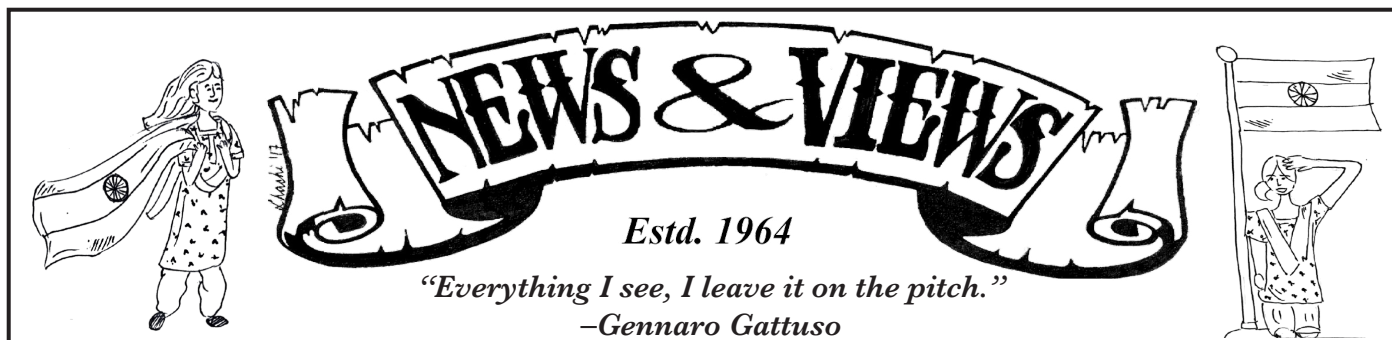




Year 2026

Issue No. 3

Welham Girls' School

Incredible India

Dear Readers,

In the past 77 years, India has grown from a fledgling nation struggling to define itself into a living entity that people carry far beyond its borders. The Indian dust has seen glorious empires and kingdoms rise and fall; it has endured the oppressive boot of colonialism; it has been torn apart, displaced and redrawn in the borders of partition. It now shoulders the responsibility of carrying one of the largest democracies of the world.

Time and again, people and events have tried to disintegrate its identity; but the Indian dust has persevered. Blood stained it in 1962, and again in 1971— each time it absorbed the pain with a heavy heart, yet carried itself with quiet dignity. In 1975, the weight of oppression pressed it down once again, this time at the hands of its own people. It did not merely absorb the sorrow – it trembled, it resisted, and it endured, scarred but unbroken. When it failed to feed its own people, the Green Revolution and the 1991 economic reforms transformed its very core. And yet, amidst the CJP protests, the rampant trade wars and the devaluation of our currency, it gives off the same burnt-ochre fragrance of sun-baked earth. A civilization once regarded as a cradle of knowledge and culture was reduced, under colonial rule, to an image of servility. Today, it continues to metamorphose, slowly picking itself up from the ashes, retracing its path and rebuilding its identity that is distinctly its own.

The Red Bricks of our school also stand on this pious, persevering dust. Over the years, the campus of No.19 has been tread over by several generations of Welhamites, each leaving something behind to add to this rich ecosystem. From the first ten Welhamites that walked into the gates of Welham to the ambitious 540 that purposefully walk through it today, the school has evolved with the country that it calls home. Like India, Welham has never been static. New policies have been implemented, schedules have been tightened, infrastructure has been rebuilt and rules have evolved.

Yet, beneath all this, some things remain unchanged. Be it the persisting lingo or the collective bonding over food, these experiences transcend generations. For each and every Welhamite, from Auld Lang Syne at Holi to the bonfire night at Christmas, all these shared experiences are wove together across generations by the crunch of bajri on the Indian dust.

Taking it one game at a time,

Rudrani Rajya Lakshmi, Gayatri Bhatia, and Prarthana Goenka

Editors-in-Chief

CONTENTS:

2-3	The Mic Doesn't Make Any Money; Fine Tune; On the walls of the Quinta del Sordo; Roses and Raspberries	4-5	Bulletin; Spotted; Bird Brain; The Secret Life of Whimsy; Never Have I Ever
6-7	Incredible India; George Orwell, Politics and the English Language; What's Playing Who's Listening	8-9	Across Borders; Into the Welham Verse; Junior Jamboree; Yellow Gumboots
10-11	It's Giving.. Community; Two Truths One Lie; Unprepared Elites Untrained Citizens; What's In What's out	12	Aunt Agatha; Credits

The Mic Doesn't Make Any Money

Music, as we know it, is amongst the most expressive mediums for self-expression in the world. It is also the livelihood of millions of artists in the world, and has now, through years of technological advancement - from vinyl records to cassettes, radios and CDs, and then to modern streaming platforms today such as Spotify and Apple Music - evolved into something increasingly more accessible to the masses.

