



**Saffron Walden
County High School**

A local school of exceptional quality

PROSPECTUS

September 2024 Intake



Opportunity and Achievement

Saffron Walden County High School is committed to providing a secondary education of exceptional quality for its local community. It does so by delivering outstanding examination results year on year, by producing stunning drama and music performances in Saffron Hall, and through achieving impressive sporting success. Perhaps the quality is best demonstrated by the fact that so many of our Sixth Form leavers gain places at the most competitive universities and courses in the country.

Our top priority is to ensure that every single student makes the greatest possible progress in their learning and fulfils their academic potential. We expect and encourage every child to aim high and strive for excellence.

We know that students attain highly when they consistently experience teaching which is stimulating, challenging and enthusiastic. We pride ourselves on an approach to teaching and learning that is both creative and innovative and is combined with high expectations around student conduct. Our behaviour code emphasises a smart appearance, good manners, respect and consideration for others.

We are a big school – on the outside. Our size allows us to offer an exceptional range of opportunities, resources and facilities for your child's benefit. But we are small – on the inside. We do not lose sight of the individual and we work hard to be a school that understands them and allows them to flourish and to be happy. Our skilled and professional staff are dedicated to supporting your child in all that they do so that they can achieve their best and go on to make a positive contribution to society.

“Saffron Walden County High School is an outstanding school providing an outstanding quality of education for all its students.” - OFSTED



Innovation and Challenge

The school has been at the forefront of innovative curriculum design over a number of years. As a result, we have developed a broad and balanced curriculum, with personalised pathways, that gives every student the challenge and the opportunity to achieve their personal best. We understand that every student is different, and we draw on our knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses to provide them with high quality information, advice and guidance to inform their curriculum choices at GCSE and A-Level.

The quality of teaching and learning at the school is outstanding. Our highly qualified teachers seek to ensure that every child is stretched and challenged and that lessons are stimulating and engaging. Our ethos encourages learners to be resilient, independent and reflective, with the skills to learn in the many different contexts they will experience in adult life.

We believe in the importance of there being a strong and constructive partnership between home and school. It is vital that parents remain closely involved in their son or daughter's academic progress. For this to work, we recognise the importance of the school providing regular and clear information on a student's progress, as well as there being good channels of communication between school and home.

“The school’s outstanding curriculum ensures that there is an appropriate pathway for each student to follow.” - OFSTED

Exciting and Engaging

Examinations are not the only measure of educational success. That is why we place so much emphasis on providing extra-curricular opportunities. Participation in these activities enables our students to develop a wider range of interests and also to acquire essential personal skills which will be of great benefit to them in their future careers. All the evidence shows that employers and universities value the extra dimension which such activities promote.

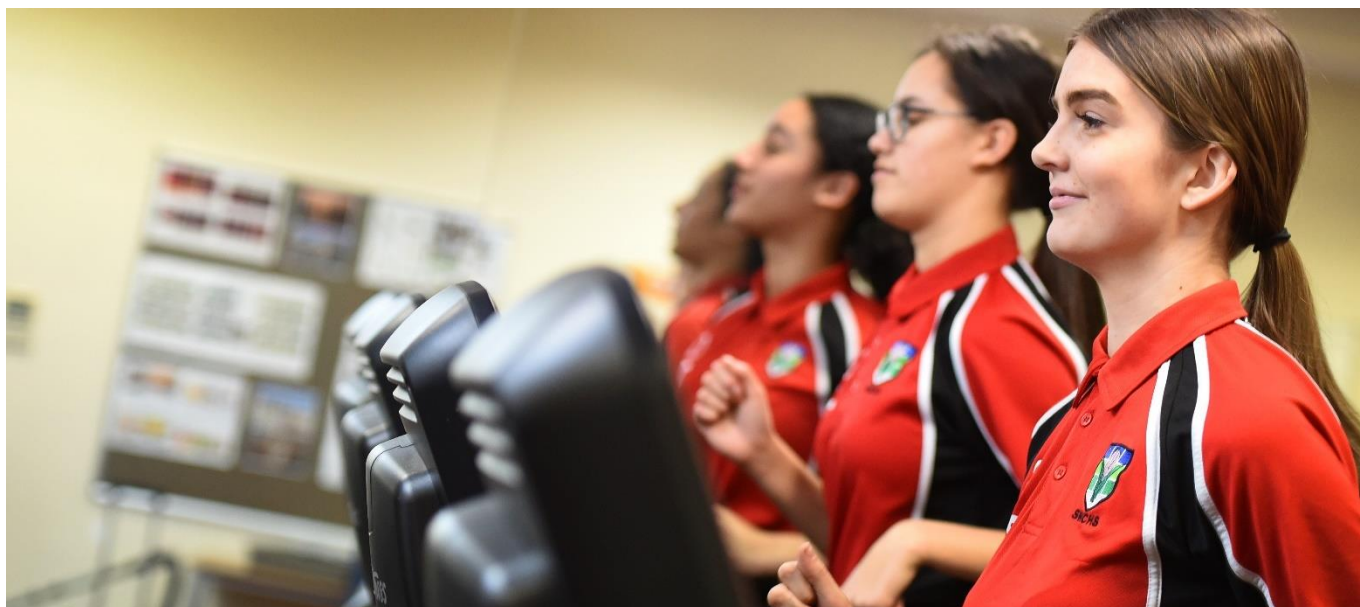
There is something for everyone at County High, from the Duke of Edinburgh Award to Chess Club. Many students learn musical instruments, so we have two orchestras, a Concert Band, a Junior Band, a Jazz Band, numerous choirs and many other ensembles. Regular concerts in the world-class Saffron Hall provide valuable opportunities to showcase musical talents before an appreciative audience. The quality of our drama productions is well documented: all students have many opportunities to take part in studio or large-scale productions – an immense range of modern theatre is presented. Art Club, opportunities to perform in dance productions...small wonder that we were amongst the first winners of the Arts Council's Artsmark Gold Award.

