



Switch on - Autumn Term 2023

SWCHS Parent/Carer Newsletter - Issue 56



From the Headteacher:



It is always a pleasure to watch our new Year 7 students enjoying starting new subjects and gaining in confidence as they settle in. We think Year 7 have made a fantastic start to their secondary school careers and we are delighted that so many of them have joined extra-curricular clubs already. This term, Senior Leaders have been giving more time to walking around the school so that we can see more of students' work and celebrate their efforts. We have been so impressed with their creativity, problem solving, analytical thinking and, maybe most of all, their commitment to their studies. Both GCSE and A Level results in 2023 showed students had made really great progress from their start points and, when you walk around the school, it confirms that our students are working hard and doing well.

One of the lovely things about this school is the sense of community. I was so proud to walk around the school on both of our Open Evenings and see so many students helping around the school and presenting to parents and future students. Our students are wonderful ambassadors, showing pride in their work and their school. We also found the Year Ahead events very useful, and we enjoyed meeting so many parents – thank you for giving your time to those (especially those parents who attended more than one!).

We are delighted that we have been able to maintain our fantastic extra-curricular programme, despite the funding pressures we are facing. We have already had so much sporting success and rehearsals for both the Autumn Concert and Sweeney Todd are going very well.

This term has also been a time to focus on the importance of ensuring that attendance is excellent. NHS guidance says that students with mild winter illnesses (e.g. coughs, colds and sore throats) should be in school. We know that students with attendance in the 'Good' category (above 96%) are most likely to make great progress and this is clear from both national and school level data. We know that it can sometimes be difficult to get students into school and so, please do get in touch if we can support you with any attendance issues.

I hope your child has a great start to this academic year and I wish you a very happy Half Term.

Polly Lankester, Headteacher

Key Dates:

Fri 20th October 2023	School Closes for Half Term
Mon 23rd – Fri 27th October 2023	Half Term
Mon 30th October 2023	School Opens – Timetable Week 2
Fri 24th November 2023	School Closed - Training Day
Thur 14th December 2023	SWCHS Christmas Concert
Mon 18th – Wed 20th December 2023	Charities Week
Wed 20th December 2023	Early finish @ 1.15pm - School Closes for holidays
Thur 21st December – Thur 4th January 2024	School Holidays
Fri 5th January 2024	School Closed - Training Day
Mon 8th January 2024	School Opens for the Spring Term – Timetable Week 2
Fri 16th February 2024	School Closes for Half Term
Mon 19th February – Fri 23rd February	Half Term
Mon 26th February 2024	School Opens – Timetable Week 2
Thur 28th Mar 2024	School Closes for holidays (BH 29th March & 1st April)
Tues 2nd April – Fri 12th April 2024	School Holidays
Mon 15th April 2024	School Opens for the Summer Term – Timetable Week 1
Mon 6th May 2024	Bank Holiday – School Closed
Fri 24th May 2024	School Closes for Half Term
Mon 27th May – Fri 31st May 2024	Half Term (BH 27th May)
Mon 3rd June 2024	School Closed – Training Day
Tue 4th June 2024	School Opens – Timetable Week 1
Fri 28th June 2024	SWCHS Summer Fundraising Evening
Wed 24th July 2024	Early Finish @ 1.15pm - School Closes for the Summer Holidays

Year 9 Residency - 'Roomful of Teeth'

30 Year 9 students had the great opportunity this week to work with Grammy-winning vocal ensemble 'Roomful of Teeth'. The collaboration organised by Saffron Hall, saw students work together over two days to create a brilliant performance piece which they showcased to all of Year 8. Students experimented with new instruments, sounds and improvisation to create their final piece and had a

brilliant time. They were also fortunate enough to perform again on Friday evening during 'Roomful of Teeth's' public concert in Saffron Hall.



Year 11 Latin Trip to Pompeii

Latin trip to Pompeii

Earlier this month, our Year 11 Latin class spent the weekend in the Bay of Naples. They enjoyed looking around sites familiar to them from their studies on Pompeii. The trip also included climbing the volcano Vesuvius, visiting the museum in Naples, and enjoying some local cuisine, including having a pizza in Sorrento.















