

NEWSLETTER



The Swan School

HEADTEACHER'S MESSAGE

Dear Parents/Carers,

Well, here we are at the end of our first full term and firstly let me say a huge congratulations to all of us for surviving and thriving! Starting a brand new secondary school was never going to be easy (for either staff, students (or indeed parents!)) but it has been immensely rewarding to see our school become established over the last few months, and to see our students blossom. It is amazing to reflect back on how much we have achieved together in such a short time.

One of the highlights of the term has to be the carol concert, which was held at Trinity College Chapel. It was wonderful to see such high quality pieces performed in such a prestigious setting. The event was a real testament to what you can achieve if you show ambition and dedication to success. As well as the student performers, I would like to pay tribute to the staff who worked fantastically hard behind the scenes to put together such a superb showcase. In these politically turbulent times, when so much seems determined to exploit the differences between us, it is more important than ever that we come together as a community for events like this one and celebrate our shared values.

On behalf of all Swan staff, we wish you a very happy holiday and hope that the break is a restful one. We look forward to seeing all of our cygnets on Monday 6th January refreshed and ready to build on this term's successes. The best is yet to come!

Ms Wood

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

Assessment week was a great opportunity for students to demonstrate how hard they have worked and how much they have learned. We were so impressed by their attitude and particularly their mature, reflective approach to feedback as a tool to help them improve.

Top 5 Students - Achievement

- Simeon Gretton-Dann, Freya Leech, Edward Thomas, Catriona Porter, Aayan Ashraf.

Top 5 Students - Progress

- Emma Song, Jack McManners, May Saltrese, Amy Saltrese, Salvador Medina Lazo

Top 5 Students - Commitment to Learning

- Freya Leech, Aayan Ashraf, Simeon Gretton-Dann, Edward Thomas, Benedict Green

Top 5 Students - Mangahigh (hours worked)

- Samreen Khamisi, Morigan Ogg, Nehan Abbasi, Brandon Hepworth, Winter Fernandez.

WATERSHIP DOWN VISIT

On Wednesday 4th December, 7L were fortunate enough to receive a visit from Richard Adam's daughters, Juliet and Ros, who came to talk about Adams' famous novel, Watership Down. 7L have been reading this amazing book in Guided Reading, and they had many questions. It was amazing to learn that Adams wrote the novel at night over a two year period, whilst working as a civil servant by day. Juliet and Ros stressed how lively their father's imagination was and it was fascinating to hear about his interest in the natural world. The pupils in 7L really enjoyed the talk and afterwards Samreen said, "It was so amazing! Lots of things were explained and we have a better understanding of the book". Hamnah enthused, "There were loads of things that we found out. They told us they didn't know exactly where their Dad got his inspiration, but they told us lots of things that showed what inspired him, like the rabbits are all named after flowers he loved". Juliet and Ros stayed for family lunch and then showed students some of the beautifully illustrated editions of Watership Down during lunch break.

Mrs Hlnze

UPCOMING DATES

HALF TERM 3 BEGINS

- Monday 6th January, 9.10am

PROGRESS CHECK AFTERNOON

- Friday 14th February, early finish (12.30pm) for students

HALF TERM HOLIDAY

- Monday 17th to Friday 21st February

PARENT FORUM (ROUTINES FOCUS)

- Tuesday 10th March (5-6pm)

ASSESSMENT WEEK STARTS

- Monday 16th March

DATA AND PLANNING DAY (INSET)

- Monday 23rd March (school is closed for students)

POETRY COMPETITION

Kennings are often used in poetry for effect. They use a two-word phrase in the place of a one-word noun. They were first used in Anglo-Saxon and Norse poetry, including Beowulf which Y7 studied in English last half term.

Ester Jaho (7H) wrote the winning poem about a mouse:

A small-squeaker,

A plump-eater,

A tiny-scuttler,

A good-sniffer,

A little-sneaker,

A nosey-peeper,

A cat-escaper,

A fat-scamper,

A messy-scurrier.

PARENT PARTNERSHIPS

It has been great to get to know so many parents and carers over the last term. We really do value your contributions to our school community so do please continue to get involved.

SwanComm- has made some brilliant progress in starting to build our community of parents/carers. We are still looking for people to take on leadership roles, including chair, secretary, and class ambassador. Let us know if you are interested in getting involved.

Classlist- Thank you to Shelley Joyce, Russell Porter and Matt Gretton for their hard work promoting Classlist on parent day. All parents have received an email to sign up. Please follow the instructions in that email to sign up and join the community of parents.

ParentTalk- we are delighted to offer places on this course held at Cherwell in Feb/March. Parenting has ups and downs for all of us. This course is not just for people with problems - it provides valuable insights for anyone navigating the teenage years, as well as parents from years 7 and 8 who are about to begin. We have sent a separate email more details about how to sign up - spaces go quickly, so please get in fast if you are interested!

SWAN STUDENTS ON THE RADIO!

On Thursday 12th December, Swan students and Ms Wood were featured on BBC Radio's World at One programme alongside Sir Paul McCartney and Bake-Off judge Prue Leith.

They were talking about our vegetarian lunches as part of a mini-series about people making positive, but sometimes controversial, choices for our environment. This is a decision that we continue to be proud of for its environmental and nutritional benefits, as well as how eating together helps us build our community. Well done to those students involved who expressed their views clearly, honestly, and eloquently.

[Click here to listen.](#)

CAROL CONCERT

The Christmas Carol Concert was a festive treat! The entertainment consisted great music, acting and a variety of readings. The concert even featured three different languages!

For music, we had the Swan school choir, the Ensemble elective showcasing the school's new glockenspiels - both led by Mrs Playford - Petit Papa Noel (a French Carol) and O Tannebaum (a German Carol) - both led by Ms McCoy. We were also fortunate enough to hear from the Swan Staff Choir, and solos from Edward Thomas, Catriona Porter and Ernie Lawrence.

Miss Shakespeare prepared the Drama elective to perform a scene from A Christmas Carol, by Charles Dickens. This was a very popular performance that showcased some excellent acting!

Ms Hinze prepared eight different reading for the event, ranging Biblical readings to modern poetry. These readings were delivered by a variety of students and truly captured a Swan School Christmas.

We were delighted to have lots of family and friends of students attend the event and we look forward to our next Carol Concert in a year's time!

Mrs Playford and Lucy Fraser-Novak (7B)



Photographs by Ms Walton