



THE MESSENGER



Dear Parents/Carers

It is fantastic to be able to share details of so many of the amazing activities which have been going in school recently. This edition also includes some of the exciting opportunities which are coming up as well. We are looking forward to Blue Coat Sunday on Sunday 5th March, a service which begins at 10.45a.m. in St. Matthew's Church. We also have a special event on Tuesday 7th March at St. Matthew's beginning at 7.00p.m. where we will be welcoming back former Blue Coat students from various points over the last 60+ years to share their stories and let us know what they have been up to since leaving Blue Coat - everyone is welcome. More details are on the school website:

<https://www.bluecoatacademy.org/home/an-evening-with-the-old-blues/>

We are delighted that the report from our recent Ofsted inspection has now been published. The inspectors have recognised that Blue Coat continues to be a 'Good' school and the report outlines many of the positive aspects of our school.



UPCOMING DATES

- Year 8 Parents Evening - 2nd March
- Year 7 & 8 Careers Fair - 8th March
- Year 7 Parents Evening 23rd March

SMITH'S MYTHS

- A: Sharks are mammals.
- B: Saturn is the largest planet in the solar system.
- C: The femur is the largest bone in your body.
- D: In Japan there are square watermelons.

PRAYER CORNER

Dear God, I will praise you with all my heart. I will speak about your marvelous work. I will rejoice and sing your praise. Be my refuge and strength in times of trouble, for I put my trust in you. Give me endurance for my sorrows have multiplied. May the joy of the Lord be my strength even in hopeless situations. Strengthen and uphold me with your righteous right hand. You are my God; I will praise you forever. In Jesus' name, I believe and pray, Amen.

YOUNG WRITERS COMPETITION 2023



The Rotary Club of Walsall is holding a creative writing competition and Blue Coat CofE students aged between 11-15 are being invited to enter.

Young writers are being asked to submit a story or poem entitled '*Climate Change isn't Cool*'. If you would like to take part, here's what you need to know:

- Stories should be between 125 and 500 words
- Poems should be between 75 and 300 words
- Entries may be handwritten or typed
- All entries should be received on or before Friday 17th March 2023 and should clearly display your name, age and school.
- Entries can be submitted electronically to youngwriters@walsallrotary.org or by post to The Organiser, Young Writers Competition, Walsall Rotary Club, 336 Skip Lane, Walsall WS5 3RA.

Prizes will be awarded for the best five entries, with the next best thirty entries all receiving special awards.

In 2022, the County Bridge Primary School won the prize for the highest number of entries into the competition and their prize was a forest of over 300 trees planted near their school! The trees were supplied by the Woodland Trust and planted on land supplied by Walsall Council.

Maybe we could win a very special prize for our entries in 2023? Good luck! From The English Department.



SCIENCE COMPETITION WINNERS

All KS3 and 4 year groups took part in an online science competition between 3 & 7pm on a Friday before the end of the Christmas term. It was based on content they are learning in their science lessons. The 1st place pupils won a £10 amazon gift voucher. The pupils also competed in forms as well and won points for the league tables shown on Friday assemblies.

We had a total of 116 pupils enter from yr7-11, with some spending a lot of time (hours...literally) and effort to secure the points for themselves and their form groups. This will be a half termly event going forward.

The winners are:

Year 11:

1st - Rohan Meares (KJT/KAA)
2nd - Antoni Kisiecki (MSP)
3rd - Kehinde Ibrinde (APB)

Year 8:

1st - Achsha Daniel (SSK)
2nd - Prosper Akoegbele (AG)
3rd - Laibah Khurram (KPA)

Year 10:

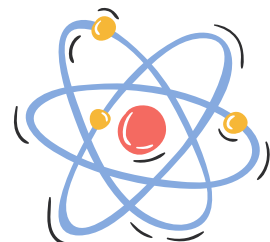
1st - Naqeeb Ur Rehman (SJG)
2nd - Darisha Danieal (SJG)
3rd Sam Ramos (SCB)

