

NEWSLETTER

December 2024

Walton High School

IN THIS EDITION

Sixth Form Success

Around School

Star Students

Sports Feature

Performing Arts

Extra Curriculum

Key Dates



Welcome

As we approach this joyous season, we are filled with pride, reflecting on the achievements of our remarkable students and staff. This year has been one of exceptional growth and accomplishment. As we celebrate the holiday spirit, we are grateful for the unwavering support of our parents and community. Together, we have created a vibrant and nurturing environment where students can thrive. We wish you all a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year!

Headteacher's Message

As we come towards the end of term, I would like to thank all the staff, students and parents/carers who have been involved in or supported the many activities over the last few weeks.

Whether it is sporting fixtures, music concerts, extra-curricular events, clubs or educational visits; these additional enrichment opportunities are an important part of our extended curriculum and the hard work that goes into arranging them is much appreciated.

As you look through our newsletter you will see a selection of the many things that make our school a warm and welcoming place.

I am delighted that these positive features were also recognised during the recent Ofsted inspection that took place in October. Inspectors were impressed that a “calm and focused environment typifies the school” and noted that “pupils regularly benefit from a range of clubs” which allows students of all ages and abilities the chance to enjoy school life outside of the classroom. In the coming months we will work hard to implement their recommendations in order to improve our school even more.

I wish you all a lovely Christmas break, and I look forward to seeing everyone back safe and well on Monday 6th January 2025.

Mr A Leese
Headteacher

SIXTH FORM SUCCESS

Focus on Wellbeing

We're excited to share that our Sixth Form is thriving thanks to our successful well-being initiatives. Our coffee mornings, walks, and yoga classes have become popular among students, providing a much-needed break from their studies and a chance to connect with peers. These activities have not only improved students' mental and physical health but have also fostered a positive and supportive community.

Year 7 Wellbeing Mornings

Our Sixth Form prefects have once again demonstrated their commitment to student wellbeing. They launched a new program specifically designed to support our incoming Year 7 students. Every Thursday since September, Year 7 tutors gather in the Sixth Form Centre to offer games, a listening ear, and a friendly atmosphere. The program, assisted by Year 11 prefects, has been a hit with our youngest students and we hope to continue to run wellbeing initiatives like this.



Psychology

Walton High School is the only Psychology department in the country, that give our students the opportunity to conduct their own research into their own particular area of interest. The students conduct their own experiments, analyse their own data and write the most fantastic research papers. From the entire cohort of psychology students research papers, the top five are shortlisted and entered into a competition run by the university of Derby.

This year's winners are:

1st – Emma S

2nd – Sophie C

3rd – Maisie D

Runners up – Samira K and Sam B

We are incredibly proud of all their hard work and dedication to their projects resulting in some brilliant research being created.

Psychology Trip

Our A Level Psychology cohort, visited Staffordshire University, where they had the pleasure of talking to accomplished psychologists, who gave in-depth lectures about their research. They were also given a tour of the fantastic facilities. The students also had the chance using ECG equipment for a stress experiment!

All students were a credit to Walton. Thank you to Staffordshire University for providing such a wonderful opportunity.



History and Art take on London

On 5th December A Level Students in History and Art went to London. They visited the Tate Modern looking at how Art has interpreted historical events. They also took a river cruise on the Thames taking in sights, including the MI5 headquarters, Cleopatra's Needle, London's oldest monument, the Palace of Westminster and the Tate Britain Museum.

The main event of the day was to visit the Churchill War Rooms in Whitehall. It was from here that Churchill conducted the war effort as bombs rained down on London in 1940. They finished the day off with some historical statue viewings and an evening at Leicester Square's Christmas markets.

As always our students were a credit to the school. It was a real privilege to spend time with them outside of the classroom environment and it confirmed what a credit to our school they really are. In particular, Noah P. His navigational skills and his creation of the morning quiz was much appreciated by all.

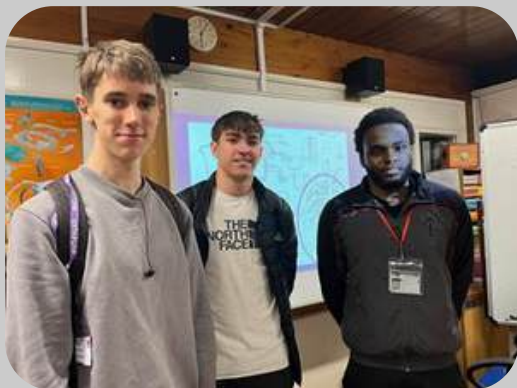


Product Design Guest Speaker

On Thursday 14th November a past Walton student, Haleem Mustapha visited the D&T department to work with our Year 13 Product Design students. He has just graduated with a BSC in Industrial Product Design at Loughborough University.

