

WEST LEA SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



A West Lea intern enjoying their placement this year

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WELCOME FROM THE CEO

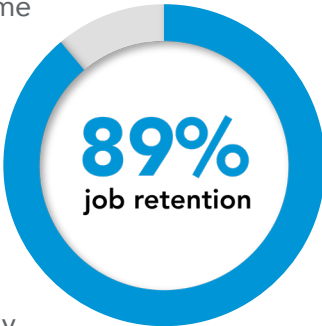
Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to this half-terms newsletter, which includes updates on the launch of our reading strategy, updates from our partners (ECT and learning for Life Charity), as well as a special feature - The West Lea Journey to Independence.

This New Year and new term is full of exciting opportunities for our pupils! At West Lea, we believe in a world where everyone can flourish. To make this a reality, we're focussed on breaking down barriers for all our pupils. To that end, the work on our expanded curriculum offer continues and you can now take a look at what your son/daughter is learning by accessing our curriculum map for parents and pupils on the website under our Curriculum tab [www.westleaschool.co.uk/our-curriculum-overview].

We often say that our pupils are on a journey to independence when they come to West Lea. Of course, all journeys must have a destination! For the majority of our pupils, the prospect of paid employment is real. Did you know that we have a very successful Supported Internship Programme for pupils 18-25? Since our programme began, we have achieved some amazing outcomes:

- Since 2017, 118 young people have benefitted from the course.
- 75% have secured paid employment
- 89% of those who secured employment are still in the jobs we placed them in



Whatever age your son/daughter is, or stage in their journey, our friendly team would love to chat with you about our work related programmes. Please reach out via your Head of School or visit our website, www.westleaschool.co.uk/our-prospectus/whos-who.

Wishing you all a very happy and healthy start to this New Year.

With every good wish,



Paul Quinn, CEO, West Lea School

READING LAUNCHES

Last term, all West Lea campuses launched reading events, designed to help students fall in love with reading. We have been teaching our students many literacy skills and offering them new reading opportunities, including introducing our younger students to phonics and launching a book borrowing system for pupils, which enables them to read as much as they can at home.

Additionally, we have provided supporting materials and advice for parents and carers, so they too can help their children enjoy reading once they come home from school and on the weekends. We want to normalise reading so it becomes a typical part of everyday life, and not just a classroom activity.

It's important students understand reading is not just helpful to passing exams or doing well at school. Rather, it's an important life skill that will guide them in their future journeys after they move on from West Lea. We're dedicated to helping them on that journey.



THE WEST LEA JOURNEY TO INDEPENDENCE

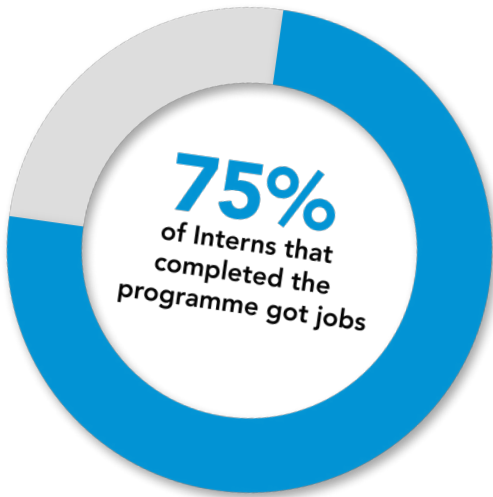
Throughout your child's time at West Lea, we aim to use personalised learning, practical experience and hands-on opportunities to provide them with a 'suitcase of skills' to support their pathway to independence. Looking beyond school into the world of work is essential to help pupils realise the amazing value they can bring to society with the right support.

With a continual rise in the number of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) over the last few years, there are now 1.3 million pupils with SEND across the UK, equivalent to 14.9 percent of all pupils. Our aim is to not only help your child flourish academically and socially, but also encourage them to engage with the local community and support their transition into the working world, simultaneously tackling misconceptions around the employment of people with SEND.

Our core value of 'learning for life' ensures that pupils can develop key skills that will ultimately prepare them for life after school. Prioritising five essential development areas, including community engagement, travel and work skills and communication, we look to ensure pupils are well equipped to enter the "real world".

At the beginning of your child's journey with us, our Meridian and Haselbury campuses support them in nurturing these skills. Starting with more simple experiences including basic travel training, cookery skills and money handling, children are then gradually introduced to more advanced activities such as residential and extra-curricular projects to help build their independence, confidence, and resilience.

