Inside this issue of the Herald...

Mr Smith...... What are you doing??

Mix It Up

A Circle Of Fun!

Name.......... Form..................
Welcome to the latest (and the best) edition of the Herald. It’s all change this year with new editors on board and a whole new group of Year 9 journalists as well. We’ve all been locked away in our Herald HQ typing away like fiends and eating lots and lots of cake (thanks to the wonderful editors)! Our wonderful writers have been churning out articles quicker than we can check and put them in. I’m afraid Miss Davies and I were nearly going blind at the end of two solid days of reading and formatting, but it was definitely worth it!

This edition of the Herald is full of amazing articles, as well as several new features, including a sports and literary section, with poems produced by our very own Heralders. We also have our the usual Herald classics, puzzle pages, Staff Leavers, as well as articles about the many events that have gone on this term (we’ve certainly been very busy).

We hope you all have a wonderful break over the Christmas Holidays! Don’t eat too many mince pies and turkey!
At the start of November, the lucky Year 7's were privileged to see Raw Nerve's Sleeping Beauty Story telling session. They were absolutely fantastic and really energetic, adding a twist to the well-known fairy tale. Year 7's loved it and the use of many different hats amazed some including Aisha, 7L. "I couldn't believe how they remembered which hat belonged to which character!" When the performance was over, the students were treated to a question and answer session with the actors.

It was a great opportunity and some really interesting questions were asked; like how the actors had gotten into acting and what their favourite role was.

Mrs Wheeler (SMSC coordinator)
On the 7th November a group of Swanshurst pupils and teachers were involved in a really amazing trip to the National Trust Back to Back Houses in Hurst St, Birmingham. Mr Smith arranged for Swanshurst to help create a visual tour. Which meant the elderly and people with mobility difficulties would be able to see everything including the parts they couldn’t access. Along with Mr Smith, 9 Year 8 pupils, 2 Year 9 pupils, Mrs Taylor, Ms Alexander, Ms Lowe and Ms Griffin were given the task of creating the visual tour.

Back to Back houses were the most common type of housing for working class in the 19th Century. They were cheap to build and would be divided in two; one that would look out to the street and the other on the back which would face the court. Everyone had a brilliant time dressing up and playing the part of Victorians and people from the 1930’s who had lived in these courts. Each student had a task to do: Laura (Year 9) had to light a pretend fire under the boiler; Kelsey (Year 9) had to use a dolly tub, Imogen (Year 8) had to put out the washing line and Tamera (Year 8) filled up buckets from the Standpipe. They even took photos of Mr Smith pretending to use one of the outside toilets!

After lunch they moved forward 70 years from the Victorians to the 1940’s where they played the part of the Mitchell family. They started off as a family clustered around the dining table reading and playing games: Ms Lowe as Mrs Mitchell and Amelia, Sumbal and Abigail as the children. Then Imogen ran in telling them they had to get out because an air raid had started. They had to rush down a staircase to the cellar which was underneath the Levy House. They then had to imagine there were bombs being dropped above and had to crouch down in terror.

Then they went forward another 40 years to the 1980’s and George Saunders Tailors shop. Eleanor played the part of his daughter which turned out to be a coincidence as her family like George’s came from St. Kitt’s. Then they ended up in the lovely 1930’s sweetshop where after learning about its history Mr Smith brought them a big jar of sweets to share between them.

Now Ms Griffin will edit the film and send it back to the National Trust who will be able to use it to help their visitors be able to appreciate the truly wonderful Back to Back Houses.

“It goes without saying that we all had a brilliant time and it was one of those days we will never forget!” ABM
‘We had a really lovely day and didn’t want it to end!’

Thirteen Year 8 students went out on a trip to Cannon Hill Park with Mr Smith to reminisce about Birmingham’s past! I bet most of us have been to Cannon Hill Park at least once, but probably never like us when we were fortunate enough to be taken there by Mr Smith.

We spent a really wonderful morning walking round the park with Mr Smith as our guide along with three more staff member, Ms Alexander, Ms Lowe and Mr Cashmore.

The purpose of the trip, apart from appreciating the lovely features of this excellent park, was to examine the history of Birmingham. Firstly we went to see the ‘moon’ rock (which was sadly not from the moon), a large piece of rock deposited by a huge glacier that created the Rea Valley during the Ice Age. Then Mr Smith told us about the Pershore Road, part of which was built by the Romans as part of Infield Street.

It was a lovely autumn morning with the sun shining and the leaves changing colours, as we walked across the grass to the Golden Lion pub. We had also met Tony Frost, the Chairman of the Friends of Cannon Hill Park and Alan, one of the Park Rangers.

We were on a roll with our ‘Water theme’ and went to have a look at the model of the Elan Valley and learnt about Birmingham’s water supply. We finished off by looking at the war memorial to the people from Birmingham who were killed in the Boer War.

‘Time flies like an arrow, 
Nature flies like a butterfly’
Swan Pals was started as part of the English Department’s efforts to promote global communication through letter writing. The Wednesday lunchtime club has been running since October 2010 and has a membership of about 30 girls. The girls were linked to their pupils of a similar age in a rural school in Uganda and they have since been communicating through letter-writing.

Apart from improving their letter-writing skills, the students have learnt about the lives of their peers. They share experiences and are also learning Swahili (a language which is spoken across East Africa).

Earlier this year, Mr Kalinda visited the Pen Pals in Uganda and the excitement spread in the whole school – the head teacher called a sudden whole school assembly so that he could talk to them! Mr Kalinda writes:

“I had taken two balls with me as presents only to find that the school had not owned balls for a long time! My reasons for running this club were because I also had a Pen Pal from Australia with whom I communicated for very many years and we both learnt a lot from each other about the countries we both lived in. Indeed, Swan Pals members are learning a lot from their Pen Pal experience.

In the near future we plan to allow a small number of Year 7 girls to join and plans are also underway to link Swan Pals with another school in Indonesia.

Swan Pals speak out!

Ishbel 8A: “I joined last year in September and have enjoyed every meeting. My Pen Pal is called Nampebwa Brenda and we have been in contact ever since. Some girls get presents off their pen pal. We don’t just make friends on the other side of the world, we make them here too! Because it is at lunchtime we come here and eat and talk. It is like a picnic but warmer!”

Izzy, 8A: “I have a Pen Pal called Beatrice. She is two years older than me and she tells me about her school and house. This is not all we do when we are waiting for replies. We learn their language Swahili. We learnt a language called Jambo Bwana and it is really fun.”

Izzy 8A.

ABM Having a ball!
That’s Why Swans-hurst Goes to Iceland!

In October during the half term, (whilst you may have been chilling out) Mrs Hanvey and Mrs Ratcliffe took a group of 8 students to Iceland (not the supermarket, the country!). The purpose of the visit was for students to see ‘real life’ Science and Geography taking place in an outstandingly beautiful setting. Iceland is well known for its’ geological activity and it was “breath-taking to see it in real life” says Mrs Hanvey.

By far the favourite of both staff and students was the Blue lagoon, an outdoor geothermally heated pool set within a stunning backdrop of Basalt Mountains. They all took hundreds of photos and had an amazing ‘once in a life time’ experience.

Mrs Hanvey and Mrs Ratcliffe are planning to run a similar visit next year (October half term 2012) for pupils currently in years 10, 11 and 12. If you are interested in finding out more, please see Mrs Hanvey for more details, I’m sure it will be a great opportunity! JP
Year 8’s were able to experience the wonders of ‘Forces and Flight' in the natural and man-made world just before the Autumn half term. The event included a bird display, making and flying hot air balloons, as well as making and flying boomerangs in Maths lessons.

