



Saffron Walden County High School

A local school of exceptional quality

Year 7 Starter Pack

SAVE THE DATE

Friday 28th June 2024

Year 7 Taster Day

As part of your child's induction into Year 7 at SWCHS in September, we will be holding a **Taster Day** on **Friday 28th June**. Each student will need to report to Main Reception by **8.30am** and bring with them a pen and pencil, a bottle of water, a snack for break, a pair of trainers for P.E. (in case they are required) and a hat and sunscreen in the event of warm weather.

Students will attend the canteen during lunchtime and can either bring a packed lunch or purchase a hot meal followed by a choice of fruit or a cookie. Water will be available. The cost of this meal is £2 (cash only) and is free to children who are currently eligible for Free School Meals. If your child does wish to purchase hot food, they will need to have the correct money to prevent long queues.

On the day, transport to and from SWCHS will be your responsibility. We would encourage all parents to avoid dropping children off and collecting them by car, unless absolutely necessary. If you are driving your child to SWCHS in the morning, we ask that you use the bottom car park, outside the P.E. block and accessed via Copperfields, as the Main Entrance will be extremely busy with school buses and barriers are now in operation.

Your child will need to arrive in the Main Reception by **8:30am** and School Prefects will be on hand to help guide them to their first lesson. The day will finish at **3.00pm** when students can be collected from the bottom car park. Please be advised that the gates into the bottom car park are locked during the school day and will not open until 2.50pm.

If your child is going to walk home with siblings, they should arrange to meet them outside the P.E. block. Your child will be permitted to walk home in a group with other Year 6 students or current SWCHS students but **under no circumstances will any students be allowed to walk home alone.**

Prospective Parents Information Evening

On the evening of **Monday 1st July**, we would like to invite parents/carers to attend a **Prospective Parents Information Evening** in **Saffron Hall at 7.00pm**. This is a meeting for Parents/Carers **only**.

At this event, key members of staff will present information on what to expect in Year 7 and you will have the opportunity to meet with Mr Paul Singh (Assistant Headteacher), Mrs Bronwen Fox (the Year 7 Achievement Co-ordinator), Miss Fiona Muir (the Year 7 Deputy Year Achievement Co-Ordinator) and Mrs Kirsty Yarrow, (the Year 7 Student Support Officer), along with other members of the Achievement Team. There will also be displays of school uniform, as sold by Gray Palmer.

If your child is unable to attend the Taster Day or if you have any queries about either event please contact Lauren Edwards, Admissions Officer, at admissions@swchs.net or by phone on 01799 513030.

The Autumn Term begins for Year 7 on Wednesday 4th September 2024 at 8.30am. On this day, it will be just Year 7 and those new to SWCHS in Year 12 in school.

You will receive an email prior to Taster Day advising you of your child's form group and teacher.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Please refer to the Parents Handbook on the school website for more comprehensive information

1. School Day

Students should be in school **by 8.30am** and in their classrooms by **8.35am**. If students arrive at school after the start of Period 1, **they must report to Main Reception before going to lessons.**

School finishes at **3.20pm**.

2. School to Home Communication

Messages from the school office are sent using Parentmail, the e-mails will come directly to the e-mail address provided. It is essential that you provide us with correct and current email addresses of all parental contacts on the enclosed Data Sheet for our records and let us know of any changes as your child progresses through the school so that we can ensure you are receiving these messages.

On the Data Sheet provided we ask for you to give details of all persons who can be contacted in the event of an emergency. **Priority contact 1 and/or 2 would usually be the student's parents/carers.**

Priority contact 1 and/or 2 will receive email communications **if** they have legal parental responsibility.

Students are known by their **legal** names on all official documentation and records. Their preferred name (if applicable) may be used by teachers during lessons.

In the case of emergency communication, parents can expect the following.

- An urgent phone call if the incident involves their child in particular.
- In case of an emergency school closure during the day, an email and a note on the school website.
- In case of an emergency school closure before the start of the school day, messages will go out to parents via email, on the school website (www.swchs.net) and on the LA website (www.essex.gov.uk/education).

