

# WEST KIRBY SCHOOL

A DAY AND RESIDENTIAL SPECIALIST SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

## West Kirby News

Winter 2019/2020

Welcome to 2020!

Wishing all our young people a positive year ahead!



Collaborative schools 'Writepath project'



West Kirby School maintains 'Autism Accreditation' Awarded by The National Autistic Society

New term round up so far!



Christmas Enterprise Fair



Duke of Edinburgh update



Celebration Awards Evening

## Message from the Principal, Miss Thomas



Dear All,

Welcome to 2020 - I can hardly believe it's here already!

Recently, in the study of other cultures our Mandarin Chinese teacher, Mrs Cui, has taught us that in the Chinese Zodiac 2020 is the Year of the Rat. We have been interested to learn that the characteristics of people born in this year are:

*'Very industrious and thrifty, diligent and positive'.*

As we work with our young people we are pleased to see all the lovely hard work and progress they make towards reaching their targets and goals. It's a real pleasure for me to be part of a team of staff: TAs and clinical services; teachers and site team; care and support services; domestics, admin and the Senior Leadership Team - all of whom work so hard to help and support our pupils.

Recently there have been some changes in school, with a new primary class being set up and a teacher being employed in The Zone. Change is never easy, Winston Churchill said, *'To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often'.*

I can't claim that we are perfect - I know I'm certainly not!- but I do want to extend a huge thank you to Miss Wood and her team and to Mrs Ryding and The Zone team, who are working with brand new teacher, Mrs Eccles. All these staff have managed great change this term and have supported our students really well throughout. We know this because our pupils tell us, but also due to feedback from parent/carers. A parent of a pupil in Y6 has told us her child has been..

*'The happiest and calmest he's ever been'.*

As ever, we are grateful to you parents and carers who work tirelessly with us, helping your children to achieve and to make the best possible progress. Some days getting a teenager out of bed, getting a child on the taxi or a young person in through the school door can really difficult! However, your diligence and tenacity will help your child learn and thrive and we appreciate this.

So, in this Year of the Rat, I would like to offer a big THANK YOU, to all the 'industrious and thrifty, diligent and positive' parents, carers and staff who support our pupils every day.

We need you!

Warmest regards,

**Miss S. Thomas**

## West Kirby School maintains Autism Accreditation



**We're proud to announce following our recent assessment, we've maintained our Autism Accreditation status, across our school and residential settings.**

First accredited in 2013, we aspire to continually provide a high quality learning environment that nurtures, supports and develops our young people. This accreditation celebrates the work our dedicated staff team do to support our pupils.

National Autistic Society commented *"The committee found compelling evidence that the school provides personal centred educational, care and therapeutic support which reflects an understanding of autism."*

Other feedback comments include

*"Staff have a high knowledge of autism and how it impacts on young people and are able to support them."*

*"The schools curriculum is enriching and diverse."*

*"There is a strong focus on promoting well-being and raising self esteem."*

*"Feedback from both young people and parents/carers is overwhelmingly positive."*

*"Pupils commented to NAS "Teachers are friendly and approachable.. listen to their needs and ideas...support students when they are finding it difficult."*

## WKS achieves ADHD Friendly School status

We were proud to receive our ADHD Friendly School Award at the ADHD Foundation's annual conference in Liverpool in October. We're one of only five schools in Wirral to receive the award for championing and understanding ADHD.

The charity's national training director Colin Foley, who presented the award, said *"West Kirby School achieve outstanding academic outcomes with highly gifted intelligent children. They also provide highly individualised and very therapeutic provision for children with very complex needs."*

Liz Wynne, Assistant Head at the school, said: *"I'm thrilled that staff have recognition for their hard work and dedication to the pupils at West Kirby School."*



Mrs Wynne with ADHD Foundation Patron, Rory Bremner

# Christmas Enterprise market

Our first Christmas Enterprise market was a great success this year! We were pleased it was so well attended by our families, friends and local community, all supporting our young people. It raised over £400 towards our school fundraising.

