

# Newsletter

## December 2023



**Volume 3 | Issue 2**

# Welcome



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the December issue of our newsletter.

As 2023 draws to a close, it's a great time to look back with a sense of gratitude and to pause and celebrate all that has been achieved across the West Lea community.

The journey for all our learners has been exciting, fulfilling and stretching. From classroom activities to enrichment opportunities and experiences, we have continued to support their development and help them broaden their horizons and enrich their lives.

Our final edition of this year's newsletter focuses on learning in action – exploring a range of creative and educational opportunities including off-site visits, project-based learning and work-related training. These activities help build skills that mean our learners can develop relationships, grow as individuals, and make their way in the world.

It is wonderful to see our learners flourish as they develop these new skills. We've also been celebrating our extremely positive Quality Assurance Review by 'Challenge Partners' – a thorough evaluation of teaching and learning, curriculum and outcomes, and leadership at all levels. We wouldn't be able to achieve such positive outcomes without the hard work and dedication of everyone at West Lea.

There is much to look forward to in 2024, and so much more we can do together as we continue our mission to break down barriers for our children and young people, so that they can reach their full potential.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

May I take this opportunity, on behalf of the whole team at West Lea, to wish you, your family and loved ones, a very festive season, and a happy New Year.

With every blessing and good wish,

**PAUL QUINN**  
CEO

community  
**kindness**  
**learning for life**  
innovation inclusion

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## West Lea School

Haselbury Road, Edmonton  
London N9 9TU

020 8807 2656

[office@westleaschool.co.uk](mailto:office@westleaschool.co.uk)

[www.westleaschool.co.uk](http://www.westleaschool.co.uk)



# Curriculum update

## Learning in action

Learners have been working hard in all areas of the curriculum, taking part in a range of activities in and out of the classroom.

Extra-curricular and project-based learning, known as 'learning in action', helps to make subjects more interesting for pupils, enhance their understanding and reinforce classroom lessons. It also helps learners with their personal, social and emotional development.

Learners from year 6 to year 11 visited Lambourne End - a centre for outdoor learning where they took part in archery, farming activities, and even building rockets. These activities are designed to develop skills in problem solving and team building. Lots of fun (& learning) was had by all!



### WORLD SCIENCE DAY

We all love science and students across the school took part in our annual World Science Day. This year, our theme was recycling.

Children at Meridian Campus built models out of materials they had collected. Haselbury learners made eggshell chalk, marble runs and balloon



powered cars. And at Learning for Life, students worked in a mocked up recycling plant.

It was a great day full of hands-on practical learning and experiments.



### PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

We use a project-based approach to the curriculum so learners immerse themselves in exciting themes and topics across several subjects.

As part of the Knowledge of the World curriculum, KS2 classes have been learning about England in 1666 and the Great Fire of London. The children re-created historical scenes and used role play to act out the events that took place. These reflected the storybooks they have used in their English lessons. They also made pictures of the fire, which coincided with lessons on Divali and Bonfire Night.



### SPOKEN LANGUAGE SKILLS WITH VOICE 21

We have joined the national charity 'Voice 21' to develop our Social and Communication curriculum. The charity works with schools to transform the learning and life choices of young people through speech.

Developing spoken language skills (oracy) helps improve academic success, builds confidence, and enhances employment and life opportunities.



We will be focusing on oracy during lessons, in social settings (such as the dining hall), and in preparation for job roles and future life experiences.

This term, our KS1 children had great fun learning to explore how characters from the story Supertato may have felt.

Our KS3 and KS4 classes have also begun using some Voice 21 strategies in their lessons to provide opportunities for collaborative working and talking including debating and discussing opinions about their class text.

We will be exploring what oracy looks like for all of our children and how we can ensure that our learners are able to express their thinking with others in whichever communication method they use.