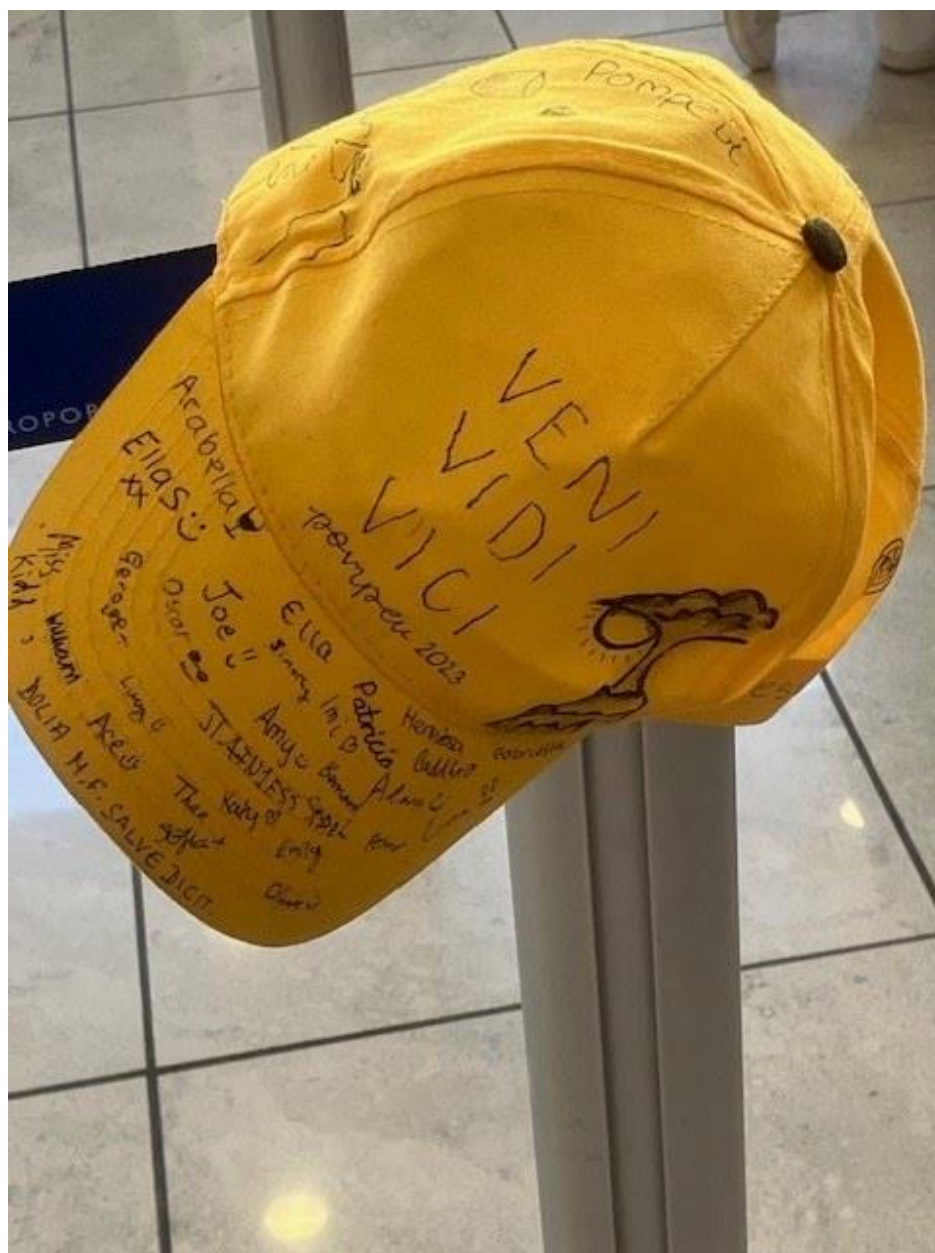








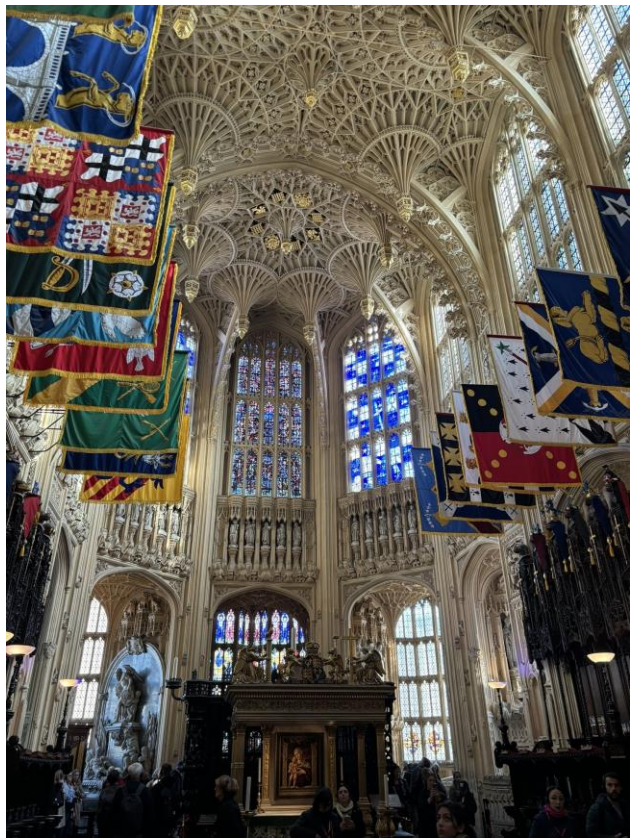




Tower of London Trip









Music



We were delighted to welcome Yvonne Howard to the Music Academy this afternoon to work with Sixth Form singers.