Our 'Learning for Life' Campus then solidifies these skills and puts everything they've learnt into practice to help prepare them for their next steps, whether that be work or higher education. The transition from the safe school environment to the world of work can be especially daunting, so our work experience schemes aim to help our young people 'dip their toes in the water' and familiarise themselves with working environments.



Partnerships with local organisations help our students gain understanding of the realities of employment whilst further developing essential skills such as communication and collaboration. For example, our partnership with local social enterprise, Building BloQs, has seen our students learn how to upcycle and repurpose unwanted goods which they can then resell at affordable rates, teaching them key retail skills.

Our Supported Internship scheme sees our students matched with roles most suited to their interests and abilities. Over the last few years, we have built partnerships with Co-op, Tesco, Nandos and more, and all our students have been supported by their West Lea Job Coach at every step of the way.

Since 2017, 75 percent of our interns have gone on to be offered paid employment, demonstrating the real benefits of the programme, which not only helps students realise their own potential but helps employers realise the advantages of supportive employment programmes.

Building skills for children with SEND is more than just classroom learning. A holistic approach which allows both students and the wider community to understand what they can achieve when provided with the right support is essential to tackle misconceptions around SEND employment and truly provide our children with 'learning for life'.

UPDATE FROM ENTERPRISE COOPERATIVE TRUST



This month, Renee Flourentzou, Director of Education at West Lea School and Trustee of Enterprise Cooperative Trust, wrote for SEN Magazine to explain the steps the school, and Trust, is taking to ensure all its students in Enfield and beyond have access to meaningful opportunities for work and independence in a landscape where these are often limited.

In this piece, she explores the disproportionate impact the pandemic has had on every aspect of disabled people's lives, including 71 percent of working disabled people who feel their careers have been negatively impacted by Coronavirus.

Her piece explains how ECT works, how the Trust ensures accountability and what its properties will be in the year ahead. She concludes:

The Trust is still in its infancy, but there are many exciting opportunities we look forward to pursuing. We know our founding principles of hope, positivity, justice and courage will ensure we support every child and turn their dreams into reality. All students, including the most disadvantaged, should have the chance to recognise their worth and see the valuable role they can play in their community.

You can find this article in the latest edition of SEN Magazine:



In response to the article, Janet Leach, Chair of Trustees of the Enterprise Cooperative Trust, has shared this message:



It is so inspiring to work with Renee and colleagues on this exciting project which brings together like minded individuals from business, community groups, schools and colleges.

Hopefully everyone can see the merits in the Trust priorities for the next 12 months, as outlined by Renee in SEN Magazine. These have been agreed by Trustees and members of our Representative Panel. The Panel consults with their community groups and networks and then feeds back to Trustees, thereby ensuring we are hearing what currently matters to young people and their families. This is so important in these challenging times, when so many of our young people have been adversely affected by the pandemic and the lockdown restrictions.

I am confident 2022 will be a new and exciting chapter in the life of the Trust, as we take forward these priorities, by working with Enfield's resilient and amazing young people and the schools, colleges, businesses and community groups that continue to support and inspire them.

UPDATE FROM LEARNING FOR LIFE CHARITY

A message from Azad Ioannou, Learning for Life Charity Manager

Learning for Life Charity exists to serve the Enfield community by providing opportunities for children and young people with SEND, or who have been impacted by illness, or poverty. To achieve this mission, we have expanded our offer to include the following two projects:

All Works of Life

We have just launched an exciting project entitled 'All Works of Life' at Building BloQs in Edmonton. For three days a week we provide printing and upcycling services to the Enfield community. 23 students a week help us complete our orders by using our machinery and following our fulfilment process. This also develops their skills in a variety of practical and business-related areas. We plan to eventually expand by offering embroidery, labelling and packaging services.

This project provides employment, on-the-job skills training, work experience and social inclusion for those who face barriers to mainstream employment. Additionally, we provide educational and life skills training which helps our service users lead as independent a life as possible outside of the workplace. We hope this project will eventually grow into a supported business. If you require high quality personalised printing on any merchandise of your choice or an upcycling service, please contact aioannou@learningforlifecharity.co.uk.



