



# Switch on - Early Summer 2023

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*SWCHS Parent/Carer Newsletter - Issue 54*

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## From the Headteacher:



We are now deep in exam season. Our mornings start with a buzz of activity outside the Exam Hall with teachers wishing students well, pockets being emptied, and final tips being shared between groups of friends... and then silence descends. The team here wait anxiously hoping for happy faces and excited chatter when students come out of the hall and we are here to support any student who might be worried about their exam. We are also busy with additional revision sessions and subject support surgeries, including some during half-term. Exams are a significant challenge for students as they have to manage revision over an extended period of time and learn a significant body of knowledge. Parents of students in Year 11 and 13 are probably well aware that the content students need to master is far greater than in the past. We are very proud of the way students approach their exams and they certainly deserve some breaks and treats in their revision schedule over half term and we are looking forward to celebrating with them at the end of term and in August on results days!

I am regularly reminded of what a wonderful student body we have in this school. They often impress the public when we are out on trips with their polite, kind and thoughtful approach and it was no surprise to learn that our Year 10 Duke of Edinburgh expedition received such accolades. Yesterday was the occasion of one of our celebration afternoon teas for students who have achieved 80 achievement points. I am delighted that so many students have reached this impressive milestone and it was lovely to spend period 5 outside in the sunshine with them. It is also lovely to go around school to see students engaging so positively in extracurricular clubs.

I hope that you enjoy this edition of our newsletter and I hope that you have a lovely half term.

**Polly Lankester, Headteacher**

## Key Dates:

Fri 31 <sup>st</sup> Mar 2023	School Closes for holidays
<b>Mon 3<sup>rd</sup> Apr – Fri 14<sup>th</sup> Apr 2023</b>	<b>School Holidays</b>
Mon 17 <sup>th</sup> Apr 2023	School Opens for the Summer Term – Timetable week 1
<b>Mon 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023</b>	<b>Bank Holiday – School Closed</b>
<b>Mon 8<sup>th</sup> May 2023</b>	<b>Bank Holiday – School Closed</b>
Fri 26 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	School Closes for Half Term
<b>Mon 29<sup>th</sup> May – Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023</b>	<b>Half Term</b>
<b>Mon 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023</b>	<b>School Closed – Training Day</b>
Tue 6 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	School Opens – Timetable week 2
Fri 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Hampers & Champers Fundraising Evening
Mon 17 <sup>th</sup> - Thu 20 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	Year 10 Work Experience
Fri 21 <sup>st</sup> July 2023	<b>Early Finish @ 1.15pm</b> - School Closes for the Summer Holidays
<b>Mon 24<sup>th</sup> July – Tues 5<sup>th</sup> Sep 2023</b>	<b>School Holidays</b>
Wed 6 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2023	Year 7s Start
Thurs 7 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2023	All Students in School

## History

Annie, Doron and Sam attended the recent talk by Lord Robertson on ‘Has Putin woken Europe up at last?’ This event was hosted by the University of Cambridge. The students thoroughly enjoyed the talk and asked questions to further their knowledge.



## Drama

### Lower School Production - Twelfth Night

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*Year 7 and 8 students, ably assisted by two additional Sixth Form Directors, have been rehearsing for the upcoming production of an abridged version of William Shakespeare's Twelfth Night. The cast have committed their time and energy to bring the text to life for their 2023 audience (adding some musical nods to their parents' generation too). With slapstick comedy, romance, a heavy dose of dramatic irony – and, of course, the 5th act reveal, there has been plenty for them sink their teeth into. The cast have had the opportunity to contribute to some final edits for the script and, as ever, we have delighted in their insight and creativity. We are thrilled to be supported by further Sixth Form students for music, lighting and promotion art work - as well as additional Year 7 and 8 students working backstage and Front of House.*

*It has been wonderful to see the students working so collaboratively together, some really pushing themselves out of their comfort zones and taking on challenging roles.*

***There will be two performances, on the 21st and 22nd June at 7pm in E7. Tickets can be purchased by emailing [eplatts@swchs.net](mailto:eplatts@swchs.net).***

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## Maths Escape Room

Year 10 took part in a Maths Escape Room. They were put into teams of 4 and had to ESCAPE real life financial problems.



## English

### **Kemi Badenoch's Short Story competition 2023**

We are pleased to announce that India from Saffron Walden County High School is this year's winner of Kemi Badenoch's Short Story Competition 2023 in the Year 7+8 category with her story about Saffron!

India's entry was submitted alongside some excellent stories set in or about towns and villages in our constituency.