Though this seems progressive, every time one opens Spotify, a strange contradiction comes to mind- although music has never been more accessible, making a living from music has never felt more daunting.

Streaming is often celebrated as the industry's saviour. After years of declining CD sales and rampant piracy, platforms like Spotify and Apple Music gave listeners a legal, convenient alternative - and the results cannot be disregarded. According to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), global recorded music revenues reached \$31.7 billion in 2025, with nearly 52.4% of that revenue having come from streaming.

But the industry's success does not always translate into the musician's success. Revenue is distributed according to total streams, allowing only a mere handful of these musicians to capture a largely disproportionate share of earnings. An artist could gain millions of streams and still struggle to support herself/himself financially. The system has not always acknowledged creativity, and has many times compromised it for scale.

Many people who support the rising popularity of streaming believe that it is a boon, because now artists can enjoy convenient access to audiences, yet this seemingly miraculous opportunity should not be mistaken for sustainability. Today, the challenge has shifted from access to diverse music. The new challenge is for these genres and artists to earn sustained and stable audience. In such a market, saturated with variety, visibility is almost as valuable as talent itself. Algorithms increasingly determine which songs rise above the noise, thereby shadowing various unconventional songs.



As a result of shorter attention spans and countless options available at one's fingertips, people no longer know how to sit with music. If a song does not grasp their attention within a short timeframe, it won't get a second chance. This results in lower individual engagement with the artist. There is no place in the market anymore for art that requires time and patience to be understood.



Yet, streaming is not exactly a bane; very few listeners want to return to the era of piracy or expensive physical media. However, the current model forces us to confront a deeper issue. The future of this thriving industry should not be judged solely by how much music one can access, but also by whether the people behind the art can continue to afford creating it.

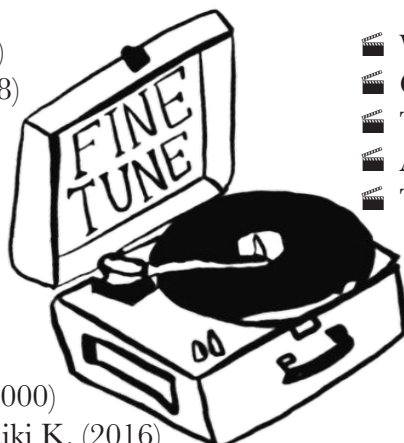
-Hetal Mathur
Class 10

MOVIES

- 🎬 Chungking Express (1994)
- 🎬 Slumdog Millionaire (2008)
- 🎬 The Odyssey (2026)
- 🎬 Party (1984)
- 🎬 Iron Lung (2026)

TV SHOWS

- 📺 The Sopranos (1999)
- 📺 Curb Your Enthusiasm (2000)
- 📺 The Disastrous Life of Saiki K. (2016)
- 📺 The Apothecary Diaries (2023)



BOOKS

- 📖 Ways of Seeing by John Berger
- 📖 Giovanni's Room by James Baldwin
- 📖 The Three Musketeers by Alexandre Dumas
- 📖 Absalom, Absalom by William Faulkner
- 📖 There Are Rivers in the Sky by Elif Shafak

ALBUMS

- 🎵 Holland, 1945 by Neutral Milk Hotel
- 🎵 The Chain by Fleetwood Mac
- 🎵 Dai Dai by Shakira & Burna Boy
- 🎵 Blue Room by Chet Baker
- 🎵 The Wow! Signal by Muse