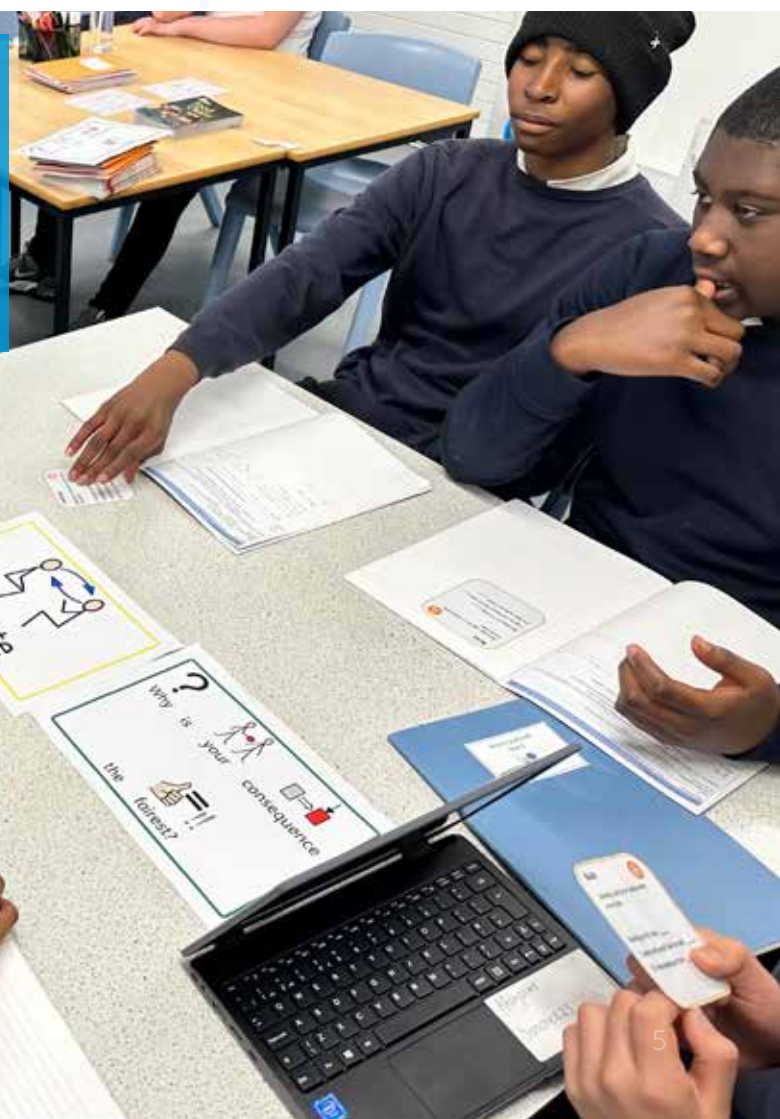
**Learning in action offers pupils a variety of approaches that include project-based, practical and creative learning environments to help them achieve academic success.**

**Our goal is to provide a range of activities that enrich the students' learning experience and help them to flourish at school and in life.**



**ANGELA POPLAR &  
TANVEELA HAIDAR**  
Heads of Curriculum Development

"Oracy helps improve academic success, builds confidence, and enhances employment and life opportunities."







## Meridian Campus

In this edition we would like to say a huge thank you to our families for your support this term.

Our learners have enjoyed celebrating the end of the Autumn term with a range of educational and enriching events.

We hope you enjoyed our family Tuesday events which involved joining in lessons and activities with the children. We hold these events every half term to welcome our families into the classroom to share our learning.

We were enormously proud of our learners at Dysons Road and Springfield for their fantastic Autumn term concerts.



Throughout this term, we have been reintroducing 'WestCo' which is our version of a supermarket. The children make items to sell in their life and work lessons, learn how to exchange and use money in Maths and bring the learning together by taking turns to host WestCo each week.

We will be developing WestCo more in the Spring term - you may even have to chance to visit WestCo as part of a family Tuesday event!



We had fun celebrating Christmas throughout December. The children made decorations for trees around the campus, and they wore their festive clothes for the Christmas dinner and parties, which everyone enjoyed. Look out for more photos of the festive season and our other events in our weekly spotlight and Twitter page @Meridian\_Campus



We wish you a peaceful festive season and a Happy New Year from Meridian Campus. See you in 2024 for the start of another exciting year at Dysons Road and Springfield.



**EMMA DRIVER**  
Head of School



## Haselbury Campus

**It's been a very busy start to the new academic year with our learners doing absolutely loads during recent weeks.**

All pupils at Haselbury Campus visited Lambourne End, an outdoor adventure centre, to spend the day working on teamwork and building relationships with their new classmates and peers.



