

## Attendance at WA

Dear Parents/Carers,

Thank you all so very much for working with us this year again to meet our WA Attendance target of 97%. We are also very grateful to you for not taking the students out of the Academy for any extended leaves in term time and for making GP/Dentist appointments out of school hours.

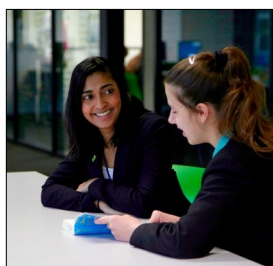
From time to time we have parents/carers asking us about our expectation in terms of proof of reason for absence. Although at the Academy we do ask that proof is provided for every absence wherever possible (text messages from GPs/Dentists are acceptable), we insist that one is provided where the attendance of the child falls below 90%. Where this proof cannot be provided when absence is below 90%, we cannot authorise the absence.

Once again, we thank you for your continuous support and we wish you happy holidays!

Attendance Team

## Message from the Principal, Ms Bora

It's hard to believe that we have reached the end of Term 2 but it has been a wonderful term! I have been proud to attend several exceptional events recently including the Christmas Show and the Parent Council's Christmas Party for families. I am looking forward to Enrichment Day today. However, I am also deeply saddened by the news from Pakistan where 132 children were killed in their school. This puts things in perspective for us at Westminster Academy. Please use the Christmas break to not only **read, revise and practise questions** with your children but also as a time of reflection. We should all be grateful for the opportunities we have been given and remember that there are others across the world who are not as fortunate. As well as showing zest, curiosity, self-control, gratitude, optimism, grit and social intelligence, let us also not forget values such as **kindness, humility and respect**.



## Grammar Objective of the Week: the accurate use of commas

"Let's eat Grandma!" Hmmm... perhaps we need to rephrase that: "Let's eat, Grandma!" That's better. We can now all settle down for our family meal, knowing that Grandma is quite safe.

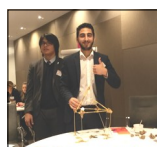
Joking aside, the use of commas is absolutely essential in conveying our meaning accurately. The sentence above demonstrates how dramatically our meaning can be changed through the careless omission of the all-important comma. This continues to be our grammar focus this week, as we learn a series of straightforward rules connected with using the comma. These little punctuation marks are used not only to separate items in a list, but also before the connective 'but' and after connectives that start a new sentence. Furthermore, commas are employed to divide up parts of a sentence – particularly when you insert an introductory phrase. As you re-read this article, please do pay attention to my use of commas.

Finally, the precise use of commas is not only essential at school. A lack of accuracy and confidence in this area will also hinder students greatly when they apply for jobs or write their CVs. Please do find out from your child what they have learnt about commas over the last two weeks.

By Mr Harris, English Curriculum Coordinator



## Developing business skills at PwC



On 5th December, myself and six Sixth Form students went for the second day of PwC's Classrooms Initiative. The day involved students completing a team building game and creating towers of marshmallows and spaghetti, followed by building their presentation skills looking at how to revive a dying brand (with a free lunch in between!). Students thoroughly enjoyed the experience and are excited for the next instalment.

By Mr Dodd, Teacher of Business Studies



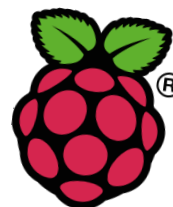
## Sixth Form learn from 'big hitters' of ICT world

On Thursday 13 November 2014, a group of Sixth Form students attended the "Big Hitters" ICT Study Day at the Institute of Education. Students experienced an exciting programme that highlighted key developments in ICT, building a bridge between the students' studies and real-world applications of ICT. Through stimulating and informative presentations given by experts in their fields, students were exposed to up-to-date examples and case studies not found in textbooks.



accountability and it was good to know that companies already have solutions for this."

James Hughes from the Raspberry Pi foundation talked about the history of Raspberry Pi, from the original idea and early prototypes, to the launch of the first model in 2012 to a mostly unsuspecting public. He discussed the subsequent impact on education and leisure around the world and touched on how his own education in computing has led to a long and fascinating career in software engineering and the opportunity to be part of the incredible Raspberry Pi story.



By Ms Gutierrez, Teacher of ICT



Sam Hickling from Google showcased the fast-moving and fascinating journey of the ICT industry over the last 20 years, using

some insightful case studies and examples. He highlighted and explored some exciting new roles likely to emerge over the next 20 years in this ever expanding sector. Fatimah Ahmed, a Year 13 student enrolled on the ITGS course, was amazed by all the projects showcased by Google: *"I enjoyed learning about the new projects, especially the Google projects with which they are trying to get the whole world connected and online. My favourite part was when they explained the effects of putting information online and if it's okay to be monitored for specific purposes; it really made me reflect on my life."*

Tom Davison and Paloma Garcia from Symantec Corporation presented on cyber threats that affect everyone today, not just in the business world but also at home. They discussed how technology opens new doors and offers new opportunities to simplify and improve lives; but security must be built in to mitigate risk. Apart from combating the threats posed by hackers' techniques, they informed us that the biggest challenge today is to identify the risks people run when proper security measures are not put in place. Many businesses' security problems, such as the leak of strategic information or data loss, occur because of internal negligence, and the same principles apply at home. Julio Cesar Da Silva, a Year 12 student studying the ITGS course enjoyed the cyber threat presentation: *"For me the best part was the talk about security because the biggest problem with most online tools is their lack of*



## Basketball team goes from strength to strength

At the beginning of December, the Girls Basketball Team represented WA at a borough-wide basketball tournament. The team was so close to winning the tournament: the girls won the most points out of the whole tournament, only missing out on victory by accumulating a few fouls...