On the walls of the Quinta del Sordo

“All roads lead back to black decay.” - Georg Trakl, Grodek

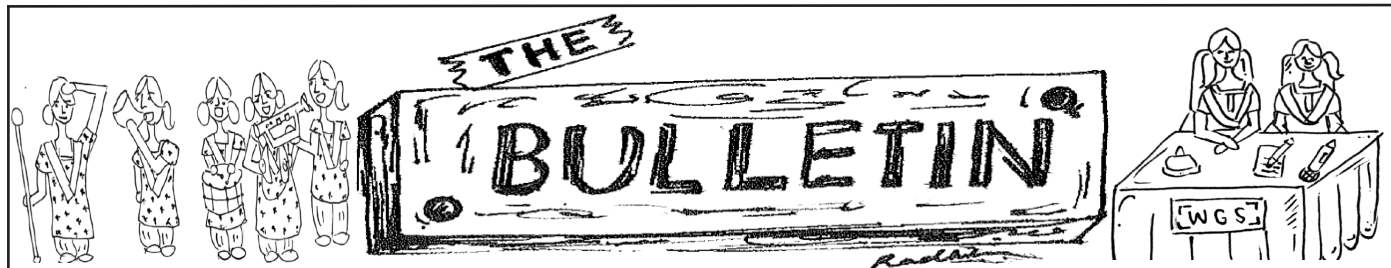
Displayed at Madrid’s Museo del Prado, the fourteen ‘Black Paintings’ in Room 67 catalogue nightmarish hellscapes, displaying depravity in its worst forms - from cannibalism and witchcraft to depictions of the Devil. Painted directly by their creator’s troubled mind onto the plastered walls of his countryside home, they remained unexhibited till five decades after his death. The artist had perhaps intended them to be a reflection of the darkness in his mind; cathartic experiences for him to process the horrible things he had witnessed during the Madrid Famine and the Peninsular War in the 1810s. Their creator, Francisco Goya, was a highly acclaimed painter of 18th-19th century Spain. Early on in his career, he largely showed idyllic depictions of Spanish life and royalty.

However, in the winter of 1792, Goya contracted an undiagnosed illness that rendered him entirely deaf, making him withdrawn and pessimistic. His 80 etchings, *Los Caprichos* (1797-1798), explore themes of ignorance, loneliness, and the irrationality of society. This series was worlds apart from his playful portrayal of aristocracy as seen before- rather, a mockery of what he had once enjoyed. Later, when the war and famine hit, they shattered the remainder of Goya’s artistic optimism. Once a celebrated court painter, he slowly turned into a deeply disillusioned hermit who had witnessed immense suffering. By 1819, in the fierce grip of his illness he painted his Black Paintings.

The most famous of them portrays the titan Saturn consuming one of his six children with Opis in fear of being overthrown- showing how destructive the pursuit of power can be. Another one, *Witches’ Sabbath*, depicts the Devil, adorned with a crown of oak leaves, seemingly preaching to frightened women- a clear mockery of blind belief in medieval superstitions. *Two Old Ones Eating Soup* reveals how harrowing aging can be - depicting two old people, one almost corpse-like in appearance with hollowed eyes and sunken cheeks, the other reduced by mortality to a skull. All the Black Paintings have an oppressive bleakness to them- tones of blacks, browns and ochres rob them of any vibrancy. All the figures are either anguished or murky, and set against vast, suffocating landscapes. There is a sense of hopelessness and isolation living in every canvas that the viewer cannot escape- the very sorrow that Goya never got to escape as it slowly became him in his final years. He died half a decade after the completion of this series. Goya’s paintings are two ends of a spectrum- on one hand, the world in its simplistic beauty, the allure of leisure; on the other, the bare truth that cruelty is everywhere we look.

**-Seeya Arora
Class 11**

<i>Roses</i>	<i>Raspberries</i>
 A bouquet of white, dewy roses to Dr. Ritika Uniyal for hosting yet another successful Psychology symposium. (<i>We love you, Ma’am!</i>)	 Assemblies full of black, burnt-out raspberries to Ms. Vibha Kapoor for being so stingy when it comes to gifting SCs a holiday.
 Red roses in an ornate porcelain vase to the School Mess for the series of scrumptious meals served during Jazbaat.	 Rat-infested raspberries to the Mayo College delegation for running away from their LO at every chance. (<i>See you at ‘Peacock’!</i>)
 A rose-garden’s worth of roses to whoever decided on giving Chinese for Monday night dinner.	 An AVC full of electrocuted, VPN-poisoned raspberries to the IT Department for banning every remotely useful website.
 A set of fragrant, powder-white roses to Mr. Gandharv Dewan and Ms. Anukriti Singh. <i>Welcome to the Welham Family!</i>	 Yellowed, hollowed-out raspberries to Gurbani for not getting her picture clicked for the Annual. (<i>Chat, can you generate?</i>)
 Freshly picked sunshine-yellow roses to the School Administration for organising the FIFA World Cup Final screening in the AVC.	 A prescription for medicine-flavoured raspberries to Dr Lanka for bringing back the winter menu in the height of summer as we slowly melt away.



15th May: Representing Uttarakhand at the Aerobics National Championship 2026, 15 students from Welham Girls' School competed against nearly 250 participants from more than 11 states. The team achieved remarkable success across multiple categories. *Taking the school higher!*

17th May: Six Class 9 students along with a teacher attended the 2026 Round Square Conference at RGS Surrey Hills, United Kingdom.

