymous, whichever is preferable. To view and make purchases for the School from the Parents' Association Amazon Wishlist, please use the following link: [https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/2AMHT2KY5NZ98?ref\\_=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/2AMHT2KY5NZ98?ref_=wl_share).

The Parents' Association would like to thank all those who continue to support our operations in these and all other ways.

The Parents' Association works hard and with pride to support the School and we welcome new volunteers, particularly those parents who are new to the School. In the coming term, we look forward to supporting School events at which we can both fundraise and engage with members of our School Community. Look out for us at the end of term when we will be supporting the School's Christmas with the Big Band event by running a raffle and bar to raise money for the School.

Thank you for your support!

*Mrs J Clarke, Chair of The Parents' Association*



Supporting the School's production of *The Pirates of Penzance*, June 2024

## THE SUMMER TERM 2024 IN PICTURES



*Anthea Bell Competition Success for our Young Translators*



*Awards for the UK Biology Challenge*



*British Biology Olympiad WHSB Gold Award Winners 2024*



*Careers Guidance - Connexions Southend and Deloitte Management Consultancy address pupils in Years 7 and 8*





Library Clubs



Essex Cup Success at Thorpe Bay Tennis Club



Farewell to our Upper Sixth





*Half for Havens Charity Run*



HARP24 Running Festival - raising money for Southend's Homeless Charity







*His Majesty the King's Official Birthday 21 Gun Salute - Rory, Lower Sixth, accompanies Lord Lieutenant of Essex, Mrs Jennifer Tolhu*