He shared his university experiences, discussed his placement year and showed the students his final year projects. The lighting project shown was for external use in the arctic designed without a power source and his other project was to support pain relief for sickle cell sufferers.

Haleem then spoke to each of the students about their own A level projects - it was such a pleasure to have him back in school inspiring the next product designers and engineers.



Keele University Library

Year 13 History students visited Keele University as part of their research for a coursework unit. They were given the opportunity to experience a day as an undergraduate, with access to a library with some 500,000 books.



S.T.E.M. Guest Speakers

This term, Walton scientists have had the pleasure of receiving numerous guest lectures by professionals in science. From Neuroscientists, Digital Forensics, to an engineer at Jaguar and Landrover!

These are incredible experiences for our A Level students and we are excited to announce that more speakers will be visiting next year.



Lotus Factory

Three of our Year 13 students Jack , Ashton and Sam had the amazing opportunity to have a tour of the Lotus Factory near Norwich. The boys have worked closely with Lotus on their STEM project which was surrounding safety in race cars. The boys witnessed the production line from start to finish and learnt about the complex Physics involved.

Nick, the tour guide, made understanding concepts like torque and BHP so simple to understand, and very interesting! The boys even had a sneak peak at some of Lotus' newest vehicles the Emira, Electra, Evija and got to sit in them for a closer look.

We can't thank Lotus enough for this amazing opportunity. Jack and Sam plan to study mechanical engineering in the future so this experience has been invaluable.



AROUND SCHOOL

Autumnal Poetry Competition

To celebrate the change of Autumn, we held our annual autumnal poetry competition. This year, students had to write a poem about how this time of year makes them feel. Entries were handed in across all year groups however it was Imogen in 7.4 who took the trophy with her bittersweet memorial poem about autumnal walks with her family dog.

More competitions to come in in New Year.

Walton Remembers

For Remembrance Day, Walton hosted a Remembrance Service.

The Exhortation was read by Mr Hales and this was followed by The Last Post, played by our very own Brass Band. A wreath was then laid at our memorial slate by Year 11 prefects, which this year was beautifully decorated by the ceramic poppies created by Year 7 students in their Art lessons.

This is a beautiful collaboration across History, Art and Music for a respectful memorial ceremony.



Class of 2019 Awards Evening

We celebrated the Class of 2019 and all their achievements, following all their hard work, this summer. Many students received a multitude of awards for excelling in their exams. We are very proud of the class of 2019 and we look forward to hearing all about their future successes.

Nice Trip

Our MFL Department were delighted with our students conduct on the Year 11 and 13 visit to Nice. Students had the opportunity to visit the Picasso museum and the spectacular outdoor food market in Antibes. In Monaco, students visited the Prince's palace and his car collection, as well as the Oceanographic museum. The weather was wonderful throughout and the visit was a great cultural and linguistic experience. We look forward to many more years of this trip!



Bookclub

On Thursday 5th December, the first Book Club meeting took place with fantastic numbers in attendance. Over the next three months, this group will meet to discuss books that have been nominated for the Staffordshire Teen Book Award.

The group will then cast their vote – the winners of this will then be shortlisted. The shortlist will be announced in March and the Book Club are looking forward to discussing the books together before the final winner is announced on July 1st.

Visit from Angela Marie James

In November, we were very excited to welcome Angela Marie James into school. Angela is a published author and poet who writes for children of all ages. Recently, she has published an anthology 'Lest We Forget' featuring her first ever published poem. Angela started the day with an assembly where she introduced herself and read some of the poems that she has written, explaining her thoughts and motives behind writing.

Alongside the students' study of James Riordan's 'When the Guns Fall Silent' students were given the opportunity to hear and discuss other poetry around the theme of conflict and war. After hearing some of Angela's poetry, students were given the opportunity to write some of their own poems.

The English Department were so impressed with these poems that they decided to run a competition. They have had some absolutely stunning entries.