Andy from the Falconry Centre in Hagley introduced the pupils to a range of birds of prey from the very small to the very large, such as the Steppe Eagle with a 6 foot wing span! Many of the birds flew short distances indoors (to the gasps and squeals of the pupils) and Andy was able to describe the habitats and ideal prey for each of them – pupils were able to ask questions at the end and made full use of the time to find out more about these wonderful birds and their behaviours.

The flight and forces theme was continued when form teams followed instructions to produce a winning hot air balloon which was flown against other forms in the year! Which one could stay in the air the longest? Students rapidly found out the effect on flight of using too much Sellotape on the tissue paper or producing an asymmetrical balloon! There was lots of cheering as the balloons left the ground and all forms cheered on their entries!

But the forces and flight fun did not stop there! In maths lessons the girls used materials to design and make boomerangs that were also tested to see how far they could fly – and if they returned! Data handling was a key technique used here to find out which design was the best.

Overall, it was a fun and stimulating teaching and learning event for both pupils and staff – well done to everyone for making it a successful experience! JP
Can you feel the excitement?!

During October, we were fortunate enough to have a band called FriXion come in to perform for the whole of Year 9. The band consists of three members - David Stanton, Neil Painter and Johnny Wright. David and Neil met in college and soon after Johnny joined the band as he was introduced to David and Neil by their management company.

They had all the girls on their feet and singing along to their cover songs and to their hit song “Under the Influence”. We were lucky enough to get sneak preview of their new single “Maserati” and based on the girls’ reaction to its premier it is sure to be a big hit!

After they had performed some of their songs, they gladly answered a few questions which included the likes of “How did you get signed?” or “What are your plans for the future for FriXion?” and even the occasional “Where did you get your shoes?”

Ikra, 9Y said: “I thought they really fed off the energy the crowd gave! It made me want to dance and really made me feel full of energy!”

Aleena, 9T: “Wonderful!”

Ellie, 9T says “I really enjoyed the performance! Under The Influence is actually one of my favourite songs of all time! It’s definitely on my wish list for Christmas and I hope they make it big!”

Annie, 9U says: “I really like how they engage with the audience and how they interact with their fans so much, I’m definitely one of them!”

FriXion have already taken to twitter and Facebook – where you can follow and subscribe to them – to express the love they have for their Swanshurst fans. We wish the very best for FriXion and we’re hoping for them to get into the Christmas charts with their new single ‘I’m falling in love’.

And Remember! FriXion makes things hot!

AS

Could someone untie my hands please?
On 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> October Year 8 were treated to a visit by Luminites, a new band from London made up of three boys and two girls. With one guy on keyboard, another playing the guitar and singing while the third boy was an outstanding beat-boxer, they were truly stunning! The two girls were amazing singers and they are only a few years older than us at 17 and 18 years old!

They sang a selection of covers and original songs before answering questions about how they had met each other, how they went about composing their music, where they had performed so far, how they had got into music, etc. They then signed autographs, met the students and had their photo taken. It was really great hearing about how someone not much older than our Year 8’s had broken into the music industry, although they had had to work really, really hard!

We did an interview with two of the fans that were at the concert, this is what they said:

Erin (8D): “They were very good. It was a new type of music I haven't really heard before. It will inspire people to beat box more.”

Eleanor (8D): “It was really good. It was really unique and individual!”

Brilliant show……well done!
Did you remember your ticket?

On Thursday 1st of December Year 7 STUDY watched a production called ‘Sleeping Beauty’ at the Birmingham Rep Theatre. We caught up with Mrs Orford and her Year 7 French class and asked them a few questions…

We found out that the play was basically a modern twist on the classic Sleeping Beauty. It featured a baby eating ogre, who every time she cast a spell would break wind!

I’m not sure this is the right door!

Clearly it is extremely different to the Disney classic that we know so well.

We had asked them if they had been inspired by the production at all and we found that they had actually based their performing arts work on it, meaning they had done drama, dance and music performances using what they had gathered from the actual play. Caitlin Kinsella and Bethany Burge said “The costumes was very detailed and imaginative we just loved the fairy's dress all the others were very good too!”

Saika 7D “The thing I liked was when the fairy did the spell then she broke wind." Year 7 thought the experience was “OUTRAGESLY FANTASTIC!!!!!!!!!!”

They’re behind you!!
Cultural

Pink Thursday

At the start of term The Zone offered a range of beauty and therapy treatments on Thursday lunchtimes for Year 11 to have as a treat. They were organised by Miss Campbell as way for us to relax during what is quite a busy year for us! A make-up session, a facial treatment, a manicure and a session on enamel nail art were on offer. I went to the facial and make up sessions.

A professional beautician ran the sessions and Ms Butt and all the staff were really friendly. I was given great advice on applying make-up and encouraged to experiment with colours I wouldn't usually wear. I picked up some good ideas for simple home-made facials. The one we made consisted of natural yoghurt and strawberries. After applying it we sat back and relaxed whilst it did its work. The sessions were a lot of fun. My friends and I all went along together, and it was a nice break from hectic school life.

Sixth Form Book Club

Book to read this week:
His son, born first, is perfectly healthy, but the doctor immediately recognizes that his daughter has Down syndrome. For motives he tells himself are good, he makes a split-second decision that will haunt all their lives forever. He asks his nurse, Caroline, to take the baby away to an institution. Instead, she disappears into another city to raise the child as her own. Compulsively readable and deeply moving, The Memory Keeper’s Daughter is a brilliantly crafted story of parallel lives, familial secrets, and the redemptive power of love.

What is the reading group about?
The reading group an opportunity for Year 12 and 13s to get together and discuss books they have read.

They discuss what they enjoyed and didn’t, as well as their own interpretations of the book over some hot chocolate and biscuit provided by the Centre Library Staff. Why not join us today? SI
E=MC WHAT???

On Thursday 1st December a limited number of lucky students were able to go on an educational and fun science trip to King Edward Boys. On this trip they were able to witness a professor from Aston University perform some crazy experiments which you are not usually allowed to perform in most schools; being that they are extremely dangerous and involve countless amounts of safety precautions. One of these experiments included: Mentos and Coke – which then the nutty professor went on to drink! Another experiment included liquid nitrogen, which created dry ice. Here’s what the students said about the trip:

Nashwa, 9U “It was really fun because it was something you wouldn’t usually get to do in school; therefore it was a new experience for us all. We got to watch a man show us different ways to blow up balloons and I thought it was really funny and helpful towards my learning!”

Zahra, 9S “It was really good because it taught me about how to be safe in a science lab. There were a few other schools there, including Camp Hill Boys and Camp Hill Girls, which was slightly intimidating but us Swanzies rocked of course!”

The pupils also like the fact that they got to ask the professor questions which benefited their learning a lot!

The science department are very proud of the girls’ academic ability as well as their impeccable behaviour and hope they’ll be able to introduce more of these trips!

P.D & A.S

Live long and prosper
Blood Brothers, Good Brothers

Last month the Year 10 Drama students were treated to a performance of Blood Brothers by Willy Russell. The play is about twin brothers that are separated at birth but meet again later in life.

“It was a really moving play and made me cry in the end, even though we had already read the play” said one student.

