

February 2023

Swakeleys School for Girls

Newsletter

Dear Parents/Carers,

It's been another busy and enjoyable half term at Swakeleys with all sorts of events taking place to support the students academically, socially and pastorally. We started the term with careers fortnight offering a multitude of opportunities for students to get involved in all across the school. You can read much more about this below and I do hope that your child benefitted from these opportunities. We are so excited that we are able to offer work shadowing for Year 10 students in May and are delighted by the types of placements that students have been able to find themselves. I'm sure that you agree with me that all you want is for your child to be happy and fulfilled in their choice of career (s). Research shows that the current generation of teenagers will have many different jobs in their working life and so it's crucial that we expose our students to all different career options.

One of the many highlights in school this term was the house talent competition where the audience was treated to singing, dancing, poetry, readings and even skipping! It takes a huge amount of courage to perform and the quality of the performances was fantastic. As I write I can hear the rehearsals for FAME taking place. The annual school performance is so important to the school and our community and I want to thank all of the students, staff and parents for their commitment without which it simply would not be possible. I am so grateful to you all.

On 8th February we had parent forum where we discussed how the year has been so far, possible changes to the school uniform, communication and parents evenings. We will get back to you in the Summer term with relevant information for the next academic year.

It was our annual culture day on Friday 3rd February where we celebrated the diversity of our student and staff body. Some pictures from the day can be seen below. We will provide more information about the day in our next newsletter. For now thanks to everyone who supported on the day.



Thank you to parents of children in Years 11, 12 and 13. We appreciate that it is a busy time and thank you for all you do to support at home. Year 11 parents should look under the parent tab on our website for information about what students should be doing to revise over February half term.

In the meantime I hope that you and your family have an enjoyable half term holiday.

Best wishes,

Kelda Stevenson



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Attendance Matters

I am delighted that Swakeleys has been recognised by the Fischer Family Trust for the excellent initiatives in place to support pupils attendance and we have been given two awards for the autumn term for our attendance which is in the top 25% nationally.

Since covid there has been a national drop in school attendance. We have noticed as a school that this is having an impact on the progress of some pupils and we are keen to ensure that all pupils strive for at least 95% attendance unless there are exceptional circumstances around their health. The reason why we consider this to be so important is that research demonstrates the clear link between attendance and academic progress.

Please support us by ensuring that your pupils has any medication that may be needed in welfare, with a medication form. We can hold prescribed medication and also painkillers that you provide to us. Please encourage pupils to attend unless they are very unwell. Please do not book holidays or trips during school time as these will not be authorised.

If pupils are absent from school we do speak to them about reasons for absence, and where attendance falls well below expectation in a term we may allocate an attendance mentor to a pupil. We know that sometimes there may be legitimate health reasons for absence, please ensure that this is accompanied by the appropriate documentation.

If you have questions about attendance our attendance officer Mrs Parker-Payne will be able to help.

Key Stage 4 Book Club

Our key stage 4 book club met at the beginning of this term to discuss their second book 'Animal Farm' by George Orwell. Led by two of our sixth form students, Sharan I2S and



Jekasini I2H, the group discussed their opinions of the book and how it continues to be relevant to today's political landscape. All members had thoroughly enjoyed the book and were interested in reading more of Orwell's work. They were particularly intrigued by the way in which Orwell had used animals as political symbols within wider society. Kashifa I1MY commented that the book "helps you to understand ideas from a new perspective".

Our book for this half term is 'The Dark Lady' by Akala.

Testaments from our members:

"Book club is the best decision I have made in year 11!" Samia I1DS

"A very interesting club, that is very enjoyable. A great opportunity for all book lovers to discover new genres and find interesting reads!" Manpreet I1JA



If you are in years 10 or 11 and would like to join there are still places available. Please see Ms Ellis (English department).



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What's on... at Oak Farm Library Online Teen Creative Writing Group

Every third Thursday of the month 4:00pm-4:45pm

Are you a budding writer looking to join a safe space to share your passion for creative writing? Join us once a month online for a fun session of creative writing, sharing ideas and using your imagination to create your own stories and characters.

Open to secondary school students aged 11-16. To book a place, please email oakfarm-library@hillingdon.gov.uk or call **01895 556242**.




For more information please speak to a member of staff or visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/libraries.



www.hillingdon.gov.uk/libraries

ISOC News:

Swakeleys Islamic Society (ISOC), meets every Friday at lunchtime in room 118. Students from all year groups are invited to join us in this friendly and welcoming environment to make friends and understand/learn more about Islam. On Fridays, we hold frequent Jummah Prayers, (congregational prayer) and many students regularly attend. We hold Islamic lectures frequently presented by sixth formers. You get a chance to ask those burning questions that you've always wondered about! In March, many of us are looking forward to exploring the Cambridge Mosque and learning about its' history and architecture.