*History Trip to Sutton Hoo and Colchester Castle*





House Drama







*The Directors of House Drama*



*International Competition for Young Debaters*



Junior Mathematical Challenge. UK Maths Trust



Mother Tongue, Other Tongue Multilingual Poetry Competition



*Level 2 Powerboat Qualification for Royal Navy Cadets*





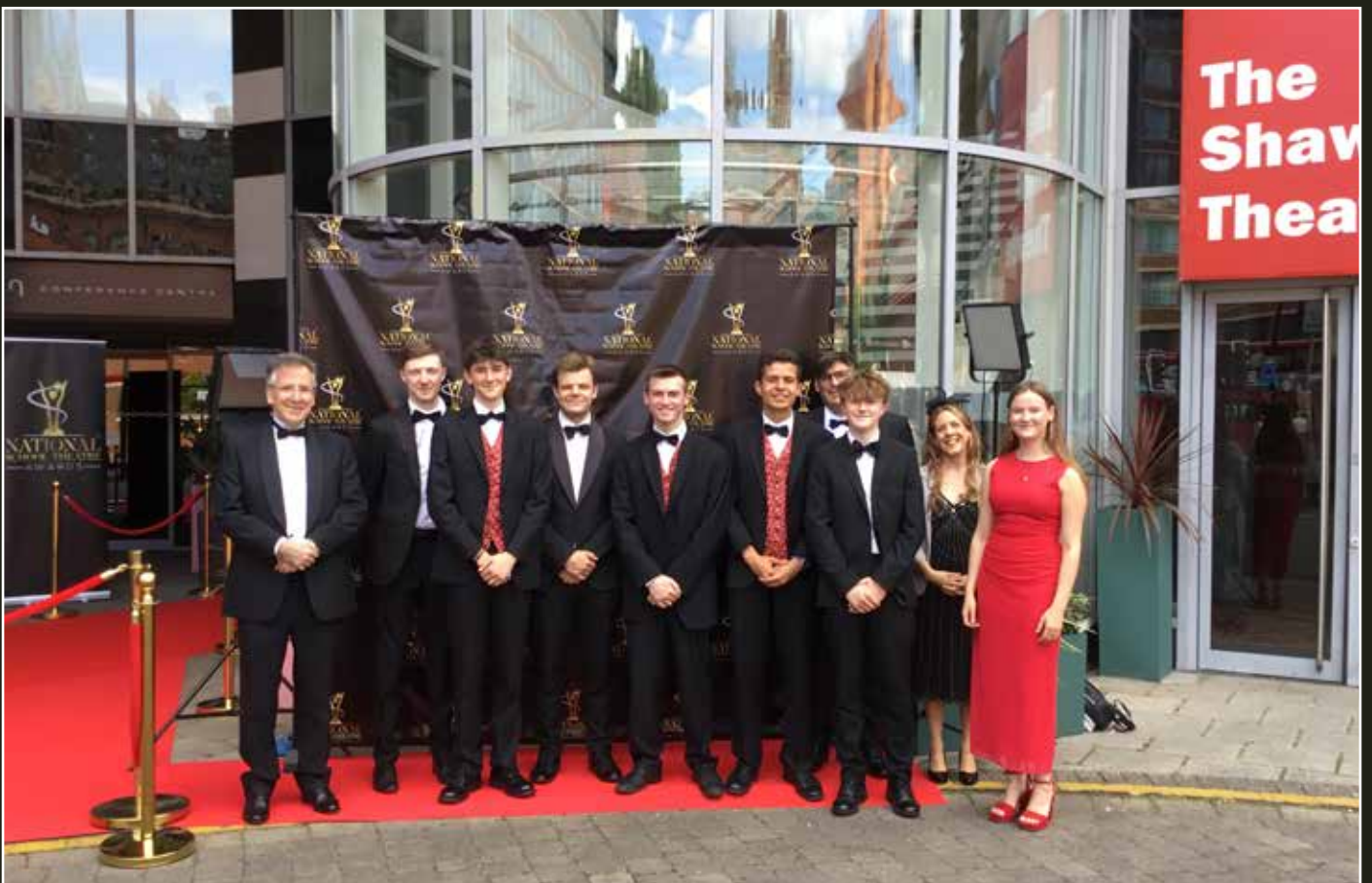
National Schools Theatre Awards 2024





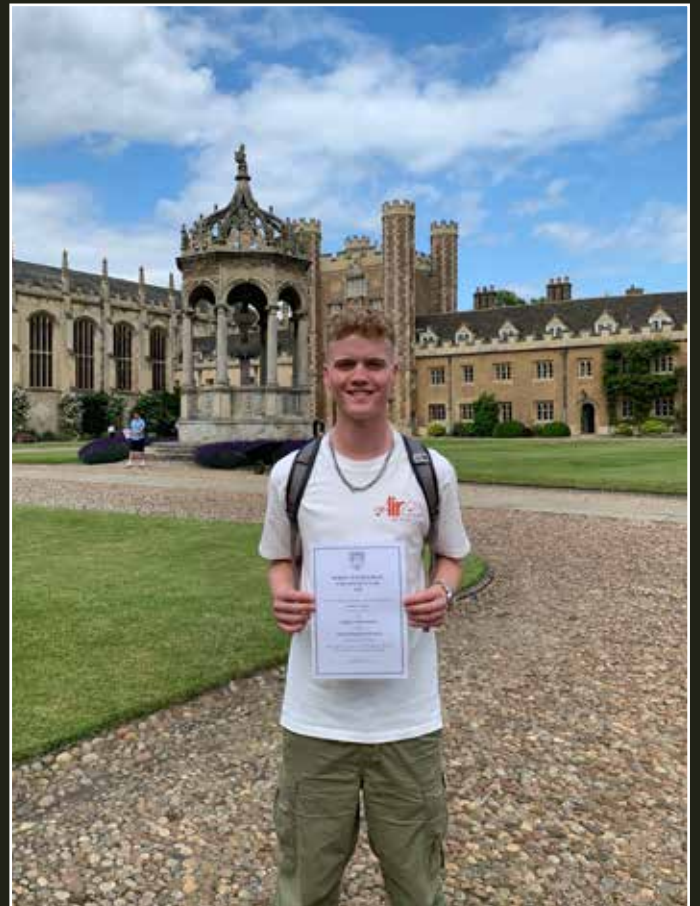


National Schools Theatre Awards 2024





*Ofsted Celebration Thank you to our Outstanding Staff*



*Quinn (Lower Sixth), Cambridge University  
Essay Competition Success*



Record results in 2024 Intermediate Maths Challenge



Regional Final of Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge





*Sixth Form and Teachers in Charity Dodgeball*



*Careers in Medicine Visit to Southend Hospital*



Sports Fixtures in Madrid





The Mock Election 2024, 3 July 2024



The Mock Election 2024, 3 July 2024



*Thirty Club Membership for sustained and exceptional service*



*Visting Art Galleries in Madrid*



Warhammer 40,000 School Tournament and Warhammer Age of Sigmar School Tournament, Nottingham



Year 9 Rugby Award Assembly March 2024



WHSB Musicians - Opening Ceremony of Knife Angel Sculpture, Southend





Years 9 and 10 Biologists Delve into the intricacies of DNA

## OLD WESTCLIFFIANS ASSOCIATION

As I write this article, preparations for the Annual Dinner on Friday 13 September are well underway and we anticipate this occasion will be a fantastic success.

In addition, the revamped Annual Newsletter will be published early this term. This will be the first OWA Newsletter produced by the School, and we hope that it captures the best of the old style and embraces the changes we consider are needed to grow the Association, and ensure it has resonance with younger generations of OWs. We also hope the Newsletter will allow the strength of our alumnus to benefit the School, each other, and current pupils. Please let me or the School know your thoughts, and constructive criticism is very welcome. This is your Association, your Newsletter and we wish to ensure broad support.