The performance also starred Niki Evans from X Factor and another student said “I can’t believe it was her – she was so good!” The performance was unmissable and it had the audience on their feet at the end.

With the amazing cast and direction you were transported to the world of the play instantly. The drama students all loved it and said that they’d watch it again, any time.

Fingers Burnt

“Booming Good”

Aisha in 7E said it was “really fun” and “so hilarious!” She said the funniest part of the performance was when they started talking about YouTube. She also said it was “extremely sad” and very moving at the end when one of the characters got badly injured in a firework accident.

The performance was very enjoyable yet highlighted the importance of being safe when dealing with fireworks over bonfire night.

M
The Debate Team
On November 25th 20 pupils, both from Year 11 and the Sixth Form, went to the Birmingham City Council House for the Young Persons Democracy Forum. It was a chance to get local MP’s to answer young peoples questions and concerns about society today. What made this event so unique is that it was in effect run by the pupils, with them setting the agenda through their well thought out questions.

The MP’s represented three different parties: Conservative, Liberal Democrats and Labour. This gave a chance for the girls to get a range of answers from several different viewpoints. The Lord Mayor welcomed the girls while Ed Doolan, who hosts the Political Show on BBC West Midlands, introduced the MP’s and was

The girls from Swanshurst asked two main questions: one of which was based around the hot topic of the UK bailing out other countries in the EU when they still need financial help themselves. Real, thought provoking questions were asked and the MP’s answered with detailed, if at times typically evasive, responses.

There was also a quiz and the girls got a chance to use their buzzers! The quiz had questions along the lines of ‘How many women in parliament?’ (a shocking less than 25%) and everyone took part (even the teachers!).

Both Miss Moody and Miss Osgood went along to support the girls, with both enjoying the experience almost as much as the students themselves. “I was so impressed with the ability of the students to hold their own against the MPs,” says Miss Osgood.

Well Done ladies.
AM

The great debaters
Its an issue that has repeatedly been brought up in School Council meetings. Now, flushed with success, (!) we have two new toilet blocks that have just been opened in Upper School.

The School Council made up of representatives from each Year hope these new toilets will put an end to frustrations and that they can be kept looking as good as they currently do.

After meetings with governors, the toilets have been opened for use at lunch and break times for Years 9, 10 and 11.

The two new toilet blocks are on the second floor and the even side of first floor in Upper. As requested by students, the toilets have been equipped with new hand dryers and full length mirrors. They will be open for a trial period so students have the opportunity to prove they can be kept tidy. Graffiti will be monitored by Prefects who will check the toilets after every lunch and break time and ask students to sign in before they enter.

We hope the toilets are kept tidy and graffiti-free so other toilets such as those in centre can be refurbished.

**The Mission Possible:**

*We went on a mission to give our fellow swansirians a preview of our new pimped out toilets- exclusive to upper.*

Adeishe, Alice, Shaira and Jeenal went on a mission searching for the new pimped out toilets. We were very impressed with what we found.

**AH, SH, ABM & JP**
Shockheaded Peter is inspired by the 1844 “Struwwelpeter” stories of Heinrich Hoffman, a German doctor wanting a better class if children’s book for his three-year-old son. But these were no ordinary children’s tales… each story is written in rhyme and each is to be performed in a different style. The young and enthusiastic cast will bounce these poems off the page and surround the audience in a world of fantasy and folly.

Eve (Year 9) plays the character of Janet:

“Shockheaded Peter is great as we learn different drama techniques! I really enjoy it because of my character (who is a spoiled brat!) she always gets what she wants and if she doesn’t she causes a massive fuss!! If you come see it you will love it!”

Shockheaded Peter is a great play if you are doing Drama, English or German for GCSE, as the play includes different aspects of drama as well as being filled with German concepts.

The play is broken up into 20 poems, each telling a tale of a mischievous child who comes to a gruesome end. The audience will see a whole host of characters including; Cruel Fredrick, Conrad “Suck-a-thumb”, Pyromaniac Harriet, Fidgety Phillip, Fartin’ Martin and Caring Mary and Hateful Georgia!

Shockheaded Peter will be running Wed 11th – Sat 14th of January 2012, at 7:45pm at the Crescent theatre. Tickets are only £9 and the seats are unnumbered so get them as soon as possible! Alice (Year9), Anni (Year9) and Eve (Year9) are all in this play.

ABM

Can’t wait to ‘Shock’ and amaze her audience!
Students were dancing their socks off on the 11/11/11 to celebrate Remembrance Day... old style. The young and the... older... joined together to make this dance special. Most who went, dressed in 1940s costumes and danced with the veterans! The veterans and the pupils sang along to the songs that were played and boogied the lunchtime away.

Hannah and Ida attended the dance and said:

Hannah: “It was fun and we got to dance and sing along. I found it funny when Ida was dancing with Mr Smith. I got to speak to the Veterans and it was so interesting to hear their past and their stories.”

Ida: “I really enjoyed dressing up in 40s outfits, with bright red lipstick and a spotty dress. It was great getting to meet people who were involved in the war effort and I even got to dance with Mr Smith!”

EJ&AB
This year, for the first time ever, Sixth Form students were given the chance to run for Head Student – a role similar to being head boy or head girl. There were two positions available for Head Student, as well as two deputies. After applying for the role, the candidates had a short interview with Mrs Davis and Mrs Ramage and then began with their campaigning. There were some interesting campaigning ideas – including some delightfully cheesy slogans and posters featuring the likes of Johnny Depp to WW1 propaganda!

The actual voting took place during L4L, when each of the candidates gave a speech in front of the rest of the Sixth Form. The teachers also voted and once all the votes added up, the results were announced in Sixth Form briefing. All the candidates made a huge effort and all of them would have made great Head Students, but the elected Head Students are Adeeba Bashir and Aneesha Bhardwa, with Fiona Conn and Zahra Sajan as deputy head students.

“I was really excited when I heard about the opportunity to be head student because after 5 years at Swanshurst I wanted to give something back to the school. My time at Swanshurst has been great and now I can be part of ensuring others get the same out of their experience. As Head Student I’m looking forward to helping your opinions get heard, as well as creating a link between teachers and pupils. Overall, I’m just really thankful for this opportunity and look forward to working with Adeeba to make a positive difference to our school” - Aneesha

“The opportunity to be Head Student was fantastic for anyone in the Sixth Form because it meant we could have someone to represent us as a whole group, and to improve the communication and interaction between teachers and students. Also it was an opportunity to bring about any physical changes required. After speaking to many students some of the ideas have been; a Wi-Fi system for students and a coffee area. I am glad to have been given this opportunity and I am looking forward to bringing up any issues we have as a Sixth-Form, to help us improve further” - Adeeba

We’re all really excited about working together; to bring new, exciting ideas and improvements to the school – so watch this space! EJ
The Zone is magnificent! The Zone gives you so much enjoyment during lunchtime! This is how great The Zone is... Me and my friends, Bailley and Reemah, were in The Zone for an arts and craft activity and we were doing some finger knitting. Bailley showed Mrs Boothroyd who was so impressed she asked us to do a workshop for anti-bullying week!

When we got asked I felt like I was walking on clouds in heaven! It was such a privilege to be asked to do this! We decided to make blue and white anti-bullying bracelets. The workshop turned out to be amazing! Loads of pupils came and they had a great time! I felt like a teacher as me and my friends demonstrated step-by-step how to make the bracelets. It was a great experience!

ALL YOU NEED IS ONE GOOD IDEA!

