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WELCOME FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Welcome to another edition of *Headlines and Footnotes* where we bring you our latest news and details of our forthcoming events. It has been a very busy term and some of the students have been working hard preparing for Mock Exams as well as taking part in a number of interesting extra-curricular activities.

We are looking forward to welcoming parents to our Progress Day on Friday 9th February. As you are aware, we will be providing the boys with their new uniform on the day. This includes two navy polo shirts (black for 6th formers) and one navy sweatshirt (black hoodie for 6th formers). Parents will also be able to purchase additional items of uniform directly from our school uniform supplier, Cross Embroidery. For your convenience we have arranged for Cross Embroidery to join us on Progress Day too.

Kiran Hingorani

HOLIDAY NEWS FLASH!

Unlike in previous years, the school will be closed on the early May Bank Holiday (7th May)

Sharing Best Practice



In December, Rob Leigh (top left) and Rob Piner (not in photo), together with Blue Planet IT, attended a conference at the University of Salford in Manchester about Child Safeguarding. They talked about 'Keeping Children Safe Online', in particular, understanding the challenges and dangers of the internet, developing a balanced approach, building a solution and how 'WatchGuard' can help safeguard children.

Paul Catherall and I are going to the NAS conference in March (7/8th) in Harrogate where we will be presenting our work on Quality of Life with a 15 minute oral and poster presentation. We are continuing to work with The Centre for Research in Autism and Education (CRAE) and will be looking at how the project will evolve over the coming year; a meeting is organised with CRAE and Limpsfield Grange School later this week to look at wider opportunities for this piece of work.

Quality of Life

First of all, thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the latest round of questionnaires just before Christmas. We received returns from 17 sets of parents and 30 students. This is really helpful as it will allow us to consider how we can best help you and your sons on an individual and group basis.

I will be giving some more feedback on the results on Progress Day (Feb 9th) and again on Open Day (March 29th) but in the meantime you may be interested to know the main issues emerging from the parent returns, which are as follows:

- Many of you (over 75%) identified specific ASD behaviours as being particularly problematic. The top 5 behaviours that you identified are related to anxiety, independence in daily living activities, sensory issues and managing emotional reactions and socialising.
- Interestingly, apart from anxiety, students did not feel that these areas were a problem for themselves. In fact, the majority did not consider that their ASD-specific behaviours were a problem at all. We recognise that this may well be more to do with a lack of self-awareness-but not necessarily! More on this later!
- As a result of your feedback, we will be offering some training sessions on the following topics which you have identified:-
 - **Understanding and Managing Anxiety**
 - **Understanding and Managing Sensory Issues**
 - **Strategies for Independence in daily living activities**
 - **Strategies for Socialising**

Other outcomes from the first round of data collection include:

- Incorporating information provided by students into how we support them and possible target setting
- Incorporating information provided by families on how we can best support you
- The development of an electronic version of the questionnaire with some amendments approved by Professor Eapen in Australia
- Submitting an abstract for presenting to the National Autistic Society's Professional Conference in March 2018 which has been accepted

Again, thank you for supporting this very important aspect of the school's work, and we look forward to having more parents joining in with the next round of data collection.....which will be in our new electronic format!

Keep up to date with the latest news

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Other news in brief

The new entrance barrier on the main driveway into school has now been installed. In the coming weeks an intercom system will be installed together with clear instructions on how to enter the site anytime day or night. The barrier is part of our safeguarding and fire safety arrangements and will allow us to keep track of who is on-site at any time.

Parent Governor Update

We are delighted to inform you of the results of the recent ballot for the role of Parent Governor. Deborah Andrioli will take up her post as Parent Governor with immediate effect and Michelle White will take on the role of Associate Governor. Michelle will replace Rachel Sands as Parent Governor when Rachel leaves at the end of the summer term. We are looking forward to working with Deborah and Michelle.

Signage and web developments

New signage with our new branding is currently underway and we hope to roll this out over the next few months together with our new website which is under construction and which we hope to launch during the course of this term. Please bear with us as we put the final touches to it.

Introducing Art Therapy and a new member of staff



Art therapy is a form of psychotherapy used across a wide range of settings including mainstream and special schools. Art therapist David Elliott joined the school therapy team just before Christmas; he is in school two days a week during term times, providing 1-2-1 art therapy for students.