Post-Employment Service

This exciting service provides support to young people with SEND during their work placement, by helping them learn to perform the job accurately, efficiently and safely. The primary focus of our post-employment service is to provide work related support to individuals taking part in the Supported Internship Programme. The Supported Internship Programme is a Government sponsored project that aims to help more people with a disability or learning difficulty move from education and training into employment. Our post-employment worker will broker an effective working relationship between the individual and employer for them to secure paid employment at the end of the placement.



Volunteers needed for our Charity Shops

The charity has two shops that both serve the local communities in which they are located (Enfield and Edmonton) and offer 12 young people with SEND a week the opportunity to gain valuable work experience and training. In addition, the shops provide volunteering opportunities for members of the local community who are seeking to re-enter the world of work. If you would like to volunteer at one of our shops, please contact Azad via email aioannou@learningforlifecharity.co.uk.

WEST LEA IN THE NEWS

We are very happy to have partnered with the Co-op Group to support a new cohort of students to gain the relevant skills they need to enter the world of work. This partnership marked Disability History Month (18 November – 18 December), promoting disability rights and equality.



This partnership will feed into our wider Supported Internship Programme, which gives 18-to-24-year-olds with SEND the opportunity to gain work experience while boosting inclusivity and diversity in the workforce.

Three students from our school will work within three Co-op stores across Enfield in roles and areas aligned to the student's specific strengths and capabilities. This spans customer service, till operation and shop floor duties. Co-op staff will also be supported by a West Lea Job Coach, who will help them support young people with a disability and be successful in work.

West Lea's Supported Internship Programme, which includes our partnership with the Co-op, has delivered outstanding success rates. A staggering 78 percent of students who underwent internships in 2017/18 were offered full-time employment following the scheme, and this number has consistently remained in the 70's over the past four years, including our 2021/22 cohort.

We are so grateful to the Co-op Group for supporting our students and giving them opportunities they otherwise may not have access to. Every young person has the potential to contribute and thrive, and it is our responsibility to equip them with the skills and confidence they need to believe in themselves.

We'd love other organisations to get involved and help our mission to show these students there really are no limits to what they can achieve.



This partnership was covered by the Co-op, snapshots of which you can find below.



Colleague Stories

DECEMBER 3, 2021 — CO-OP COLLEAGUES

Today is International Day of People with Disabilities

By **Steve Murrells, Co-op CEO** and **Joyce Miguel, Store Colleague**

Today, 3 December, marks International Day of People with Disabilities, and this year's theme is looking at the challenges, barriers and opportunities faced by disabled people as a result of the pandemic.

As one of the most vulnerable groups of people in our communities, the pandemic has significantly increased marginalisation of disabled people through difficulty accessing support and services.

Here's Joyce Miguel's story as she talks about how she has found happiness working in our Co-op after her previous placements came to an end due to the pandemic.

I was studying at Enfield college before I started looking for work. I felt that although I wanted to continue my studies, I wanted to look for work too. It was hard to find work because I'm incredibly shy. I found it hard to drop in CVs, to speak to people and I find formal interviews difficult. I also have a learning disability which I like to keep hidden and even if I made it through the first stage of recruitment, people who weren't aware of my needs maybe thought I wasn't suitable for the role. As I find it hard to talk about my needs, I always felt like I wouldn't get the support I needed. I also tend to struggle with the induction and training processes as well as they were often very overwhelming experiences for me.

Joining the Supported Internship at West Lea School was amazing for me. It's designed to help young people with special needs like me and I did eventually manage to find employment.

Congratulations, Carline Ikoroha!

We must hugely congratulate our brilliant senior job coach Carline Ikoroha, for being awarded the 'Highly Commended' Practitioner of the Year at the British Association of Supported Employment (BASE) UK Best Practice Awards 2021! We are so proud of all Carline's incredible work to inspire and motivate others.

Carline has worked closely with all our students who undergo supported internships, helping them when things go wrong and encouraging them to thrive in areas they enjoy. She is also expertly connected with local employers and sets our clear expectations for both them and interns so both can benefit from the experience.

Ultimately, Carline has broken down barriers for our students. She encourages interns to be independent in every respect while supporting parental involvement so they reach their full potential.

At West Lea, we expect 80 percent of our interns to gain employment this year and this is largely down to Carline's hard work and inspirational leadership. During her time at West Lea, she has supported over 80 students to gain valuable skills through internships, of which 62 have been offered meaningful work.

From all of us at West Lea, thank you for all you do Carline, and congratulations once again for this well deserved recognition!