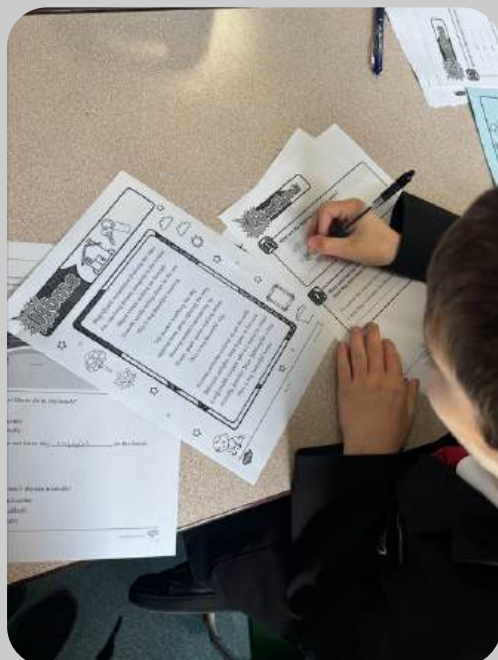
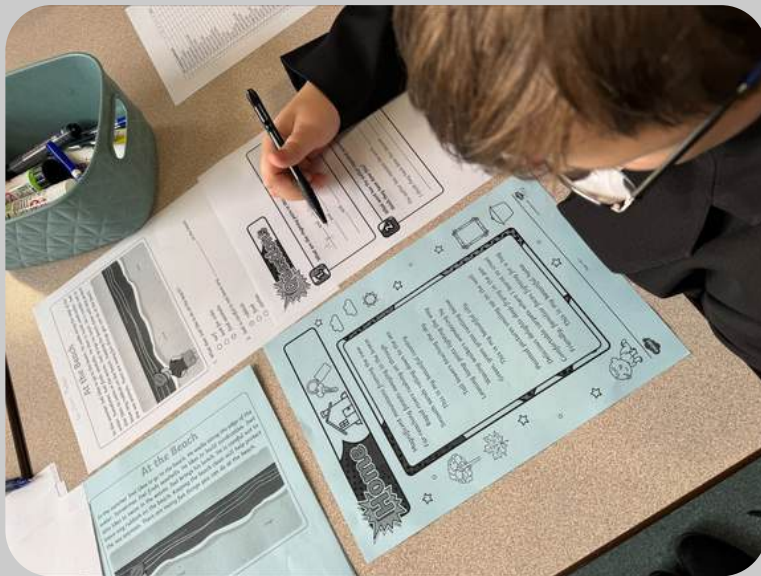
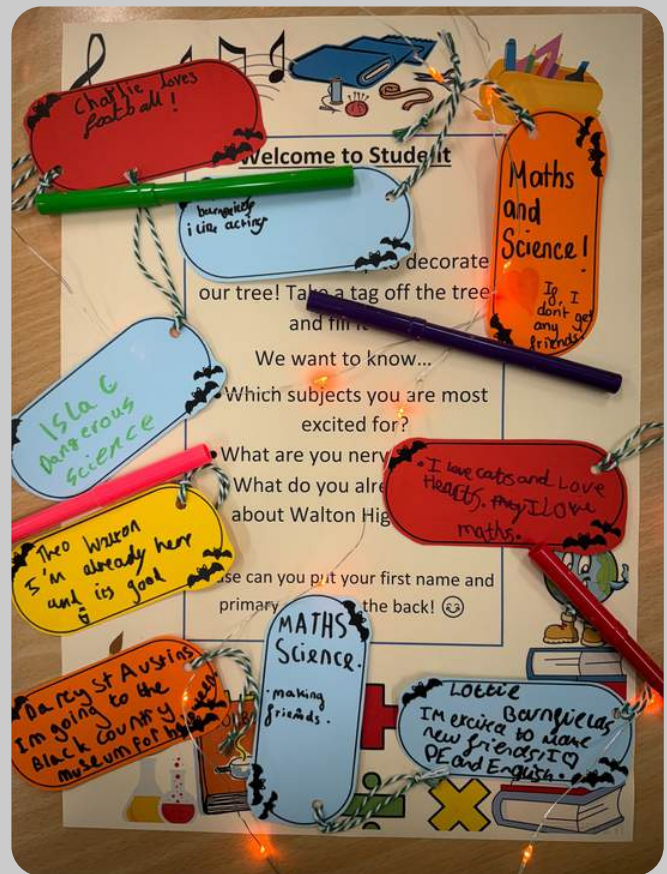


In Student Support

Student Support having been doing some amazing activities for our students!