A question often asked of the Headmaster, Mike Skelly when he meets up with OWs is whether WHSB remains a 'local school'. The simple answer to that is yes, very much so. Entry to School is at Year 7, the School remains selective and therefore applicants need to sit the 11+ examination and meet a minimum score. Year 7 has 6 Forms and 191 pupils, the largest in the School's history, and 80% of these places are reserved for those living in the SS0 - SS9 postcodes. Very pleasingly - and this is a vast improvement on the past - the number of boys within the priority catchment area meeting the pass mark and wishing to attend WHSB has been close to or above the number of available places. The remaining 20% of places are available to any boy outside of the priority catchment area and selection is by the highest 11+ score.

Many of you will recall the long jump track and pit located in the lower field. This is in need of replacement after very many years of use by thousands of pupils. It has played an important part in the track and field success of the School's athletes. Old Westcliffian Max Cole and his father Anthony, who is Joint Chair of the Governing Board, are raising funds to support the School in its wish to replace the track. They are aiming to climb Mount Kilimanjaro in Northeastern Tanzania and are seeking sponsorship. Please do support them in this incredibly difficult endeavour by sponsoring them using the link included in this edition of *The Westcliff Diary*, or via Facebook.



*Nothing But Thieves*

One of the new features in the Newsletter is a 'Where Are They Now?' column. We thought it would be fascinating to seek your assistance to understand more about our Alumnus, particularly those who have reached national and / or international stature in the fields of sport and culture. Kicking this quest off is Nothing But Thieves, an alternative / indie group which was formed by musicians who met at WHSB in the late 2000s. The band is now an international success, playing to sell-out audiences all over the world. In July 2024, the band was special guest to Green Day at Wembley Stadium, playing before an audience of just under 100,000. The question is, have any other OWs played before a larger audience? Please let us know!

*Jon Gershinson, Secretary OWA  
secretary@oldwestcliffianorganisation.org*

### Jimmy Harrison, Old Westcliffian



It was with great sadness that I heard the news of Jimmy Harrison's passing. Jimmy left us on Monday 22 July.

Jimmy was educated at Westcliff High School for Boys (1945-1951) before completing military service and attending Loughborough College. He returned to the School as a teacher of Physical Education in 1956, taking over the Physical Education

Department in 1971, and served with distinction for 35 years. In recognition of his service the School's Sports Hall bears his name - The Jim Harrison Hall.