If you wish to come into school to see the Year 7 Achievement Coordinator or another member of the Year Achievement Team, please either telephone or email year7office@swchs.net to make an appointment.

Day to day queries may be addressed to your child's Form Tutor by letter, email, or through the student planner.

When communicating with the school, we expect **everyone** to

- Be calm, friendly and polite in all communications (including in writing, in face-to-face meetings, during parents' evenings and during phone conversations).
- Have respect for each other.
- Set out to build and maintain a positive home/school relationship in the interests of the child.

3. Absence from School/Sickness in School

- a) You can report an absence or medical appointment via our dedicated e-mail address absence@swchs.net
- b) You can also telephone the school **by 9.00am on each day** of your child's absence.
- c) Students must report to the medical room if they feel unwell during the school day. If the First Aider decides that the student needs to be sent home, they will contact you by telephone. **Under no circumstances must your child use their phone to call home requesting to be collected.**

Please do not send your child to school if they are unwell in the morning. The school First Aiders deal with issues that occur within the school day; known medical conditions or injuries must be dealt with by your GP.

- c) We actively discourage pupils from taking holidays during term time. Requests for leave of absence during term time should be made using our online form on the school website at www.swchs.net (Information, Key information, Attendance).

All leave of absence within term time will be recorded as unauthorised unless there are **very exceptional circumstances**. Parents will be notified by letter within two weeks as to whether the absence will be recorded as authorised or unauthorised.

If your child needs to leave school to attend a medical/dental appointment, please make a note of the appointment on the appropriate date of their Student Planner. They should also present the appointment card or letter from you at the school reception area when signing out for the appointment, ensuring that they sign in again on their return. You can call the school office to inform us of any appointments in advance.

4. SWCHS and Social Media

We know that the transition from primary to secondary school is a significant moment in every child's life and we endeavour to ensure that this process runs smoothly for all our pupils and families. To support us in achieving this, we ask all members of the school community, including staff, parents and students:

- To not engage in online discussion on personal matters relating to members of the school community.
- To ensure that their security settings on personal social media profiles are regularly checked to minimise risk of loss of personal information.

5. Pupil Premium Grant

Pupil Premium is a special additional grant that schools receive to support the learning of certain students in Years 7 – 11.

The PPG (Pupil Premium Grant) brings additional money into schools to address the needs of children from potentially challenging circumstances. In the past, we have used the money given to us for a variety of initiatives to increase the attainment and opportunities of students.

More information is available in the Parents Handbook on the school website or to ask about what support you could access for your child please contact Mr Singh (psingh@swchs.net) or the Year 7 Office.

6. Music Lessons

The Music Department offers individual music lessons for a variety of instruments. Details of how to sign up will be sent to you via email. For further information on lessons or details of orchestras, music groups, ensembles or choirs available to students, you may also contact our Music department directly.

7. Uniform

SWCHS blazer, badge, tie, and branded PE kit can be bought at Gray Palmers (High Street, Saffron Walden). Black trousers, a black blazer, and white shirts can be purchased from other suppliers. Gray Palmers also offer an initialling service for PE kit. **Please ensure that all uniform articles are clearly named.**

The approved garments and their colours are:

A: Compulsory	B. Optional	C: Choose 1	D: Choose 1
<p>Blazer Plain black with badge and Year Bar (Blue)</p> <p>Smart black shoes Low heeled and sensibly styled in the interests of safety - leather or leather effect (heels no higher than 4cm) – no trainers, plimsolls open-toed or boots. No trainers, particularly Nike Air Force 1s.</p>	<p>Black V neck jumper</p> <p>Outdoor Coat An anorak is recommended as it can be worn over the blazer.</p> <p>Denim, leather jackets, sweatshirts of any kind, and hoodies must not be worn.</p>	<p>Buttoned up white shirt with collar, with long or short sleeves, tucked into trousers or kilt and school tie knotted closely to the collar with the crest visible</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Regulation white fitted, reverse necked blouse with ¾ or full-length sleeves tucked into trousers or kilt</p> <p>Polo shirts are not allowed.</p>	<p>Kilt in Dress Mckenzie Tartan worn just above the knee with plain black socks or tights.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Black Trousers tailored and of suiting material, not tight, stretchy or denim.</p> <p>Approved trousers for girls: Plain black trousers: a choice of four styles: Gray Palmer: David Luke: 'eco uniform' black trousers Gray Palmer: Banner: 'Trimley' black trousers Gray Palmer: Banner Black trousers with crocus logo Other retailers: Black zip pocket trousers with adjustable waist.</p> <p>During the summer term only: Black Tailored Shorts can be worn instead of the trousers or kilt. These should be worn with plain black ankle socks.</p> <p>Approved shorts are available at: Gray Palmer: David Luke black senior Bermuda shorts Gray Palmer: David Luke black senior (girls) City shorts Other retailers: Black regular/slim leg shorts Other retailers: Black cotton rich tailored shorts</p>

PE Uniform

Boys Compulsory	Boys Optional	Girls Compulsory	Girls Optional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWCHS Embroidered Rugby Shirt SWCHS Embroidered Red & Black Polo Shirt SWCHS Black & Red Unisex shorts Red & Black Hooped Games Socks Short White Sports Socks Football Boots Non-Marking Trainers or Plimsolls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWCHS Embroidered or Plain Black Jogging Bottoms SWCHS Embroidered Black & Red ¼ zip sweatshirt Black dance leggings <p>STRONGLY RECOMMENDED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plain white t-shirt Plain black base layer Gumshield Shinpads Abdominal Protector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWCHS Embroidered Red & Black Polo Shirt SWCHS Black & Red Skort or SWCHS Unisex shorts Red & Black Hooped Games Socks Short White Sports Socks Non-Marking Trainers or Plimsolls Football Boots (<i>only when instructed by P.E. staff</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWCHS Embroidered or Plain Black Jogging Bottoms Black dance leggings Black lycra cycling shorts (<i>min length 4 inches</i>) SWCHS Embroidered Rugby Shirt SWCHS Embroidered Black & Red ¼ zip sweatshirt <p>STRONGLY RECOMMENDED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plain black base layer Gumshield Shinpads

Team Wear - Students who are selected regularly for any school team will be expected to have the relevant uniform below.

- SWCHS Embroidered Teamwear Top
- Cricket Whites
- Black & Red Singlet (Athletics)

There is a small supply of second-hand uniform returned from other students, but this stock is limited, and we do not hold all sizes. If you would like to see or buy any of the items available, please contact preloveduniforms@swchs.net

Additional Equipment

- a) School bag: Please provide a strong bag for students, preferably with a zip, to transport books and other items of equipment between home and school.
- b) Stationery such as pens, pencils and a non-permanent whiteboard pen to use on mini-whiteboards in lessons should be provided by the student. Geometry Sets and Calculators are available to purchase through the school via Wisepay.
- c) **Refillable and named water bottle.**

8. Go4Schools

Go4Schools is an electronic system which allows you to access 'live' information on your child's progress, attendance, behaviour and achievement. Your child's school report will be available each term through Go4Schools and you will receive a weekly summary of your child's positive or negative behaviour.

At the start of the school year you can create an account through www.go4schools.com. Further information is available on the attached School to Home Communication document.

9. Wisepay

SWCHS uses a secure online payment system called Wisepay to enable parents and carers to pay for catering, trips/visits and student resources via debit/credit card. In July you will be emailed log in details for Wisepay so that you can log in and pay dinner money before your child starts school in September. **It is essential that you do this to enable your child to access school meals on the first day.**

Please note only the **Priority 1** contact will receive initial setup instructions for Wisepay. If you require a second parent to have access to your child's account you will need to contact the school to request this.

10. Behaviour and Discipline

SWCHS is a secure and caring community, which encourages a sense of achievement, respect and responsibility for all.