Including a spookily decorated Halloween tree, some great work in the Morning Club with Mrs Harman where students have brushed up on Maths and English.

They are ending the year with some amazing Christmas activities such as making their own ornaments.



Year 11 Textiles

The Year 11 textiles students went on a GCSE fabric shopping trip in November, to Abakhans in Stoke on Trent. The students all measured and planned out their designs before hand, then bought the fabric they needed to make their GCSE pieces.

Destiny Garden

We are delighted to announce that Walton High School's 'Destiny Garden' has been selected as one of three standout projects in Staffordshire, to reach the final stages of a completion run by Severn Trent.

The winning project in each county will receive an extraordinary boost from a team of up to 20-30 Severn Trent volunteers, who will work side-by-side with us for two days, giving each project the hands-on support, it needs to thrive.

Plus, each winning project will receive up to £2,500 to support both the volunteer efforts and the project itself, ensuring a positive impact across our region.

We have our fingers crossed!



The New City Gallery

Year 10 Art students visited The New City Gallery, Walsall, as part of their GCSE Art course. They had a fantastic morning seeing art works live in the gallery space, including a talk from a gallery curator and photographing and sketching in the gallery setting.

For some of our students it was their first time in an art gallery and what a valuable experience it has been for them.



Christmas Door

Our annual Christmas door competition kicked off the start of December, we have had some great entries and are excited to see which tutor group will win this year!



Maths Week

From the 11th to 17th November we participated in Maths Week England. This week long celebration is to highlight the importance and beauty of mathematics throughout all areas of life, not just its use in the maths classrooms.

We celebrated with puzzles and challenges in tutor, mathematical artwork and a look into the maths of everyday life.

There were two competitions run throughout the week with both teachers and pupils eager to get involved. The winners, Lyla and Lily, are now the proud owners of a jazzy new maths set. Well done to everyone who joined in.



Food Bank Appeal

Throughout December, we have been supporting House of Bread with their annual food bank appeal.

The school community has rallied together to collect non-perishable food items to support families in need during the festive season. We are very proud of our school community for coming together to help those in need.

STAR STUDENTS

Rewards Scheme

Our rewards scheme, praising students for outstanding work in lessons, showing kindness, respect, and highlighting those extra curricular contributions.

So far 765 nominations have been received for the 'Outstanding Work Award' across all years!

100% Attendance

We continue to be proud of our students' attendance with 282 of them having 100% attendance. These students were invited to a special assembly where they were awarded certificates for their dedication to learning.



100% Praise Points

Similar to our 100% attendance celebration, 534 students have not received a single negative behaviour point this term. They received a certificate and the top 50 students in each year have been treated to a Christmas Film Festival.

We hope to continually see such great behaviour from our students.

Salvation Army Appeal

One of our Year 11 students, James has gone above and beyond to bring some cheer to those in need this Festive Season. Walton High School have smashed the Christmas Present Appeal for the Salvation Army. Not only have we collected donations from Walton, but we had proudly partnered with two local primary schools: Leasowes Primary School and Berkswich CE Primary School.

James was also featured on BBC Radio Stoke where he was interviewed and appealed to all of Staffordshire to get involved!

This has meant we have been able to nearly double the amount of donations we have collected, receiving a total of just over 700 presents! This means an awful lot to both the Salvation Army and those who will be gratefully receiving the presents. On behalf of the Salvation Army and all those involved, thank you. Those that have donated have made such a difference to a life, on Christmas day.



Memorial Art Installation

The memorial piece produced last year by our current Year 10 students, in memory of Nicole Guo, has now been installed.

Nicole was an exceptionally talented artist and we have featured pieces of her work within each panel.

Every student produced a drawing or painting of a flower, which have all been compiled into two digital collages in Nicole's memory. These now take pride of place on the exterior wall by the doors to room 20.



SPORTS FEATURE

Year 9 Football

This term, our Year 9 footballers avenged their defeat two years ago by beating Kingsmead 7 to 1 in the County Cup! They played amazingly, including a hat trick from Josh and some great goals from Kian, Miller, Oli and Ellis.

However this is not all, they also beat Landau Academy 3-2, again some excellent goals from the team!

The boys were an outstanding team and we are very proud of them. On to the next round!



Under 12 County Cup

Our Under 12 Girls' Football Team who despite the awful traffic and freezing cold weather, played with great determination and grit at their match in Stoke, at the Power League stadium.