Safiyah 7L

Moral

Anti- Bullying Bracelets – A Year 7 Pupils’ Workshop

DID YOU KNOW?

The teachers at Swanshurst have some very interesting facts about them that they’d like to share with us....

Mr Twist- “I once played the drums on stage with a member of the Rolling Stones.”

Mrs Saleh- “I once appeared on the show, This Morning. I was 14 years old and was doing a fashion piece on there.”

Mrs Taylor- “I met the Queen when I was in Secondary School. I curtsied and waved a little flag!”

Ms Hardwick- “I was in a TV advert when I was 8 about marriage counselling. I was my ‘parents’ child in the advert and they were splitting up.”
Remembrance Day is something that everyone at Swanshurst likes to be involved with. Each year we look forward to this special event as something that touches the hearts of many of us. We like to remember this day in respect to all the people that fought for us in the wars over the years.

On this day veterans come in to school to speak to some of the students and to be with us when we do our ceremony at 11 o’clock where Mr smith, who is very passionate about Remembrance Day, says a speech to show the students how much the people in these wars have helped us. He also tells us about the people who are connected to members of staff that fought in the wars. This is a great ceremony that is held and the students get the opportunity to watch this and observe the 2 minutes silence alongside the veterans.

There were a few students this year in Year 9 which got the chance to talk to the veterans and take them round the school and get to know what these people did to help. We spoke to Eve 9E who told us what the veterans said when she met them.

“I spoke to one veteran in particular called Frank who told me about what life was like in the war. He said that it was hard work but he knew he was helping many people therefore he didn't mind.”

We also have a comment from another student Becki 9L who quoted ‘RIP to all that fought in the war, gone but never forgotten.’

Some of the pictures from the event were used in a local newspaper talking about the great day that was had by all. They also talked about the 40s dance that we had with the veterans, which was where everyone got dressed up into 40s clothes and danced around with the veterans on the lunch of the Remembrance Day. Which both students and veterans enjoyed. PD
Social

A Token of Appreciation...

On November 2\textsuperscript{nd} 13JGP washed staff cars to raise money for St Marys Hospital. It was done in their own time during lunch.

This was done because last year a friend of Mr Gupwells’ died and it was St Mary’s Hospital that looked after them with such great care. As a mark of gratitude Mr Gupwell and 13JGP washed the cars of staff members to raise money for the hospital.

Over £60 was raised and the hospital was extremely grateful for all the hard work and effort put in – Well Done.

-AM

So

HOW GREEN ARE YOU?

This quiz is a small quiz about Swanshurst and how well you know your facts!

1. How many stairs do you think there are in Swanshurst when you put Upper, Lower and Centre’s amount together?
2. Which teacher worked here the longest?
3. Which building was built last?
4. How many students are there in sixth form?
5. How many pupils are there in the whole school, excluding sixth form?
6. How many buildings are there all together?
7. Where is the maths department?
8. Up till this year, where did the Year 7’s have gone on an annual trip to get to know each other. Where was it?
For Children in Need this year Swanshurst put on several activities. There was a non-uniform day, a bake off, movie mayhem, we sold Pudsey key rings and wristbands and some pupils did sponsored silences. Through these events we raised over £2,350!

The girls that entered the cake sale were extremely enthusiastic and we were overwhelmed with entrants. Prizes were given out in assemblies for the best cakes! The cake competition winners were:

- Best teacher cake: Mrs Shah
- Best cake design: Aisha 7D
- Best Pudsey cake: Sameyah 8R
- Best tasting cakes: Hafsa 8A, Mariam 7A, Isobel 8L, Charlotte 8L, Talie 9L

I interviewed Taliesen (Talie) about winning the “best tasting cake title”

Me: How do you feel about winning the prestigious “Best tasting cake title?”
Talie: Happy. I was really surprised to win
Me: Any more cakes planned for future sales?
Talie: I always enter cake sales so definitely. Watch this space!
Me: So what was your cake?
Talie: It was a 7 inch circular, salted caramel cake with yellow icing and chocolate curls.

MMMM! Tasty! Let’s hope there’s more delicious cake treats in the future!
Well done Swanshurst!

AB
As part of Black History Month celebrations, Key Stage 3 pupils had the opportunity to see a performance by the fantastic Theatre Company “Sister Tree.” Their piece was called “Mix n’ Flix” based upon many aspects of Black History.

The play involved two girls working on their homework on Black History, during which they look back at what life was like for black men coming from the Caribbean to find jobs in England. There was a selection of short scenes based on many of the key events or key influential figures in history e.g. inventors, politicians, motivational speakers, sports people, entertainers, etc.

Not only did we learn lots of interesting facts but some of the scenes were really funny and had everyone laughing. Some were laughing so hard, they were nearly crying! Especially the scene with the mobile phones, their accents were hysterical. Also not forgetting the slave auction, where members of the audience were called out to take part in the performance.

We hope that Sister Tree can come back again soon because everyone had a great time. On behalf of everyone who was lucky enough to watch them, they were FANTASTIC!

Written by Year 7 pupils  AH
The Sixth Formers have been taking part in a great scheme offered by a partnership between Birmingham City Council’s Road Safety Education Team and 5 Star Driving Academy.

After attending three workshops, covering how to obtain a driving licence, a mock theory test and the consequences of illegal driving, students were let loose for a 20 minute driving experience with a qualified driving instructor!

The four week course has a long waiting list of Sixth Formers eager to start their driving careers. Feedback from all the students has been overwhelmingly positive.

“I loved every minute of driving around in the instructor’s car, especially making Mrs Ramage nervous when we drove a bit too close to her while she took photographs” said Monjoht, one of the first students to get behind the wheel.

“The driving was great fun, but the workshop about illegal driving taught me about things I hadn’t thought about before” added Zahra, who the instructors described as ‘a confident young driver.’

This workshop was set out to produce safer drivers for the near future and create awareness of the importance of safe driving but also an opportunity to gather a greater understanding of how to become road smart drivers. This experience will be very useful when they set out to obtain their driving licence and are able to use the knowledge they acquired form the workshop to their advantage. The Herald wishes the best of luck to the Sixth Formers who are currently trying to obtain the driving licenses. SI

Look, I didn’t scratch it!
How Far Are You Willing to Go to Fit In?

Self-respect, confidence and faith.

What kind of problems does a girl face in this society? Many feel the pressure to fit into the media’s idea of perfection and beauty. But what is perfection?

A group of girls from Years 10 and 11 volunteered in their own time to put together a performance on the kind of problems girls face in modern society, from self-esteem to bullying. The performance spoke out loud and clear about all kinds of issues and how little things can have such a big influence on you. They dealt with the pressures put on young women today to fit in with this modern world: including such common issues as weight and skin colour.

The actress Marlene McKenzie came in and worked with the girls to come up with a real-life based, moving performance that reflected huge difficulties girls face now to fit in.

Both pupils and staff came to see this performance and it was agreed that a tremendous amount of effort had gone in to devise a great performance.

Don't forget, Marlene McKenzie had completed a new performance called ‘lite’ that will be shown at the Birmingham Mac on Wednesday 7th March 1.30pm and 7.30pm.

AM
As part of the lead up to the London 2012 Olympics Year 7 & 8 have been taking part in Swanshurst Inter-form Olympics during Thursday lunchtimes. Currently they are competing in the qualifying rounds with the hope to get to the finals in the Spring/Summer term, where the top five teams will compete for Gold, Silver or Bronze!