30th May - 1st June: Two students, Ananya Dasgupta and Yadavi Malhotra, attended an exchange at Groton School in Massachusetts, USA, facilitating cultural exchange and bridging geographical distances.

8th June: Representing Welham Girls' School, two students took part in the Downe House Exchange Programme, gaining first-hand experience of British school life while broadening their academic, cultural, and global perspectives.

30th June: Welham Girls' School received accreditation from HMC, a thriving, proactive Association of heads of the world's leading independent schools.

25th July: Welham Girls' School hosted the CISCE Zonal Swimming Competition 2026, bringing together young swimmers from schools across the region for a day of spirited competition.

28th July: Welham Girls' School welcomed Ms. Akiko Takagi of Yokohama Eiri Girls' School in Japan—looking forward to another friendship transcending borders.

1st-2nd August: WGS hosted the third edition of Jazbaat, a national symposium on mental health and human well-being. The theme for the year was 'Developmental Psychology'

10th August: Fourteen schools participated in Welham Girls' School's first-ever Robotics Championship, broadening the horizons of the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

SPOTTED

✂ Priyanjali speaking in a 'Shin Chan' accent to help revise the United States legislature. *(desperate times call for...)*

✂ Saraswati Ma'am climbing on the water tank to fetch Divyanshi's books. *(#interdisciplinarylearning)*

✂ Kyra scaring Kostubh into remembering that OCD is caused by serotonin imbalance. *(Some memories last a lifetime!)*

✂ Mansa Ram beararji trying to close the e-source doors while Prarthana's face was stuck in the middle. *(it's a 1 vs 1)*

✂ Gitanjali Ma'am and Achin Sir engaged in a rivalry over audience chocolates. *(#Kshitija Ma'am's office is the new akhara.)*

✂ The ChatGPT database actually having random details about Welham based solely on the sheer volume of hyper-specific prompts given by juniors.

✂ Shanvi Doval trying to slip on a banana peel to get a mention in the N&V. *(The News and Views Editorial Board is not responsible for any bodily damage done by any of our readers to themselves and/or others.)*

BIRD BRAIN

🐦 **Mitashi:** Joshi Ma'am, what country are you supporting in the FIFA final?

Joshi Ma'am: I am supporting Lion Messi. *(This lion was not the king of the jungle.)*

🐦 **Mudit Sir:** Who was that ex Welhamite who became an Indian professional footballer?

Valabhi: Sir, Jyotiba Phule. *(The history department has filed a formal complaint.)*

🐦 **Sukanya Ma'am** (In O.Lit class): Do you understand what a Wildean epigram is?

Ojasvi (whispering, perplexed): Epigram? Isn't that a Greek yoghurt company? *(Yes – their best flavours are blueberry and Bunbury, of course.)*

🐦 **Kyna:** Guys, today is Inter-House Aerobics, right?

Shanvi: Yeah..

Kyna: So, is it House wise? *(ee sala cup namde)*

🐦 **Some random Mayoite** (during WELMUN): Canada, what's your official name?

Mahiera (delegate of Canada): Mahiera Goel.



**BIRD
BRAIN**

The Secret Life of Whimsy

Modern cynicism has a way of spinning joy into nothing more than innocence and naivety. Humanity's inner child has been crushed, matured, and hardened by the sheer force of contemporary "intellectualism".



Forgoing the love we had for life and its little things, we have all but given our souls over to the dark side. "Being Whimsical" is one of those TikTok trends that seems a little gauche on the surface. However, as you delve deeper, you realise this is so much more than a passing fad, but rather a whole micro-movement launched by a generation that grew up on ugly skyscrapers and minimalism and a general anxiety about the state of the world. While everyone on the internet seems to be "Adding a Little Whimsy" to their lives, we see that it has taken over fashion, food, art, lifestyles, and even intellectual subcultures (as witnessed by Chuo University launching Cute Studies as a course).

If there's one thing we know about young people - and this goes for all those who have ever been young - it is that there is nothing they value more than their youth. Currently, we are stuck in this loop of children wanting to grow up as quickly as possible, and adults wishing they had valued their childhood. The Whimsy Movement is the refusal to abandon the joy of childhood and the little things of life. Historically, this has been the strongest defense against oppression.

Surrealism (of which whimsy is a close cousin) emerged as a reaction to the atrocities of World War I. The aim was to surpass reason and what society labelled as "good" and "mature" art. Artists challenged people to see what was irrational and to accept it with grace and even learn to love it. In their own ways, both surrealism and whimsy have distinct elements that defy convention.