The learners commented on how nice it was to have time with their new classmates and teachers. Pupils took part in rope crossing races, archery and caving; learners also met some of the farmyard animals!



able to dance, watch a movie or be supported by staff to socialise with friends.

Providing enrichment experiences for our learners has always been a priority and this year has given pupils lots of exciting opportunities. Our Halloween Disco was very popular with learners, who dressed up and socialised in the evening. Pupils were

November's Science Week was also a big hit with students. Each year group and pathway created something different, and pupils had loads of fun creating their own toys from recycled materials. This was a great opportunity to promote the importance of recycling.



Next year, pupils will have many more opportunities and experiences that go beyond the classroom.

As always, thank you to all parents and carers for supporting at these valuable events.

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas and New Year. See you in 2024!



**TOM COLLIER**  
Head of School





## Learning for Life Campus

We've had an exciting term here at Learning for Life Campus.



We started the academic year with our team-building trip to Lambourne End. Students had an amazing time, including opportunities to explore the outdoors in a fun and safe manner as well as developing relationships amongst their peers.

This term, our Year 10 learners started college for the first time exploring vocational opportunities including construction and catering. They have shown maturity in their approach to being at college and the independence the experience brings.



As part of the PE curriculum our learners also took part in off-site activities including, kayaking, swimming and canoeing. We took PE even further by taking a group of our learners to the swimming gala and coming 3rd. "Well Done" Learning for Life!

Our Year 10 and 11 learners have also started exploring the 'World of Work'. Our Year 10 learners have been to either Brentford FC or Tottenham Hotspur FC to see exactly what it takes to make a football club run and what goes in to match days. Our Year 11 learners started their Work Experience

placements, the Autumn term has seen Dutoit Class out and working in shops, restaurants, library's, primary schools and hairdressers. They have done an amazing job and we're looking forward to both Phelps and Hill exploring their Work Experience placements next half term.



We've hosted shows on site from theatre company Facefront, and have taken learners offsite to gain the full theatre experience.

Overall, it's been an action-packed and enriching first term, and we are looking forward to even more opportunities next year.

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year. See you in 2024!



**THESPINA SKARPELLIS**  
Head of School





## Horizon Campus

**As this term ends, we've been reflecting on all of the wonderful things that have been happening at Horizon Campus so far this year.**

All of our learners are well and truly settled in and are preparing for the next part of their journey.

In addition to their usual timetables, KS5 learners have taken part in mental health awareness activities, worked through Skills Builder tasks, visited the QEII centre and a Skills and Careers Fair at the Excel Centre. Some even caught a glimpse and waved at Prime Minister Rishi Sunak as he visited CONEL recently. Building on their work skills they've begun either a supported or individual work experience placement.

Pre-interns have completed their supported work experience at the Birch Hotel and have created their vocational profiles as they prepare for an individual work experience placement starting next term.



They've taken part in a series of workplace visits learning about a variety of industries and job roles, and also had an inspirational talk by Olympian and gold medallist Joanna Rowsell. They'll now be completing an enterprise project where they've learnt research, design production and evaluation skills.

Interns completed their six week induction having taken part in a series of activities to help prepare them

for their work placements. They've completed First Aid training, taken part in team building activities, visited a range of employers, completed an accredited course in health & safety at work and attended a SIP Job Fair. They're now beginning their work placements in roles they've been matched to in line with their own unique vocational profiles.

All learners across the campus also took part in our fresher's activity at Lambourne End where they had a great day learning outdoors and building their skills. They've also continued to build on their English and Maths learning with many taking part in formal functional skills reading assessments.

Our Horizon Hang Out Club was relaunched this term and is open to learners from across the campus. It's been lovely to see them taking part in our film and games clubs, doing sports with Thrulife coaches and cooking with Carline!

We'll be celebrating the festive season at Horizon with celebratory Christmas lunches and a theatre experience before finally wishing all of our staff and learners a restful break this Winter. We look forward to welcoming everyone back in the new year!



**KIKA CHARALAMBOUS**  
Head of School

# Celebrate with us

## SIP GALA AWARDS

In November we celebrated the amazing success of our Student Internship Programme with The SIP Gala Awards at The Millfield Theatre, London.