Year 7:

1st - Sumaia Kabir (SBH)
2nd - Shakayla Williams (SPK)
3rd - Cyra Walker (VIK)

Year 9:

1st - Olanike Ojetoro-Amachree (LAG)
2nd - Noreen Masanja (JAB)
3rd - Alessia-Maria Coroi (LAG)



SCIENCE COMPETITION WINNERS

The results from the week of 13th Feb are as follows:

Year 11:

1st - Antoni Kisiecki (MSP)

2nd - Mason Simonds
(11KJT/KAA)

3rd - Condoliza Tagedin
(11MSP)

Year 10:

1st - Elijah Ibrinde (10SSK)

2nd - Gamu Kandemiri
(10ANM/FAD)

3rd - Darisha Daniel (10HCT)

Year 9:

1st - Olanike Ojetoro-
Amachree (LAG)

2nd - Harley Walker (ARO)

3rd - Matilda Jones (JAB)

Year 8:

1st - Achsha Daniel (RAA)

2nd - Keyonte St Martin (RSV)

3rd - Rehaan Shabir (8AG)

Year 7:

1st - Safiya Oates (TG)

2nd - Rayyan Sidique (VIK)

3rd - Isaac Agada (SPK)

CHINESE NEW YEAR & INDIAN FOOD THEME DAY

Food glorious food!

To celebrate Chinese New Year
this year our catering service
Miquill provided our students
with a delicious range of
Chinese food.



An Indian themed day was also celebrated, and was very popular with the students!



STOP AND SEARCH WORKSHOP

On Monday 23rd January we held a Stop and Search workshop. We worked alongside the West Midlands Police Crime Reduction Partnership. Each year looked at the powers the police have in order to stop and search people and the police's responsibility to ensure that each stop and search is done within the law respecting each individual's rights throughout the search. We also looked at the rights we have as citizens should we be stopped and searched. Students engaged well in the session and asked lots of questions to our visitors who delivered this workshop.



SCHOOL EVENTS



Year 9 STEM Trip

We took a group of Year 9 girls on a STEM day to the University of Birmingham on 14.09.22.

They participated in a Camera-less Photography workshop and their reprinted cyanotypes from the session are currently on display at the Hive in the Jewellery Quarter, until 10 February 2023 (along with those of students from other schools).

Macbeth Production

Intrigue, scandal and conspiracy filled the hall on Friday 27th January when an amateur performance of William Shakespeare's Macbeth enraptured, bewitched and spellbound a hall full of year 10 students in preparation for their GCSE English Literature exams. The students represented the school very well and were attentive and respectful to the performers when they needed time for a scene change, and they later discussed how beneficial the performance was for their knowledge of the play.



SCHOOL EVENTS

Choir Trip to Grosvenor Road Studios

Just before Christmas the students in the choir and acapella vocal group had an exciting morning visiting Grosvenor Road Studios in Handsworth, Birmingham.

Whilst at the studio they recorded the song Stand Up from the film Harriet which is a true story based on the life of Harriet Tubman.

Whilst they were recording they were also videoed at work. The audio and video recordings are currently being edited by Joe Novelli from Son's of Pitches who works with the students every Thursday.

The finished track will hopefully be released on a YouTube channel before the end of February so look out for further news of where to see and hear it. Even listening to some draft recordings at the studio with Joe we know it is going to sound outstanding!



SCHOOL EVENTS

Year 9 Futures day

Year 9 took part in a Futures day which allowed them to explore their options for the future. They were able to take part in 6 sessions which covered the following:

Session 1: Walsall College - What does college look like?

Session 2: Skills Training UK - What do training providers offer?

Session 3: Aston University - What options are available at university?

Session 4: Unifrog - Pathways to next steps

Session 5: Apprenticeships - The Apprenticeship Route - levels and pathways

Session 6: Why Options Matter.