Jimmy was a larger-than-life character who inspired and encouraged many generations of Westcliffians. During his tenure, the School enjoyed considerable success in a range of sports. I know that many Old Westcliffians will have fond memories of Jimmy, not least of the many school trips he ran, be it on tour with a team, skiing down slopes, or cycling through the Netherlands. As a young teacher, I lodged at Jimmy's home, and my own memories are of his infectious enthusiasm, good humour, kindness and passion for sport (particularly rugby).

Every team has its star performers and Jimmy was one of our finest. His positive influence lives on through all those he taught at WHSB and we are immensely grateful for his tremendous service. Jimmy's funeral took place on Friday 30 August and the School's flags flew at half-mast on that day as mark of our respect.

*Headmaster*

### **With Our Thanks: Raising Funds for Westcliff High School for Boys**

If you have been following our School News, you will know that in the recent English Schools Athletics Association (ESAA) National Final in Stoke-on-Trent our Junior and Intermediate Boys Teams gave spectacular performances, with our Intermediate Boys Team gaining a podium place and coming an impressive Third in the country. No less impressive were the performances of our Junior Boys Team, who exceeded their own target for the day, placing them fourth nationally.

Our athletes continue to train hard in order to maintain their position among some of the best Junior and Intermediate athletes in England. The School's athletics facilities and equipment are now failing badly and the condition of the tartan is so poor that it must now be replaced if we are to provide the facilities we need.





Kibo Peak, Mount Kilimanjaro

To be clear, our tartan facility is not merely something which is 'nice to have' for our top athletes; this effectively serves as an outdoor classroom for all our pupils. Aside from providing a surface for long-jump and other athletics training, for example hurdles training, this is a surface on which skills are taught to all pupils when engaging in physical education lessons, and it is important for general fitness.

The price quoted for replacement of the tartan facility and associated equipment is an eye-watering £50,000. You are likely to be aware that funding for schools has been in serious decline for over 10 years, with many schools now in a budget deficit position. We continue to manage our budgets carefully, but without your help will not be able to replace the tartan and other facilities, as there are so many competing pressures on our budget.

I would like to record my sincere thanks to Old Westcliffian Max Cole, and his father Anthony, Co-Chair of Governors at WHSB, who took on the ambitious challenge of climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, Northeastern Tanzania in September this year and, in doing so, set out to raise much needed funding for a new tartan facility. We are delighted with their efforts on behalf of the School and would be most grateful for the support of Old Westcliffians, parents, and friends of the School through sponsorship.

To donate, please use the following bank account details:  
**Lloyds Bank, Sort code: 30-97-84, Account number: 34480360**  
**Account name: Westcliff High School for Boys**  
**Please add the reference: KILIMANJARO**

The School is also able to accept donations by cash, cheque, or bank transfer directly. A donation in any form may be accompanied by a Gift Aid form (if applicable) <https://www.whsb.essex.sch.uk/key-information/news/supporting-westcliff-high-school-for-boys-climbing-mount-kilimanjaro>.

### WHSB Alumni: Jack Chesher

Jack describes himself as "an author, tour guide and blogger". With a substantial following on social media, he now runs his own successful London tour company "Living London History". He has also written a best-selling book "London, A Guide for Curious Wanderers" and produces a weekly newsletter for subscribers to his website.

Jack grew up in Leigh-on-Sea, where his family still live, and with London being so close, spent a great deal of time visiting its various museums, inspiring his passion for history. After leaving Westcliff High School for Boys, he studied a BA in History at the University of Bristol, moving to the South West and living there



Gift Aid enables the school to benefit by a further 25% of voluntary donations given, so do please complete the Gift Aid Declaration form if you are an eligible UK taxpayer. You may return it to Mr Rotheron (Director of Finance and Accounting) by email [rothons@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:rothons@whsb.essex.sch.uk), or to the School Bursar Mrs Darby [darbyn@whsb.essex.sch.uk](mailto:darbyn@whsb.essex.sch.uk), or by post or by leaving the form at Reception (the pupil name on the form may be left blank or marked N/A if you do not have a child at the School).