Recently they have competed in the Indoor Athletic events which involved, relays, the javelin, long jump, speed bounce and many more. Then onto Badminton where they played a game of doubles in a straight knock out event.

The teams who made it to the finals (Well done!):

Indoor Athletics:  
- 7L  
- 7E  
- 7T  
- 7R  
- 7A  
- 8A  
- 8T  
- 8U  
- 8Y  
- 8D/8E

Badminton:  
- 7S  
- 7T  
- 7D  
- 7A  
- 7Y  
- 8E  
- 8U  
- 8L  
- 8N  
- 8D  

ABM
Never afraid to speak their mind

At the beginning of the year, Head of Year 9 Miss Sambhi was on the search to look for a team willing to be her Pupil Voice team. After students sent in applications, 18 girls got through and then there were the interviews where 3 candidates were interviewed at once. The girls that were successful and got are now part of the pupil voice team! These girls are:

- Zarafshaan M-9S
- Hafsa H-9S
- Khadija T-9Y
- Faryal K-9L
- Aman Q-9L
- Nada H-9L
- Sunia J-9L
- Samaira F-9A
- Halimah S-9R
- Fatima Z-9R
- Alisha S-9R
- Jeenal P-9N

Suni in 9L explained what it was about. “What the pupil voice team does is that they organise different charity events for different charities every month with a Form they’re probably not familiar with, for example, I’m in the middle of organising an event with 9U and it’s going quite good. I joined pupil voice because I wanted to be able to help the school and charities and I can also put it on my CV. You also get the sense of teamwork because you’re working with people you do and don’t work with so you also make new friends!”

Being part of pupil voice myself, I suggest that if there is an opportunity for you to join, that you take it as it can benefit you in so many ways.

JP
Peer Mentor Perspective

Hi, my name is Kanisha and I am a Year 11 Peer Mentor. Being a Peer Mentor involves a lot of commitment. Peer Mentors have a day of training which involves listening-skills and anti-bullying work. We attend a duty at least once a week and every Wednesday morning we all have a meeting to think of different ways we can involve students in the zone.

Our duties involve advertising activities, making younger pupils feel welcome and involved and supervising film shows. We also help run the arts and crafts session at lunchtime and the Chil-lax therapy sessions. Our busiest days are Friday when we have Bingo.

I find being a Peer Mentor very rewarding as it gives me a chance to support pupils and the Zone Staff with their work. For many pupils we become a familiar friendly face.

Kanisha (Year 11)

Zone Summer Scheme

I went to Swanshurst Zone Summer Scheme in July. It was brilliant. Lots of other girls from different primary schools came along. It was run by Miss Khatun and Miss Magee and was brilliant!

We did different activities everyday such as African drumming, making smoothies, creating a mural and sport activities, including Thai boxing. We even went to the cinema for a private screening of Harry Potter!

It was a great opportunity because whilst everyone else was at home with their old mates I had the chance to get to know more people and make friends and this made it easier for me to settle into Swanshurst in September.

Marita, 7Y
Cooking Her Way
to the Final...It’s

Claire Hutchings is an ex-Swanshurst student who is getting closer and closer to the final of Masterchef professionals!

Claire left Swanshurst in 2005 (and is 22 now) she worked for two years at a Michelin starred restaurant in Edgbaston. She impressed the judges in her first week with her food and was put straight through and has kept going through since. She is now in the semi-finals and is one of the red hot favourites to win!

““The best dessert by a thousand miles. I'm blown away, it's sensationally good. It's difficult for me to believe that sort of work has come out of a chef so young.”- Greg Wallace (judge)!

Good Luck Claire! Make Swanshurst proud!

ABM

Watch This Space...

- Wednesday 11th January – Swanshurst is hosting the Inter-Area Sports Hall Athletics Challenge. If any Year 7 and 8 pupils want to be involved, see Miss Johnson.

- Monday 30th January – Swanshurst is holding the Y10 & 11 Trampolining Competition. If any Year 10 & 11 pupils want to be involved, see Miss Ketley.

- Monday 20th to Friday 24th February – Year 9 go to Ogwen cottage for their educational visit.

- Friday 9th to Saturday 17th March – Yea8-10 go to Torgon, Switzerland for the Ski Visit
Starting Year 7 can be both a confusing and exciting time, overcoming academic and, just as importantly, social obstacles can be difficult. Year 7’s enter a completely different environment, with a completely different uniform and completely different set of people. Understandably, it can be a difficult time for anyone; having to learn quickly the ways of a secondary school. But thankfully these Year 7’s are at Swanshurst girls who have the chance to meet their new peers, become more relaxed around them and make new friends in the form of a trip to Oakerwood, which took place in October.

From what we heard, it was well worth getting to school at the ungodly hour of 7:30am to enjoy all the fun activities Oakerwood had to offer! There were wood activities, rope climbing, wall climbing, environmental art, a running course, and even an inflatable assault course! Mr Stocks claimed he “destroyed” Mrs Taylor and Dr Garny when they fought each other in an epic gladiator battle, while the Years 7s worked at team building tasks and made friends with each other.

After an exhilarating, yet exhausting, day, the Year 7s returned to school at 6pm. They all had a brilliant time and said they highly recommend the trip for the next batch of Year 7s.

AB
On Wednesday 2nd November the GCSE Dancers were taken by Miss Gardner and Mrs Falconbridge to see Cirque Éloize’s brand new creation, “iD”. It was a blend of stunning circus arts combined with awe inspiring acrobatic feats, urban dance: b-boys/b-girls, break-dance and hip-hop.

The scene was set in the heart of a city where identities are forged and individuality is expressed, all set to a stimulating soundtrack integrated with amazing multimedia effects and a cast of sixteen highly skilled performers! All these elements collide to create Cirque Éloize’s entertaining urban universe. They have performed more than 4,000 times in over 30 countries.

Thanks to the artistic imagination and determination of its creators, the contemporary circus/dance company has acquired an international reputation for its highly original works.

‘We all absolutely loved it and wished it could have gone on for longer. Hopefully they’ll come back to Birmingham again soon!’

SB & AH
Inspiration from an Egg? Marcus Sedgwick Reveals All!

Tuesday 29th November, award winning author Marcus Sedgwick came to Swanshurst to share his story with Year 8 and a number of pupils from Years 9 and 10 who are big fans of Marcus’s books and wanted to hear his story.

During this event, Marcus answered questions about his books and spoke about his ideas and inspirations. There was a lot of humour and surprises. Who knew that a great plot would come from an egg! He read extracts from his books, including his most recent: Midwinterblood, to a wowed audience. At the beginning the pupils had fun asking Mr Sedgwick interesting questions and getting equally interesting answers.

Marcus stayed during lunch to answer more questions about his books and sign them for enthusiastic pupils. “A brilliant experience” is how Sameyah described it and Nayab spoke about Marcus Sedgwick being one of her favourite authors! Everyone had fun and found his background stories interesting.

Look out for Marcus’s new book Midwinterblood and visit the official website for more exciting books and reviews. Don’t forget you can always read more of his books: The library has them all!

AM

“My Sedgwick is singing!”

“Prepare for the smoulder!”

“I will live 7 times and I will look for you and love you in each life. Will you follow?”

Look out for Marcus’s new book!
Preparations for the ski visit began with skiing lessons for all of our beginners, as well as an opportunity for the intermediate and advanced skiers to get back on the slopes. Snowploughs, parallel turns and stopping enabled all beginners to begin their descent down the Ackers dry slope. By the third week everyone had progressed onto using the lift to be able to get higher up the slope before facing the downhill descent…..a great achievement.