Involvement in sport is highly valued at SWCHS. The PE department has a strong commitment to providing both competitive and recreational opportunities in all major sports. Anybody who is keen and wishes to improve their standard is welcome to attend the many sports clubs. Our Sports Centre provides a rich environment to develop sporting skills. As with the Arts, excellence of our provision has been recognised by the Sportsmark Gold Award.

“It was one of the most incredible experiences of my life and such a fantastic and unique opportunity to view another culture from the inside.”

- YEAR 10 STUDENT





Caring and Supportive

Each student is placed in a tutor group when they join County High, with a Form Tutor who comes to know them well as individuals during their time together. Under the leadership of an experienced Year Achievement Co-ordinator, each student's academic progress and wellbeing is carefully monitored.

The Form Tutor develops a close insight into the student's social and academic development through a programme of individual tutorials as the student moves up through the school. During tutorials, the Form Tutor and the student review progress in different subjects and identify targets for improvement. This has proved very successful in supporting student progress. Form Tutors help identify obstacles to progress and suggest ways to overcome them. Later on, if examinations and extra-curricular commitments create workload pressures, tutorials can help students plan their time effectively.

At County High, emphasis is placed on civilised standards of behaviour towards others. Students and staff together devised a "Community Code" which defines those standards. The main themes are courtesy towards others and pride in ourselves and our school. For example, we expect uniform to be worn properly, litter to be picked up, and students to address members of staff and each other with courtesy. These fundamental values underpin our community and ensure that all children can develop to their full potential in an environment that is caring, respectful and supportive.

"The teachers really know and understand my children and I love the way the school celebrates excellence and is proud of it." - PARENT