Please give as generously as you are able in order to help the School to reach our fundraising goal for this replacement sports facility. Equally, should you wish to discuss a donation to the School to assist with the funding challenges we now face, please do get in touch with me directly, as I would be pleased to meet with you to discuss your wishes.

At the time of writing, Max and Anthony are to ascend the tallest mountain in Africa, and the highest free-standing mountain in the world, they will Trek through the unique and incredibly varied flora and fauna, lush rainforests and high-alpine deserts, to vast ice fields and glorious glaciers. This immense mountain is made up of three volcanoes: Shira, Mawenzi, and their goal, Kibo, the tallest one in the middle. Our climbers have a demanding schedule planned over seven days, accompanied by a local guide. On behalf of the entire School community, I thank both Max and Anthony for their generosity in supporting the School through their adventure. I would also like to thank you for your support.

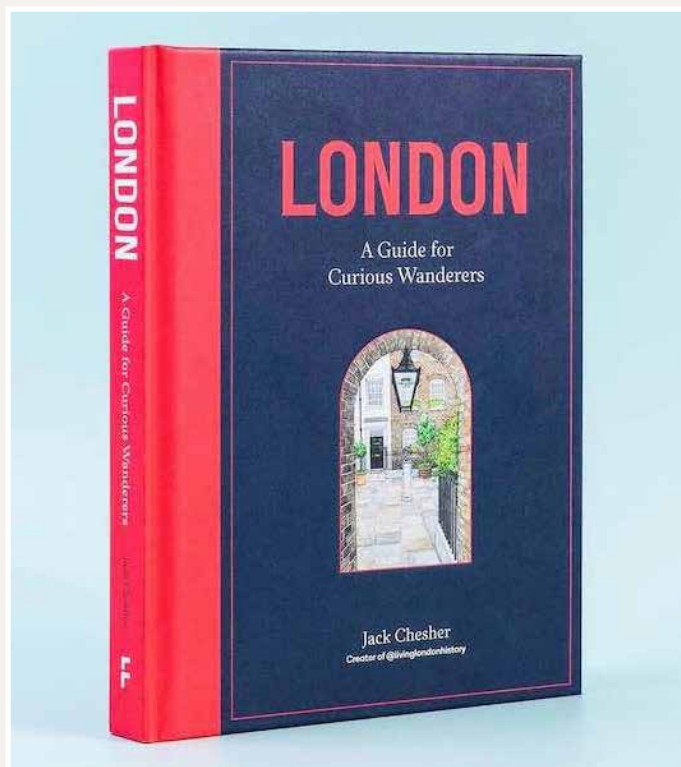
Headmaster



for several years. After completing his degree, and four years into a career within hotel management, Jack launched “Living London History” as a weekly blog post back in August 2020. This was somewhat of a pandemic project, with the hospitality industry seriously impacted by Covid-19 and Jack finding himself not having much else to do other than walk around London. To reflect his interest in the history surrounding people as they go about their everyday lives, he started voraciously exploring the city and its environs, and writing about his findings to a few keen subscribers. Jack said: “I started this blog to share my journey discovering London’s fascinating past, by walking its bustling grand streets, diving down its mysterious alleyways and strolling along the banks of the Thames. I believe that the city itself is the greatest and most interesting museum of all.”

In 2021, Jack took part in Open City’s Golden Key Academy guiding course, and in October 2021 he started running his guided walks of London’s hidden history. He describes his walks as “focusing on one area of London at a time, with the aim to uncover its stories, point out the little details many miss, really get under the city’s skin, and ultimately share my passion for the city’s history.” In June 2022, having built up his subscribers, Jack resigned from his day job and took his tour company “Living London History” full time, saying he has not looked back since. April 2023 saw the publication of his best-selling book “London: A Guide For Curious Wanderers”, Jack describing this as his “guide to London’s quirks, oddities and often overlooked details”. Beautifully illustrated and containing self-guided walking maps to discover the city, this Sunday Times Bestseller is available worldwide and is currently listed by Amazon in the UK as the Number 1 most gifted book in their Local and Urban Cultural History titles. For details of how to subscribe to Jack’s weekly newsletter, or for further information on his guided tours of London, visit his “Living London History” website: <https://livinglondonhistory.com/>. “Living London History” can also be followed on social media.