Advanced skiers quickly regained their “ski legs” and after a few warm up runs picked up speed and style. Our annual ski visit departs for Torgon in Switzerland on 9th March for 9 days. Next stop……the Alps.

Are you enjoying Skiing at The Ackers?
“Yes! It's great fun!”

Are you looking forward to Switzerland?
“Yeah, I can’t wait! It is going to be so much fun!!”

Is there anything you’re not looking forward too?
“Falling over!”

Is there anything that you’re really looking forward to?
“I’ve heard that there is beautiful scenery and its great fun!”

Interview with Becki (Year9)

ABM&PD
Alice 9Y Cross-Country Running!

Alice represented Swanshurst in the South Birmingham Schools Cross-Country Championships at Becketts Farm at the end of September. A sport that requires immense physical endeavour as well as prowess, Alice led the 55 competitors over 2500m on a very hilly course and was crowned South Birmingham Champion! As a result she was selected to represent the South Birmingham team in the Birmingham Schools Championships in Sandwell Valley in October. This was a very muddy course which was 3000m long and was waterlogged in parts! Competing against 80 other runners, Alice was shoulder to shoulder with the eventual winner of the race narrowly missing out on the top spot by the smallest of margins in a sprint finish.

Nevertheless this didn't stop the selectors seeing the talent on show and selected her to represent the West Midlands team in November. She took to the starting line of the Midland Championships cross-country race at Perry Park. Alice did herself proud by finishing 5th. This was an outstanding achievement which has earned her the right to compete at the prestigious English School Cross-Country Championships in the New Year which has seen the likes of Paula Radcliffe being crowned Champion when she was Alice's age! Well done Alice! Swanshurst Alice says: 'I enjoy it! I have to train every night. Just normal training... I run or swim every night. And the days before the race I eat a diet of pasta at lunch, etc. I like running because after the race I feel really good about myself. I do a whole season which lasts a year. I do it because I love it'.

Cool Runnings

ABM&SB
Happy Golfmore

Over the past 10 weeks 40 of the Year 11 pupils have been learning how to play golf, starting on our field and have now progressed onto Kings Norton Golf Club. Over the past few weeks the girls have started to play a round of golf. An amazing experience for the girls to have access to a private golf club and use the course; one of the squirrel last week had a lucky escape when one of the girls tee’d off and their ball landed and bounced over the furry resident – narrowly missing the oblivious creature as the ball headed onto the green!

We’re in our final week and the girls have done really well to move from total beginners to competent players in such a short period of time….the only pressure now being the shortened day and trying to get the round done before the light disappears on us.

Many thanks to Mr Cashmore for driving and his expert coaching – quote of the course has to be his technical advice to help the girls use a club: “It’s just like using a broom”.
‘Watch and learn guys, this is how a pro does it!’

I.H

Watch out for that squirrel!

All Spiked Up at Birmingham University!

A tartan track, spikes and a desire to improve led our 49 GCSE PE students in year 10 to head across to Birmingham University. Faster times, longer jumps and new triple jump techniques have led to personal bests, improved performances and higher GCSE practical grades.

Before going to the University our pupils had achieved 59 performances that had given them GCSE grades (x3 grade A, x29 grades B, x47 grades C).

After the visits the total number of graded performances went up to 119 – double those that had been achieved at school! Wow! In these the group now has x4 grade A, x39 grade B and 76 grade C standard performances.

Additional support from Birmingham University PGCE PE students on their school based placement at Swanshurst meant more individual support for our GCSE performers and enabled our girls to access more events and facilities. SB
A group of Year 8, 9 and 10 pupils, who regularly attend trampolining club and take part in competitions, experienced a fantastic event at the NIA. 35 Nations including Australia, USA and even some countries the girls hadn't heard of (!) competed against one another for medals and for a chance to compete in the 2012 Olympics.

The gymnasts performed superb trampolining routines, tumbling and dismounts. The girls were overwhelmed by the talent and advanced skills they observed and gained lots of experience to take back to Swanshurst. The girls are now determined to complete their front and back somersaults and begin to learn synchronised trampolining. They enjoyed watching and cheering for the Great Britain gymnasts from their front row seats.

Following the trip 12 pupils took part in a trampolining competition against Bishop Challoner, Baverstock and Queensbridge. The motivation helped the girls take 1st and 3rd place at the competition with each pupil gaining a medal and a trophy for the Swanshurst cabinet. Tani in 9Y said “We won the trampolining tournament. It was fun but quite scary because there were loads of people watching. It was still enjoyable though!”

Team 1 winners!!! From left to right: Izzy 9N, Jamie 8T, Jemima 8T, Tani 9Y and Kate 9E

Team 2 in 3rd Place: Daisy, Talie 9L, Hope, Alice, Remanda 7Y and Josephine.
An Evening of Dance, Drama and Music

On Wednesday 24th November Centre Dance Studio was alive with the buzz of adrenaline as over 100 girls took to the stage to perform for family, friends and staff in the Performing Arts Evening.

All the performers were brilliant, with many audience members commenting on the outstanding standard of the performances.

The selection of pieces included such performances as Year 7 African drumming, a Year 9 Street Dance performance, a Year 10 devised drama piece about everyday life and a Lady Gaga Medley Dance routine that concluded the evening.

A wonderful time was had by all and we’re all eagerly looking forward to the next one!

This was a great evening and experience for all of the students that took part in it. The had a very enjoyable time working on it; however this did not happen without a lot of hard work from the staff in the performance arts department as well as students; ensuring that the evening ran without a hitch.

Miss Gardener said she was “very proud of all of the girls that took part in the evening”, and she thought that they were “amazing” and “all sparkled”.

Interview with Ikra, 9Y: “I went to the Performing Arts evening and I really enjoyed the performances. I liked how the pupils had more input to the performances than the teachers did. I also enjoyed watching the choreographed dances, the well performed drama sketches and the clearly projected singing and the well-constructed instrumental performances. Also it was good to see a range of different pupils, as this really showed off the different skills and talents at Swanshurst School.”

PD
The “Year 9 celebration of achievement in sports” day saw around 55 girls from Year 9 come off timetable for the day to enjoy sports activities such as Zumba, football, trampolining and quizzes. These girls were chosen because of their talent in P.E and their excellent progression in the subject. I asked Aman (9L), Roshni (9L) and Anneliese (9A) how much they enjoy P.E. Aman and Roshni said they “loved P.E”, and Anneliese said she “loved it too as long as it wasn’t trampolining!”

Aman also said she was really looking forward to the Zumba later on in the day. Henna (9A) said it was “very exciting” and Kelsey in (9A) said “it is very fun and interesting to learn about different sports”. A lot of organization goes into these events and it just goes to show that effort in sports really does pay off!