Interns, past and present and their families, employer partners and West Lea employees joined together for an evening of music, awards, canapés and networking.





## SIP RECOGNISED AS AN AREA OF EXCELLENCE

Following a successful quality assurance review we are delighted that our supported internship programme has been recognised and accredited as an area of excellence by Challenge Partners.

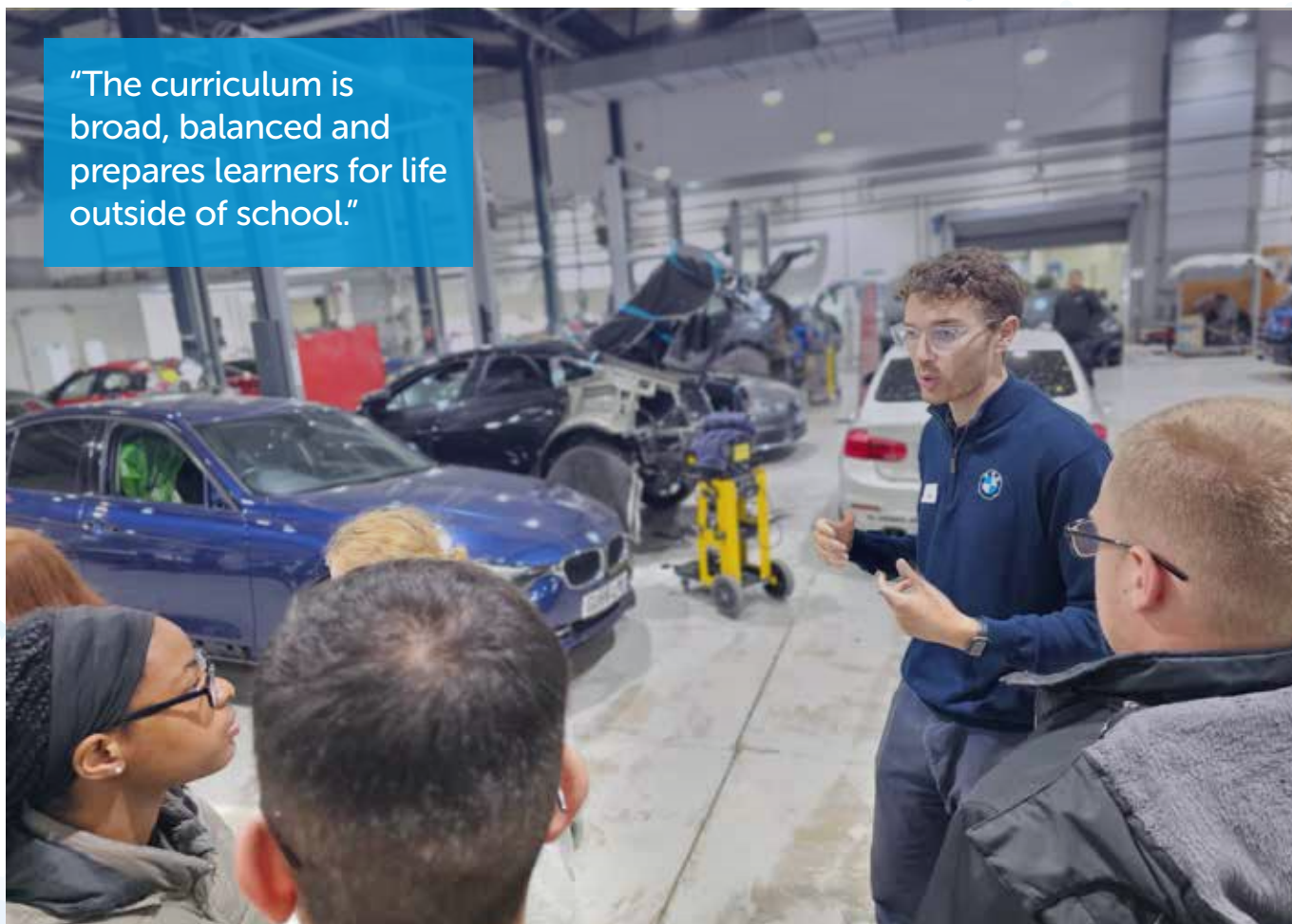
We're excited to share our approach with like-minded schools keen to learn from the work we do at West Lea.