In fact, Surrealism emerged partly from Dadaism. Dadaism was a direct criticism of war, capitalism, and convention. Even now, watching people display their "whimsical art", a trained eye can detect the influence of Dadaism. Vibrancy, unusual shapes, and proportions were all trademarks of the Dada style. These art styles were the most significant forms of protest against fascism and dictatorship.

However, art is nothing more than a medium. It is the artist who creates the message, the artist who is behind the emotion evoked. Whimsy is nothing more than a mode of expression; it stands for its own set of morals, but it cannot condone anything without being prompted. Mere existence is not enough. It is found in the small acts that make life uniquely yours, be it adding a colourful pin to your outfit every morning, laughing at a joke everyone else thinks is corny, or just believing in your own individuality.

If you take anything away from this, let it be that whimsy is a celebration of our inner child. No child on their own can be violent; no child on their own can be oppressive. Allow yourself the freedom to be young and allow yourself the freedom to be happy. There is no bigger weapon against the despair of the future.

-Ojasvi Mehta
Class 11



- 👁 Given a Math exam with language so twisted, it felt like an English exam.
- 👁 Motivated myself through Sunita Ma'am's podcast.
- 👁 Wished to be a part of the News & Views Ed- Board.
- 👁 Been cursed by the haunted doll in the Sr. Mess.
- 👁 Ended up missing my school during an outbound competition.
- 👁 Tried to get myself excused from Socials to study for a Math test.

- 👁 Eaten at least half the bowl of chocolate I was given to use for my Home Science practicals.
- 👁 Started and finished a Holiday Project after returning to school. *(All that work and no success.)*
- 👁 Had beef with the School Captain of a neighbouring school. *(It is all very diplomatic.)*
- 👁 Used a window to enter a classroom.
- 👁 Fallen asleep in Gitanjali Ma'am's class.
- 👁 Torn my hair out in anguish as Neera Ma'am headed towards the fans to slow their speed.

George Orwell, Politics and the English Language, 1946

Language, while a tool of communication, is also an instrument of thought-control. Clear language is considered to be the very foundation of truth while deception is mostly facilitated by insincerity in language. This flexibility of language may seem like a weakness, but those who have a command over it may exploit it most effectively.

These may seem like mere statements, yet those in positions of power have repeatedly demonstrated how language can be used to influence and exploit. These people, often politicians, use large umbrella terms because they seem to encompass all kinds of ideas, and through this, they control the masses. An average listener upon encountering words such as ‘minority’, ‘social justice’, or ‘national interest’ may feel a sense of comprehension. However, what they understand shifts depending on who is speaking and the intent behind its usage. As such terms are repeatedly reinforced, their context is gradually stripped away, until the words no longer invite scrutiny. Over a period of time these words become sensationalised, their meanings hollowed out and their impact diluted. This process continues until a farmer protesting land rights and a journalist filing a report can both be arrested under the same charge of being anti-national. Words like ‘anti-national’ and ‘minority’ carry considerable weight, as they not only isolate the individual or group but portray them as the enemies of the community. Over the past decade, opposition figures, activists, marginalised communities, and tribal communities - groups that share little in common except their dissent - have all been grouped together. Using a word as broad as ‘anti-national’ subtly manipulates a person into believing one standard idea - that there is an ‘us’ and a ‘them,’ and that ‘they’ pose a threat to ‘us.’ This boils down to authoritarian tendencies weaponising language to blind people to injustice. In many cases, such as the Rohingya people of Myanmar, this allows governments to institutionalise discrimination.

Consider this: how much criticism does the Cockroach Janta Party receive based on how ‘anti-national’ they are? In a country like ours, young people may be encouraged to engage with politics—until their views diverge from those in power. The issue here is not whether certain groups are beyond criticism, but that it’s telling of a larger political pattern.

This weaponisation of language only continues to intensify. Of the 405 sedition cases filed against Indians for criticizing political leaders over the last decade, 96% were registered after 2014. There has also been a 28% annual increase in such cases between 2014 and 2020 compared to the previous decade. Most of these cases never even reach trial. Therefore, the use of words such as ‘anti-national,’ and ‘sedition’ has often served one purpose: to instil fear - fear of the long judicial process that awaits anybody who revolts, of the hellish taunts of a conservative society, and of the shame of being unheard despite voicing out.

In a world where power feeds on fear, where language becomes a mechanism of control, it is important for us, as citizens, to question: how much of this label is the truth, and how much is a calculated strategy?

