



Switch on - Christmas 2023

SWCHS Parent/Carer Newsletter - Issue 57



From the Headteacher



This half term is always one I really enjoy. There are so many events that showcase the talents of our students including regional and national sports competitions, our annual Dance Show, the Autumn and the Christmas concert as well as a number of exciting trips and events.

We also celebrated the 10th anniversary of the building of Saffron Hall. There may well be some parents who remember the old school hall with its terrible acoustic and the hard plastic chairs put out for each event – a far cry from the world class space we now enjoy which was built as a result of the largest ever donation to a state school in this country. Saffron Hall is not just a lovely place for our students to perform, it also brings a team of people who look for every opportunity for the Saffron Hall public programme to also bring benefits to the school.

This half term is also a time when we celebrate our community. Our student leaders worked hard to gain a large number of donations for the Uttlesford Food Bank and our 6th Form students hosted a lovely evening for over 100 senior citizens from our town. And then we end the term with Charities Week, led by the 6th Form Committee... you will see a round up of all of the events in this newsletter. What a fantastic way to raise thousands of pounds for the charities chosen by our students!

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank parents for all of your support for SWCHS this term, including your support for ensuring we have excellent attendance at school.

I hope you all have a lovely holiday!

Polly Lankester, Headteacher

Key Dates

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

SWCHS Heroes and Villains Dance Production 2023

Students from across the school, year 7-13, were involved at the beginning of December in the annual dance production. The show takes an inclusive approach, allowing students of all ages and abilities to take part in a range of dances and musical theatre numbers. This year we had a theme of Heroes and Villains, and we were incredibly proud of the way the students performed a slick, exciting show full of vibrancy.









Music

This term has been wonderfully fulfilling in terms of curricular and extra-curricular music, both in school and within our local community! October saw our Music Academy students enjoy a talk from Edward Gardner prior to his concert with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and our Year 9 Music students taking part in Music residency 'Room Full of Teeth' at Saffron Hall. We were delighted that Music Academy Student, Claire Middleton, alongside the Chamber Choir, was invited to perform a recital at St Mary's Church, which was extremely well-received and has resulted in further invitations next year. In November, hot on the heels of our Autumn Concert, which saw many of our newest students perform

outstandingly in their first school concert, a group of SWCHS singers taken from Show Choir, Lower School Choir and the Chamber Choir were invited to perform at the annual Christmas Lantern Parade and Light Switch-on in town – a wonderfully festive event! Towards the end of November, the school hosted the annual Music Festival – this is a celebration of young and more experienced performers playing in various section classes – we are very proud that several SWCHS students scooped-up some of the top prizes! Whilst we are not yet very far into December, we have already had numerous music events this month: Year 7 have enjoyed a musical term and sang their class song ‘Hakuna Matata’ from the Lion King in assembly. Members of our Jazz Band, Music Academy singers, and Chamber Choir all had opportunities to perform as part of the big celebration weekend for Saffron Hall’s 10th birthday. Our jazz musicians provided quality performances and our Chamber Choir took to the stage to share the final chorus of Handel’s opera, Rodelinda, with world-renowned singers. The same day, the Show Choir had also been involved in The Spirit of Christmas – an annual celebration with the Saffron Walden Choral Society and our local primary schools. Our Christmas Music Academy recital this year took place in the Great Hall at Audley End House, which was truly spectacular! Solo performances and carol-singing delighted the audience members in what felt like a joyous union of school and local community. Students have just taken their Associated Board Music exams and we still have more to come with our Christmas Concert, a visit to Stanley Lodge care home and a lunchtime foyer recital before the end of term! All this alongside all our usual weekly extra-curricular activities and curriculum lessons, of course. We look forward to seeing what wonderful opportunities the new year brings!





Language Trips to the BFI

In November, Year 12 students of French, German and Spanish enjoyed trips to the BFI Southbank Centre for a languages film study day. Students had morning activities and lectures, with an afternoon screening of a foreign language film related to their studies. Over three days students conducted themselves brilliantly, participating in lectures in their target languages in front of many other sixth formers from across the country – a brave thing to do!

