The market was run by our classes, each with their own festive products. Each class has worked together on Christmas related items to sell, from Christmas tree decorations and wreaths, mince pies, plants, pebble pictures, recycled Christmas tree decorations, t-shirts, Christmas food treats and Christmas decorations. Classes had even produced posters, price lists and a website!

Our classes won prizes for Enterprise related skills such as Best team, Best recycled products, Most innovative products, Most profitable and our Overall enterprise team of the market - Post 16 Class LM.

*Thank to you all for coming along to make it a success!*



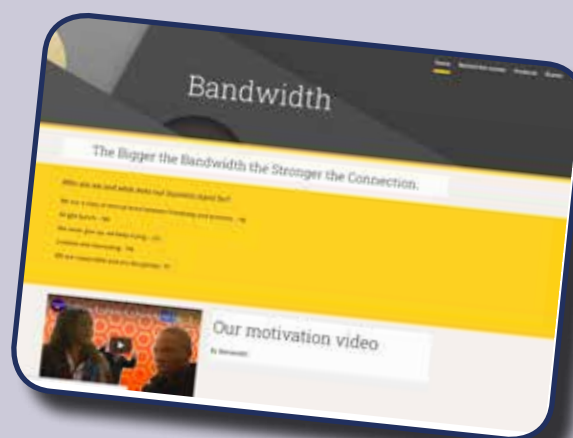


## Class LM – Enterprise project winners!

Our Post 16 class LM won the ‘Overall Enterprise Team’ at the market, with their T-shirt, mugs and recycled jewellery business.

Class LM had shown real Enterprise skills, created a business name, slogan and even thought through their ethos. They had done market research during an employer visit, gone through trial and error production challenges in DT, shown brilliant marketing skills with their website and produced excellent end products! Importantly they’d worked as a team and developed skills invaluable for their future pathways.

**Congratulations Class LM!**



# Our school vision and development plan

We are sharing our School Development Plan with parents, carers and pupils in a leaflet. This is our action plan for the school, the ways in which we want to improve and who is involved.

We'd like pupils to know we think about:

- Their Education
- Their Personal development
- Behaviour, attitudes and attendance of all of our students
- What our Principal and leadership team need to do to improve the school



## Parent Carer SEND workshops

Last term was the first of our Parent Carer SEN support workshops with our Clinical Psychologist, Dr. Ze'ev Levita. Thank you to all those that came along.

Covering topics relevant to our pupils, including Autism, ADHD, Emotional Regulation & Self Harm, these were intended to give an understanding of challenges facing our young people, and were open to all of our families. The nature of the small groups gave the opportunity for questions and discussions around the topic.

From the feedback we received we're pleased to see parents, carers and families found the sessions very worthwhile! Here's some of the comments:

*"Fantastic opportunity to meet other parents."*

*"A great insight"*



*"I have enjoyed the workshops, I have learnt a lot and have helped me more than any others."*

*"It is taught in a calming, informative way and gives you time to talk and respond."*

*"I would recommend any parent to attend these workshops."*

*"An opportunity to discuss different situations that work to help with your own situation"*

*"So helpful, so empowering"*

# PSHE update - Promoting British Values & Protected Characteristics

This term Miss Hercules has led on our pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.

Through assemblies and follow up class discussions and activities, pupils have been focusing on each of the Fundamental British Values, why they're important and then relating them to our school.



One pupil expressed "Without rules there's be chaos!" which led to a discussion about 'School Rules'!

On the theme of *Individual Liberty*, we're also talking about Protected Characteristics, promoting an inclusive environment and equality of opportunity at our school.

## Debating club encourages views & opinions!



Debating Club is a new lunch activity option, introduced by Mrs Clemenson, our English teacher. We've seen lots of good lively debates on a variety of topics! Themes so far have been 'Should climate change be on the curriculum?', 'Should mobile phones be banned in school', 'Roblox or Minecraft?'

Brilliant for encouraging and developing listening, taking turns, tolerating and accepting others' opinions. We've seen some fantastic research taking place in the library too.