To this end the school employs a balance of rewards and sanctions. It seeks to recognise excellence by positive feedback, achievement points and Headteacher's Commendations.

Parents will also need to be aware of the school's discipline policy. The school rules are published in the Parents Handbook and student planners. There is also a full behaviour and discipline policy, which parents are welcome to view on the school website.

Building on the notion of partnership, we expect that you as parents will commit your support for our efforts to ensure the best possible education for your child.

In particular, we ask that you abide by:

- **School attendance requirements** and policy in relation to notification of legitimate absence. Only in the most exceptional circumstances should holidays be planned during school terms.
- **Regulations on uniform and P.E. kit**, as described, up to the end of Year 11.
- **School policy on sanctions**, which includes after-school detention for which parents are given 24 hours' notice and are normally expected to make any necessary arrangements for the journey home.

You can further support your child's progress at SWCHS by:

Attending **Parents' Evenings** and other occasions where discussion on educational opportunities or progress is appropriate.

Engage with weekly Go4 Schools reports, your child's Behaviour and Achievement are reported in the following way:

Behaviour B1 - Low level disruption in lesson B2 - Repeated disruption or misbehaviour B3 - Serious disruption or serious misbehaviour.

Achievement points are issued across the school and home notes are completed on GO4 Schools, so you can celebrate your child's recognition at home. The total value of achievement points is recognised further through our rewards system. There are four increments award 1 – award 4 at each point further recognition of these milestones is celebrated through postcards home, fast-track canteen passes and afternoon tea celebrations. Achievement point increments are reviewed on annual basis and may vary each year.

- * Taking an interest in, and sign regularly, your child's **Student Planner** (which helps pupils manage their studies, especially with their homework).
- * **Responding positively** to any concern expressed by the school about progress or behaviour and work with our staff to effect improvement.
- * **Encouraging** your child to participate in extra-curricular activities and sustain such interests throughout their time at the school. This may include participation in school sports, drama productions and musical activities with a commitment from your child to take part in the necessary training and practice.
- * Checking their **Responsibility Card** to ensure that they are following school rules and not receiving any Amber Warnings.

Detentions

Students may be required to complete an Area or after-school detention if behaviour has been poor, or work has not been completed to a satisfactory standard (and the student has not responded to a personal warning or teacher detention). There is a staged system of such detentions which are detailed in the Parents Handbook.

Parents will be notified via Go4Schools of all after school detentions (except Friday School Detention where parents may be notified by telephone).

Isolation

For serious misbehaviour or failure to attend after school detention, a period of between one lesson and two days is spent in the schools' 'Isolation Base'. Students are supervised by a member of staff and will be expected to complete their class work in isolation from other students and if required they will also have break and lunch within the base.

Responsibility Card

All students are issued with a Responsibility Card at the beginning of each term. The Responsibility Card is used to log Amber Warnings for minor infringements around the school such as eating or drinking in the corridors or classrooms, uniform infringements, and poor low-level behaviour. If students receive four Amber Warnings, they receive an after-school detention. Those with blank cards at the end of term are entered into a draw with a chance to win an Amazon voucher.

11. Home School Agreement

Please take the time to read the Home School Agreement, which can be found on the school website under the Parents tab in Policies. This Agreement, which is contained in the school planner and the Parents Handbook, is intended primarily to make all students, parents and staff aware of their and other responsibilities in supporting student engagement and progress.

- If there are concerns that a member of staff is failing to fulfil these responsibilities, these should be addressed to the relevant member of staff, Area Coordinator, Form Tutor, Year Achievement Coordinator, Student Support Officer or, in cases of serious concern, a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team.
- If there are concerns that a parent is failing to fulfil these responsibilities, the relevant member of staff will raise this with the parent and will seek to improve the situation.
- If a student is failing to fulfil these responsibilities (which will be reflected in poor progress or learner scores), they will receive support as part of the Year Achievement Coordinator/Form Tutor Progress Check intervention.