We can't wait to see them play again!



Year 10 Basketball

Well done to our Year 10 Basketballers who beat Sir Graham Balfour 23 - 20 and Wolgarston 24-18. Josh and Kyro were our highest scorers but the whole team did themselves proud, especially Hayden who nailed a three pointer!

Cross Country

Our P.E. Department took fourteen students to compete in the District Cross Country Tournament at Stafford Grammar School. All of our runners managed to place at least once in the top 5 of each race and Beth in Year 9 came first in her category.



Badminton Champ

A huge congratulations to Ava, all her hardwork, commitment and dedication has paid off.

Ava played in the Under 13 National Badminton England Tournament on 23rd and 24th November. She got to the quarter finals in the women's singles. She won a silver medal in the womens' doubles and won gold in the mixed doubles with her partner from Jersey.

We are very proud to announce that she is the under 13 English champion in mixed doubles for 2024.

We are so proud of her.



PERFORMING ARTS

Christmas Concert

On Tuesday 3rd December, over 85 students wowed the audience in the annual Festive Concert with the Music Department.

The students worked incredibly hard in rehearsals and were amazing on the evening, showcasing a mixture of solo performances and ensembles.

A huge thank you to all parents who came along to support your children and to the staff who supported the Music Department on the evening.



Chitty

Our Year 11 Drama and Music students had the chance to experience live theatre as they watched Chitty Chitty Bang Bang in Stoke. As our students need to reflect on a live stage performance for their upcoming exams, all students were enraptured by the great use of lighting, staging and seeing Chitty fly!

Students behaved exemplary. Thank you to our Drama and Music departments.



School Musical Announcement

Over the last three years, Walton has put on some amazing school productions and 2025 will be no different! We are very happy to announce that this year's school production will be Disney's High School Musical!

With preparation starting in the New Year we hope all 'Wildcats' will 'Get their head in the game!'



EXTRA CURRICULAR

Dungeons and Dragons Club

Dungeons and Dragons club started this year in the library, with many brave students taking up the challenge to battle orcs, dragons and go on an adventure. This club is mainly organised by the students and they have done a fantastic job running it so far and Miss Bowen could not be prouder!

History Club

This year's Key Stage 3 History Club entered the Western Front Association's competition to design a front page of a newspaper or an article about an event in WWI.

We are very please to announce that Anya 9.3 was selected as a prize winner and Charis 9.6 has been awarded a commendation. Both will be entered into a raffle to win a trip to the remembrance service at the cenotaph next year.



Young Chef

On Wednesday 4th December six students from Walton High School took part in our annual 'Young Chef' Cooking Competition.

Students were asked to cook two dishes, in two hours, for two people, costing no more than £20. Dishes were judged by Mr Fletcher, Dr Rowley and Ms Hillier.

A huge congratulations to our 'Walton Young Chef' winner Khushboo 9.4 and runner-up Roumaissa 10.4 who wowed the judges with their outstanding culinary skills. Not forgetting Sofia 9.4, Belle 8.6, Zie 9.3 and Sophia 10.2 who worked just as hard to compete.

Mrs White can't wait to take our top 'Walton Chefs' to the District Final at Stafford College in February.



Duke of Edinburgh

Miss Abrahams was pleased to report that the silver training for the Duke of Edinburgh award went amazingly well in September. All students came back in one wet, muddy, tired piece with blisters, but still smiling! They did themselves proud.



Quiz Club

Quiz Club was back in the library this year by popular student demand. Every Tuesday lunch time all students get the chance to compete in a quiz surrounding all different categories. Each week the Quiz Teams' score gets added to the last. With some teams scoring 10/10 each week, Miss Bowen will have to create some more challenging quizzes in the New Year.

100 Book Challenge

In the library, Miss Bowen has issued a challenge to all students. Can they collectively read 100 books? Each time a student finishes a book, they add it to the list, they are currently sitting on 51 and the challenge only began at the start of November.

KEY DATES

For your diary.

20 December - Non-uniform Day
School closes at lunchtime for students (12.50 pm)

21 December – Sunday, 5 January
2025 Christmas Holidays

6th January - All students in School

14th January - Revision Strategies Parent Forum

21st January - Year 9 Parents' Evening

28th January - Year 9 Options Information Evening (6 – 7.30 pm)

31st January - Sixth Form Application Deadline

15th – 23rd February - Half Term

On behalf of all the staff and students of Walton High School, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