Pupils say "Debating club is important, even if they do not join every week, as pupils can express their views and it gives children a voice."

They also commented "It helps build confidence and the English room is a nice and calm place."

# Pupil news

## Jack wins Merseyside Believe Award!



We're very proud of Jack winning an award for 'Overcoming Difficulties'. Believe Awards are run by YKids in Liverpool, partnering with Radio City's Cash for Kids, to celebrate inspirational young people. *Well done Jack!*



## 'Trust' theme Poetry competition winners!

Our English and Reading team ran a pupil and staff poetry competition which received some overwhelmingly talented entries.



### John wins 'Individual prize'

John was chosen as the pupil winner. Mrs Clemenson commented "We were all very moved by John's poem, as he expressed the sad loss of his friend and in spite of it ended it with a positive message."

### Class SB win Group prize!

*Trust is important in Class SB,  
We trust in food, fun, games, laughter and smiles you see,  
We trust that Archie will say lumbago at least 10 times,  
And the class will come together to find something that rhymes,  
We trust that Leon will keep the title 'Banana eating King'.....*

To read the full poem  
- visit the website  
Latest News!

## Kyle volunteers at local charity shop

As part of his Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award, we're proud Kyle has been volunteering regularly at a local charity shop and received some great feedback "Kyle has been very helpful in the running of the store and proven himself to be a valuable part of the team"



## Kaiden publishes novel 'Atlantis'

Our Librarian Miss Dennis commented "Kaiden had been working on a book by himself and came to see me to develop his writing skills and get the book published. (He has hopes to eventually sell his work on Amazon) I entered the finished piece of writing into the Engage Awards in the Innovation and Creativity category where he won the Gold Award."

Kaiden commented, "I have always been a BIG fan of Sci-Fi. This is what inspired me to write my novel, 2938 Atlantis which is a book in my non chronological series of books. It was a privilege for my book to be reviewed by Dan Freedman and I hope my book can inspire others! It is available on blurb for others to read and also available in our school library!"





# News from our Residential care

We'd like to share an update from our Residential Care team.

We have two community residential houses, staffed by a fabulous team who also work in the school during the day. We pride ourselves on the communication between the houses and school and how we provide a home from home feel.

Our resident told us about his move to the new house at the start of term: *"When I first moved to the Greasby house staff were really helpful in making sure that my room was ready and how I wanted it; they made sure that the wallpaper I picked was up before I came. I also like that staff made sure I was given time to settle in so that I could figure out my new routine. I am happy that now I have more peers to spend time with and since coming to Greasby we have been doing the majority of activities as a group which has helped me to be able to build up relationships with everyone."*



Jack's wallpaper to personalise his room

Residents talked to us about Community activities such as working with Wirral Foodbank through collections in school, active Tuesdays, the Hive and other activities:



## **What I like about Active Tuesdays**

*"I think that Active Tuesdays are really important because if we weren't active and didn't go on regular walks then we would just be sitting around not getting enough exercise" – J*

*"Active Tuesday helps me to build up my independence and activities like the food bank help us to give something back to the community" – D*

*"It's good for my exercise" – N*



**From the Care team**

*Thanks to Jack Wilks, member of the Care team, for the update!*

# Wheelchair rugby and Judo

Our young people across the school have been trying new sports - Judo and wheelchair rugby has been a real success!

With mixed groups, pupils have got stuck in. Character building, learning new skills, working within the boundaries of rules and showing brilliant team, winning and losing skills.

Not to forget all the physical activity that is perfect for regulating our pupils!

*Thank you to Sale Sharks and Judo Education.*



# Anti-bullying week awareness

In November our Pastoral Care team Mr Brown and Miss Killey organised a week of activities to raise awareness of Anti-Bullying Week, with the theme this year is 'Change Starts With Us'.

We kicked off with a wear Blue day to help raise initial awareness, followed by an assembly, class based activities, Odd Socks Day and finally a local Drama company Curious Minds delivered thought provoking interactive workshops with various groups across the school.

Pupils also enjoyed making and selling themed cupcakes with Miss Hercules to raise money for anti-bullying.