The girls played with huge heart and a great deal of grit, which saw them in lead position against schools with a high level of training. The whole day



was very rewarding, as the girls finally were able to recognise how good they were and could be for future tournaments. The team and Miss Gold look forward to more tournaments in the new year.

By Ms Gold, Teacher of PE

## What's on

**FREE IT classes for parents** Thursday after school

**FREE Art classes for parents and community**

**FREE 'Parent Gym' - Wednesday 14th January 2015 (taster)**

**FREE Adult English classes - every Wednesday 1-3pm**

**To express interest in any of the above, please email Mr Gothard: [AGothard@westminsteracademy.biz](mailto:AGothard@westminsteracademy.biz)**

**End of term 2 - Friday 19th December**

**Staff INSET - Monday 5th - Tuesday 6th January 2015**

**Term 3 begins - Wednesday 7th January 2015**







THINK  
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KNOW

## Keeping your child safe online - A checklist for parents and carers

As a parent you'll probably know how important the internet is to children and young people. They use it to learn, play, socialise and express themselves in all types of creative ways. This may be through sharing photos and videos, blogging, gaming, or even developing their own apps. It is a place of amazing opportunities.

The technology children use in their daily lives can seem daunting. You might worry about the risks they can face online, such as bullying, contact from strangers, as well as the possibility of access to inappropriate or illegal content. To help them stay safe, it's important that you understand how your child uses the internet.

By following this simple checklist, you can start to protect them and decrease the risks they face:



**I have asked my child to show me sites they use** – By doing so, your child is including you in their online life and social activity. Show an interest and take note of the names of their favourite sites. You can then re-visit these when you are alone. Take your time and explore the space, find out how to set the safety features and learn how to report any issues directly to the site.



**I have asked my child to set their profile settings to private** – Social networking sites, such as Facebook, are used by children to share information, photos and just about everything they do! Encourage your child to set their privacy settings to private. They need to think about the information they post online as it could be copied and pasted anywhere, without their permission. If it got into the wrong hands, somebody may wish to use it against them or worst of all try to locate them in the real world.



**I have asked my child about their online friends** – We know that people lie online about who they are and may create fake identities. It is very important children understand this. Whether they are visiting a social network or a gaming site, the safety messages are the same. Children and young people must never give out personal information and only be "friends" with people they know and trust in the real world.



**I have set appropriate parental controls on my child's computer, mobile and games console** – Filters on computers and mobiles can prevent your child from viewing inappropriate and possibly illegal content. You can activate and change levels depending on your child's age and abilities. You can also set time restrictions for using the internet or games. They can be free and easy to install. Call your service provider who will be happy to assist or visit CEOP's parents' site for further information. Explain to your child why you are setting parental controls when you talk to them about their internet use.



**My child has agreed to tell me if they are worried about something online** – Sometimes children get into situations online where they don't feel comfortable or see something they don't want to see. By opening up the communication channels and talking to your child about the internet, their favourite sites and the risks they may encounter, they are more likely to turn to you if they are concerned about something.



**I know where to get help if I'm concerned about my child** – The CEOP Safety Centre provides access to a range of services. If you are concerned that an adult has made inappropriate contact with your child you can report this directly to CEOP. You can also find help if you think your child is being bullied, or if you've come across something on the internet which you think may be illegal.

Visit the Safety Centre at [www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre](http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre) or by clicking on this button:



For further help and guidance on all the information mentioned please visit  
[www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents)

# Parent Gym at Westminster Academy

## Free workshops for parents

- HAVE HAPPIER, MORE CONFIDENT KIDS
- GET YOUR KIDS TO OPEN UP AND TALK TO YOU
- FEEL CALM MORE OF THE TIME
- MAKE FAMILY LIFE MORE FUN

“ I am calm... the family is happier... It is amazing how a course can change your life.”  
Parent, Morningside Children's Centre



## Sessions - overview

### WEEK 1



Get you and your kid talking in a positive way, every day.

### WEEK 2



Show your kids you care, in the right way.

### WEEK 3



Bring order to your house with rules and routines that really work.

### WEEK 4



Keep yourself and your family happy and healthy.

### WEEK 5



Help your little one learn, grow, and achieve their dreams.

### WEEK 6



Keep your family rock solid and help your kid to make friends.

## HOW TO SIGN UP:

Speak to Alan Gothard or call 020 7121 0600

Sessions will be running on Wednesdays at 1pm at Westminster Academy

From 21st January 2015 (taster session: 14th January)