Well done to everyone that took part.

Congratulations India!



### **Jack Petchy Speak Out Challenge**

SWCHS students have just taken part in the Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge – a programme managed and delivered by Speakers Trust, the UK's leading public speaking organisation. The aim is to amplify young people's voices by building confidence, developing skills and creating platforms for young people to share their stories and ideas to empower not only themselves but each other.

Our involvement started with a workshop in March in which 24 Year 10 students participated. They took part in a series of learning sessions delivered by a professional speech coach and were encouraged to plan, produce and deliver an engaging and well-structured speech on a topic of their choice. From this workshop, two SWCHS students were chosen to participate in the North Essex Regional Final which took place on 27 April. SWCHS students competed against students from a number of other schools in the region, providing an opportunity for everyone in the community to come together to celebrate and

build a platform for young voices. Layla Mone spoke passionately about how song writing had enabled her to find self-assurance in a speech named 'The Confident One' and Oliwia Szczepaniak delivered a powerful speech talking about the importance of embracing change in a presentation entitled 'Love the Butterflies'. Oliwia was the runner-up in the final – a wonderful accolade! Both students performed amazingly and SWCHS is very proud of their incredible achievement.



## Music

Just before the end of the Spring term, I was lucky enough to be able to perform in Saffron Hall with not only my friends, but with one of the world's leading Baroque ensembles: The Dunedin Consort. It was incredible that the SWCHS Chamber Choir and the Dunedin Consort united to provide such a unique performance for the local public. I loved every aspect of the experience and realised how privileged students are at SWCHS to be given opportunities like this. In the afternoon, we were invited to rehearse our piece with the consort's harpsichordist. It was both humbling and enlightening to listen to the director's ideas and to hear their subsequent impact on our performance of 'Happy, happy shall we be' from Handel's Semele. I think I speak for all the members of the Chamber Choir when I say that this wonderful learning experience was also enriched by us being treated as genuine musicians, rather than simply as students! I have taken away so much from this experience and I feel very fortunate to have been involved.

Thank you to the Music Department, Saffron Hall and Doctor John Padfield for this opportunity.

James Razzell Year 9.



## Spotlight on . . . Computer Science

### Computer Science – Literacy Focus

In Computer Science this year we have been focussing on improving literacy and the use of keywords in Computing lessons. We have introduced a range of resources this year which we hope will help to embed the correct terminology and give pupils the opportunity to learn new words which are relevant to our subject, including those outside of our curriculum. Correct technical terminology is essential for progression in Computer Science and for success in exams at the end of our courses. By incorporating a variety of opportunities to learn and use a range of vocabulary we hope that this will become second nature for our students.

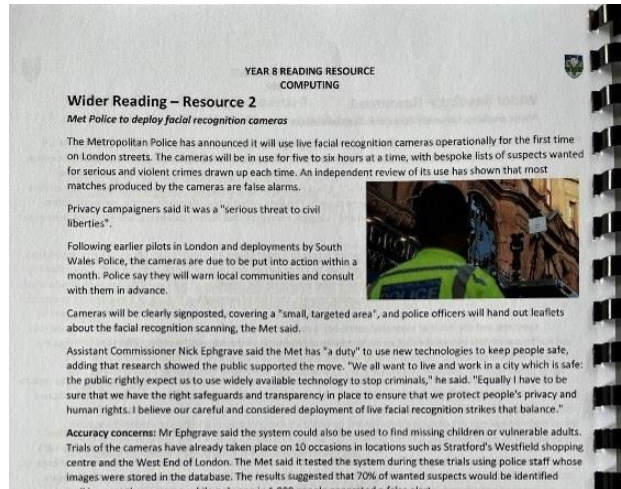


### Reading Resource for Years 7 and 8

This has proved a lovely resource that gives pupils a chance to read articles relating to the topic that we are learning. It has provided classes with some lovely discussion points and questions that arise from

