



Switch on lite



SWCHS Parent Newsletter

From the Head

Dear Parents and Carers,

With Charities week almost over we are coming to the end of a long term.

When sad things happen in schools, like the death of an inspiring and much loved teacher like Rachael Wilson, we are all tested to our utmost, but County High has really shown its true colours this week and the support that staff and students have shown each other at a difficult time has been immense. It makes you very proud to be a part of this community.

And we carry on.....a highlight of the term for me must be the Winter Concert. Dozens of children and staff have taken part in school choirs over the past months and the concert showcased our work. We can now truly call ourselves a 'singing school'.

At Christmas we say goodbye to two teachers: English and Drama teacher, Matt Dunne, and Maths teacher Jennifer Baxter. Both return to their country of birth, Australia, for the Christmas sun and we thank them for their contribution to SWCHS during their time here. New colleagues in English and Maths join us in January 2017: Karen Palmer (English) and Stella Papadatou (Maths).

May I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a very happy Christmas and to thank you for your good wishes in 2016.



Christmas Variety Show

You cannot learn how to manage an event by reading a book, as Nike says, you have to 'just do it'. This is exactly what the A Level Leisure Studies students did this week when they organised and put on the Annual Christmas Variety Show.

The programme showcased a sparkling array of talent from across the whole school with performers from Year 7 through to Year 13. Stars of the show included singers, musicians, dancers, a gymnast, a concert cellist, actors and a magician.



The show sold to a record audience of almost 500 people and raised in excess of £2,000 for two local charities; Open Doors (which offers confidential counselling and advice to Sixth Form students) and XL Mentoring (which provides independent adult mentors for younger vulnerable students at SWCHS and Joyce Frankland Academy). An enjoyable evening was had by all

Reverse Advent Boxes



An unusual idea has caught the imagination of students and staff this festive period at SWCHS. Rather than opening windows on our own Advent Calendars we have been filling boxes with much needed food and toiletry items to be donated to Uttlesford Food Bank. These boxes will be distributed by the food bank to help others have an easier Christmas.

Midwinter Concert

Wednesday evening saw our first ever purely vocal concert staged in Saffron Hall with performances from three SWCHS choirs, the winning forms from the Year 7 Interform Singing Competition and a variety of smaller solo acts.

The programme provided a real mix of repertoire, some festive and others just for fun, aiding an ideal opportunity to escape the chaos of Christmas preparations!

We received fantastic reviews from the evening:

"I just wanted to thank you and your music team for the fabulous concert last night."

"The mix of music and performance was lovely, and as always I am stunned by the range of talent that pupils at SWCHS show."

"It clearly took a lot of hard work, practice, creativity and talent and it really was a lovely show."



Vocational Department Supporting Charities Week

On Friday 2nd December, one of our Double Applied Business groups set up a stall at the Saffron Walden Christmas Market. The students, under Project Manager Charlie Kinnerley—Year 12, were able to test out their project management and sales skills, raising £117 for Charities Week. Another of our Double Applied Business groups have been selling candy canes with Christmas messages to the lower school. Our Foundation Diploma students organised a Christmas Jumper Day where staff and students were transformed with bells, baubles and tinsel.

We are very proud of those students who have been involved in Charities Week activities and we would like to say a huge well done to everyone for their hard work and effort. Full details of the Charities Week fun and monies raised will follow in our next edition of Switch On.

Senior Citizens Party

Last Tuesday, SWCHS hosted the annual Senior Citizen's party for local residents. Over 80 attendees enjoyed an evening of entertainment, which included a Christmas quiz, bingo, a raffle, dancing, carol singing and live music from our own talented SWCHS students. Food and drink flowed and everyone enjoyed tucking into the mince pies. The evening was a huge success and we look forward to hosting the party again next year.



Sports News

Rugby:

The Year 8 boys rugby team have continued their winning streak with a victory (45-5) away to King Edward Grammar School in Chelmsford. On Wednesday the team travelled to Barking Rugby Club to compete against the seven remaining teams for the Essex Cup. The boys won their first two pool games to see them through to the semi-final against Colchester. Despite spending the majority of the second half camped on the oppositions line they failed to cross over and Colchester snatched victory in the last minute of the game. It was a cruel end to a fifteen game unbeaten run, however we are sure the boys will bounce back in Year 9!