SWCHS PE

Rugby

District Rugby. The Year 7 boys did so well, winning all 4 group matches vs HRS, JFAN, BSC and Avanti school without conceding a try in all 4 games. The boys then went on to beat Hockerill in the semifinal 2 tries to 1 with a last minutes try from Felix Fox. The final vs Bishops Stortford College was a very tight game neck and neck, Barnaby Sindell makes a break down the left hand side and offloads to Tommy Last who scores in the corner. SWCHS win the game 1-0 and won the Year 7 District Rugby Competition. Players of the tournament were Jon Ridley and Tim Gilbert. Top try scorer was Charley Holland. Barnaby

Sindell was captain and led by example, a fantastic effort from all! To only concede 1 try in 6 games is brilliant, well done!

SWCHS Year 7 rugby. SWCHS 55-10 Robert Clack 10. Well done to the Year 7's in your victory. Year 8's,9's and 10's all lost but all very competitive games. Thanks to Robert Clack.

SWCHS Rugby. Well done to the Year 9 boys with a hard fought victory over their rivals JFAN 29-5. MOM Charlie H. Top tackler Jago M

Year 10 rugby. SWCHS 65-Trinity School 12. Well done boys on your convincing win. Outstanding performances from Sam P and Ollie R

SWCHS Year 10 rugby. Well done boys with your impressive cup victory today v Framlingham College







Cross Country

District Cross Country. Some great results from the North West Essex Cross Country yesterday. Fred & John were 2nd & 10th, Clara, Charlotte, Annie & Emma were 2nd, 3rd, 5th & 6th - all should qualify for Essex Schools

More excellent cross country results from the North West Essex Cross Country. Notable top 10 performances were: Junior Boys - Andrew, Henry & Tiernan, Junior girls - Annabelle & Lucie, Inter boys - Raph, Lucas, Ollie, Rufus & Inter girls - Keira, Kate, Grace & Phoebe













Hockey

Awesome work from the senior girls hockey team winning the district hockey tournament and retaining their title from last year.

Some great hockey from the Year 7 girls hockey v Brentwood. The A team came back from 0-1 down at half time to win 2-1 goals from potm Charlotte & Phoebe. B's had a tough 1st half but managed to keep the score to 1-2 in the 2nd. Goal from Grace, potm Tilly.

Superb performance from the U12 Hockey B team at the district tournament today. A clean sheet from Jasmine and goals from Grace x7, Tilly x2, Rose & Kristen. The team didn't lose a game drawing to H&E & JFAN. District Winners on goal difference. Well done team.

Excellent games for the Year 7 girls hockey against Leventhorpe. The A's were quick to score goals from the left post. Goals for Nancyx3, Phoebe3, Anniex2, Charlottex2 & Eryn. B's did superbly goals for Grace5, Tillyx3, Clarax2 & debutant Thalia MT Potm:Alice

Congratulations to our Year 7&8 girls who won the local area EFL cup. They now go on to represent Cambridgeshire in the next round. Well done girls.

Congratulations to the Year 8 girls, District Hockey champions for the second year running for both the A and B team.

Two wins for the Year 8's, against a very competitive St Edmunds College. The girls worked hard and stayed composed to score some amazing goals. POTM Betsy, Grace and Gemma.

A 5-1 win for the U14 girls football v Plume in the Essex Cup. A great match under very windy conditions

U16 girls beat Bentwood 3-1 tonight. Hatrick for Sophie. Great teamwork



































Huge congratulations to Evie Stringer, Lilly Thacker and Grace Pierson for your mavericks selection

Congratulations to Holly who has just received the news that she has made it into the U16 England hockey squad. We are so proud of her and this is very much deserved. Looking forward to watching her progress as she gains her first cap in February.