Art therapy uses art materials as a medium to express and process thoughts, feelings and experiences that the student is finding difficult. As with counselling and other psychological therapies, things shared during therapy remain confidential, giving the client/student confidence to express themselves both verbally and non-verbally through the art making processes. The artworks made during therapy also remain private until the end of therapy when the student can decide what to keep and what to dispose of.

David works with students across Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire and has been working with ASD for over seven years. He is enjoying getting to know the students at Swalcliffe Park and looking forward to working with them in the months ahead. www.davidreedelliott.com

RESPIRE WEEK

We will be running a respite week during the summer holidays from Saturday 11 August to Friday 17 August.

To register your interest and for more information, please contact:
admin@swalcliffepark.co.uk

WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON

Education Matters

This term the students have been sitting Mock exams and after Half Term some will be sitting real exams and taking their Functional Skills. These are very useful qualifications as a Level 2 is the equivalent of a Grade C GCSE. They consist of 3 parts; a writing exam, a reading exam and a speaking and listening exam. We wish them all the very best of luck.

Maths

On Thursday 1st February up to 10 students will be taking part in an Intermediate level, UK Maths Challenge at the school.

On 9th March we will be travelling to Birmingham to take part in the Maths Feast for Year 10 students. This is organised by the Further Mathematics Support Programme and is an enjoyable and challenging team competition testing mathematical, team-working and communication skills.

Following this, on 13th March, we will be visiting the Oxford Mathematical Institute to take part in a UK Maths Challenge for Year 8 and Year 9 students. All of these opportunities are both enjoyable and inspirational for the students and the teachers!

ICT

The school has recently invested in Adobe Creative Cloud applications so the students can use current state-of-the-art applications to meet the requirements of the ICT curriculum. The applications include *Illustrator* for creating digital graphics, *Animate*, for creating animations and *Dreamweaver* for building websites.

This term, those students pursuing the level 2 BTEC qualification have started learning *Dreamweaver* and *Illustrator* skills so they can meet the requirements of the Website Development unit and Digital Portfolio unit.

Through the curriculum enrichment program, students will be offered the opportunity to learn *Dreamweaver* and *Illustrator* skills with a view to creating websites and/or blogs the best of which will be showcased on our school website.

School Council



At the most recent School Council meeting, held in January the main agenda items were:

1. School Uniform
2. Internet access
3. School menu
4. Wi-fi speed/connection

All suggestions coming out of our school council meetings are fed directly into the meeting of the Full Governing Body where we discuss how we can act on their suggestions through the School Improvement Planning process. The next Student Council meeting is due to take place on 13th March.

Outdoor Curriculum

This term we have continued with our Outdoor Curriculum and so far the students have had a go at practical First Aid, including CPR and administering bandages, and they have also been learning in the classroom about the basic physical requirements for survival and about fire safety.

On Wednesday afternoons the students have built simple shelters and made fires in the woods, putting into practice what they have learned in the classroom.



Food Enterprise Group



Once again the Food Enterprise Group have been busy in the kitchen and so far this term we have enjoyed a Café take-away of Chicken Noodle Stir Fry and a magnificent Café lunch to celebrate Burns Night consisting of Haggis, square Lorne Sausage, Meat stovies with corned beef, 'neeps' and tatties followed by cranachan with shortbread and Dundee cake.

Thank you to Mrs Varney and all her team!

Forthcoming Café events

Progress Day Table Sale – Friday 9th February – a selection of home-made chutneys, marmalade, jams and Swalcliffe loose leaf tea.

Valentine's Day Cupcakes on sale Thursday 8th February

Café Lunch - Thursday 1st March, St David's Day with welsh lamb and other welsh delights!

Spruce it up Enterprise Group



Cameron Pickersgill, pictured here, has been hard at work over the last few weeks restoring and renovating our school boat as part of the Spruce it up Enterprise initiative.

So far, Cameron, has stripped back all of the old paint, sanded the entire boat in preparation for a fresh coat of red paint.

“I’m really enjoying this project and I can’t wait to see how it turns out when it’s all done.”

Keep up the good work Cameron!