After their recent Rugby tour the Year 10 team eased in to the quarter final of the Essex Schools Cup by beating Coopers School (55-10). Well done to both teams!

Hockey:

The girls' Hockey teams have also been on a winning streak. Our Year 8 A and B teams gained a win against Hockerill (10-2) as well as Bishop's Stortford College (2-1). The Senior girls Hockey team also won against Hockerill (3-1). Great effort girls!

Football:

SWCHS Seniors Football team remain unbeaten and are through to the quarter finals of the Essex Cup. The Year 9 team reached the 4th round of the National Cup before being defeated 4-3 during extra time in Shefford.

Regional Trampoline Competition

Big congratulations to Sydney Kelly, Rhyannon Kinnley-Richardson and Mia Budworth-Blockley on winning the Regional Trampoline competition. They have now progressed to the National competition and it was a great effort from all three girls. Good luck in the next round.



Google Virtual Tour

Earlier this month a team from Google Expeditions led students from Year 7 and 8 on a virtual expedition of Antarctica, The Great Barrier Reef, Jerusalem, the North Pole, the Solar System and even the Digestive Tract, using virtual reality headsets as an educational resource. Shrieks from the students were heard when putting on the headsets, testifying a very vivid experience.



In all the classes, students were very engaged exploring the 3D scenes and discussing the learning that resulted. We can see a place for this kind of technology at SWCHS in the future.

Trophy Winners

This year, SWCHS were proud to host the Annual Model United Nations Strachan Quiz. Four local schools competed for the trophy over a number rounds, which included; The United Nations, History, Geography, Culture, Recent Conflicts, World Leaders, Organisations and The World on your Doorstep.

The team, consisting of Christopher Bogg, Will Banks, Lauren Brannon and Amelia Greenwood, performed extremely well and retained the trophy for SWCHS ahead of Joyce Frankland Academy and Walden School.

Year 10 GCSE Dance

GCSE Dance students had the fantastic opportunity of dancing excerpts from the new GCSE exam piece 'Emancipation of Expressionism' led by a professional dancer from Boy Blue Dance Company.

The girls worked extremely hard on the piece that will feature in February's school dance show, Colours.



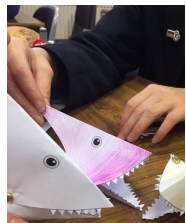
Cambridge Classics Competition

Three of our Year 7 students were all winners at the Cambridge Classics for Schools competition recently where students from five schools around Cambridge entered retellings of Ovid Myths. Jonny Jones and Jake Latham won the overall prize with their 'Theseus and the Minotaur Shield' and Verity Buckle won the performance category for her video about 'Pandora's Box'.

Introducing Our New Geology Club

Geology club is open to aspiring geologists and rock enthusiasts from Years 7 and 8. So far the students have decorated dinosaur biscuits, adopted a rock and studied fossil formations, in particular, moulds and casts using Play-Doh. They have also made prehistoric puppets and next year are intending to trace the footsteps left by dinosaurs on our very own school field.

The club has been extremely successful and we hope that it continues to be a fun and interesting way of introducing students to the subject, as well as providing an insight into Geology A level.



Spanish Exchange

Ten Spanish students joined us for the first leg of this year's Spanish exchange. The students enjoyed various activities including trips to London, Cambridge and an outdoor adventure in Danbury. The trip was a huge success and we received very positive comments about the Spanish students' experiences with their host families. SWCHS students will be heading to Spain in February where we look forward to practising our Spanish and revisiting our new friends.

Dates for your Diary:

Wed 21st December - SCHOOL CLOSSES at 1.15PM
Thursday 5th January - School reopens
Friday 27th January - SCHOOL CLOSED for training day
Mon 13th February - Fri 17th February HALF TERM
Monday 20th February - School reopens