



NEWSLETTER

GCSE results are up there with the best!

WATERSIDE Academy is among the best schools in the country for GCSE results, statistics from the Department for Education have confirmed.

The school's Progress 8 score, the government benchmark for measuring achievement, was plus 0.77, which is significantly above the national average.

It means students at Waterside achieve on average three quarters of a grade higher than they would at other schools.

The drastic improvement in results, which are likely to make the school the most improved in the country, comes just four years after the school was taken over by The Community Schools Trust.

Since then, the school has jumped two Ofsted grades, moving from inadequate to good in just two years. The results have gone from being well below the national average to well above.

The school also ran compulsory revision lessons before and after school, plus exam skills sessions during weekends and holidays.

Year 11 students arrived at the school at 7.30am for revision sessions and were held back after school until 4.30pm every day, and during Christmas, Easter and half-term breaks.

Headteacher Mr Bray said: "There was never any shortage of intelligence and ambition at this school, there was just a lack of good teaching and leadership.

"To have transformed a failing school in four years, nearly two of which saw the children out of school during the pandemic, is nothing short of miraculous.

"I am proud of the students and incredibly grateful to our hardworking and dedicated teachers who sacrifice their own time to help our students."

The school was taken over by the Community Schools Trust (CST) in 2019 after being shut by Ofsted for being unsafe.

CEO of CST Simon Elliott said: "Our teachers came in at holidays, half term, gave up their weekends. We have left nothing to chance."

Stats confirm grades are well above the national average...



Hardwork revising before and after school has paid off.

“To have transformed a failing school in four years, nearly two of which saw the children out of school during the pandemic, is nothing short of miraculous... Headteacher, Mr Bray”

Grades are cause for much celebration

Headteacher Mr Bray says hard work by students and staff has been rewarded.

I THINK I might be accused of sounding like a broken record when it comes to shouting from the rooftops about our recent exam success.

I don't mind. This achievement is worthy of celebration.

To put this in to context, our school is likely to be the most improved in the UK, it is now among the best in Hackney, in London and the entire country.

Some parents of Year 11 students will remember what this school was like when the



Community Schools Trust took over in 2019.

For those with slightly younger children, I can tell you it bore only a passing resemblance to the calm, structured academically-focused school it is today.

Our success as a school is not that of an individual, I do not take credit for the results. This was a team effort.

Our teachers who stayed behind and came in on weekends and holidays, the students who knuckled down and studied, the families who were there supporting us; this success is all of ours.

In practical terms it means our students can take the next step in their journey with better grades, and consequently better opportunities.

The hard work of getting this year's Year 11 cohort ready has already begun, they will get the same support from our dedicated teachers as last year's students did.

Because we are a small school, we can give our students the personalised learning support that makes all the difference to their grades.

We fully expect to improve on these results and perhaps surpass other local schools who have traditionally scored the best exam results.

It is hard to believe that just four years ago we could be talking about being the best school in Hackney but now it is within our grasp.

Finally, I would like to wish you a happy and restful Christmas break. The hard work continues in the New Year.

Events give students a taste of black culture

THE SCHOOL marked Black History Month with a range of learning activities, assemblies and competitions.

There were movies celebrating black actors and filmmakers such as The Princess and the Frog and Space Jam.

There was a delicious selection of African and Caribbean food on offer in the canteen.

Teachers led assemblies and classroom learning on historical and current figures from the black community.

Our dance troupe performed routines inspired by their own cultural heritage.

Year 9 Emmanuela was one of the dancers. She said: "It was amazing to be able to celebrate my culture while doing something I love, which is dancing.

Year 7 Micaela said: "It was great to be on stage with all my friends and to do something as part of a group.

Year 9 Tami said: "It is very important we get to express ourselves and our culture through dance.

"Black History Month is very well celebrated at our school. It is an inclusive place where people can be themselves."

Food, film and dance are highlights of this year's Black History Month...



Students enjoyed a wide variety of events for Black History Month.

Fabulous fashion from around the world

STUDENTS got the chance to share their cultural identity with their peers on Own Clothes day.

They were encouraged to wear outfits that reflect their heritage or homelands, and educate their classmates.

As part of the celebration, delicious food

from across the globe was on offer in the school canteen.

Year 8 Radiance said: "I felt really happy that I could express myself and my culture in the clothes that I wear.

"I am from Nigeria so I dressed up in traditional clothing for my country. I was

also able to talk to my friends about my home country and the culture."

Year 7 Maxeem said: "My family are Arabic so I wanted to show my heritage with the clothes that I wore.

"Everyone was really nice and interested in me."

Awesome exchange!

Students given insight into trading on trip to London...