A.B

The “Year 9 celebration of achievement in sports” day saw around 55 girls from Year 9 come off timetable for the day to enjoy sports activities such as Zumba, football, trampolining and quizzes. These girls were chosen because of their talent in P.E and their excellent progression in the subject. I asked Aman (9L), Roshni (9L) and Anneliese (9A) how much they enjoy P.E. Aman and Roshni said they “loved P.E”, and Anneliese said she “loved it too as long as it wasn’t trampolining!”
My Sonnet

Your chestnut brown eyes are bright yet so dimmed
They weaken my heart to a messy state
With silky hair so simply styled and trimmed
I must be lost if we weren’t brought by fate
Your soft olive skin glimmers in the light
Oh, how I dream of my hand tucked in yours
Your grin, so catching, fits your face just right
When we touch, over the moon my heart soars

My soul bleeds for your attention my dear
The devil has cursed us to be apart
Each day without you is like a year
It kills me to know that she has your heart
No one man can ever compare to you
If we’re meant to be, my wish will come true

By Adeishe 9A

A Love Poem

What is love to the ever simple mind?
A red rose glance, an endless dance,
Something sweet and rare yet so hard to find,
Ready to be yours if you take that chance,
Sunshine after the heaviest of storms,
Meaning when all else in your life is lost,
Bittersweet comfort when you do mourn,
Part of your soul no matter what the cost,
Oh, but to the mind that bears sense thus far

Love is but an illusion of the heart,
Always ready to maim, break, hurt and scar,
Striking like the most poisonous of darts,
Its holds no beaut, this cause of raw pain,
Because once you break you’re never the same.

By Aalia 9D
**Spiritual**

**Christmas**

A small white flake drifts down,  
Onto a child’s nose,  
They smile wide for the snow is here,  
It only takes a small flake,  
Made of ice,  
To make a child smile,  
The jingle of a bell,  
In the night sky,  
No sign of a sleigh,  
But the magic is there,  
Just a small jingle,  
Of a small bell,  
To make a child smile,  
A shout of their name,  
To put the angel on the tree,  
To stand on a chair,  
And stretch their arms high,  
To finish the shelter for their presents,  
Just some tinsel,  
Or a bright light,  
Glowing throughout the night,  
To make a child smile.

EJ & AB

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**The Perfect One**

He holds me when I start to cry…  
Makes me smile with just his eyes…  
Shares my hopes, dreams, and fears…  
Wipes away all my tears…  
I love him without regret…  
I just haven't found him yet.

Anon.

Sometimes the perfect person is worth waiting for!
Mathematics & Statistics
Reading University

I am now working for Npower as a Forecast Analyst after achieving a First Class Degree.

My time at Swanshurst Sixth Form was invaluable to me as I received support from all of my teachers and excellent progression advice, which definitely prepared me for University.

Rachel Simons
Left 2007

Biomedical Science
Aston University

I have recently graduated with a First Class Honours Degree from Aston University and I am now progressing onto study Dentistry as a Post Graduate Student at the University of Birmingham.

Swanshurst Sixth Form always encouraged me to keep my options open as I was unsure of what I wanted to do for my final career. I am so glad that I listened to their advice as I could not be happier.

Sehrish Rafiq
Left 2008
I was fortunate enough to get a place at my first choice university to study Dentistry. This summer I am happy to say that I have graduated with the Bachelor of Dental Surgery and am now Dr Niala Khan. I am currently in my first job and really enjoying it!! I am very grateful to Swanshurst Sixth Form as I believe it was the foundation to my career.

Dr Niala Khan
Left 2006

After Swanshurst I went to Aston University to do Pharmacy. I spent four years there and passed with a first class honours masters degree (MPharm). After the degree I had to do a Pre registration year, which involves working under supervision and an exam at the end. I have been offered a conditional place at city hospital to work as a pharmacist if I pass the exam!

Hanna Khandwalla
Left 2006
Law
Oxford

I am currently studying Law at Keble College, Oxford. I received a Distinction in my first year exams, which is only awarded to the top 10% of first year law students. I have also been made an Academic Scholar at Oxford. In the future I hope to become a Barrister, preferably working in the field of Human Rights Law.

Anjoli
Left 2009

Dance
Chichester

Dance for me was always something I was going to do for my career. I knew the teachers for my GCSE Dance and they knew me and it made complete sense to stay at Swanshurst to study this at A level so that I could continue to reach my full potential. I achieved a First in year one! I still come back to Swanshurst when I am on term breaks to help teach dance as I want to pass on the encouragement and support that was given to me and I hope to inspire younger students in the same way that I have been.

Victoria
I can remember when I was in Year 11 and I attended this evening and the advice I was given about the career I was interested in was really valuable in helping me to decide which subjects I would study at Swanshurst Sixth Form.

All students participate in a planned ‘Career Planning’ programme in Year 12 which starts in the Autumn term where we look at various opportunities for progression so that we are able to make informed and confident choices for our future and to find out what we will need if we want to go to University.

For me this was really helpful as I have always wanted to be an Accountant but was not aware of all the different progression routes into this profession.

The Career Planning is followed with a clear, step by step process about the application process for University so that not only do we understand what is required from us but we can also update our parents about what we are doing and why.

Working in partnership with our local universities we are able to keep up to date with information so that we are confident that we are doing the right thing at the right time.

Chloe—Year 13

Swanshurst Sixth Form works in partnership with our local Universities who offer advice and guidance and organise opportunities for us to attend Master Classes and seminars at their institutions as well as visiting us here to give presentations and subject support.

We are offered a variety of Master Classes including: Medicine, English, Geography, Maths, Chemistry, Biology etc. and I took part in the Study Skills seminar which helped me to organise the way in which I worked and prepared me for the demands of my A Level studies as well as the opportunity of experiencing a ‘real’ university lecture.

We are also an active partner in the Access to Birmingham Scheme ‘A2B’ offered by the University of Birmingham which is ‘A2B’ is a great opportunity if you come from a background with little or no experience of higher education as it will support you with the transition to their university and in some cases you might receive a reduced entry offer!

We also work with a variety of Employers from Price, Waterhouse Coopers through to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital who help us with work placements and also ‘practice interviews’ and all these opportunities help us to secure university places.

Kirsty & Fiona—Year 13
This year we were given the extra opportunities to take part in a Personal Development Day at MOD Stafford or spend 37 hours training to pass the Active IQ Level 2 Certificate in Fitness Instruction (QCF) (Gym) course.

**Level 2 Certificate in Fitness Instruction**

**What was the course about?**

We were trained on how to deal with clients, assess their needs and create a fitness programme for them that they could keep to in order to reach their goals. Each exercise programme is different depending on what a person wants to achieve from fitness to toning or muscle building, weight loss or cardiovascular exercises.

**Had you done anything like this before?**

No this was a completely new experience for me. Even though I don’t exercise regularly I’ve realised the importance of it and learnt new tips on how to stay healthy.

**Where did your training take place?**

We spent time in the classroom learning about anatomy and then we had practical sessions at Billesley Sports Centre learning about the use of different equipment in which we could use.

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**What do you think you gained from the course?**

Although I have joined a gym in the past I never really understood what each machine could do to help maintain fitness. I didn’t realise that in order to keep body and mind fit you did not have to do complex exercises every day for hours on end you just need to do something small scale but on a regular basis.

**Did you enjoy the course?**

The course was very intense as we covered a lot of material in order to pass the examination and get our award. But it was fun and I learnt a lot about my own fitness as well as how to help others design safe exercise machines.

**What benefits have you gained from your training?**

Apart from gaining the qualification I know that by keeping fit my energy levels have increased I feel more alert during the day and less stressed. Healthy body healthy mind equals success.
MOD Stafford Personal Development Day

What was the day about?
We went to MOD Stafford and took part in activities that helped to develop our social, communication, thinking and team working skills. We were set challenges to overcome as individuals and as part of a team. There was paint balling, an assault course, a climbing wall and a team challenge.

Had you done anything like this before?
I had been on a climbing wall before but everything else was new.