"A comprehensive personal development programme at West Lea enables learners to be the best they can be"



"The executive team have a clear, long term, strategic vision."



"The curriculum is broad, balanced and prepares learners for life outside of school."



# Enterprise Cooperative Trust

## ECT PARTNER CHICKENSHED FEATURED ON SKY NEWS

**Last month, Chickenshed – part of the ECT family – featured on Sky News!**

The piece focused on a poll by disability rights charity Dimensions, which revealed that one in five people (21%) had seen someone mocked because of their learning disability. The same rang true for three people - Jenny, Jimmy and Alex – who told Sky how they have been mocked, criticised, or abused, and made to feel 'different' because they have a learning disability.

Luckily for them, all three now say their lives have changed thanks to the outreach projects, education courses, and performances taking place at Chickenshed.

It's this very spirit of making people feel valued, included and part of a welcoming community that is at the core of everything that Chickenshed, ECT and all its members are so passionate and determined at achieving for as many young people as possible.

Together, we want to break down these barriers, tackle perceptions in society, and help every young person realise their potential. By providing supportive spaces, environments and opportunities they will feel happy, confident and valued in all aspects of life.

**To read the full story, visit:**  
[bit.ly/chickenshed\\_sky](http://bit.ly/chickenshed_sky)





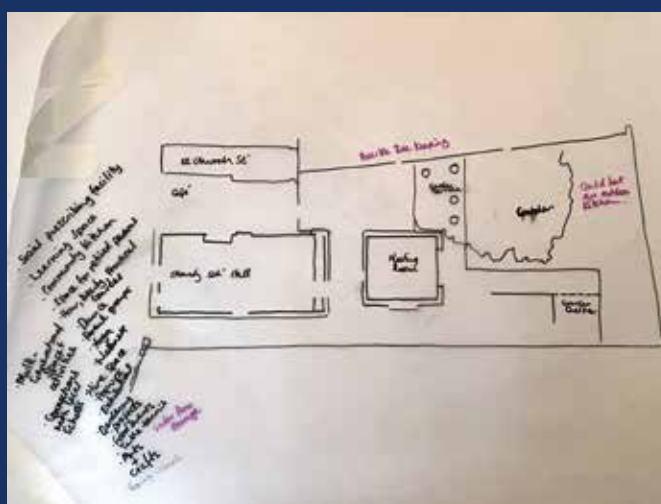
# Learning for Life Charity

**The aim of our Life in the Community Project at the Charity School, Edmonton Green is to regenerate the historic site and create a new café and community space.**

This will provide a range of training and learning opportunities for young people with SEND or disadvantaged groups from the local area, run through the Learning for Life Charity.

We're currently developing our project, preparing our architectural plans for the site, strengthening our business plan and exploring the activities that will be offered. Through all our planning it's essential that we work closely with young people from Enfield, ensuring that they have a voice and play a central role in the shaping of our project.

To achieve this, we've set up a Youth Steering Group (YSG) who meet quarterly and working with our team, explore different aspects of our project and contribute to their development. The YSG is made up of students and young people from Laurel Park School, West Lea School, Orchardside School and Chickenshed Theatre, who are working together, learning from and supporting each other through their participation.



The group first met in September and after being introduced to the historic buildings and the project began to explore the areas that they would like to be involved in. When we met again in November to group took forward these ideas, firstly by developing a brief to appoint artists to work with them and develop creative responses that would help to tell the history of the site to people when they visit. The group has a huge number of extraordinary ideas from murals and mosaics, a statue fountain, light and sound installations and a path that takes you back through time....

Our architects then led a workshop to look more closely at the plans and architectural drawings of the

site, exploring how the group want to use the different spaces and how to think about this through the design process. Again, the group brought a huge number of suggestions about how they wanted the site to be used and also some very dynamic ideas about practical considerations around storage, quiet spaces and equipment.

The YSG will continue to meet throughout the project and will retain this role as we move through future stages. The group brings knowledge, ideas and skills to create a project that is for young people from their community and also provides an opportunity to grow connections and develop new skills that they can take forward.