Senior Citizens Christmas Party

We absolutely love hosting the Senior Citizen's party each year - for most of us it is the highlight of our Sixth Form calendar! And this year has been no different. We are immensely proud of the student bodies that have worked so hard over the last two months to ensure that the party was a huge success - and they did not disappoint! We really hope that the night brings lots of Christmas joy to the older community of Saffron Walden. We also like to say a massive thank you to the local businesses that donated towards the raffle and bingo prizes and to the gingerbread grotto for donating some gingerbread goodies for our guests.









Charities Week



Total raised so far: £5,500!!

The Sixth Form Committee have pulled off another fabulous Charities week! We are so pleased that we have raised approximately £5,500 over the first two days, with the final total announced in January.

This year, the charities selected were:

- Cancer Research UK
- WWF
- RSPCA
- Make A wish Foundation
- WaterAid
- Help For Heroes
- ASU

Twelve events, arranged by a committee of Sixth Form students, took place over the last three days of term during break and lunchtimes. Highlights included Xmas Factor, The Masked Singer, Bake Off and Strictly Come Dancing, much to the amusement of the students, and even included a special recorded message from our special *Friend*, Janice!

Mrs Ward also organised a brilliant Staff Triathlon, travelling 874 miles by running, cycling and rowing the length of Great Britain using equipment in the school foyer. This has raised £850 so far for Tommy's, the baby charity.

SWCHS is incredibly proud of the Sixth Form Student Committee who have worked so hard to organise such a fabulous week of events and thank the whole school community for the donations and support.

Sixth Form Triathlon



The poster features a stylized triathlete logo in blue, green, and orange. The background is split diagonally into purple and white. Text on the purple background includes the event title, charity name, and details about the 600+ mile challenge. A QR code is located in the bottom right corner.

SWCHS STAFF
INDOOR TRIATHLON
IN AID OF
**TOMMY'S PREGNANCY AND
BABY LOSS CHARITY**

STAFF WILL BE RUNNING, ROWING AND CYCLING THE
600+ MILES FROM LANDS END TO JOHN O' GROATS

FULL LAUNCH DURING SWCHS CHARITIES WEEK

PLEASE DONATE VIA THE QR CODE

Tommy's
Together, for every baby







Staff Fancy Dress









Xmas Factor



















Carpool Karaoke





Taskmaster





The Masked Singer







Strictly Come Dancing











Teachers Q&A

Meet Miss Coates, Year 9 Achievement Co-ordinator



Why did you decide to become a teacher?

As part of my university degree, I spent a year in France as a teaching assistant. I really enjoyed it so decided to train to become a teacher when I came back to England.

Did you have any other jobs before teaching?

I was a pot washer whilst at sixth-form which was horrible. I also spent a lot of my summers working on holiday camps, running sport activities.

What was your favourite subject at school?

PE

What was your worst subject at school?

Ironically it was History when I was in Year 7 and 8, but then I grew to love it!

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

I only had one, and it was for talking too much in art.

Do you play an instrument or speak another language?

I can speak French (ish) and used to play the saxophone and the piano.

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

Believe in yourself

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

I play a lot of hockey

What is your favourite TV Show?

I love a cheesy chick-flick

Do you have a hidden talent?

I wish I did, but I can't think of any!

What is your dream holiday destination?

I'd love to travel around New Zealand

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

100% my pillow

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

To fly

Sunrise or Sunset?

Sunset

Dogs or Cats?

Dogs

Summer or Winter?

Summer

Sweet or Savoury?

Sweet – I'm a big fan of Dairy Milk

Messy or Tidy?

Tidy

Coffee or Tea?

Coffee

Night in or Night out?

Night out

Movie or Book?

Book

Truth or Dare?

Dare

Mountains or Beach?

Mountains

Maths or English?

English

Safeguarding Update

This week's [#WakeUpWednesday](#) guide explains how to set up parental controls on some of the most popular internet-enabled devices – reducing [#OnlineSafety](#) risks while increasing the festive fun!

Download >> <https://bit.ly/41LLOzn>

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to have an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit nationalonline-safety.com for further guides, tips and signposts.