Mrs J Clarke, Community Development Officer





### The CCF Annual Pass Off Parade and Dinner

We were delighted to see so many Old Westcliffians returning to the School for our Combined Cadet Force Dinner this year. This was a special dinner following our Pass Off parade at which many cadets were celebrating their achievements through awards and promotions. We were also saying farewell to Mr Bleakley who has held the role of Contingent Commander since 2012, and were pleased that so many of our cadets from the early days could join us for this occasion.



### School-led Teaching Internship Programme

Following a successful recruitment campaign, last academic year we were delighted to welcome back four Old Westcliffians to WHSB to complete the School-led Teaching Internship Programme, part of a Department for Education initiative. Targeted at undergraduates studying for a degree in STEM-related subjects or languages, the aim of the Internship Programme is to give those participating a taste of teaching before considering it as a career.

Our interns last year; Jathniel, Sachin, William and Ethan are studying for degrees in Mathematics, Chemistry, Computing, and Modern Foreign Languages. During the three-week programme, they shadowed experienced teachers, observed lessons, and gained experience of what school life is like for a teacher outside the classroom. We thank them for participating in the programme and wish them well for the future.

We are grateful to Miss Lo and Mrs Williams for facilitating the programme, and to Miss Negus, Mr Chanut, Mr Lo and Mr Steel for mentoring the interns.