We are extremely grateful to the YSG and everyone who has helped to make it possible.



**Learning for  
Life Charity**

**PANAY RICHARDS**  
Operations Director  
Learning for Life Charity

# Pastoral update

## SAFEGUARDING OUR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE ONLINE

As we approach the Christmas break, I recall recent conversations with our students (and my own sons) on Christmas present wishes, which often relate to upgraded digital devices and, for example, the latest PlayStation games.

As a society we spend large amounts of money on security measures to safeguard our families and homes, but we often overlook the risks posed by children having unfiltered access to the internet and strangers through the use of smart phones or games consoles.

When used safely and with the right levels of supervision, the internet is a fantastic tool for researching information, just like the magical lands in Enid Blyton's Faraway Tree books, which I recall my father reading to me and my brother when we were young!



While as parents and carers we feel reassured that our children are safe at home and actively engaged in their rooms, an ever-present danger exists of what children and young people have access to and are exposed to, even without actively searching for specific content.

This point is echoed by Luke Savage, from the NSPCC. In a recent article on the graphic images and video clips widely available on the internet in relation to the ongoing Israel- Hamas war, Luke discusses how the content being shared is incredibly difficult even for adults to process and he raises the concerns about the long-term impact exposure to atrocities of this type may have on a child's mental health and wellbeing.



While the knee-jerk reaction may be to stop children having access to the internet, closely monitoring what they are accessing and ensuring parental controls are in place are two key strategies for keeping children safe. Internet Matters have some useful guides for parents and carers on installing parental controls and privacy settings on devices. [bit.ly/parent\\_internet\\_matters](https://bit.ly/parent_internet_matters)

We want to equip children with the skills to navigate the internet safely, with the confidence to recognise and report concerning content online. It's important that they know never to reshare content of concern. The Department for Education and the NSPCC have a wealth of information for parents and carers at these links:

Support for parents and carers to keep children safe online - [bit.ly/gov\\_online\\_safety](https://bit.ly/gov_online_safety)

Keeping children safe online | NSPCC  
[bit.ly/NSPCC\\_online\\_safety](https://bit.ly/NSPCC_online_safety)

The NSPCC has also partnered with Ambitious about Autism and parents and carers of Children with SEND, to produce these specific resources:

[bit.ly/NSPCC\\_send\\_online](https://bit.ly/NSPCC_send_online)

[bit.ly/NSPCC\\_send\\_onlinewellbeing](https://bit.ly/NSPCC_send_onlinewellbeing)

Please contact your campus team or Angela Poplar, our Online Safety Lead, if you need any support with any aspect of your child's online use.



**CATH GOODWIN**  
Head of Pastoral  
Development



We want to equip children with the skills to navigate the internet safely, with the confidence to recognise and report concerning content online



# West Lea in the news

## HELPING OUR LEARNERS BECOME SKILLED FOR SUCCESS

**As educators, one of our main aims is to help our learners prepare for successful adult life.**

In the wider community, young people experiencing SEND can find the transition from education to work challenging, and often experience lower employment rates.

To help our young people flourish in the future, we must provide an education that develops the skills, knowledge and characteristics to succeed in all areas beyond school.

This involves creating a wider and more creative curriculum that gives students the ability, experience and opportunity to develop real-world skills. These skills can help them secure employment, become part of a successful community and flourish in adult life.



At West Lea we ensure our curriculum focuses on academic, technical, vocational and extra-curricular activities. These help learners develop growth mindsets, critical thinking, problem solving and creativity.

One of the ways we are developing our curriculum at West Lea is by learning from others and sharing our successes. A key part of this has been creating The Enterprise Cooperative Trust (ECT), a partnership made up of like-minded schools and organisations which have a vision to provide a holistic education which goes beyond academic achievement.

These organisations come together regularly to share ideas, best practices and resources and as a group they are pioneering a new approach to



learning that widens opportunities and broadens aspirations for every child.

Our ECT partners at Chickenshed run several initiatives including peer mentoring, confidence building workshops, and work experience. These activities help build self-belief and independence while strengthening our learner's CV's and work skills.