The committee that we are creating is dedicated to representing the Muslim student body at our school and plans to host many events and activities in the future. Furthermore, we aim to create New Thursday sessions where students will be able to gain knowledge through guest speakers for example a professional calligrapher and a Shaykh.

We look forward to welcoming many additional students to our ISOC community!

Written by Aisha IIMC



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Careers News

Careers Focus Fortnight (3rd January – 13th January)

I am delighted to write that we started the New Year with a whole school focus on Careers. The autumn term had been spent planning multiple careers events that would serve to reach as many of our pupils as possible across all year groups.



unifrog

All pupils (from Year 7 – 11) were delivered careers lessons during their **PSHCE lessons** mainly using the Unifrog tool.

Throughout their time at Swakeleys, all pupils have access to the [Unifrog system](#). Unifrog helps young people find and apply for the best opportunities for them after school. It offers a wealth of information to help them navigate the array of options open to them. From interest and personality profiling, to information about a wide variety of careers and education pathways, Unifrog also gives pupils a space to record their wider activities to build a profile of their skills and competencies.

During the two weeks there was a special focus on the **options process** for our **Year 8** pupils where they were invited to attend ‘taster lessons’ to help support with their choices about their next steps. The taster sessions form part of a much bigger options preparation package with the aim being to support our pupils and provide them with as much information as possible, so that students can make good decisions about their next steps.



Year 8 Taster session

Our **Year 11** pupils excelled themselves during a **1-1 mock interview day** supported by over 30 business volunteers from SCS Railways. The pupils came to school dressed in professional business dress and looked super smart in preparation for their interviews. The feedback from our business volunteers was really excellent and they spoke so highly of our pupils. Year 11s also experienced a **Year 12 taster day**, where they took over the 6th form space to get a feel for what life at Swakeleys Sixth form might be like. They were given an **information, advice and guidance** session to support their post 16 decision making and inform them of all the available options to them. SCS Railways came in again to deliver a **Skills for Life day** where pupils followed an adapted timetable including a carousel of workshops. From personal branding, CV writing, apprenticeships, assessment centres, using the STAR technique in interviews to equality, diversity and inclusion. Our pupils experienced these workshops, introducing them to vital employability skills. We are so very grateful to SCS Railways and their business volunteers for supporting our pupils in this way over two whole days.

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Year 11 I-I Mock Interview Day



Year 11 Skills for Life Day

The highlight of the two weeks was probably our whole school **careers fair**, for most pupils this was 'the' main event and it didn't disappoint! This year, we were very proud of our new **Alumni Corner** which consisted of 19 of our past students who volunteered their time to come back and speak to our pupils about their own personal experiences and careers journeys. It was so lovely to have them all back and hear of their successes. In addition to our wonderful Alumni, the careers fair was supported by over 30 exhibitors across a range of different sectors; KPMG, Siemens, HPE, RC Vision, Oak Farm Library, The Beck Theatre, The Army, Virgin Media, Hillingdon Council, Pathways to Property, Fire service, Martin Baker, Computacentre and many more. We were also joined by further and higher education providers including colleges, apprenticeship providers, and universities with the aim of raising student aspirations, broadening their horizons, and encouraging them to think about what may be possible in their future. It really was a fabulous day.



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Careers fair in full swing



In addition to the **Careers fair**, we offered **INSIGHT** workshops for our **Year 10** and **Year 11** pupils to attend. One was **speed networking** event for 80 of our pupils to speak to our alumni and people in industry – this was extremely popular. We also ran a **STEM workshop**, **University applications workshop**, **Apprenticeship workshop** and an **Entrepreneurship workshop**.



Year 10 pupils have also been given access to **EtonX**, a virtual online CV writing package offered by Eton College. So far, two pupils have completed the programme. Well done to Jannatul I0DS & Zaibaa I0AF!

The same philosophy governs our whole school careers programme. We aim to do our very best to make sure that our students' choices about their next steps - whatever and whenever they may be - are informed, thoughtful and the best possible choice for them.

Mrs Laguillo

It was motivational to meet them and see how they have made a name for themselves after coming to the school- especially Jo Ahmed

'Helped me realise the range of options I have for further education'

It was inspiring

I now know what A level subjects and university options to choose from

'Since they had once been in the same shoes as us, I felt that they could understand what we are going through now and answered in a sympathetic way and in a way in which we could relate and feel comfortable around.'



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Mental Health Champions

On Thursday 19th January 20 pupils completed training as Mental Health Champions in order to support mental health of their peers across the school.