Pupil communicating how bullying would make you feel using our 'Zones of Regulation'



# Celebration Awards evening 2020



Our Awards evening was a memorable night to celebrate the achievements of our young people.

Pupils were awarded with certificates for all qualifications, awards and Duke of Edinburgh.

We welcomed back our Post 16 pupils who have moved on

to their future pathways including college and apprenticeship settings.

It was good to see so many current and ex-pupils with their families, who enjoyed being re-united to share their stories.

Thanks to everybody who came!



Congratulations and good luck to you all!

# Duke of Edinburgh update



Duke of Edinburgh is a popular option at KS4, a key part of the optional curriculum for our pupils. Our young people enjoy learning new life skills and developing personal skills such as teamwork, getting along with new pupils, independence, challenge and resilience. Along with the sense of achievement and progression it offers.

## New DofE room

Our group are very proud of their new room and learning environment. Now able to display resources, learning materials and use the space for learning activities such as map reading and putting up tents. Also utilising the outside space for lots of activities too.

## New Bronze group

We're pleased to see we have a good new intake of pupils doing the Bronze award this term, they've ploughed head-on into their expedition training scheme. Good luck!

## Congratulations!

Big congratulations to our pupils from last year who gained their Bronze - Kyle, Alfie, Nathanael and our leavers Morgan & Matthew.



## Mrs Draycott sharing good SEND teaching practices

We're very proud our DofE Lead Mrs Draycott who shared SEND teaching practice ideas to create inclusive learning for all pupils, in her presentation at the North - Western region DofE conference.

If you're aged 14 or older and are interested in joining the adventure next year, speak to Mrs Draycott to find out more!



Thanks to everyone who continues to support our pupils. Please follow us on twitter to keep up with our adventures!

[@WestKirbySchool](https://twitter.com/WestKirbySchool) [#wksdofe](https://twitter.com/wksdofe)

# Author day - Dan Freedman visit

Local author Dan Freedman, known also as the writer behind the Jamie Johnson CBBC TV series, joined us in December for our Author Day. Organised by our Reading Support mentor Mrs Abernethy.

Pupils enjoyed his open style question and answer session, asking many exploring questions around reading and writing, and very popular, the signed football prize for the best question!

Thanks to Dan for also kindly giving a book to every pupil in the school.



*Corey - Proud winner of the signed football!*



# 'Write Path' collaborative writing project

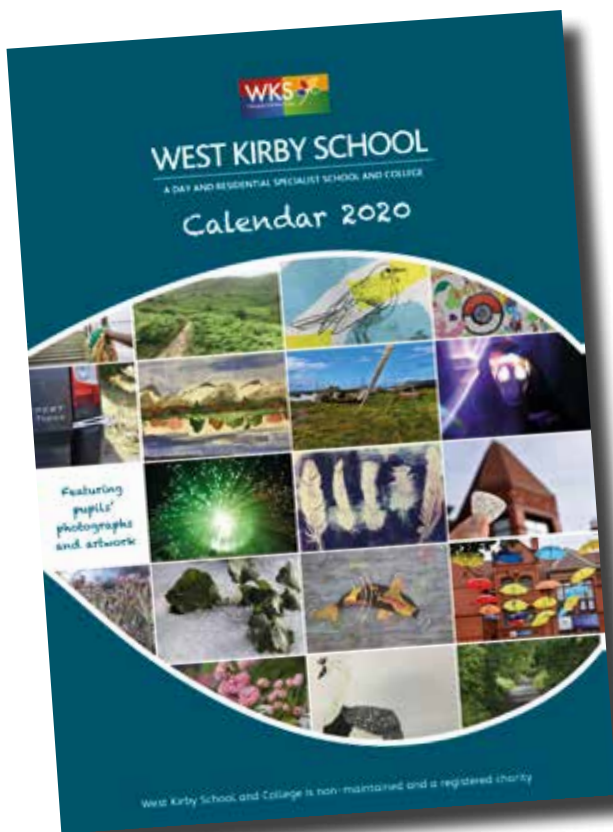
Organised by our English department and Reading support team, pupils joined in with an International collaborative writing project 'Write Path'.