Feedback

"I found it helpful as it shows what colleges and University is like and it helped me worry less about my journey into KS4. I also know where to go and who to ask if I need extra help". - Muhammed DA 9ARO

"Just wanted to say a quick thank you for having me today. I've had such a great morning and the kids are so great." - Heidi from Skills Training.

What you need to know about... GAMING STREAMERS & INFLUENCERS



Part of our Gaming & Gambling Series

NOS

Gaming & Gambling



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What are they?

'Gaming Streamers & Influencers'

Streamers are people who stream themselves gaming, drawing, making things etc. for people to watch on the internet. Usually this will be done live, and others are able to chat with them in real time while they do so. Influencers are social media stars who hold influence over the people that follow them, like a kind of trend-setter or taste-maker, who companies often pay to promote their products. A streamer could also be considered an influencer in their chosen area.

JADAGAMING

LIVE

Know the Risks

Adult Content

Many streamers use platforms such as Twitch or YouTube to broadcast themselves. YouTube for example, is only for ages 13+ (YouTube kids is for under 13s) and may contain a lot of other adult content. Streamers themselves, may be unsuitable for younger audiences with the kind of content they make, and with many opting to stream live, anything can – and does – happen.

Authenticity Risk

A lot of streamers will have some kind of sponsorship deal in place with a company trying to sell their products to an audience. When the audience is mostly younger viewers, they may not realise that streamers are getting paid to promote a product and may not necessarily have their best interests in mind.

Bullying and hate

While some streamers do employ moderators to try and combat hateful comments or bullying in their comments sections, they can still be very hectic. Hateful language is quite common, and people looking to groom children or engage in online bullying behaviour, could frequent the live chats.

Subscriptions

Streamers also make money through subscriptions on websites like Twitch, where fans will donate them a small amount as little or as often as they like. Called 'bits', they can be bought in bundles of varying prices which can be gifted to streamers via 'cheers'. Children could buy these 'bits' in large amounts without realising what they're doing, leaving a big bill behind.

Safety Tips

Discuss what's real online

Be sure to teach kids the difference between what's real and honest, or fake and untrustworthy online. Photoshopping fake images and videos and bragging about themselves online is unfortunately quite commonplace so it is difficult to tell what is real or fake. People with large followings can be promoting unhealthy or unattainable lifestyles to children to boost their own online influence.

Use filters

There are filters that can be put in place to block out a lot of adult content on streaming sites. Just make sure you have access to children's accounts so you can set the parameters and keep track of what they're seeing yourself. Usually, parental controls will be located in the settings portion of an account's menu.

Check age settings

Both YouTube and Twitch state that they are not suitable for children under 13 years old, but other sites might be different. YouTube Kids, for example, is for ages 13 and under, and offers much of the same kid-friendly content that YouTube does without the risk of running into something improper.

Affiliate links

Keep an eye out for affiliate links in social media posts and tags like #ad. UK influencers have to follow the CAP Code for advertising standards, but many don't. It can be hard to tell who is working through legitimate channels because it's almost impossible to regulate. Many streamers encourage fans to buy merchandise through online shops and stores.

Action & Support

Name check streamers

If your child has begun showing an interest in a streamer or influencer, check their names on Google. Some popular streamers have been discovered flouting industry regulations and using their young audiences to enhance their personal wealth through scams whilst others may swear on streams or promote drinking, substance abuse or links to gambling sites they operate to their young audiences.

Talk to your child

Initiate an open dialogue with your child about the kind of content they're consuming online. Ask about their favourite streamers and whether they like their personalities or the games they play and the community they have. Also remind them about what they should and shouldn't be sharing about themselves online and that just because social media stars do it, it can also be damaging.

Block and report

If you suspect a streamer might be taking advantage of their audience, or worse grooming children in any way, and have irrefutable evidence, do not hesitate to block and report them. First, block your child from being able to view their content and alert other parents to your concerns. Go immediately to the police or local authorities with the evidence of what you've seen.

Our Expert Mark Foster



Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for 5 years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the current gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UNILAD Gaming and GAMINGbible. Starting gaming from a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work, but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.