The visit to the London Metal Exchange proved a hit with our students.

SELECTED students had the chance to witness firsthand the world's largest commodities exchange on a school trip.

They visited the London Metal Exchange where futures and options contracts are traded in metals such as gold, silver, zinc, and copper.

The students were chosen for their trip for classwork in chemistry and business studies.

They got the chance to watch the world-famous live trading in the floors of the exchange, known as The Ring.

They learned about the hand signs used to trade and the different terms used by traders.

Student Teddy said: "It was a great experience to be able to get the chance to see the traders and how it all works."

"I really enjoyed learning the terms and the hand signs and how the traders make the deals. I'm interested in the business side of things so it was a good experience."

Student Owen said: "I was interested to learn about how the prices of various metals are decided and how a knowledge of the materials can help make financial decisions."



Students have had fun while improving their numeracy skills.

Numbers add up to success

STUDENTS are raving about an interactive after-school club which improves numeracy skills.

Year 7, 8 and 9 students meet after school on Wednesday to play computer-based games such as 24 and Hedgehog for Mathematics Club.

The club regularly has up to 10 students attending and helps them improve their skills in a fun and welcoming environment.

Year 7 Nelson said: "The games are really fun and interactive. We can work on them together which makes it even more fun."

"I have made loads of new friends at the club as well. We share an interest in playing games and maths so we get on well."

Brilliant answers to some big questions

DO WE live in a virtual reality? That was the question answered by our bright pupils in the Brilliant Club.

The Year 7 and 8 philosophy students have been learning about the subject from a PHD student.

The university-style programme runs across a term with students writing a thesis at the end.

They attend a graduation at a top university, getting the chance to meet current students and tour the campus.

The programme aims to help students aspire and prepare for the top universities in the country.

Year 8 Ellie said: "I have very much enjoyed the Brilliant Club. You get to do stuff you would not normally do in class."

It's a bit harder as well so you are really challenged.

"I haven't studied philosophy before but it's such an interesting subject. Our teacher is doing a PhD so they know the subject very well."

Year 8 Nicholas said: "It has really made me think about university. I really want to go and now I feel much more prepared."

Diva's reminder about Collective responsibility

YEAR 10 student Diva has won praise from her teachers for her responsible approach to The Catalyst Collective.

She has been reminding her fellow students about appointments and to respond to emails with their mentors.

The Year 10 black female students get support from relatable role models on issues such as relationships and career pathways.

Each student receives a monthly mentoring session to help build confidence and communications skills.

It is also a chance to help build a network of supportive professionals who can help with future career development.

The scheme sees our female students matched with professional black women for year-long mentoring.

Diva said: "I love the Catalyst Collective and the support we all get. I think it's a wonderful programme because the people we are paired with are relatable to us.

"I wanted my friends to get out of it as much as I had and to see the benefits.

"I was talking to them in the playground, reminding them to respond to their mentors or when the next sessions were."

Student praised for highlighting the importance of replying to mentors...



Keeping fit is a huge hit with Gym Club



STUDENTS are getting fit at Gym Club. They have access to state-of-the-art machines and weightlifting equipment during sessions led by staff.

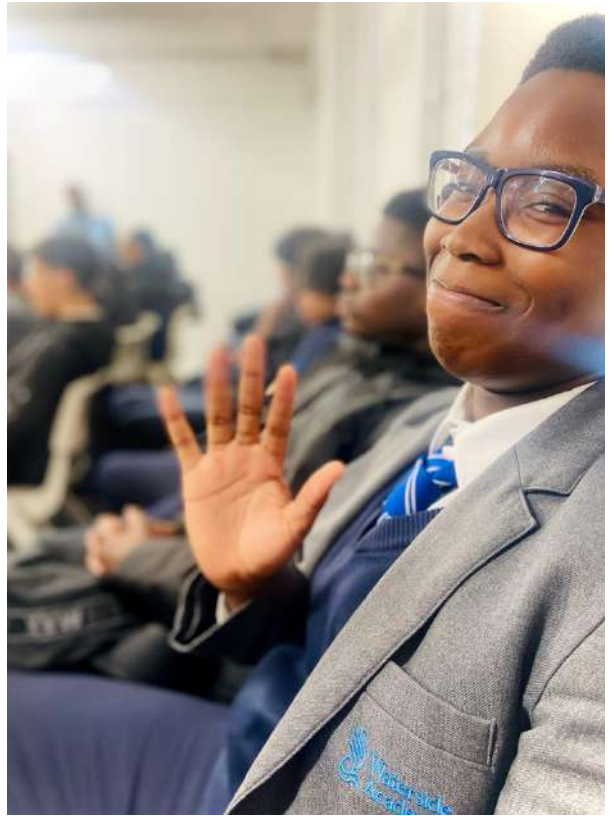
Year 9 Luke said: "I really enjoy the treadmill. Sometimes it's not good conditions to run outside, so getting on the treadmill is ideal.

