

Headteachers' Fortnightly Newsletter

Monday 27 November 2023 – Friday 8 December 2023



Good Afternoon All,

So, we are now approaching the final fortnight of the longest term in any school year. I am personally, very much looking forward to all the in-school festivities and celebrations coming up in my calendar. From the Christmas lunch and jumper day on Thursday 14th December, to the Headteacher celebration breakfasts - I do hope you can join us to celebrate your child's contribution to Stowmarket High School this term.

This is a time to be thankful for the opportunities we are afforded, and the people we have around to support us. I urge you to take the time to reflect on the year gone by as we rest, recuperate, and spend time with loved ones over the holidays, but also to promise to come back prepared in January for hard work and persistence in being a better version of ourselves.

A special mention to the Year 11s that have had an amazing attitude and focus to their preparation exams. I look forward to celebrating their successes in the upcoming assembly to demonstrate they are on track for strong GCSE outcomes in the summer.

There will be a final Newsletter on the last Monday of term, so I will save my well wishes for then, in the meantime I will leave you with my Christmas mantra;

'Rest up – Be kind'

Ms L Hernandez

Teaching and Learning Update

As a school, we are ambitious for every child in our care. Every lesson supports our drive to enable pupils to know and understand more. Staff and pupils have worked really hard since September to engage with the exciting phase of our Teaching and Learning development under new leadership. We believe that student engagement in learning is created through dynamic and active lessons, creating a thirst for knowledge in all students.

A change implemented in all lessons, are the fact they start with 'Do Now's'. These are short, recall exercises that strategically plan spaced knowledge retrieval of previous content and allow students to self-regulate their learning. Recent student surveys and monitoring visits have commented on their effectiveness across all subjects.

Teachers have also been working hard on the importance of questioning. Staff have been using a variety of techniques such as:

- Cold calling
- Show me boards.
- Say it better.

These have been explicitly chosen to create a culture of questioning in all lessons to stretch and challenge our pupils. The school has made a huge investment in 'Show me boards', or mini-white boards, in every classroom so that staff and pupils can rapidly check for understanding and give explicit feedback in the classroom. This also allows staff the opportunity to skillfully check for any misconceptions or gaps in knowledge.

This has all been underpinned by significant staff training in Rosenshine's principles of instruction, that places emphasis on the importance of giving students time to practice, ask questions and review new information over a period of time. This work will continue throughout the year as we look to drive higher standards across the board.

Merry Christmas!

Last week you will have received our Christmas card, several students designed 3D snow scenes in a bid to create the winning design and feature on our Christmas card! Congratulations to Isla who was crowned the winner by Ms Hernandez.



CHARACTER AND COMMUNITY

Aspirations, Communication,
Resilience, Responsibility,
Kindness, Respect, Rewards,
Student Leadership,
Student Voice



Year 7 Litter-Picking

This week saw the start of our Year 7 litter picking crew. These wonderful Year 7 volunteers are heading up a 'keep our community clean' campaign by carrying out litter picking during their lunchtimes. They can be seen in their high visibility jackets, working hard to improve their school community. For each day they wear the jacket, they will be awarded a community merit. Any Year 7 student can join the crew - please see our Deputy Head student for Character and Community - Harriet, or Mrs Broxton for more information.

The Grinch came to visit!

During the week, we had an overnight visit from the Grinch, who decorated Lilies and turned it into Whoville!

You're a mean one...Mr Grinch!



Lost property

Lost Property

If your child has misplaced or lost any items over this term, please urge them to go to Student Services before that last day to collect their things. We have a huge amount of lost property including, but not limited to, items below:

- Seven coats
- Two zip-up hoodies
- Five+ PE Kits
- Unnamed school uniform
- Jewellery
- Five keys

Countdown to Christmas!

Please see below a summary of events we are holding in the run-up to Christmas.

- **Tuesday 12th December** – Celebration Breakfast for invited students (Year 7 & 8)
- **Wednesday 13th December** – Celebration Breakfast for invited students (Year 9 & 10)
- **Thursday 14th December** – Christmas Lunch (early lunch at 13:10-14:10) and Christmas Jumper Day (Wear your best Christmas jumper!)
- **Friday 15th December** – Christmas Hamper judging and donation.
- **Monday 18th December** – Celebration Breakfast for invited students (Year 11)
- **Tuesday 19th December** – Non-uniform day and early finish at 1:10pm.



Useful Contact Information:

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