



# WALTON HIGH

*Leading Learning*

Walnut Tree Campus: Fyfield Barrow Milton Keynes MK7 7WH

Brooklands Campus: Fen Street Milton Keynes MK10 7HE

Tel: 01908 677954

[www.waltonhigh.org.uk](http://www.waltonhigh.org.uk)



Principal – Brooklands Andrew Bennett  
Principal – Walnut Tree Sharon Alexander

Chair of Governors Ayser Asif  
Business Manager Sukh Singh

30 October 2023

Dear Parents,

What a busy half term students, staff and families have had! We are delighted to share news of events and activities that our students have been enjoying.

Year 7 began their first day at Walton High on 5 September and it was wonderful to welcome so many parents and small siblings to lunch and to share in the excitement that is having a locker and choosing what to eat from the vast array the Café provides.

We followed the next day with a Key Stage 4 and 5 trip to MK Theatre to see Matthew Bourne's **Romeo and Juliet**. Students came away very keen to get back to class and to incorporate some of the techniques and choreography in their own work.

Walton High celebrated Languages Week by sharing greetings in as many languages as we could and finished with a second **Languages Bake Off**. Thank you to all the competitors whose bakes were truly amazing, celebrating as they did the diversity and baking talent of our students. We enjoyed trying so many different flavours and types of cake that were new to us.

Our Open Mornings in October were well attended and as always, our students were the stars of the show. So many visitors complimented staff on the enthusiasm of the tour guides and the performances of the musicians and vocalists who performed before each talk, and the students who confidently stood up before large audiences and shared their experiences of being a student at Walton High.

Launched on 6 October, our National Poetry Day competition has received 75 entries from across all year groups. This is a great effort; students wrote on the theme of *Refuge* and winners and winning entries will be published on our website next half term.

Drama students, and friends, had a late night recently, travelling to London to attend a performance of **Macbeth** at the Globe Theatre. Experiencing theatre just as it was in Shakespeare's day gives students an insight into the context of their set texts. Ms Spencer was especially happy to report that staff at the theatre had complimented Walton High students on their positive behaviour and clear understanding and enjoyment of the show. Feedback like that is also a compliment to families and staff who make these events happen.

Our sports teams have also had a very active half term; the Under 16 netballers had significant wins over three local competitors – Waddeston, Stowe and Shenley Brook End. This means the team has qualified for the regional rounds in January.

Our Post 16 debating team, arguing in favour of school uniforms being compulsory, also had a win against Ousedale and so they head into the next phase of the competition. Congratulations to Lucy Harris and Mathilde Whitbourne who received great feedback from the judges who were impressed with the arguments the team presented. You are very welcome to support Mathilde and Aria Gharachorlou who will be arguing in their next debate at Ousedale on 15 November.

Year 13 Computer Science students recently visited AIIMI, a cutting edge technology company located in Milton Keynes, specialising in the fields of Artificial Intelligence and data analysis. Students shared the day with one of AIIMI's clients, Jaguar Land Rover, which enabled the students to engage directly with industry experts and seek insights into data manipulation, career opportunities and educational pathways within this exciting field of study. For more information and student feedback, please see our website.

Students and staff enjoyed the first Advanced Learning Day of the year last Friday. A number of new events took place including Year 7 experiencing "Once Upon a Time in "History"; Year 9 answering the question "Can you survive a Zombie apocalypse?" and Year 11 learning how to "Prepare for Success". Details and photographs will be posted on our website shortly.

Trips abroad have continued this year – in two separate trips, students and staff have visited Naples and Sicily. 49 students went on an action packed, three day trip to the Bay of Naples. They visited the UNESCO world heritage site of Pompeii and other buried and preserved sites of the 79AD eruption of Mt Vesuvius, including the luxurious Villa Oplontis and the ancient city of Herculaneum. They then climbed to the summit of the volcano itself! Students also had the opportunity to attend a pizza making class, eat the results of their efforts and then visit the picturesque coastal town of Sorrento. Thank you to staff and parents who made this amazing trip possible.

24 Year 11 students (and three teachers!) set off very early on Friday 13 October for the school's first trip to volcanic Sicily. They were blessed with glorious sunshine as they enjoyed the ancient town of Lipari (with streets that use obsidian as cobble stones) and were greeted by the sulphurous smell of Vulcano, a small island north of Sicily, as they explored its black-sand beaches. However, the undoubted highlight of the trip was taking the cable car and jeep towards the summit of Mount Etna - the largest active volcano in Europe - to see evidence of an eruption two months beforehand and the smoke rings it is still regularly emitting. Memories that will undoubtedly stay with the students forever!

Last month, Year 11 Walnut Tree student, Millie Howe had the exciting news that she had been selected to represent Great Britain in the sport of artistic roller dancing. She has been roller skating for almost eight years. With only four weeks to practise, Walton High offered support by lending Millie the Dance Studio in Brooklands after school.

The three day competition was held in Northern France, in the town of Hettange-Grande. Millie put in a great performance with her dances that made her parents, coaches and club very proud. It was great for Millie to spend time with the rest of team GB, making new friends and learning much from the whole experience. Images of Millie's performance can be seen on our website.

Another student having amazing experiences is Year 10's Mylee Baker from Brooklands. Mylee has been filming for a CCBC football drama, **Jamie Johnson FC**, currently screening now. She also plays for the Under 16 MK Dons team and has the opportunity to attend monthly training camps with England. With these opportunities, Mylee is well on the way to achieving her dream of playing professional football.

Autumn@Brooklands celebrated students' work in Music and the Performing Arts so far this term. Many young people had their first opportunity to perform in front of a live audience and we all look forward to seeing more as the year progresses. Upcoming performances include **Christmas@The Venue** on Thursday 14 December and **Godspell**, our annual musical theatre production, performing in the week beginning Monday 12 February. Mark those dates in your calendar now.

37 Post 16 students took part in the Senior Maths Challenge at the beginning of October. 21 students received a Bronze Certificate, six students received a Silver and two received a Gold. Congratulations to Isaac Maidment and Milan Gader on achieving Gold and progressing onto the next round of the competition.

The DfE has released its provisional data for the 2022/23 examinations and we are delighted to see that all the hard work of our students and teachers is reflected in this. At Key Stage 4, students have on average achieved significantly above their expected grades. The validated Progress 8 score will be shared in future communications, demonstrating the excellent achievements we continue to make as a partnership of students, parents and staff.

Thank you to students and parents who have worked so well with us on the change to our mobile phone use in schools. It is wonderful to see students talking to each other in the Café at lunchtimes and playing chess and boardgames instead of being hunched over a screen. The Pastoral team reports a notable decrease in issues between students linked to social media so the benefits to student wellbeing are already evident.

Kind regards



Andy Bennett  
Brooklands



Sharon Alexander  
Walnut Tree

Walton High is operated by Milton Keynes Education Trust which is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales.  
Company number 7663689. The Registered Office is at Walton High, Fyfield Barrow, Milton Keynes, MK7 7WH

***Enabling · Enhancing · Enriching***