A visit to St James Palace

On Tuesday Steve and I were invited to attend the Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Gold Award Presentation at St James Palace. This was a great opportunity for us to experience this first hand and give us something to aim towards in motivating students from Swalcliffe to their Gold in the future. Steve and I were invited as special regional guests and we were seated with the parents of the young people receiving their awards in one of the four rooms being used at St James Palace.

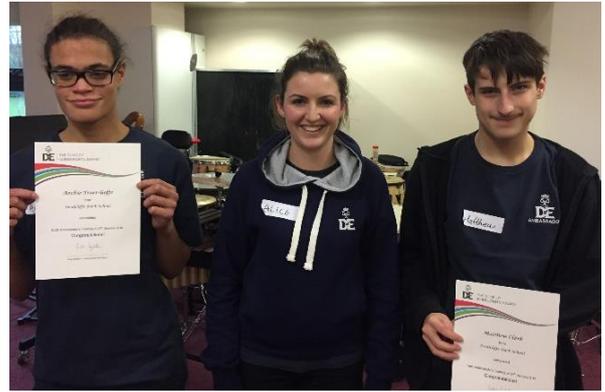
When we arrived we were greeted by DofE Operations Manager, Hayley Meredith. Hayley has helped us a lot over the past few years in setting things up at Swalcliffe. She asked if Steve and I would speak to the young people so they could rehearse for the presentation ceremony and for their meeting with the Earl of Wessex, which we did.

The Earl of Wessex spoke to the young people about their Gold Award, There was lots of inspiring and funny stories from the young people. The Earl then went onto the next group in the following room and handed the certificates to the DofE staff to give out to the young people. Each room had its own celebrity guest to do the handing out of certificates and give a short speech to the young people, in our room it was Writer/Broadcaster, Andrew Collins, who spoke to the young people about his life and what he believes enabled him to have a successful career.

We had a great day and it was very inspiring to see all the young people receive their Gold Awards, we are now determined to get our boys there! *Bill Adkins.*

Congratulations to our DofE Student Ambassadors

Archie Traer-Goffe and Matthew Clark pictured here with DofE Operations Officer, Alice McLinden, were delighted to receive their certificates to welcome them as DofE Ambassadors. This is a new scheme and the boys will be assisting Bill Adkins in encouraging more students to take part in the DofE, acting as role models to other students and giving advice. Well done boys!



Introducing Dance Club and Swim Club



Lou Blincowe, Residential Care Worker, has recently started two new exciting clubs

Following on from the success of the Dance Workshop last term, we decided to start our own Dance Club. This activity takes place every Wednesday evening in the school gym between 6.30-7.30pm and, so far, a handful of boys regularly attend. Students can join in at any time during the course of the term and are very welcome.

During our sessions we explore a variety of dance styles and so far the students have learned 'Lindy Hop' (also known as 'Jitterbug') and are currently learning 'Street Dance'. We start our sessions with a warm up, then learn some moves and put this together to form a dance routine. As we progress over the coming weeks we will add to our dance routine. I have already seen great potential in some of our boys and look forward to more boys joining in. We hope to showcase our work at some point!

We have also started a Swim Club and have been fortunate to secure a slot at the nearby swimming pool at Sibford School on a Tuesday. Sibford are also providing us with a teacher so the students can be assessed and earn some badges. This is proving very popular with the students who are keen to come each week and we have some strong swimmers who, no doubt, will achieve their certificates. Watch this space.

Lou Blincowe

Restocking 'School Lake'



We are delighted to report that our lake is now registered as a CEFAS fishery called 'School Lake' and we have received approval from the Environment Agency to conduct our stocking policy which will not only improve the boys' fishing activity but also prevent the build-up of excessive weed in the lake too.

Our restocking programme is well underway with our first delivery

arriving last week which included a batch of about 100 Crucian Carp. After the Half Term holiday, we will receive another batch of smaller Crucian Carp, Tench, and Mirror and Common Carp to add to the lake. There may, in the near future, be some scope to open the lake to other schools. We also plan to enrol in the Angling Trust which will enable us to apply for grants for special equipment, etc.

Indian meal

Recently students and Care staff were treated to an authentic Indian meal prepared by Residential Care Worker, Safina, and her mother. They made Chicken Curry and Lentil Curry which everyone thoroughly enjoyed! Thank you so much to Safina and her mother for making this possible!