"I loved the training session; it was extremely helpful and fun. The environment was very friendly and calm and I learnt so much on our journey. It developed us as people and aided us to build our personalities. It also taught me how to cope with different situations and how to deal with problems. It was a very relaxed zone where I felt like I could share anything. It was very informative and taught me things I never knew before. I now feel much more confident in myself and to help other people." Alishba Anhar 10EB.



Congratulations to the team:

Sabrina	9MY	Laura	9MC
Freeha	9MY	Dhiyaa	8FN
Alishba	10EB	Adeena	9FN
Harjot	9RP	Sivanjah	9MY
Baaran	8MC	Naina Kaur	9RP
Fatima	9EB	Tamanna	8EB
Eklive	9DS	Corinne	8MC
Japlive	10MY	Anya	8MC
Harmony	9MC	Angela	8JA
Shafeeya	8JA	Lauren	8FN



Swakeleys School for Girls

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LET'S
CONNECT



TIPS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Dear parents and carers,

6 - 12 February 2023 is Children's Mental Health Week. The week is run by children's mental health charity Place2Be to raise awareness of the importance of children and young people's mental health. This year's theme is Let's Connect.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Let's Connect is about making meaningful connections, and for Children's Mental Health Week 2023, Place2Be is encouraging people to connect with others in healthy, rewarding and meaningful ways.

As parents and carers, you are an important role model to your child. How you connect with friends and family will influence your child, and how they develop their own friendships and relationships. For example, how you greet people and maintain friendships, but also how you forgive people or say sorry when you need to.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Here are a few simple ways you can connect with your child and help them to make meaningful connections.

- 1. Connect with your child in everyday ways**
Moments of connection (and re-connection) are really important in child-caregiver relationships. For example, when you pick them up from school, or come in from work, try to give them your full attention and see if this helps you feel better connected as you hug, talk, smile and hear about their day. Watching your child play and joining in is really important to them – so put your phone away and have a bit of fun – being playful is good for adults, too!

With your older child, you may find times such as car journeys a good time to talk, or to re-connect by playing music you both like. It is important to be accessible to a teenager when they need to talk. You may have to be there 'on their terms' and be ready to listen.

- 2. Talk to your child about important connections**
This could include talking about family members, friends, neighbours, childminders, people in the local community and others in your faith group (if you have one). Remember it's ok to talk about people they miss, for example, family members who live in a different country or people who have died.

Children learn a lot from their parents about how to express their feelings, including the joy that comes with feeling connected to others and the sadness that comes with missing others.

- 3. Talk to your child about their friends**
As children become teenagers, their friendship groups become increasingly important to them. Be open to hearing about their friendships and try to listen without judgement.

#ChildrensMentalHealthWeek



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LET'S CONNECT



Ask them about their life in real life and online. You may not think online friends are 'real friends', but your child may feel differently. Losing friends, feeling left out or being bullied is very painful and your child needs to know you will support them through these difficult times.

4. Connect by taking an interest in your child's world

As adults we can sometimes be dismissive of the things that our children and teenagers are interested in, e.g. their music, fashion, what they watch etc. If you do take an interest in these things, however, you may feel better connected to your child and the important things in their world. This can lead to other conversations about other things in their lives that matter to them.

5. Find time to connect as a family

Family life can become busy and stressful, so it's important to find some time where you connect together. This could include simple things like cooking, watching a film, playing a game, going to the park or even doing the family shop together.

6. Try to resolve conflict and re-connect after arguments

Arguments and moments of disconnection are bound to happen in families - between your children, between yourself and your children and between yourself and your partner, if you have one. It is important that children learn how to disagree in appropriate ways, how to say sorry and how to make amends when they have done something wrong. They will learn a lot about how to do these things from you - so try to model the behaviour you want to see in your children. Talk to them about how to re-connect with friends after arguments including what they can do to help repair relationships.

Video activities from Place2Be

Puzzle Pieces – aimed at 4-7 year olds, this activity is presented by CBBC's Art Ninja, Ricky Martin, and will show children how we are all connected. Why not take part as a family? [childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/puzzlepieces](https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/puzzlepieces)

Connecting Paperchains – developed by Place2Be's Art Room team for 7-11 year olds, this activity helps children think about the people, things and activities they feel connected to. [childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/paperchains](https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/paperchains)

Exchanging Postcards – developed by Place2Be's Art Room team for 11-14 year olds, this activity encourages young people to explore what connection means to them. [childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/postcards](https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/postcards)

Looking for free practical advice to help you support your child?

Parenting Smart, Place2Be's site for parents and carers, is full of expert advice and tips on supporting primary-age children, and managing their behaviour. [parentingsmart.org.uk](https://www.parentingsmart.org.uk)

Let your child know that if they are worried about something, they should always talk to an adult they trust. It could be you, someone in your family, a teacher or someone else in their school.

If you're worried about your child's mental health you can talk to your GP or someone at your child's school.