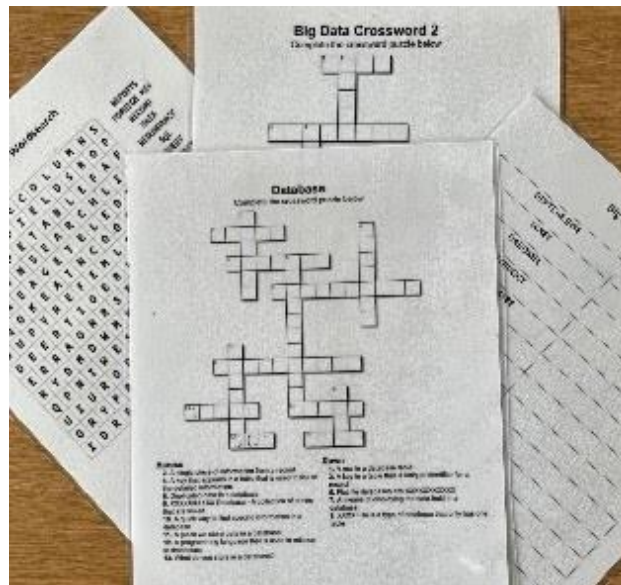


reading. We have used the material in a number of ways, sharing the reading between pupils and teachers. This gives pupils the opportunity to read out to others and practice their pronunciation.




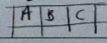
### Puzzles with keywords

Crosswords, anagrams, wordsearches are examples of short activities that we use at the start of a lesson while pupils are registering and getting settled. This gives them an opportunity to focus on literacy in a fun way.



### Glossaries

We have started using Glossary sheets at KS3 to record the keywords and their meanings. This has been well received by students and has been found to be very useful when revising for topic tests. We will be expanding the use of this to KS4 and KS5 students from September.

Key Term	Meaning	Example
Cell	One of the boxes in the Excel or spreadsheet grid	Cell A5
Row	The cells going horizontally (left to right)	represented by a number 
Column	The cells going vertically (top to bottom) in the grid	represented by a letter 
Formula	The equation that you can put in a cell	= E1 + E2 + E3
Function	A built in algorithm to perform a pre-set task	= SUM(E1:E15)

## SWCHS Ring for the King

On Thursday 4th May a bell ringing band consisting of teachers, students and a parent rang at St Mary the Virgin, Great Bardfield, Essex.

The band from left to right:-

Sofia, Alfie, Mr Scheilling, Mrs Agg, Ben, Mrs Colenso and Mr Cox. We were also joined by Sarah Holland, mother of Alfie who took the picture.

We rang a few minutes of rounds on all 8 bells in celebration of the upcoming coronation of His Majesty Charles III.

Alfie explains that rounds is "Bells are rung in the order that they are hung in the tower". This creates the descending scale that you would probably associate with wedding bells.



## Agricultural Service Unit (ASU)

Today our ASU was presented with a cheque from Tesco Groundworks and will go towards a new trailer for moving our animals and going to sheep shows!



## PE

SWCHS 92-4 Joyce Frankland 68 Well done boys on your victory at home to Joyce Frankland. Well batted Bobby T 38 no and well bowled Tom M and Nicky W on debut.



Great 1st game of rounders for the the Year 7's against Hockerill. Wins for both A and B team. POTM Ariana and Teghan.



Wimbledon has started in PE. Year 10 girls winning the tennis tournament in their lesson today



## Teachers Q&A

Miss Gilbert, Year 7 Achievement Co-ordinator

**Why did you decide to become a teacher?**

When I started secondary school I had the most amazing PE teacher. She was so inspiring and the best role model. I have wanted to be a PE teacher since my very first lesson with her.

**Did you have any other jobs before teaching?**



I have been a lifeguard and a waitress but went straight into teaching from university.

**What was your favourite subject at school?**

PE (obviously) but other than that History and Biology.

**What was your worst subject at school?**

Computing.

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

No I didn't (I would have been in too much trouble with my mum).

**Do you play an instrument or speak another language?**

I can play the piano and I can speak French (un petit peu).

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

Always be yourself, do what makes you happy. Go confidently in the direction of your dreams.

**What would your students be suprised to find out about you?**

I cry.....a lot!

**What is your favourite TV Show?**

24

**Do you have a hidden talent?**

It wouldn't be hidden if I told you.....

**What is your dream holiday destination?**

Anywhere, but recently fell in love with Madeira.

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

Can I take a gym?

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

To fly

**Sunrise or Sunset?**

Sunrise

**Dogs or Cats?**

Dogs

**Summer or Winter?**

Both

**Sweet or Savoury?**

Sweet

**Messy or Tidy?**

Tidy

**Coffee or Tea?**

Coffee (I am very particular about my coffee).

**Night in or Night out?**

Night in

**Movie or Book?**

Book

**Truth or Dare?**

Dare

**Mountains or Beach?**

Mountains

**Maths or English?**

Maths

## Safeguarding Update:

### Vaping

Vaping among teens has recently skyrocketed, as a school we cover the dangers in our RPHE lessons but vaping is a problem and we would urge you to speak to your young people about it.