With various stories started by authors, our pupils took pleasure in choosing a story that took their interest, writing for an hour, creating the next chapter, taking the story on a different twist or leaving it on a cliff hanger, working in groups or independantly!

We look forward to receiving the final published books with our pupil's names printed proudly by their contributions.



# Artistic talent for school calendar



For those who saw our school calendar and Christmas card, you'll recognise the fabulous creative talents of our pupils, from Year through to Post 16.

Artwork featured included photography, drawing, watercolour, gelli plate print, acrylic, mixed media & monoprint.

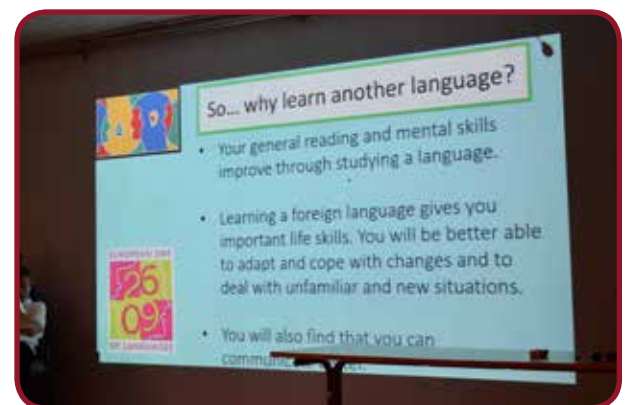
Tom and Codey's artwork were winners in the Engage Creative awards 2019!



# European Day of Languages

To celebrate European Day of Languages and raise awareness of learning alternative languages, Mrs Clemenson, English and MFL teacher led an assembly.

Not only did we look at the benefits of learning another language, our talented teachers took it in turn to introduce their specialist language, including Mrs Brown French, Mrs Clemenson German, Mr Cable Spanish, Mrs Cui Chinese, Miss Millington Sign Language and finally, we were very proud of one of our pupils who did Welsh!



# Careers and Pathways update

Our Career & Pathways Officer, Helen Shallcross has an update....

What a brilliant first term back! I am now joining pupils from year 7 to Post 16 pupils in their classes on a weekly basis to sow the seeds for their **future aspirations** and **pathways**. We have covered a variety of topics from specific career sector information, such as Catering and Hospitality, to looking at labour market information (ILM), to visiting local employers and colleges with the Post 16 pupils.

Miss Millington's class, used their careers sessions with **employer visits** to enhance their 'enterprise' project. They visited the Bridge Cafe and Woodside Ferry Village, where the pupils were able to engage with the managers and staff, ask about how they accessed catering and started their business up, and as a reward, they had a cooked breakfast of their choice!



We hosted our third **Transition Evening** in November for parents/carers and pupils to meet with local colleges. Alongside the colleges, we had Autism Together, WIRED and Career Connect to provide advice and guidance on advocacy and other services for the future. This event whilst is in the safety of our school, provides the initial contact for some our parents/carers and pupils.



We have had Barry Thomas, an **independent Career Advisor** from Career Connect offering 1:1 sessions offering personal guidance to assist our pupils to make the right choices for their future aspirations.



As the word 'transition' promotes changing, and change can be difficult for our pupils, I have had a job title change to *Career & Pathways Officer*. This new job title reflects more about what I do in the school with the pupils. I am still supporting our parents, carers and pupils with the career pathways and preparing them for their routes out of WKS.

**If you do need to get in touch with me, please email [hshallcross@wkrs.co.uk](mailto:hshallcross@wkrs.co.uk) or ring 0151 632 3201**



# Online safety update

Here at West Kirby we promote online safety with pupils. Thanks to Liam in our Residential Care department for his CEOP updates, here's some of the information we've shared. You'll find much more on the [www.net-aware.org.uk](http://www.net-aware.org.uk)

## Online gaming safety

NSPCC joined forces with O2 to help parents explore and understand online life as kids know it. They worked with 674 parents and carers, and 1,696 young people to review the sites, apps and games that children use.