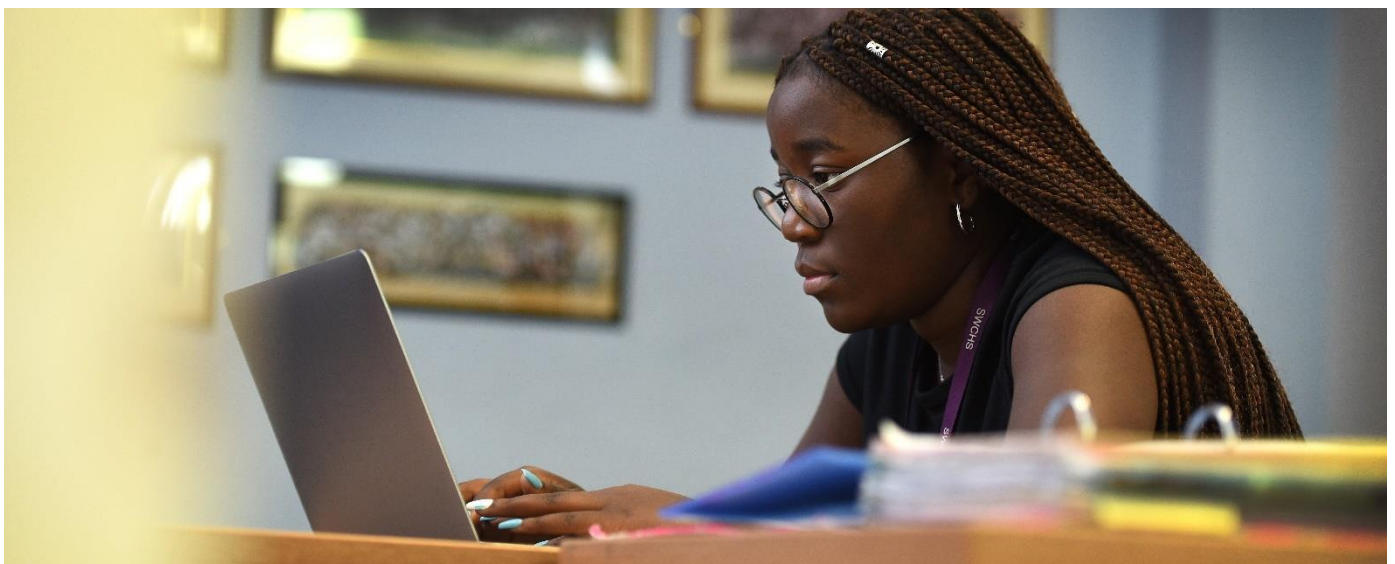
Dynamic and Successful

A large majority of our students stay on for post-16 education and are joined by students from other local schools. The Sixth Form at County High offers an exciting and varied curriculum as well as stimulating activities out of the classroom. We seek to ensure that every student achieves their full potential, in whatever field that might be. We firmly believe that the Sixth Form is a stepping stone to higher education or employment and as such we encourage students to develop the skills needed to be successful in a more independent environment.

We offer a diverse range of A-Level courses and our innovative timetabling enables most students to choose their subject combinations freely. We are justifiably proud of the academic progress our students make, with most of them achieving better results than would be predicted from their GCSEs. Students are supported in this by teaching and learning that is stimulating and of a consistently high quality, and by the academic and pastoral support of a team of experienced personal tutors.

Our students are actively involved in the wider community and in supporting regional and national charities through a diverse programme of fundraising activities. The opportunities for international travel are also considerable with annual trips to the USA, France, Germany and Spain. Closer to home, we have a thriving Duke of Edinburgh cohort involved in UK-based expeditions. The depth of talent amongst our students is truly impressive and Drama, Art, Music and Sport all flourish, both at a competitive and social level. An example of this is our Music Academy, which is open to all students in the Sixth Form who play an instrument, including singing to at least a grade 6 level. This exciting programme is unique to the Sixth Form at County High and gives students access to Masterclasses with world class performers, provides training and opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills, and supports them to meet visiting artists, as well as providing them with excellent performance opportunities.

“The school has supported me so much. I feel I’ve really been stretched and grown as a character.” – SIXTH FORM STUDENT



Ethos and Expectation

To help make an informed choice of school, parents will wish to know something of our beliefs and expectations.



Governors and staff believe that academic achievement to the highest level to which each individual can aspire is what most parents will value. This will enable the majority of children to aspire to university entrance standards, including those of the most prestigious universities. Staff will seek to challenge all students regardless of their ability and provide them with opportunities to fulfil their potential and achieve their personal best.

In consequence, the school emphasises the prime importance of teaching and learning. Our staff place great value on academic work and are continually seeking to improve classroom practice.

We are also clear that this central purpose is most likely to be achieved within a framework of clear values such as discipline, respect and acceptance of school procedures. You may wish to read the relevant policies on the school's website, which include our Behaviour, Drugs and Exclusions policies.

In a large school it is necessary for all students, parents and staff to share an understanding that all students will:

- Work hard to achieve their full academic potential
- Respond to the many opportunities present both in and beyond the classroom
- Respect fellow students and staff
- Behave well in and out of class, following the community code
- Take care of property belonging to others and to the school
- Attend regularly, except when ill
- Complete homework and coursework by set deadlines
- Comply with instructions from staff
- When at fault, accept correction without argument
- Wear uniform as intended
- Talk with parents and teachers about any concerns in school
- Seek to make excellent progress
- Accept the fundamental values of our country

Parents who share these values will find their children get the most out of Saffron Walden County High School. Those with different priorities may wish to consider alternatives for their children's secondary education.



Useful links on our website

Admissions policy for 2024-25: [Saffron Walden County High School – Admissions \(swchs.net\)](https://www.swchs.net)

The School Curriculum: [Saffron Walden County High School - Curriculum \(swchs.net\)](https://www.swchs.net)

Exam results: [Saffron Walden County High School – Exams Results \(DFE – gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

SWCHS Sixth Form: [Saffron Walden County High School - Sixth Form \(swchs.net\)](https://www.swchs.net)

Safeguarding: [Saffron Walden County High School - Safeguarding \(swchs.net\)](https://www.swchs.net)

SEND: [Saffron Walden County High School - SEND Provision \(swchs.net\)](https://www.swchs.net)

Saffron Academy Trust: [Home - Saffron Academy Trust](https://www.swchs.net)



Saffron Walden County High School

Saffron Academy Trust

Audley End Road, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 4UH

Tel: 01799 513030 | www.swchs.net | info@swchs.net

Polly Lankester
Headteacher