Year 9 Cavale said: "Mr Waters who runs the club really knows about fitness. It's very helpful to get his support and knowledge."



OUR Year 11 students have been getting in to school early for revision and intervention sessions ahead of their mock GCSE exams.

Early risers determined to succeed!



EXCITED to get started with the mock maths exam.



At school at 7.30am for history revision despite Storm Ciarán.



STUDENTS attend an early morning religious studies intervention in a bid to boost their exam prospects.



STARTING early to prepare for geography mock exam.

Students set excellent example for their peers

OUR “always” students have been rewarded for acting like role models for their peers.

Always students are those that are always on time, always arrive prepared for lessons, always contribute and behave well in class.

The students’ contribution to the school community is measured in merits, with students able to earn silver, gold and blue badges.

The blue badges are for students who have achieved 500 merits in an academic year.

Student Eris has reached 300 to attain gold. He said: “I am very proud to be an always student. Firstly, because I want to be a role model for the other students at the school.

“Also, I really want to make my parents proud of me. When they found out I was an always student they were very pleased.”

Headteacher Mr Bray added: “We want all of our students to see that if you do make a positive contribution to all areas of school life you will be rewarded.

“Our always students are seeking an incredible example to their classmates. We are very proud of them.”

Badges are rewarded for hard work and respect from dedicated role models...



Mr Bray rewards ‘always’ students with their badges at assembly.

STUDENTS donned odds socks as the school marked Anti-Bullying Week this term. Each department put on a series of events based on this year’s theme of Make a Noise. There was also an assembly on how bullying can impact mental health. Year 9 River said: “Lots of people are impacted by bullying and it does affect their mental health. Having the assemblies gives you knowledge of what to do if you need support with any of these issues.”

Wonderful Wednesdays!

STUDENTS are being encouraged to learn new skills and develop hobbies during Enrichment Wednesday.

All students take part in an extracurricular activity every week after school to widen their interests.

There are a number of clubs on offer to take part in and students are encouraged to try something different every term.

Year 9 River said: “I really look forward to my club every Wednesday. I have been trying different activities.”

Year 8 Ismail said: “I go to Fitness Club in the gym. It’s fun because you get to do something you enjoy with school friends.”

Year 7 Noor said: “It gives you a chance to do stuff with students from other classes and year groups.”

Headteacher Mr Bray said: “Every student stays behind school on Wednesday to try one of our clubs. We want to enrich their lives by helping to develop their interests.

“We want them to try new things and be excited by the different challenges that lay ahead.

“Varied interests are also really important when it comes to social, emotional and employment skills.”



Students enjoy a range of activities during Enrichment Wednesday.



Our Year 7 students have finished their first term at the school. We spoke to three of them to find out about their experiences so far. Here's what they had to say...

Fresh challenges offer exciting opportunities

DAVID recently joined us from Randall Cramer Primary.

What is your favourite lesson? Science, the teachers are very knowledgeable and good at teaching the subject to us.

What advice would you give Year 7 students starting next year? Go in with a positive attitude and things will work out.

DUAA joined Waterside Academy from Queensbridge Primary School.

What is your favourite lesson? Geography because I like learning about the different countries and places around the world.

What advice would you give Year 7 students starting next year? Learn your way around the building quickly and it will all seem a lot less scary.

IBBSATU joined from St Monica's Primary.

What is your favourite lesson? History as it's very interesting and our teacher is nice.

What advice would you give Year 7 students starting next year? Do your best in class and don't be afraid to ask the teacher questions.



DAVID



DUAA



IBBSATU

Panel offers insight into exciting careers



The Deputy Mayor of Hackney, Antionette Bramble, was part of a panel talking about their careers at an event run by Hackey Council. The Year 9 students heard from professionals from Amazon, Deloitte and Hackney Council at the Inspiring Hackney Careers event.



YEAR 7 and 8 students heard from a professional from MACE Construction as part of our Careers Day.



Year 7 Food Tech class enjoy making brownies.

PICTURE PARADE



Students working hard at our lunchtime Computer Club.



Our boy's Year 11 football team ahead of a match.



Students enjoy expressing themselves in a variety of ways at Art Club.

We love to see our students helping each other. Above, Year 10s prepare for a humanities exam during break.



City of London School for Girls

Students visited City of London Girls School as part of the Prestigious Colleges Programme. Students can earn fully-funded scholarships to private schools.