The Home School Agreement in the student planner must be signed by the student, Form Tutor and a parent in the first week of each term.

12. School Transport

The Local Authority (not the school) remains responsible for **school transport**. The contact address is County Planner, Education Transport Team, County Hall, Chelmsford CM1 1LB and the contact telephone number is 0345 603 220. Applications for school transport can be found via the Essex County Council website at www.essex.gov.uk

Please refer to the following information when completing the enclosed Consent Form

SWCHS Acceptable Use Agreement / E-Safety Rules

The school will try to ensure that students will have good access to digital technologies to enhance their learning and will, in return expect the students to agree to be responsible users. I understand that I must use school ICT systems in a responsible way, to ensure that there is no risk to my safety or to the safety and security of the ICT systems and other users.

For my own personal safety:

- I understand that the school will monitor my use of systems, devices and digital communications.
- I will keep my username and password safe and secure – I will not share it, nor will I try to use any other person's username and password. I understand that I should not write down or store a password where it is possible that someone may steal it.
- I will be aware of the risks when I am communicating online.
- I will not disclose or share personal information about myself or others when online (this could include names, addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers, age, gender, educational details, financial details, etc.)
- If I arrange to meet people offline that I have communicated with online, I will do so in a public place and take an adult with me.
- I will immediately report any unpleasant or inappropriate material or messages or anything that makes me feel uncomfortable when I see it online.

I understand that everyone has equal rights to use technology as a resource and:

- I understand that the school systems and devices are primarily intended for educational use and that I will not use them for personal or recreational use unless I have permission.
- I will not try (unless I have permission) to make large downloads or uploads that might take up Internet capacity and prevent other users from being able to carry out their work.
- I will not use the school systems or devices for online gaming, online gambling, Internet shopping, file sharing, or video broadcasting (e.g., YouTube), unless I have permission of a member of staff to do so.

I will act as I expect others to act toward me:

- I will respect others' work and property and will not access, copy, remove or otherwise alter any other user's files, without the owner's knowledge and permission.
- I will be polite and responsible when I communicate with others, I will not use strong, aggressive or inappropriate language and I appreciate that others may have different opinions.
- I will not take or distribute images of anyone without their permission.

I recognise that the school has a responsibility to maintain the security and integrity of the technology it offers me and to ensure the smooth running of the school:

- I will only use my own personal devices (mobile phones/USB devices/wearable technology, etc.) in school if I have permission or in the Sixth Form as set out in the BYOD policy. I understand that, if I do use my own devices in the school, I will follow the rules set out in this agreement, in the same way as if I was using school equipment.
- I understand the risks and will not try to upload, download or access any materials which are illegal or inappropriate or may cause harm or distress to others, nor will I try to use any programmes or software that might allow me to bypass the filtering/security systems in place to prevent access to such materials.
- I will immediately report any damage or faults involving equipment or software; however, this may have happened.
- I will not open any hyperlinks in emails or any attachments to emails, unless I know and trust the person/organisation who sent the email, or if I have any concerns about the validity of the email (due to the risk of the attachment containing viruses or other harmful programmes).
- I will not install or attempt to install or store programmes of any type on any school device, nor will I try to alter computer settings however trivial.
- I will only use social media sites with permission and at the times that are allowed.

When using the Internet for research or recreation, I recognise that:

- I should ensure that I have permission to use the original work of others in my own work. Where I do use the work of others, I should cite the author for reference.
- Where work is protected by copyright, I will not try to download copies (including music and videos).
- When I am using the Internet to find information, I should take care to check that the information that I access is accurate, as I understand that the work of others may not be truthful and may be a deliberate attempt to mislead me.

In addition:

- I understand that I am responsible for my actions, both in and out of school.
- I understand that the school also has the right to take action against me if I am involved in incidents of inappropriate behaviour, that are covered in this agreement, when I am out of school and where they involve my membership of the school community (examples would be cyber-bullying, use of images or personal information).
- I understand that if I fail to comply with this Acceptable Use Agreement, I will be subject to disciplinary action. This may include loss of access to the school network/Internet, detentions, suspensions, contact with parents and in the event of illegal activities, involvement of the police.