Three students thoroughly enjoyed their opportunity to workshop with [@GrantaChorale](#) on their Christmas compositions. They have been shortlisted for their entries in the Christmas Carol Competition!



It's been a brilliant start to the year for ensembles. Please join us at our Autumn Concert.

Focus on . . . The Learning Centre

The place to be...

We call the Learning Centre "The place for curious minds" as, though it hosts the wonderful Lower School Library, it also offers much more to students who want to discover more about the world around them. In this issue of the newsletter we thought we would let you know about what you can find here.

Open from 8am in the morning, the Learning Centre allows students from Year 7-11 to read, prepare for the day ahead and work in a calm environment. Students can revise, research and complete homework every lunch and break. And if they cannot print at home, they can do so here. Monday to Thursday, we also offer help with homework after school until 4.30pm where Teaching Assistants and older students are available to support students when they need it.

But the Learning Centre also hosts a variety of other activities too. Poetry Club runs at lunchtime on Tuesday in Week 2 whilst students can also develop their personal creative writing at lunchtime each Wednesday in Week 1. Students should sign up to the Creative Writing Channel on TEAMS to find out more. Last summer we ran open mics for summertime stories and poems where both staff and students shared their work and those of their favourite writers one sunny lunchtime.

We also host writers and poets in the Learning Centre and run workshops and talks to allow students to develop their creative side. Last year, we were lucky enough to host a poetry workshop run by published poet, writer and alumni of the school, Hannah J Walker who revealed how to find the poet in all of us. We also had a fantastic visit by the writer Julian Sedgwick who spoke to the whole of Year 7 about how he writes and gave the group a great opportunity to ask questions about the writing process. It was a lovely way to end the year.

In the past, parents have been keen to recycle study guides and textbooks. If you would like to donate these books to school so we can add them to our library, we would be delighted to receive them so they can be accessible to other students. Please just drop them into the school's Reception if you wish to donate them.

We have also been lucky enough to receive requests about how parents can donate money to help to develop the range of reading resources we provide in the Learning Centre. If you would like to do so, attached is a link to our Amazon Wish list [HERE](#) through which you can donate a book to us. You will need to log into your own Amazon account, and the book can be sent directly to the School. It is important to keep reading material current and fresh to attract teen readers. Thank you

Have a lovely break.

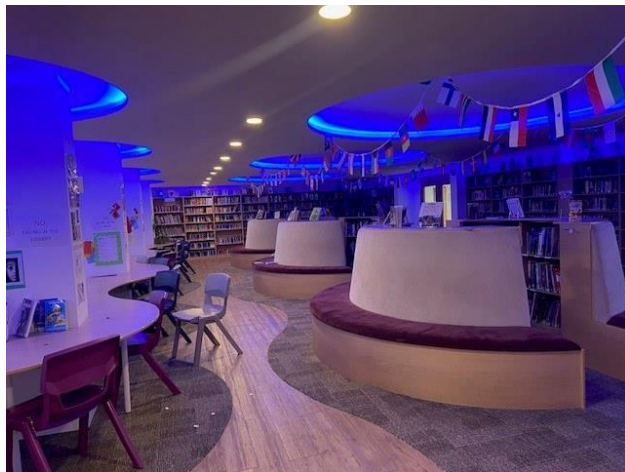
JULIAN SEDGWICK

- Author of several novels including:
- The Mysterium Series
- 100 Years at the Ghost Café
- Tsunami Girl



Summertime Stories

- Come and taste a slice of summer next Wednesday in the Learning Centre
- Summertime Stories is a chance to listen to excerpts from stories, Travel Writing and even poetry to take you to special places
- Come along with your own writing or just come and listen...
- 1st session: Wed lunch June 28th





World Mental Health Day

On Tuesday 10th October SWCHS celebrated World Mental Health Day. It was a beautiful sunny day with staff and students embracing the 'wear bright colours' challenge. We had lots of lovely free activities at break and lunch in D2,B16 and The Wellbeing Shed. Guinea pig petting was a firm favourite as was the Gratitude Wall and lollipop messages of love. In B16 students had a wonderful time with Blaze Pods and reptiles.

It was a lovely day of bringing the school together to recognise the importance of looking after our mental health.

Thank you so much for your donations. All money raised helps us to provide resources and upkeep for all Crocus Wellbeing Services.





Sports

Hockey























Huge congratulations to Holly Hartley who has made it through to the next round of England U16 Hockey trials. An outstanding achievement, well done Holly.

Netball



The U14 Netball team are North West Essex champions after winning every game today at the first round of the national tournament.