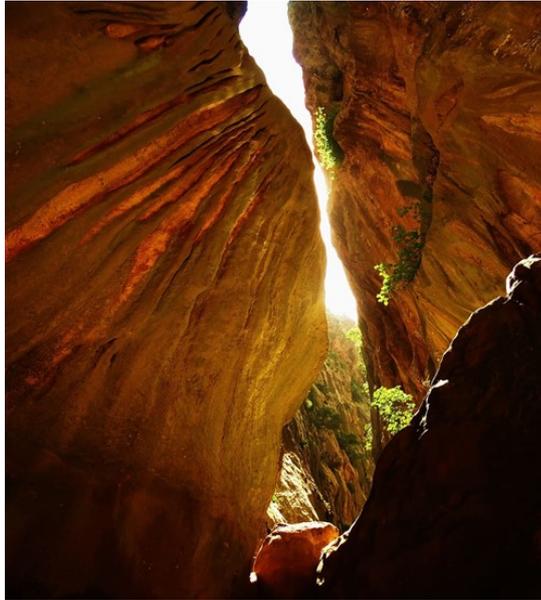


Swakeleys School for Girls

Brought to you by: The Geography Ambassadors

CAREERS IN GEOGRAPHY

Newsletter



Written by Rohey 9MC

Back in January, we had a Careers week at our school. Amongst an exciting variety of activities and events, students were able to explore different careers and find out what they could use their subjects for in the future. For many students, myself included, the Careers Fayre was the highlight of the entire week. We were able to freely explore different jobs, universities, sixth forms and pathways, widening our knowledge and understanding of life post-school.

So, what careers are there in Geography (other than being a Geography teacher)!??!

Well, to name a few to start... journalism, an environmental lawyer or a landscape architect. Geo-

graphy is a highly respected subject by employers (certainly if you ignore the colouring in jokes!!) Geography graduates have one of the highest rates of graduate employment, pursuing a wide range of career paths. If you're in Year 8 preparing to choose your options for Year 9, then Geography is a subject that should definitely be considered. Even if you are already at GCSE level, you can always consider Geography for your A-levels.

The skills and knowledge that you gain from studying geography at GCSE, A-Level and even university, are relevant to almost all jobs and workplaces. An international review ranked Human Geography in British universities as "first in the world." The Geography Ambassadors and I could go on for ages about how amazing Geography is and we'll leave you here with a quick list of 10 Geography related careers:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Environmental consultant | Political risk analyst | Computer programmer |
| Data analyst | Market researcher | Environmental scientist |
| Marketing Executive | Cartographer | Architectural technologist |
| Conservation scientist | | |



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Brilliant Club

At the start of the academic year, I found out that I was chosen to be a part of the Brilliant Club. At first, I was apprehensive as I didn't think I would be able to do well as I have always been academically comfortable and I knew the Brilliant Club was going to push me out of my comfort zone. I also didn't believe I was smart enough to take part. However, these fears were erased when we went on our trip to Oxford University and bumped into a former Swakeleys student that now studies Maths there. She became an inspiration to me as she made me realise that going to a top university and doing well academically can be a reality rather than just a dream. When it came to writing our essay, I decided to write about 17th and 18th century paintings and 20th and 21st century films. I chose to write about these things because I enjoyed learning about paintings in the tutorials and by writing about films, I was also able to analyse one of my favourite films! Writing about things I'm passionate about caused my essay writing experience to be easier and more enjoyable than I initially expected, and I ended up getting a 1st class!

My Brilliant Club experience has given me more academic confidence and has even improved my abilities in other classes. It's helped me develop my critical thinking skills and confidence, which are things needed in the majority of my subjects! I thoroughly enjoyed my experience and I hope my experience inspires anybody that will participate in the club in the future.

Written by Crystal 10DS

Teacher of the Month

December

Ms Shah

Miss Kang

Support Staff of the Month

December

Ms Stanborough

Mrs Green



Swakeleys School for Girls

Term Dates 2022 – 2023

Newsletter

Spring Term 2023

Term starts	Tuesday 3 rd January 2023
Half Term	Monday 13th to Friday 17th February 2023
Term ends	Friday 31 st March 2023

Summer Term 2023

Term starts	Monday 17 th April 2023 (INSET DAY) Closed to students
Bank Holiday	Monday 1 st May 2023
Bank Holiday	Monday 8 th May
Half Term	Monday 29th May to Friday 2nd June 2023 Thursday 29 th June 2023 (Well Being Day School Closed to students)
Term ends	Friday 21 st July 2023

Autumn Term 2023

Term starts	Monday 4 th September 2023 (INSET Day) Tuesday 5 th September 2023 (Y7 only) Wednesday 6 th September 2023 (all year group)
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