SWCHS Use of filming & photography for special purposes

During the course of the school year, there may be opportunities to publicise some of the activities that your child is involved in. This may well involve filming or photographing students for use in the media. As a school, we welcome these opportunities and hope that you do too. There may also be occasions when we arrange filming or photography for our own purposes, such as displays, school brochures, newsletters, our official social media outlets and for our website.

To comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in respect of personal data, we need to ask for your consent to your child being photographed (including digital and video images) where we propose to use the images for publicity purposes. This may also involve images being replicated on the Saffron Hall website where a school performance is being publicised and/or celebrated.

Research

At SWCHS we are constantly looking to develop our approaches to teaching and learning. As such, all our staff engage in small-scale research projects. This involves teachers observing lessons, talking with students and using equipment such as iPads and recording equipment to film sections of lessons. This material is used only by SWCHS staff to support approaches to teaching and learning and will not be used outside of school unless further permission is sought from parents.

If you have any queries or concerns about this matter, please feel free to discuss them with us.

P.E. Department Extra-Curricular Sporting Activities

The P.E. Department at SWCHS runs an extensive extra-curricular clubs and fixtures programme. Details such as fixture lists, dates and team lists will be published on the P.E. noticeboards within school, and it is the responsibility of all students to check these boards regularly to keep you informed.

For away fixtures, travel is usually by coach or minibus. Students will return to school after the event. If there is any delay to the return, students will be advised to contact their parents to advise them of the revised expected time of return to SWCHS.

Please note that all national sporting bodies give school activities (not just sporting ones) priority over club activities. For example, Football Association Rule 4 requires that this is included in all League regulations. This is rarely a problem, but it should help avoid putting students in unnecessary conflict with the variety of school activities that are available.

Very occasionally, parents may offer to provide lifts for their own child and others to fixtures or sporting activities – this is an invaluable service. It is important that parents who offer lifts hold a clean driving licence, have appropriate insurance cover and have a roadworthy car with a current MOT certificate. All these requirements are in accordance with national guidelines. Please note that the school insurance does not cover students travelling in private cars, this is covered by the driver's individual insurance policy.

To avoid confusion and disappointment we ask that parents' give consent to their child taking part in these activities by completing the enclosed consent form. This consent form covers taking part in activities, being taken to and from events by school transport as well as consenting to your child to travel in a private vehicle.

Consent need only be given once as the form will be kept on file for the duration of your child's time at SWCHS.

You should contact the school if you wish to withdraw your consent at a future date.

Biometrics for Cashless Catering (Fingerprint recognition)

SWCHS operates a biometric cashless catering system which links to your child's Wisepay account and avoids the need for students to pay cash for their meals. The system uses the latest biometric technology that can recognise the thumb or finger of the student at the tills.

This system improves our ability to serve food quickly and efficiently, reduces the amount of cash circulating within the school and makes the process of getting a school lunch easier for Free School Meal students. It also makes it more convenient for you as lunches can be paid for in advance, online.

Step 1

The student's cashless account is set up and their finger scanned to associate the student with their account. This will link with their Wisepay account.

Step 2

Cash is loaded onto the student's Wisepay account either by the parent or by the student putting money into the 'cash loader' inside the school.

Step 3

The student chooses their school lunch items and scans a finger at the till; this displays their name, photo and account balance to the till operator who then enters the cost of their food items, deducts the total from the account and the transaction is complete.

A very small number of parents decide to opt out of the biometric aspect of the service, in which case a plastic payment card can be issued. Please note that there is a £5 replacement fee for lost cards.

Biometrics and Security

Please be reassured that the fingerprint images taken cannot be used by any other source for identification purposes. The system uses an image of the fingerprint to create a mathematical algorithm and then discards the fingerprint; only the numbers remain, and these cannot be reinterpreted back into a fingerprint image. When a student leaves school, all data will be deleted very easily.