

# Switch on lite



## SWCHS Parent Newsletter

### From the Head

Dear Parents and Carers,

Easter is almost upon us and once more we can report a busy, successful and tremendously productive time at SWCHS. Three things in particular have given us good reason to feel a sense of pride in our school - Firstly we have had a fantastic run of success in sport. The highlights include Khai Mhlanga's win at the English Senior girls' cross country competition and the tremendous performance of our U14 girls netball team. Secondly, we triumphed in the Bank of England Target 2.0 Competition for the second year on the trot and brought home a huge trophy and thirdly our farm (or Agricultural Science Unit as it is now called) has transformed and is a really thriving and vibrant part of the school. Here you see me holding our new school mascot, Xena, the lamb who thinks she is a dog. Have a very enjoyable holiday break. We are looking forward to the summer term already.

**Caroline Derbyshire**  
Headteacher



### School Visitors:

Just before February half term, 130 students from our link school in Beijing spent time with us in school. The Chinese students were paired up with SWCHS students who have either been to China on previous trips or who are due to go in 2018/19. As well as being together in lessons, the students also spent lunchtimes involved in cultural activities: the Chinese students taught SWCHS students dragon dancing, paper cutting, calligraphy and gave musical performances; there were two football matches (SWCHS winning both!); whilst SWCHS students performed some Shakespeare and the SWCHS Jazz Band entertained. The Chinese teachers accompanying the students spent time observing SWCHS teachers and reported that everyone had had a great time with us and had made some good friendships. We are very much looking forward to visiting their school as part of our China trips in 2018 and 2019.



### LGBT Pride Day:



The second annual PRIDE day, organised by Sixth Formers and staff facilitators, was recently held at SWCHS. Its purpose was to educate and promote awareness of the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Tom Brown; a Human Rights lawyer and an inspirational speaker, was joined by two former pupils in a Q&A session with staff and students. Other activities included a bazaar with a variety of merchandise on sale. The PRIDE day was a fantastic success. Congratulations to all of the students involved.

### Bank of England Target 2.0 Competition:

A team of Year 13 economists won the prestigious Regional Final of the Bank of England's Target 2.0 competition at the Bank in London recently. Presenters Leon Bozianu, Harvey George, Chris Shaw and Alex Thomas, along with manager Josh Brown, proposed an interesting set of policies to the four judges, one of whom is a member of the Bank's Monetary Policy Committee, recommending action to be taken at the next meeting of the MPC. The team beat six other schools in the final, including the Stephen Perse Sixth Form and Haberdasher Aske's Boys, to claim the trophy in the final year of the competition. Economics teacher Mark Landor commented 'This is a really well deserved victory, and puts them amongst the top 25 A level economists in the country. It's a daunting prospect to advise the MPC but they have spent very many hours researching and preparing their presentation and delivered it confidently - they definitely rose to the challenge.'



### Mathmagicians:

For the past three weeks fifty Year 6 students from local primary schools have been attending the joint Maths and Computer Science club 'Mathmagicians'. The club seeks to show students how Mathematics and Computer Science are closely linked through challenging puzzles, tricky logic problems and learning functional programming, using Geomlab. This year we were fortunate to have the help of Year 13 students Fiona Gardner and Lewis Colley to support the students. Both Lewis and Fiona have studied Computer Science and Mathematics at County High and are a real inspiration to the younger students.



### Languages:

During half term a group of eight students visited Northern France on an immersion French course. They completed a treasure trail of the town, looked at shops and produce at a local market and visited a goat farm where they learnt how to make goats cheese. Other activities included visits to an amazing military bunker, a sea life centre and a ceramics factory, even making their own piece of pottery to take home. C'était magnifique!

### Oxford University Computer Science Challenge:

TCS Oxford Computing Challenge is a set of programming challenges that were given to the top 10% achieving students in the country in November last year. Last week a large turnout of Year 7 and 8 competitors worked to solve problems in the Oxford challenge. GCSE students also competed, completing some challenging problems to program in Python.