-Kyra Nagpal
Class 10

WHAT'S PLAYING	WHO'S LISTENING
 Dai Dai	▶▶ WGS delegation at VDJS
 The Less I Know The Better	▶▶ SC Batch
 Me, You and Steve	▶▶ Paanya Gupta
 Cruel Summer	▶▶ Welham Girls' School
 Barbie Girl	▶▶ Saishaa Somani
 Baarishein	▶▶ Sports Department
 We Can't Be Friends	▶▶ WBS SC Batch



Across Borders

When we were told we would be interviewing a visiting Japanese Principal, we were curious to see where the conversation would go. Ms. Akiko Takagi, visiting Welham as part of a conversation on education across borders, gave us far more than we expected. What started as a fairly standard set of questions somehow wandered from Artificial Intelligence to social media to Indian traffic, and we regret nothing about the detour. We began, as everyone seems to these days, with A.I. Her school, she admitted, is “still in the middle of deciding a particular policy” on it — a sentence that will be deeply relatable to anyone who has sat through a staff meeting on the subject. But she wasn’t bracing for impact either. Her stance was “open,” she said, while adding, quite firmly, that she’d “still like to prioritise a learning approach on human interactions.” Translation: use the tool, don’t become the tool. Keep “thinking individually.”

Given the state of the world lately, we couldn’t resist asking about conflict and whether the idea of a “global student community” isn’t a little naive right now. Her answer was astonishingly simple: talk to people. “It is very important that as young people, we continue talking to people from various cultures internationally,” she said — open-mindedness, apparently, is not that complicated in theory, just in practice.

Naturally, this spiralled into social media, the thing everyone loves to blame for everything. Ms. Takagi’s take was refreshingly not a lecture: connection isn’t the same as being informed. Social media can broaden perspectives, she said, but it can also “dull” them, feeding us whatever’s popular until we mistake it for the whole picture. Her fix wasn’t “log off” — just remember that what you’re seeing has already been filtered for you. We asked about student agency next, mostly because we wanted to know if she’d noticed how much we run our own show here. At her school, the students’ council apparently handles most of the social media presence, and she was quick to say, “in any of their endeavours, my full support lies with them.” (There may even be a Welham feature coming to their platforms — watch this space.)

Her advice on getting students to actually participate in things was so simple it almost felt like a trick: find something you care about. “If you’re interested in music, you automatically would be inclined to learn it,” she said, and from there, apparently, everything else follows — languages, cultures, whole new interests you didn’t know you’d acquire. Multitasking, reframed as just, caring about enough things.

On research — a topic every one of us has strong, tired opinions about — her advice was equally unfussy: read more than one source. “When we look at only one side of the information, we restrict our knowledge to only that part,” she said, which sounds obvious until you remember how often we don’t do it.

And then, because no interview at Welham is complete without someone asking a foreign guest what they think of India, we got to the good part. Her first visit to the country, and her first comment was the most universally Indian sentence possible: “The weather has been very erratic, haha.” She’d been warned to expect an enriching cultural experience and found the trip “nothing short of dynamic” — traffic, chaos, and all. Rather than being rattled by it, she seemed genuinely into it. “This ‘chaos’ of sorts is very interesting to me,” she said, adding that she’s already looking forward to coming back. Somewhere between education systems and Delhi traffic, it stopped feeling like an interview and started just feeling like a chat, which, we think, was rather the point of the whole “across borders” idea to begin with.

-The NV Editorial Board



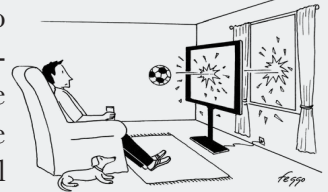
INTO THE WELHAM VERSE

- ☛ Inter-House Aero using a song other than the same ten in their combees.
- ☛ Vibha Ma’am actually granting a half-day during assembly protests.
- ☛ Mr. Gandharv Dewan doesn’t wear multicolored novelty socks with pizzas on them (*adding pizza to pizzazz*)
- ☛ Welhamites showing up to the FIFA screening out of genuine love for the sport.
- ☛ Hockey is actually happening in the field.
- ☛ Miss Sapna Sharma not haunting hallways for her Vasant Valley team during class hours.
- ☛ Getting more than boiled corn-on-the-cob for Fruit Break once in a while.

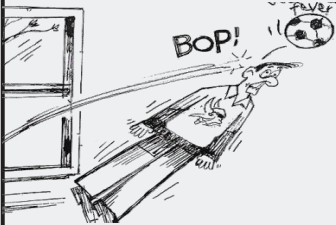
JUNIOR Lamboree

Football Is For All: The FIFA Screening Report

19th July 2026 has cemented itself into the history of Welham leniencies. Even as I write this article, a Welhamite passes me by, voice hoarse from shouting. The first thing that comes to mind at the thought of this unforgettable date is the noise of unintelligible cheering and the odour of deliciously tempting chips that reach the junior dorms. We turn our heads (not in the One Direction way) envious of the seniors who were graciously permitted a 4:00 a.m. all-nighter to watch the world's favourites, Yamal and (maybe) Messi play.