*Headmaster*

# CALENDAR FOR AUTUMN TERM 2024

Tuesday 3 September	<b>STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY</b>	17 - 20 October	CCF Royal Navy Section Trafalgar Day Parade in London
Wednesday 4 September	<b>AUTUMN TERM BEGINS, 8.40am</b>	Friday 18 October	Charity Events
	Years 7, 9, 11, New Lower Sixth and Staff Individual Photographs		Year 7 Phase 1 Report Issued (Data Only)
Thursday 12 September	Battlefields Trip Parents Information Evening, Westcliff Theatre, 7.30pm - 8.30pm	Tuesday 22 October	Year 11 Phase 1 Report Issued (Data Only)
	Lower Sixth Education Evening, 7.30pm - 9.00pm		Music and Drama Trip to Hamilton, London, 3.40pm - 12.30am
Friday 13 September	Old Westcliffian Association Dinner, 6.00pm - 10.00pm	Thursday 24 October	Year 9 Phase 1 Report Issued (Data Only)
Monday 16 September	Year 7 Parents - Welcome to Westcliff, 6.30pm - 7.00pm	Friday 25 October	Lost Property Reclaim
	Year 7 Helping Parents to Help Their Son, 7.00pm - 8.30pm	<b>28 October - 1 November</b>	<b>AUTUMN HALF TERM</b>
	Parents' Association AGM, 7.00pm - 8.00pm	<b>28 - 31 October</b>	Sixth Form Geography to Trip Norway
Tuesday 17 September	Years 11 and Upper Sixth Art to London Galleries, 8.40am - 6.00pm	<b>Monday 4 November</b>	<b>STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY</b>
Wednesday 18 September	Norway Trip Parents Information Evening, Westcliff Theatre, 7.30pm to 8.30pm	Thursday 7 November	Speech Day - School Closes at 12.50pm
Thursday 19 September	Mental Health Information Evening, 7.30pm - 9.00pm	Friday 8 November	Year 8 Phase 1 Report Issued (Data Only)
Friday 20 September	Enrichment Day	Monday 11 November	Annual Service of Remembrance, 8.45am - 9.30am
	Year 7 Trip to Thriftwood	Tuesday 12 November	Parents' Association Meeting via Zoom, 7.30pm - 9.00pm
	Year 8 Enrichment Science Day	Thursday 14 November	Sixth Form Open Evening, 6.30pm - 9.00pm
	Year 9 Trip to Imperial War Museum, Duxford	Friday 15 November	Year 10 Phase 1 Report Issued (Data Only)
	Year 10 Humanities Enrichment Day	<b>18 - 26 November</b>	Year 11 Trial Examinations
	Year 11 and Upper Sixth Trip to Nuclear Races	Monday 18 November	Year 7 Parents Consultation Evening, 4.00pm - 6.00pm
	Lower Sixth Mental Health Day	Thursday 21 November	Lower Sixth at Biology Live, London, 8.15am - 6.00pm
	Upper Sixth Trip to Science Museum and Kensington Palace		Rigoletto, The Coliseum London, 4.15pm - 11.15pm
	Upper Sixth Trip to Sizewell	Monday 25 November	Ski Trip Parents Information Evening, Westcliff Theatre, 7.00pm - 8.00pm
20 - 21 September	Year 9 Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Assessment	Wednesday 27 November	Upper Sixth Parents Consultation Evening, 4.00pm - 6.00pm
20 - 22 September	Year 11 History Battlefields Trip	Thursday 28 November	Careers in Finance Evening, 7.00pm - 8.30pm
Saturday 21 September	11+ Main Test Day		Spanish Trip Parents Information Evening, Westcliff Theatre, 7.00pm - 8.00pm
23 - 27 September	Upper Sixth Formative Assessments	Saturday 30 November	Autumn Sinfonia Concert, 7.30pm - 9.00pm
Thursday 26 September	Year 9 Helping Parents to Help Their Son, 7.30pm - 9.00pm	<b>2 - 3 December</b>	History Trip to Hampton Court Palace, 8.15am - 6.00pm
Friday 27 September	Lower Sixth Geology Trip to Folkestone, 8.30am - 6.00pm	Wednesday 4 December	GCSE Music Recording
Saturday 28 September	CCF Royal Navy Section Field Day, Grangewaters Outdoor Education Centre, 9.00am - 5.15pm	Friday 6 December	Years 7 to 11 Flu Immunisations
30 September - 4 October	Year 11 Formative Assessments	<b>9 - 18 December</b>	Christmas With The Big Band, 7.30pm - 10.00pm
Tuesday 1 October	Year 9 Take Your Child to Work Day	Monday 9 December	Lower Sixth Formative Examinations
	11+ Alternative Test Day	<b>11 - 13 December</b>	Year 8 Parents Consultation Evening, 4.00pm - 6.00pm
Thursday 3 October	Years 8 and 9 to Dracula, Palace Theatre, 7.15pm - 9.50pm	Friday 13 December	Christmas Drama Performance: The Box of Delights, 7.30pm - 9.00pm
	Year 10 Education Evening, 7.30pm - 9.00pm		Year 11 Trial Examination Report Issued (Data Only)
	Year 9 CCF Interest Evening, 7.30pm - 8.30pm	Monday 16 December	Geology Conference
Friday 4 October	Lower Sixth Phase 1 Report Issued (Initial Indications)		Charity Events
7 - 11 October	CCF Field Days Week		Year 11 Geology Trip to Natural History Museum, 9.00am - 6.00pm
Wednesday 9 October	Year 11 Road Safety Play <i>Dead End</i> , 8.50am - 10.00am	Thursday 19 December	Leavers' Certificate Collection, 3.45pm - 5.00pm
Friday 11 October	Upper Sixth Phase 1 Report Issued (Data Only)	<b>Friday 20 December</b>	Festival of Lessons and Carols, 7.30pm - 9.00pm
Saturday 12 October	WCCG Go for Grammar All Things Creative Day, 8.30am - 3.00pm	<b>Monday 6 January</b>	Lost Property Reclaim
Thursday 17 October	Autumn Chamber Recital, 7.30pm - 9.00pm	<b>Tuesday 7 January</b>	<b>AUTUMN TERM ENDS, 2.45pm</b>
			<b>STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY</b>
			<b>SPRING TERM BEGINS</b>

Tickets for all Westcliff Diary events can be purchased via TicketSource at <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on/westcliff-on-sea/westcliff-high-school-for-boys/>



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