Below are some extracts from a recent article in the times with some concerning facts.

### The Times article on vaping

*Vapes confiscated from children at a secondary school had more than twice the safe level of lead and more than nine times that of nickel.*

*The investigation also found that some devices had more than ten times the legal level of carbonyls, compounds in the e-liquid that break down when heated.*

*Exposure to high levels of lead can affect development of the brain and the central nervous system, according to the World Health Organisation. It is illegal to [sell vapes to under-18s](#) in the UK but a YouGov survey from last month showed that 11.6 per cent of 11 to 17-year-olds had experimented with the products, which contain nicotine.*

*The laboratory found that most of the vapes from the college were illegal and had not been tested before sale.*

*David Lawson, who co-founded the laboratory, which analyses vapes to ensure regulatory standards are met, said: "In 15 years I have never seen lead in a device. None of these should be on the market — they break all the rules on permitted levels of metal. They are the worst set of results I've ever seen."*

*It had been thought that exposure to dangerous amounts of the metals originated from the heating element in vapes but Lawson's tests showed that they were also present in the e-liquid.*

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*For lead it was 2.4 times the safe level and for chromium it was 6.6 times.*

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*In "highlighter vapes" — so-called because of the bright colours that make them look like highlighter pens — 9.6 times the safe level of nickel was found. For lead it was 2.4 times the safe level and for chromium it was 6.6 times. Some vapes had levels of carbonyls that exceeded cigarettes.*

*Chemicals including formaldehyde and acetaldehyde are produced when carbonyls in the e-liquid are heated by vapes.*

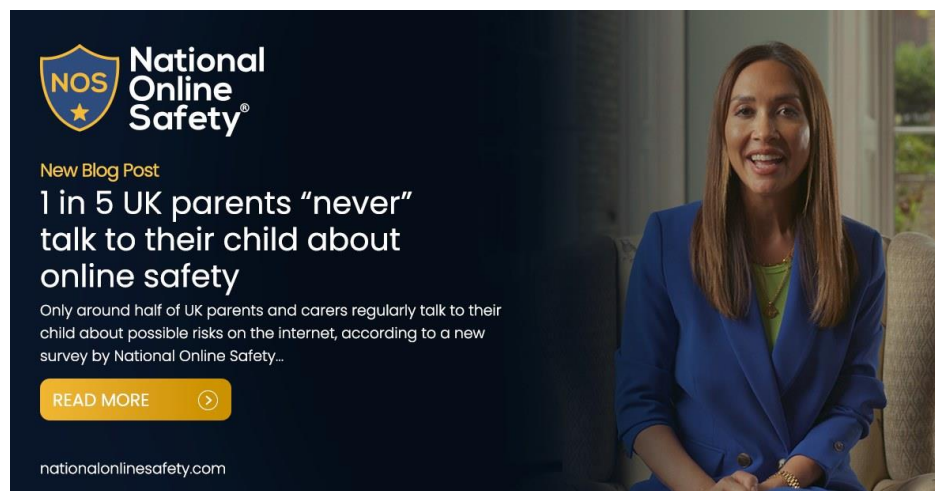
*Manufacturers have to follow regulations on ingredients, packaging and marketing, and e-liquids are supposed to be registered with the Medicine and Health Care Products Regulatory Agency. However, the agency is not required to check claims made in the paperwork it receives from makers and has no power to investigate unregistered products.*

*Lawson said there had been a rise in illegal products that were hard to distinguish from legal ones.*

*Dr Penelope Toff, of the British Medical Association, said “These products, designed in bold, bright colours and flavoured like sweets, are clearly being marketed at young people and it is high time we recognised their inherent dangers”.*

[Parents and carers | CEOP Education \(thinkuknow.co.uk\)](#)

[Click on this link for further information from the National Online Safety](#)

A promotional graphic for National Online Safety (NOS). On the left, the NOS logo (a shield with 'NOS' and a star) is above the text 'National Online Safety'. Below this, it says 'New Blog Post' and '1 in 5 UK parents “never” talk to their child about online safety'. A smaller line of text reads: 'Only around half of UK parents and carers regularly talk to their child about possible risks on the internet, according to a new survey by National Online Safety...'. At the bottom left is a yellow 'READ MORE' button with a right-pointing arrow. The website 'nationalonlinesafety.com' is at the bottom left. On the right, a woman with long brown hair, wearing a blue blazer, is smiling and sitting in a chair.

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:

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**.