Red night suits and Bulbul house t-shirts replaced the team jerseys and in that mess, there were a few scattered blues. While the lights were being turned off in the junior dorm, a full-blown party had just begun in the AVC. In this wild stupor of football frenzy, there were two kinds of people observed: football fans and fake football fans. While some began to cheer when the teams walked in, some only woke up for Dynamite (and were more disappointed with *Hallelujah* than with the disallowance of Nico Williams' goal).



The party really did, however, begin with that disallowance. People who had been shaken awake because of the cheering, and who had almost been lulled back to sleep because of the collective 'Boo' afterward, let go of their 'larping' and started paying attention to the match (because which Welhamite does not want to discuss favouritism and bias?). No amount of begging would let us (AIIs) catch a glimpse of the champions, but we could hear from the 'tsks' and the snickering that some scale had been tipped. For all the traitors in both blue and red, you did not go unnoticed.

Besides the saranghae screamers, the Laxmi Yamal fans, the Argentina-supporting minority, and the people who just attended the match out of a debilitating FOMO, this screening will remain an iconic moment for Welhamites, and a big win for the student body against the strictly binding school rules. You could say, on the momentous day of the 19th of July, we had become, finally, too cool for school.

-Miraya Puri
Class 9

YELLOW GUMBOOTS



It's Giving...Community (Shared Lore?)

Our online presence increasingly dominates our offline persona; after all, we are what we consume digitally. As a generation with daily exposure to online ideas, we are inherently shaped by what we see over time - from something as trivial as our taste in music to something as formative as our political beliefs. Whether it is about demonic Labubus, matcha lattes, or one random audio becoming everyone's entire personality for a week, our algorithm becomes something of a conversation starter or an icebreaker.

At a time when armed conflicts are on the rise and international relations are increasingly strained, when ethnic deportations and hate crimes are escalating with each passing year, Meme Culture is a surprisingly easy way for individuals to find a safe space for themselves online and gain support. To bond over shared humour is an easy way to forget any prejudice or ill-feelings one may harbour towards another. They're easily adaptable to any situation: one week it's AI-generated Indonesian 'brain rot' figures with questionable origins (yes - Tung Tung Tung Sahur), the next it is everyone collectively mourning a nihilistic penguin walking into the distance. For example, in times of political crisis such as during the Trump's administration, they have been tweaked to fit his irrational rhetoric into the butt of the joke. Such memes gain much popularity online, and become a point where people from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities can join a global conversation, breaking barriers of language and social differences. The joke changes, but the audience rarely does.

The Welham community is in itself an ideal example of how unifying meme culture can be – discreetly grinning at a distant classmate when the teacher says “6-7”, or doing TikTok dances for a friend's birthday as a joke. Talking about being “cooked” before a test you certainly didn't study for, “crashing out” over the results afterwards, or “aura-farming” ironically and still failing at it terribly. Pretending someone has “negative aura”, calling your friend a ‘performative male’ because he suddenly discovered the gym, or quoting an absurd brain rot audio with absolutely no context; and, somehow, everyone still gets it. We are all part of an online ecosystem without even realising it, and our active participation in the culture of memes is why our generation is considered relatively “unserious”, especially in times of distress – although we do “lock in” when the situation calls for it. It is just not clicking to these people that we are standing on business, is it?

-Antara Singh
Class 11

- Aarna Tiwari and Aditya Koradia did a push-up challenge at Socials. *(There was a one-point difference between them- guess who?)*

Everyone watching the FIFA match could name more than two players on the teams.
(Lion Messi counts as one of them.)

Participants resorted to fairy lights and umbrellas for the Jazbaat Psychological Analysis.

- The school Social Media Official does not have access to social media. *(the ultimate paradox)*

The Welham IT department made the Indian government ban Instagram chats across the country. *(For the people, by the people.)*

The Quiz Official thinks that Hridaan Roshan is Mr. Roshanlal's son.

- Sara was able to find a clean washroom in VDJS. *(#PeeSafeoversettingspray)*

The Kaliya Daman choreography has been performed only once in WGS.

SC-C shares the same opinions as Dr. Neera Kapoor. *(#twinning)*

- PreSCs submitted Yagyana a proposal for a flashmob in the ISC English Language proposal format.