Sports News

Cycling— Inter-School Cyclo-Cross Championship

Our SWCHS teams recently competed on a tricky course in very muddy conditions. The Year 7/8 girls’ team won, and the Year 9/10 boys’ team were just pipped into 2nd place by Colchester’s Philip Morant School.



Netball:



The Year 8 Netball A & B teams played amazingly at the recent District Netball Tournament. Both teams sailed through their pools winning all matches to meet Herts & Essex in the finals. Both finals were toughly contested but the B team were first to celebrate with a 7:1 win. The A team final was a real nail biter but the final score was 6:4 to SWCHS. We are extremely proud of the girls for their extraordinary effort and commitment this season and for the progress that the A team have made to win the tournament this year having lost in the finals last year. The B team remain unbeaten and continue to play incredibly well as a team.

A team Players of the tournament: Rosie Chen, Anna Thatcher Crespo & Olivia Cansell  
B team Player of the tournament: Olivia Harris

Netball National Finals:



On the 18<sup>th</sup> March, our U14 Netball team played in the National Finals. The girls battled hard throughout the early rounds and went into their final game against Canford needing a win to go through to the semi-finals. They fought till the very end but unfortunately were narrowly defeated. The team ended the day coming 4<sup>th</sup> in their pool, and 7<sup>th</sup> overall: the highest ranking state school team in the country and the first to represent SWCHS at the National finals. Congratulations girls, an amazing achievement!

Team: Ashleigh Cowling (Captain), Stephanie Dunlop, Grace Taylor, Alex Bill, Megan Redmayne, Hollie Kelvin, Isabel Sheairs, Mya Sanderson, Tia Kaye and Grace Westwood.

Cross Country:



Congratulations to Khai Mhlanga (pictured) who won the English Schools senior girls’ Cross Country event. Helena Dyce (Year 10) also competed as part of the Essex team who were 3<sup>rd</sup> in the intermediate team event. Full details of this event will follow in the summer edition of Switch On.

Hockey - Essex Cup:

Big congratulations to all of SWCHS students who competed in the recent Essex Cup Competition.



U16 - Runners Up



U14 - Runners Up



U14 - Champions

SWCHS Celebrates Science Week:

SWCHS has celebrated Science week in style with a range of interactive activities, workshops and guest speakers. Activities covering a number of Science Topics and all key stages included extracting DNA, making and racing egg mobiles, making Aspirin and learning about ruminant digestion down at the Agricultural Skills Unit. Equally the arrival of a number of rare animals into the school was a fabulous tool to engage students on how animals adapt to their environments and their specific behaviour. There was no better way to inspire and enthuse students than see Science happening at first hand.



The essence of Science Week was summed up by a two pupils:

“I have loved Science Week – I didn’t realise the huge variety of different career opportunities that science could offer.” - Year 13 pupil.

“The activities have been amazing during Science Week – Science is amazing!” Year 7 pupil.

ASU Easter Fair:

The SWCHS Agricultural Science Unit (ASU) held their Annual Easter Fair last Saturday. Members of the public had the opportunity to meet all of the animals, including its latest edition, the 36 hour old heifer calf. Activities on offer included bottle feeding Xena, the orphan lamb, egg collecting, ferret walking and goat milking. Alongside the animal experiences many Easter themed activities were on offer. Esther Blakey, ASU Farm Manager commented “I am pleased everyone enjoyed the opportunity to visit the ASU and see the valuable educational and community resource the unit is. We now look forward to the main



Dates for your Diary:

- Monday 17th April - Bank Holiday
- Tuesday 18th April - School Closed for Training Day
- Wednesday 19th April - School Reopens
- Monday 1st May - Bank Holiday
- Friday 26th May - School Closes for Half Term
- Monday 5th June - School Reopens
- Friday 21st July - School Closes for the Summer Break