Where did this take place?
The day was organised by at MOD Stafford and our trainers were all members of the serving army. Thankfully the weather was good as most of the activities took place out of doors. I expected the corporals to shout a lot but they were not as ferocious as some teachers.

What do you think you gained from the day?
The day has helped me with team work and problem solving as we had to look at a problem from a different point of view. I now feel more confident in dealing with other people as the day helped me to express my ideas clearly. It also made me realise I don’t like heights. Not just that I’d realised that team work is important, you should always work as a team and success as a team.

Did you enjoy the day?
It was excellent despite ending up with grazed knees & elbows even though I’m not the sporty type of person but; we had to do a lot challenging exercises I still enjoyed it.

What have you gained from the day?
I am willing to take regular exercises and I’m now prepared to have a go at anything and not to stay safe inside my comfort zone.

By Holly Smith, Saika Bashir, Adeeba Bashir, Sally Whitlock. I.H
Did you know what our Sixth Form Students go on to do?

2011 SIXTH FORM LEAVERS—UNIVERSITY COURSES
Did you know where our Sixth Form Students go?

UNIVERSITY DESTINATIONS

- Westminster
- Leeds
- Birmingham
- Loughborough
- BUCB
- Liverpool
- Reading
- Newman
- Derby
- Herts
- Kingston
- Gloucester
- Coventry
- Manchester
- Oxford
- Southampton
- Aston
- Lancaster
- Lincoln
- London
Term Dates 2011-2012

Autumn Term Dates 2011
Thursday 1st September
To
Friday 21st October
HALF TERM
Monday 31 October to Wednesday 21 December

Spring Term Dates 2012
Monday 09 January to Friday 10 February
HALF TERM
Monday 20 February to Friday 30 March

Summer Term Dates 2012
Monday 16 April to Friday 01 June
HALF TERM
Monday 11 June to Friday 20 July

May Day – Monday 7th May 2011
Mrs Sullivan

What subject do you teach? Maths
How long have you been here? For 12 years
Any good memories or things you’ll miss? I’ll miss the sense of care students have for each other and how they support each other too. I’ll also miss the Christmas concerts.
Anything you won’t miss? Travelling from room to room in the crowds
Words of wisdom? Always make the most of your opportunities and abilities

Mrs Robinson

What do you do? I’m a lunchtime supervisor
How long have you been at Swanshurst? 29 years
Any good memories or anything you’ll miss? There’s so many I can’t remember! I’ve had happy and sad memories, we’ve lost so many lovely teachers throughout the years.
Anything you won’t miss? The litter!
Any words of wisdom for the girls? Be true to yourself, because if you are true to yourself, life will be easy.
### Criss-mas-cross Carols

#### Across
1. Kiss me under the...
2. So I... it could be Christmas everyday
4. ...bells...bells
5. Last Christmas I gave you my....
8. Oh Christmas ... How lovely are your branches
9. I'm dreaming of a ... Christmas
10. Frosty the...
11. Away in a...
12.... Baby come running down the chimney to night

#### Down
1. Kiss me under the...
3. Walking in a ... wonderland
6. So here it is.... Christmas
7. All I want for... is you

Work out the missing words to these famous Christmas songs and fill in the Criss Cross.
Find Santa’s Secret Message

Find the words in the word search. Then take the beginning letter of each word and try and figure out a new word—Santa’s Secret Message.

The secret word are…..
ANGELS
ANTLERS
CHRISTMAS
ELF
FATHER
HOLLY
HOLY
ICICLE
MISTLETOE
REINDEER
RUDOLPH
SLEIGH
SNOWMAN
TINSLE
TREE

AB & EJ
So what is The Zone?

The Zone is a place you want to be when you are feeling happy, sad or mad! It is always welcoming.
The Zone has fun activities at lunchtimes such as jewellery making, badge design, poster making, pottery, painting and sewing. It also shows a good range of films and you can borrow laptops to do your homework.

If you’re not in the mood to join in with an activity the Zone staff allow you to play board or card games or just sit quietly and read books and magazines. Friday is bingo day and it is very, very popular!

When it is a special occasion such as Christmas, Eid, Bonfire Night or Halloween we make themed cards and masks.

Every year, usually in November, the Zone organises activities for Anti-Bullying week.
This year we had an Anti-Bullying rap workshop, displays around the school, made anti-bullying bracelets, badges and watched a film about bullying called ‘Mean Girls’.

The Zone staff are very kind, friendly, reasonable and fair. Their names are Ms Butt, Miss Campbell, Miss Chambers, Mrs Khan, Mrs Burns and Mrs Boothroyd.

If you happen to be feeling stressed Miss Campbell kindly organises “Chillax” sessions with relaxing music, aromatherapy, head and foot massages.

The Zone is a place to express your feelings, either by talking, doing art, singing, dancing or even sulking.
A young girl I spoke to said “When I started Swanshurst I didn’t have many friends and then I heard about The Zone and came along and all my problems were sorted out. I’ve made lots of friends.”

Lunchtime activities are only a small part of The Zone staff’s work. They actually spend most of their day helping and supporting Swanshurst girls to do well at School by mentoring them.

At the moment The Zone is putting on a Nativity Play.

Samira 7U
I’m Ghana Win the World Challenge... and They have!

Making new friends in Ghana

As you can see from the picture the trip wasn’t just about getting away from it all. The whole point of the trip was to help the people in Ghana. Whilst there they had many things to do, including painting buildings and helping out in lessons for the children at their schools.

They also had to sort out day to day things such as going to the supermarket to get food, which they then had to cook. This wasn’t the only thing they had to do for themselves; they also had to wash their own clothes without a washing machine!! They had to do everything by hand!

Fundraising

Getting the opportunity to go on this trip didn’t come easy for them. They had to various activities to try and fundraise for their trip and in order to get the equipment needed to help the people when they got there. Fundraising events included an apple crumble sale, cultural week, gift wrapping and Boundary Mills collection.

In Ghana!

Working hard in the heat

It wasn’t all work and no play though. The girls also scheduled in some down time. After a couple days of hard work they got to relax and spend a whole day relaxing, sunbathing and swinging in hammocks.

PD
Meet the Team!

We are a bunch of Year 9 girls, two Sixth Formers and a couple of teachers. Here are couple of random thoughts:

**Aroosa Sanghar** – It’s time to hang up your red and white socks.

**Ellie Jefford** – Woo it’s Christmas!

**Aida Burazorovic** – Fish!

**Priya Digpal** – I hope you enjoy your Xmas holiday, X representing the amount of money you will spend before the month is out!

**Aalia Mahmood** – My back is hurting!

**Adieshe Hyera** – Looking all professional in the press team badge.

**Jeenal Parmar** – Who knew Ladybirds weren’t poisonous?

**Annabel Butcher** – Just read the articles with AB at the end! They’re the good ones!

**Shaira Begum** – Who knew you could make toilets look cool?

**Alice Bettis Marsh** – I’m going to miss the cake!

**Shameela Islam** – I’m getting fat!

**Insa Hussain** – It’s a lot of work!

**Miss Osgood** – Is looking forward to curling up with a good book over Christmas (oh, and marking Year 10 CATs =/)!

**Miss Davies** – If I ever see the font Rockwell Extra Bold 36 ever again, it will be too soon!

**Alice Bettis Marsh** – I’m going to miss the cake!

So from The Herald Team, we wish you a Fabulous Holiday and a Happy New Year!