Dr. Ritika Uniyal, a psychology doctorate, actively joins lunch-table debates on which vegetable has the most personality. *(She thinks ladyfinger wins.)*

The TechKey Founders' Issue is ready to be printed. *(Ananta working overtime, all the time.)*



Unprepared Elites, Untrained Citizens

Nobody runs the sauté station on their first night unless they want a kitchen fire, walk-outs, and raw chicken. There is an order: months of prep first, dicing onions until tear ducts give up, and learning which vegetables turn to mush. A restaurant letting anyone run the line would not survive a dinner rush. Trust, in a kitchen, is earned through practice.

It is strange, then, that this logic disappears outside the kitchen. The electorate welcomes 18-year-olds to decide the country's trajectory, without knowing if they have ever practised high-stakes decision-making. When they do not show up, we call it apathy, when it might be closer to candour: it is impossible to feel accountability over a station you cannot run. This generation has not stopped caring; it has just never been given a chance to prep.

Ireland did not fix political problems by electing better politicians, but by pulling ordinary citizens from their lives to sit with arguments long enough to change their minds on issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. Both went to referendum; both passed. This is sortition: choosing decision-makers by lot and it was held in Athens for centuries. It challenges the illusion of democracy as a closed kitchen run by elites. Ireland proved sortition works, forcing us to confront whether citizens are ready for what that trust demands.

The obvious objection is that governing is hard, and random selection does not teach people how to govern. However, Germany transcends traditional boundaries through codetermination. Under this system, employees elect representatives to corporate boards with real votes on executive pay and major decisions - an actual seat, not just a suggestion box! Having thrived for seven decades, this workplace democracy is the civic prep shift one cannot skip.



Yet, every noble activity faces difficulties. Who decides which questions the assembly argues about matters just as much as the debate itself. Meanwhile, applying codetermination does not map neatly onto the chaotic gig economy where young people work today. These are not reasons to abandon either idea, but to build both with the patience a kitchen demands before handing anyone the mandoline.

A cook earns their station so gradually that nobody can point to the exact morning it was attained. What this generation lacks is not the capacity for that attainment, but the kitchen in which to do it. Give us the prep, and we will earn the station ourselves.

-Aditri Lahiri
Class 9

What's Out	What's In
☐ Meeting Welhamotes at Socials	☒ Meeting Welhamotes at Haldiram's
☐ Classrooms	☒ AVC
☐ The Prime Minister of India	☒ Mrs. Vibha Kapoor
☐ Art Block	☒ <i>Madhuri Block</i>
☐ Hospital Beds	☒ Fever
☐ Bumping into Subohi Ma'am during Fruit	☒ Meeting Robots during Fruit



Q. How do I tell my Seniors I just want to watch Inter-House Aerobics and not be a part of it?

My dear- unfortunately- aerodynamic -Welhamite,
The plight you suffer is on account of your own talent for being thrown in the air like a sparkling baton and your ability to look adorable in pigtails. While your heart may yearn to be sitting in the galleries, cheering for the same combees year after year as if it is the first time you have ever seen them, you must realise there is a significant amount of dignity in pretending that whatever you do is the hardest of all things in this School of Hard Things That Only I Do. In fact, that sort of entitlement is all the rage these days; you might benefit a little from some of it. So, do your little kicks and tricks and remember that a smile is worth twenty points.

Q. What can I, as a Junior, do to help my Seniors through this tough laptop policy?

My dear, young Scokie,
I hope you realise that as the ancient Greeks passed on torches from runner to runner, your beloved yet helpless seniors will pass this behemoth policy on to you. The only thing you can do is bide your time, as you offer discreet prayers to the Laptop Gods in the silent corners of your classrooms. You can kiss goodbye to the good old days of MP4 movies on Saturday night and come back down to the level of reality where cable TV is your idea of a fun night. Bow down to the surveillance in the E-source and bid farewell to your *Oceanofpdfs* in the computer labs. Say goodbye to your French VPNs and welcome the new age of Microsoft Teams being your only stimulation (oh wait, they got that too).

*Signing Off,
Always forever, (never) yours,
Aunt Agatha*

CREDITS

Teacher-in-Charge- Ms. Bela Pandey
Editors-in-Chief-
Rudrani Rajya Lakshmi,
Gayatri Bhatia and Prarthana Goenka

Senior Editors:
Rashika, Krishnangi, Aadya
Dakshayani and Sienna

Junior Editors:
Sanaa, Aradhya and Miraya

Technical Editor:
Rudrani

Art Editors:
Valabhi, Navya and Ojasvi