## Net Aware

**Net Aware** is the O2 and NSPCC guide for parents to the most popular sites, apps and games that young people use. Using Net Aware, parents can form their own views about whether an app, site or game is appropriate for their children.



## Class KH Christmas community art project



Pupils from Class KH produced ceramic and paper decorations to decorate a Christmas tree with our neighbours at West Kirby Methodist church. The work was produced in their art lessons, the pupils then took the work down to the church, helped set up the display and looked around the church.

*Mrs Davies, Art teacher*



## Annual school walk

Thanks to Mr Saunders, we had our annual school walk in October. Pupils and staff enjoyed the opportunity to walk and chat, with mixed groups all taking it at their own pace, meeting at Thurstaston for lunch. There was a choice of walks, from a ten or five mile along the Wirral way back to school, to a local one, or even a bike ride to make sure everyone is included in the activities.

*Well done everybody!*

## WKS Macmillan Coffee morning raises £236!

Our Class LT Cafe hosted our own Macmillan coffee morning, welcoming our families and local community.

It was a lovely atmosphere and we're proud to have raised £236!

Class LT run their cafe as an Enterprise project within school. Hosting the cafe in their classroom, they go shopping



for cafe items, produce the menus and take on different roles including kitchen, taking orders, producing the bills and generally keeping their customers happy!

They also run our Parent Support Group, so come along next time!

## Christmas dinner & panto

Pupils enjoyed our traditional annual Christmas dinner, all gathered in the hall! Those young people in the Zone area of the school enjoyed a separate special one of their own.

Thanks to our catering staff & domestic team who put on a delicious full dinner with trimmings and dessert. And we even had a surprise visit from Santa!

We also had a visit from local theatre company with a pantomime production of 'Cinderella'!



## Book Fair encourages reading interest

In November we had Scholastic book fair in school, organised by our librarian Miss Dennis. Lots of students visited and bought books. The good news as well as students reading, is we received £80 in rewards for the school to invest in new books for the library.

# Parent Support Group

Our Parent Support Group is growing in size and parents and family members enjoy the opportunity to meet with each other and feel supported.

It's now hosted by our Class LT Cafe, serving tea, coffee and biscuits while you chat!

In our last group Jonny Knowles from National Autistic Society enjoyed joining the group to get feedback to support our Autism Accreditation. *Thankyou to our parents!*

We do appreciate it may be a long way to come, or you may be by yourself, but everybody is welcome, even grandparents and those who are involved in supporting your children.



*Next parent support group*  
*Tuesday 11th February*  
*10.30am*

## Welcome to our new staff



Mr Kelly  
Teacher



Miss Eccles  
Primary teacher



Mr Clarke  
Teacher



Miss Wood  
Primary teacher



Mrs Meegan  
Teacher



Mr Lancaster-Smith  
Teaching Asst



Miss Wiggins  
Teaching Asst



Miss Callaghan  
Speech & Language  
Therapist



Mrs Halliday  
School Nurse



Mrs Irvin  
Occupational  
Therapist



Special appearance for  
*West Kirby School fundraising event*

**ROCK CHOIR**

**Saturday 28th March**

**Tickets £5**

*All pupils, families and local community welcome!*

*Special appearance to support our school fundraising*

[www.rockchoir.com](http://www.rockchoir.com)

### *Dates for the diary*

**Y9 Options and Parents Evening**  
**Parents & Careers Evening**  
(Only Y10, Y11, Y12, Y13, Y14)

Thursday 13th Feb, 4pm-5.45pm  
Thursday 13th Feb 4pm-5.45pm

**Parent support group**  
**Half term**  
**School photographs**  
**Exam dates**

Tuesday 11th February 10.30am  
Close Friday 14th February, open Monday 24th Feb  
Tuesday 17th March  
W/c 4th May - 26th June



**WKS Twitter updates**  
**@westkirbyschool**



We're always updating Twitter with lots of photos, news from class activities, Friday options, extra curricular activities and SEN resource links.



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