At Orchardside School, students experience a personalised learning journey. By offering a wider and more flexible curriculum, our students are learning in an environment that promotes wellbeing, good mental health and sets them up for success beyond school.



At West Lea, each student has an Independence Passport that helps them develop and track the skills to become self-sufficient successful adults. To help students succeed in the working world, our Supported Internship Programme (SIP) provides work experience, job coaching and professional training

The result of all of these interventions is that 80% of SIP students secure employment with 9 out of 10 retaining their jobs in the long term.

The dedication of our employees, partners, carers, parents, and students is what makes this possible.

As we move into a new year, that's something to be proud of!



**MELANIE BIGNOLD &  
RENEE FLORENTZOU**  
Directors of Education





To help our young people flourish in the future, we must provide an education that develops the skills, knowledge and characteristics to succeed in all areas beyond school



# Our campuses



**Dysons Road**  
174 Dysons Road,  
Edmonton,  
London, N18 2DS

**Springfield Road**  
Springfield Road,  
New Southgate,  
N11 1SP



**Haselbury**  
Haselbury Road,  
Edmonton,  
London, N9 9TU



**Laurel Park School**  
Wilmer Way,  
N14 7HY



**St Mary's**  
Lawrence Road,  
Edmonton,  
London, N18 2HN



## Parents/Carers keeping in touch

As many of you will know, we are adopting the School Gateway app to help streamline communications.

Using the School Gateway app means you'll receive letters and notifications straight away, and no more lost messages as they will all be in one place.

We are grateful to those of you who have already downloaded the app. If you haven't yet got the app, we've set up a page on the website with full instructions [westleaschool.co.uk/school-gateway/](https://westleaschool.co.uk/school-gateway/)

If you prefer not to use the app, there's also a web based version that you can log into from any computer or mobile device.

If you have any issues or questions, please contact the office on **020 8807 2656** or email [office@westleaschool.co.uk](mailto:office@westleaschool.co.uk)

### Schoolgateway





# Key term dates 2023 - 2024

## AUTUMN TERM 2023

**Thursday 21st December**

Last day of Autumn Term

**Friday 22nd December - Friday 5th January**  
**Christmas Break - School closed to learners**

## SPRING TERM 2024

**Monday 8th January**

**INSET Day - School closed to learners**

**Tuesday 9th January**

Start of Spring Term 1 - School reopens

**Wednesday 10th January**

Parent/Carer progress review meetings - School closes at 1230

**Monday 29th January - Friday 2nd February**

WOW Week - National Storytelling Week

**Saturday 10th February**

Chinese New Year

**Monday 12th February - Friday 16th February**

**Half Term - School closed to learners**

**Monday 19th February**

Start of Spring Term 2 - School reopens

**Monday 4th March - Friday 8th March**

WOW Week - National Careers Week

**Sunday 10th March**

Start of Ramadan

**Friday 15th March**

Red Nose Day

**Tuesday 19th March**

Meridian Campus Easter Concert

**Thursday 28th March**

CONEL INSET Day

Last day of Spring Term

**Friday 29th March - Friday 12th April**

**Spring Term Holiday - School closed to learners**

## SUMMER TERM 2024

**Monday 15th April**

Start of Summer Term 1 - School reopens

**Wednesday 17th April**

Parent/Carer progress review meetings - School closes at 12.30

**Monday 6th May**

**Bank Holiday - School closed to learners**

**Tuesday 7th May**

**CONEL INSET Day**

**Tuesday 14th May**

Bring your parent/carers to school morning - Meridian Campus

**Monday 27th May - Friday 31st May**

**Half term - School closed to learners**

**Monday 3rd June**

Start of Summer term 2 - School reopens

**Monday 17th June**

Eid el adha

**Monday 1st July - Friday 5th July**

Year 11 PGL

**Friday 5th July**

**CONEL INSET Day**

**Tuesday 9th June**

Meridian Campus Summer Concert

**Friday 28th June**

Last day of term for KS5 learners and pre-interns

**Wednesday 10th July**

Parent/Carer end of term review meetings - School closes at 1230

**Friday 12th July**

Last day of term for interns

**Wednesday 24th July**

Last day of Summer Term



community  
**kindness**  
learning for life  
innovation inclusion