WHAT'S COMING UP



Progress Day Friday 9 February

Parents are invited to join us for Progress Day

09.30-11:00 & 11:30-14:00

Appointments with staff

11:00 -11:30

Refreshments available in the café
Welcome and presentation by Senior Leadership Team

12:00 - 13:30

Buffet lunch available

Education, therapy and care staff will all be available.

If you are unable to attend, please let us know so we can make the necessary transport arrangements for your son. At the end of the day please sign out and inform staff when you leave school.

We look forward to seeing you on the day.

NEW SCHOOL UNIFORM

As you know, we will be providing the boys with their new uniform on Friday. This includes two navy polo shirts (black for 6th formers), and a navy sweatshirt or black hoodie for 6th formers.

Parents and carers will be able to buy additional items of the new school uniform from our supplier, **Cross Embroidery** who will join us for Progress Day on Friday 9th February.

If you are unable to attend Progress Day, additional items of uniform can be bought directly from Cross Embroidery.

Telephone: 01295 270555

www.crossembroidery.com

Join Us for Open Day Thursday 29 March



Doors open 10am

Café Lunch from 12 noon | Live Performances | Talks

For more information, visit www.swalcliffepark.co.uk

RSVP (by 22nd March): 01295 780302
Email: admin@swalcliffepark.co.uk

Weekend Activities

Our weekend activities are proving very popular and beneficial. Recently the boys visited 'Crocodiles of the World', watched a Rugby match and went ice skating. Please see below for our forthcoming planned activities which are open to our day boys as well. However, we do ask for a contribution of between £10 and £30 depending on the nature of the activity to be paid in advance. This covers transport (where relevant), food and the activity.

To find out more and to book for an activity please contact Bill Adkins badkins@swalcliffepark.co.uk

Forthcoming Activities

20 th January	Trip to London to visit the British and Natural History Museums
21 st January	Dodgeball Tournament
3 rd February	Watch Ice Hockey - MK Lightning v Guildford Flames
4 th February	Laser Tag, Sabotage, Milton Keynes
24 th February	Thirsty Meeples, Oxford Board Game Café
25 th February	Splashdown Water Park
10 th March	The Living Rainforest
11 th March	Bowling
24 th March	Trip to Alton Towers
25 th March	Easter egg hunt

Summer Residential Trips 9th – 12th July



Residential week at Swalcliffe Park takes place in the last week of the summer term. All students are taken off their normal time table and given the chance to take part in one of four exciting trips.

We offer a range of activities to suit all tastes. While for some students this may be a totally new experience and something they haven't tried before but from our past experience, we know from past experience how much our students benefit from these trips. It gives them the opportunity to enjoy time with their friends, to build relationships with staff and peers alike, to develop their self-confidence and, of course, to have fun.

Students can choose from either exploring the vibrant city of Bristol and all it has to offer or enjoying outdoor activities in Cheddar or a sailing voyage in Portsmouth or exploring the Art and culture of Brussels. All activities take place during the week commencing 9th July. For further information and to register your interest please contact badkins@swalcliffepark.co.uk

A programme with a booking form is available to download from our school website and information will be available on Progress Day too.

DIARY DATES

Spring Term

Progress Day	Friday 9 February school finishes for Half Term after Progress Day
Return to school	Tuesday 20 February arrive at school at 13:00*
World Autism Awareness Week	26 March – 1 April
Open Day	Thursday 29 March school finishes for Easter Holiday after Open Day

Summer Term starts

Tuesday 17 April arrive at school at 13:00*

May Bank Holiday **Monday 7 May SCHOOL CLOSED**

Pathway Planning Day	Friday 25 May - school finishes for Half Term after Pathway Planning Day
Return to school	Tuesday 5 June arrive at school at 13:00*
The Autism Show, London	Friday 15 and Saturday 16 June, ExCel, London
Leavers Assembly	Friday 6 July
Sports Day	Friday 13 July 2018 - school finishes for students' Summer Holiday at the end of Sports Day
End of Term for Staff	Thursday 19 July 2018 4pm

Autumn Term Starts

Monday 3 September 9am Staff Training Day

Tuesday 4 September Students return arrive at school at 13:00*

** unless college starts on a different date / Correct at time of going to print.*

HOLIDAY NEWS FLASH

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