U16 Netball team are the North West Essex champions through to the Essex Finals. Well done ladies.

Rugby



SWCHS Year 9. Well done boys on your 31-12 win over KEGS. MOM Jago M



Year 9 SWCHS rugby. Well done in the opening match of the season. A loss but lots of positives. Well played and a big thank you to Birchwood School. Final score SWCHS 17-Birchwood 24



SWCHS Year 7 Rugby. Well done boys on your first game and first win v Birchwood this morning winning 40-10.



SWCHS Year 8 Rugby. Well done boys on your 55-5 win v Birchwood this morning. Great start to the season.

Golf

Albie, Holly, Jake, James and Zach at the Essex schools golf championships.



Teachers Q&A



Meet Mr Wheeler, Year 7 Achievement Co-ordinator

Why did you decide to become a teacher?

I wanted to engage pupils in a way I never was

Did you have any other jobs before teaching?

Yes, I ran my own business selling office supplies.

What was your favourite subject at school?

Geography

What was your worst subject at school?

Languages

Did you every get a detention and if so, why?

Yes, talking, not paying attention generally. I didn't like homework either

Do you play an instrument or speak another language?

No, other than cockney

Best piece of advice given to you that you would pass onto a student?

Work hard at school as it makes life easier later on if you do.

What would your students be surprised to find out about you?

I run at least 15Km per week

What is your favourite TV Show?

Game of Thrones

Do you have a hidden talent?

Not really, unless you count trying to always be kind

What is your dream holiday destination?

Dubrovnik and San Francisco

What would you take to the jungle as your 1 luxury item?

Bruce Springsteen's greatest hits

If you could have any super power what would it be?

To be able to wipe out the few evil people in this world for the good of humanity.

Sunrise or Sunset? Sunrise

Dogs or Cats? Cats

Summer or Winter? Summer

Sweet or Savoury? Savoury

Messy or Tidy? Tidy

Coffee or Tea? Coffee

Night in or Night out? Night in

Movie or Book? Movie

Truth or Dare? Dare

Mountains or Beach? Beach

Maths or English? English

Safeguarding Update:

The most exciting signing of the season? EA Sports FC 24, “the new FIFA”, has arrived ... but how well does it defend against [#OnlineSafety](#) threats? Our [#WakeUpWednesday](#) guide has the essential info for parents of young football fans

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it needed. This guide focuses on some of the risks parents should be aware of when their child plays EA Sports FC 24. It is not intended to be a definitive guide to all risks and tips for safety.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about EA SPORTS FC 24

After two decades of holding the official FIFA license, EA Sports' phenomenally successful football video game series has embarked on a solo run at goal. This season's iteration marks the debut appearance of a new name and branding, but don't let those fool you – EA Sports FC 24 is still a very similar proposition to last year's EA Sports FC 23. Popular features such as Ultimate Team remain a big focus, meaning that potentially costly in-game spending is still among the line-up of risks that parents and carers should be aware of.

FOR RESTRICTION PEGI 3

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

RECURRING RELEASES

EA Sports FC 24 effectively picks up the EA Sports FC 23 banner, meaning that while it's a new game, it's also a familiar one. EA Sports FC 24 is the latest in a series of EA Sports FC games, with EA Sports FC 23 being the previous iteration. EA Sports FC 24 is a football simulation game, and it's a very popular one. It's a game that's been around for a long time, and it's a game that's been around for a long time. It's a game that's been around for a long time, and it's a game that's been around for a long time.

OFFENSIVE VOICE CHAT

EA Sports FC 24 has a feature called 'Ultimate Team' which allows players to create their own team. This feature is very popular, and it's a feature that's been around for a long time. It's a feature that's been around for a long time, and it's a feature that's been around for a long time. It's a feature that's been around for a long time, and it's a feature that's been around for a long time.

IN-GAME PURCHASES

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ULTIMATE TEAM SCAMMERS

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POTENTIAL FOR ADDICTION

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Get your ultimate team

Advice for Parents & Carers

CONTROL SPENDING

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DEFEND AGAINST SCAMMERS

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AVOID EXTRA TIME

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SHOW TOXIC CHAT THE RED CARD

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CELEBRATE THE VARIETY

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Meet Our Expert

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NOS National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

@nationalonline_safety /nationalOnlineSafety @nationalonline_safety @national_online_safety

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Building your knowledge! The massively popular world-creation game Roblox has finally been released on PlayStation. Our updated [#WakeUpWednesday](#) guide reminds parents of the potential [#OnlineSafety](#) risks to watch out for.



Change of Contact Details:

It is extremely important that you inform us of any changes to your contact details. In case of emergency we may need to contact you urgently.

Please advise us of any changes to your contact details either via Weduc by selecting **The Hub** and clicking on **Contact the School** or via email to **office@swchs.net**.