Please see coverage of Carline's amazing recognition below:



ALTA
REVIEW
BESPOKE ARTS GUIDE

HOME MENU ADVERTISE DONATE VIDEO INTERVIEW SHECAN BIZ

Carline Ikoroha wins National Employment Award for Helping SEN Community Pandemic Recovery

ENFIELD SCHOOL JOB COACH CARLINE IKOROHA WINS NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AWARD BY HELPING SEN COMMUNITY RECOVER FROM PANDEMIC

Latest News

Royal Hospital School Offers Generous Mathematics Scholarship to Year 11 Students in Essex and Suffolk

EE to upgrade 4G in more than 160 rural locations across the East of England by 2024

Carline Ikoroha, Supported Internship job coach at West Lea School in Enfield, has been awarded the 'Highly Commended Practitioner of the Year' at the British Association of Supported Employment (BASE) UK Best Practice Awards 2021.

Essex foster care

THIS IS
LOCAL LONDON

YOUNG REPORTER

Image Source: 'Best Practice Awards 2021' official website

0 comment

Carline Ikoroha, a job coach from West Lea School has been awarded the 'Highly Commended Practitioner of the Year award' at the British Association of Supported Employment. Carline received the award for her significant contributions to helping the special needs community transition into the workforce via an Internship program she hosts at West Lea School. I was lucky enough to interview Caroline about the award and was able to ask her some questions.

INTRODUCING MELANIE BIGNOLD, OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

We are very happy to introduce our new Director of Education, Melanie Bignold.

Melanie has been working in education for 14 years and has held a variety of senior roles, both in the secondary and further education sector, including Deputy Head, Assistant Head, Head of Year and Head of Department. We are excited to welcome her as Director of Education at West Lea school. She will work alongside our existing Director of Education, Renee Flourentzou.



Most recently, Melanie has served as Vice Principal for Quality of Education at Aylward Academy, where she successfully implemented the whole academy curriculum. She is passionate about developing excellent CPD opportunities for all, and has worked as a Specialist Leader of Education to develop routes for all. She currently holds leadership responsibility for SEND across the academy.

Melanie also has an undergraduate degree in Modern Greek and French Studies from Kings College London University and undertook her PGCE in Religious Education at the Institute of Education, London.

We are incredibly proud of Melanie’s work and are excited for her to start her new role here at West Lea school.

‘I am thrilled to be part of the West Lea family. I believe passionately in the vision that everyone can flourish. In my short time at the school, I have been inspired by the wonderful work both students and staff do every day to achieve this goal. I am excited to develop further the quality of education here at West Lea and for the opportunities the school offers all our students. West Lea is an extra-ordinary school and a great place for our students, parents and staff.’


KEY TERM DATES 2022

February 2022 Week 13th Spring half-term holiday week Monday 21st Inset day (school closed for pupils) Tuesday 22nd Pupils return from half-term holiday	April 2022 Friday 1st End of Spring Term (1:30pm) Tuesday 19th Start of Summer Term for Pupils and Staff	May 2022 Monday 2nd Early May Bank Holiday (school closed) Friday 27th May Additional Bank Holiday/ Platinum Jubilee (school closed) Week 30th May Summer half-term holiday week
June 2022 Monday 6th Pupils return from Half Term Holiday	July 2022 Friday 22nd July End of Summer Term (1:30pm)	

Please note that the school is now not closing to pupils (for 'Review Days') on Friday 22nd April and Friday 15th July. School will be open as usual on these dates.




OUR CAMPUSES



West Lea
MERIDIAN CAMPUS

Dysons Road (KS2)
174 Dysons Road
Edmonton
N18 2DS

Springfield Road (KS1-2)
Springfield Road
New Southgate
N11 1RR





West Lea
LEARNING FOR LIFE CAMPUS


Broomfield School
Wilmer Way
N14 7HY

St Marys (KS1 & KS2)
Lawrence Road
Edmonton
N18 2HN

Ponders End
219 – 221 High Street
EN3 4DZ


Chace ARP (KS3 & KS4)
Churchbury Lane
EN1 3HQ






West Lea
HASELBURY CAMPUS

Haselbury Campus (KS3)
Haselbury Road
Edmonton
N9 9TU






West Lea
HORIZON

Learning for Life Centre
24 Cyprus Road
Edmonton
N9 9PG

College
College of North
East London





West Lea School

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