



SWANSHURST PARENTS' NEWSLETTER

OUR ATTENDANCE HOTLINE IS: 0121 464 2413 MARCH 2011

Flying high!



World Trampoline and Tumbling Championships Launch

Birmingham is to be the host city for the next World Trampoline and Tumbling championships in November this year. To launch this fantastic event 3 world class gymnasts came to Swanshurst School on Wednesday 16th February, and some of our Year 7, 8 & 9 pupils were invited along to demonstrate their skills and ask questions to the gymnasts.

Amanda Parker, ranked 5th in the world, did an amazing demonstration on the trampoline and the pupils got to see footage of Zara McLean and Alex Foster performing their skills and asked them questions about what it's like to compete professionally at top class level. Sparky and Jo, BRMB presenters, came along to run the event and there were representatives from the city council and local media. Everyone said how superb our pupils were and what a delight they were. Well done girls, you did Swanshurst proud!

Undefeated!

This year has been successful for the Swanshurst Netball club, with teams entered into the Birmingham Schools Netball league from Year 7 right through to Seniors.

So far the Year 7 and 8 teams are undefeated and the Year 9 team have only lost 1 game by a mere 3 goals which is a great achievement as they are in Division 1.

Netball club practice is on a Monday from 3.30 – 4.30pm in the sports hall until the end of the season in March. We welcome all players regardless of experience so if you fancy playing for fun and fitness or being competitive please come along. If you are interested in playing netball for a local club such as Fox-Hollies, Sparkhill, Bournville or Birmingham City please see Miss Place for details.



The Year 8 team—still undefeated!

Progressing into Swanshurst Sixth Form

Last month saw the successful launch of the Swanshurst Sixth Form Progression fortnight for year 11 students. A programme of events organised by teachers from different departments was held in and around Centre. Each day year 11 students were invited to attend different workshops and events so that they could see what each department offered post 16.



I like the feel and atmosphere in the sixth form. I felt so comfortable going around the different events that I knew it was the sixth form for me

As the staff are so helpful and approachable in the sixth form I know I will do well in my AS subjects



Gurpreet and the other sixth form students made the courses sound so interesting that I cannot wait to start on my studies here. I am so excited by what I will be doing next year.



Buy your tickets soon!

The dates have finally been set for the spectacular Swanshurst production of 'Annie' and with an extremely talented cast of actors, dancers, singers and designers, the musical will definitely be a huge success. Students and staff have invested a huge amount of time and energy into making this a real show stopper. You will be able to buy tickets soon for the evening performances on the 15th and 16th June.

'Being part of the cast of 'Annie' is a great opportunity for all of us taking part. Our first school musical in many years is coming along brilliantly, and you can feel the buzz of enthusiasm and sense of anticipation in every rehearsal as the performance dates get closer and closer.'

Isabelle Kelly 10R



2 members of the cast practise mopping the orphanage floor!

The Governors would like to extend their congratulations to staff, students and parents for the recently published league table results: excluding private and selective schools, Swanshurst came 11th overall across the whole of Birmingham, and 5th in the new 'EBACC' tables. (The 'EBACC' is achieved when a student's passes include English, Maths, Humanities and a Language at GCSE grade C or above.)



Soundcity Sensation

Every year, all the best gifted and talented musicians and singers from across the whole of Birmingham compete for a place in the SoundCity Concert Final at the CBSO. We are hugely proud of Iona McGuire in year 9 who has beaten off stiff competition to perform her solo 'Little Girls' from 'Annie'. The competition will take place at the CBSO on the 29th March. We wish her luck.



Facebook—friend or foe?

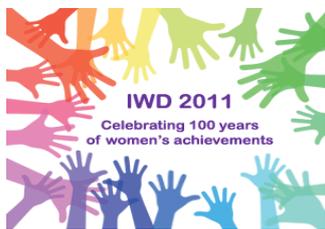
It can seem a really great way of keeping in touch and finding out what everyone's up to, but there is a much more sinister side to Facebook that parents should be aware of. We are lucky to be a school with very little bullying, but the majority of incidents we now have to deal with seem to start on Facebook. Students who would never dream of saying unkind things to others in 'real' life somehow feel it is a safe place to be a bully. Hiding

behind nicknames or fake profile pictures often enables bullies to remain anonymous, making the victim feel even more helpless. Pictures can easily be copied from genuine profiles and 'fake' accounts set up by bullies, so innocent people can look as if they are joining in the bullying too.

What you should know:

- Facebook can be accessed from most mobile phones not just from your PC/ laptop so even if you think you are monitoring what your daughter is doing, there may be times when she has unmonitored access to facebook.
- Posting messages about others on facebook that are classed as 'indecent, obscene or menacing' may result in criminal prosecution under the 2003 Communications Act - as a school we may report students to the police if we feel they are the best people to follow up incidents of serious facebook bullying.
- Many students compete to see who has the most friends on facebook by accepting friend requests from people they don't know; this enables all sorts of people to have access to your daughter's profile, pictures and details—make sure you advise your daughter NEVER to accept friends unless she knows them.
- If you are worried about your daughter being bullied on facebook—close her account down, and then report the bullying to facebook. Don't let her see unkind comments that others are making, or let her worry about what might be being said. Seek support from school if you think the bullying is continuing inside school, otherwise, contact your local police for advice.

More information on cyber bullying and bullying in general is available in the school's Anti Bullying policy.



International Women's Day 8th March

Tuesday 8th March was a global celebration honouring the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future from around the globe. In some countries, like China, Russia and Vietnam it is a national holiday! At Swanshurst, the Learning4Life

programme will enable students to have a chance to reflect on women they admire, and think about how they want to be remembered as great women of the future. In the Sixth form, a series of briefings and a 'Health MOT' day will enable students to learn about issues that affect women around the world, including how to stay safe and healthy. One of the sessions on the 15th March will involve a talk about chlamydia, and provide any girls who have further questions with a drop in session after school where they can speak to the school nurse and experts in health care about any issues they may have regarding their personal health.



What *is* the price of fashion?

Raw Nerve Theatre Company's high energy fast paced performance of Cheap and Cheerful explores the world of unethical clothing

manufacture. This month's performance to year 8 was funny, gritty and thought-provoking, challenging us to think about where our clothes come from, who makes them and the cost to others - especially to the many children working in factories producing the latest trendy "must have" label driven clothes we all rush to buy without a thought for those who make them or their working conditions.

Here are just a few responses from the year 8s who saw the performance:

"I loved it – it was funny but shocking at the same time. I had no idea that children younger than us had to work in clothes factories – they should be at school like us"

"It made me have a serious think about the children who work really hard to make stuff we take for granted"

We also came away with 15 ways of trying to shop ethically, these are the top 5:

- 5: Don't throw your clothes away – swap with friends or make it into something new
- 4: Campaign for ethically sourced goods – write a letter to your shop
- 3: Always check the label
- 2: Buy vintage or second hand
- 1: Buy Fair-trade



10 out of 10!

Top marks for Swanshurst and Mr Smith for spearheading the British Lung Foundation campaign to stop parents smoking in cars with children present. Sannah, Kaynaat, Eve

and Stevie took our petition to 10 Downing Street, and were then invited to the Houses of Parliament to meet (and lobby!) MPs and the Minister for Health, so they could explain why this issue was so important to them. You can find more information about the campaign at lunguk.org.



Our attendance hotline is 0121 464 2413. Please ensure you let us know of any absences, and encourage your daughter to come to school unless she is really sick.

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