Top Tips for SETTING UP PARENTAL CONTROLS ON NEW DEVICES

In children's eagerness to start enjoying new digital gadgets immediately, it can be easy to overlook setting up the type of parental controls that can help to protect them whilst, if you don't sort those out from the very start, it can be an uphill battle – technologically and psychologically – to impose such controls later. Here's our roundup of what to look for when setting up the various internet-enabled devices that might be lurking under the tree at this time of year.

IPHONE

If your child's lucky enough to be getting their very first smartphone, parental controls can help avoid issues like screen-time limits and app restrictions. Go into the settings and scroll down to 'Screen Time'. From here you can customise a range of settings including time limits on using the device, content restrictions and content blockers. You can also lock your changes behind a passcode.

ANDROID

With Android devices, Google's Family Link app is your friend. You'll need a Google account – and it's essential one for your child, which you should use when first setting up the device. Then, in Family Link, you can select 'Add Child' and enter their account details. This lets you specify limits on daily usage, restrict certain apps, block purchases and more.

PLAYSTATION

You can prep for a PlayStation before it's even unboxed. At any account away room, create an account, then go to Account Management > Family Management > Add Family Member. You'll get your child's account, which you'll use to sign in on the console. You can restrict the age ratings of the games they can play and make a list of friends. Oh, and you can make exceptions for any game with a high age rating.

IPAD

iPad parental controls are identical to those on iPhones. However, if you've got a shared family iPad and want to ensure your child doesn't access certain age-inappropriate apps you first need to turn on Restricted Mode. Then, go to Settings > Screen Time > Add Family Member > Add Family Member. You'll be walked through the functions of setup, but you can also reach them manually via Settings > Account > Family Settings.

XBOX

The Xbox Family Settings app helps you manage which games your child can play (and when). You'll need to set up the console with your own account and then create a separate one for your child. Your account's password protected, so your child can't enter your details later. You'll be walked through the functions of setup, but you can also reach them manually via Settings > Account > Family Settings.

NINTENDO SWITCH

To manage the Nintendo Switch Parental Controls app on your Switch, link it to the account you'll use to set up the console. Once that's done, you can limit how long your child can play each day, restrict what age apps they can download, and more. You can also get weekly updates on how often they've used the device. These controls are accessible through the console itself, but the app is a handy extra.

WINDOWS 11 PCS

On Windows 11, account management is key. Set up the device with your own account on the sideloading. Then go to Settings > Accounts > Family and Other users and create your child's account. (If you already have one on a previous PC, just log in with those details.) In Family Safety, select the app or the site, then lets you control screen time, what content children can view and more.

CHROMEBOOKS

Chromebooks' parental controls are managed via the Family Link app, online on Android devices. However, you'll need to log the Chromebook with your own account first. Then, in Family Link, you can select 'Add Person' and input your child's details. You'll be walked through the functions of setup, but you can also reach them manually via Settings > Account > Family Settings.

MACS

Like iPhones, parental controls for Macs are managed via the Screen Time app. Again, the child here is to set parental controls on the device before setting up any child accounts. In the settings, you'll have a choice to create your child's account, then – while on their phone – use the screen time options to place any boundaries around apps, usage and when your child can communicate with (and vice versa).

SMART TVs

Smart TVs typically have their own individual parental controls. One of the most popular brands is Samsung – and on their TVs, you can restrict the content available to your child. In the settings, you'll be walked through the functions of setup, but you can also reach them manually via Settings > Account > Family Settings.

Meet Our Expert  

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55%

of 8 to 11-year-olds own a mobile phone, as reported by parents and carers

Source: Ofcom



[Click on this link for further information from the National Online Safety](https://www.nationalonline-safety.com)

We have a legal duty to protect children from maltreatment; prevent impairment of children's health or development; ensure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and take action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

If you have any safeguarding concerns, visit our website for the Safeguarding Team contact details and further information.

[Click here to visit our website](#)

Change of Contact Details

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