

Headteachers' Fortnightly Newsletter

Friday 16th February 2024



Good Afternoon All,

As another half term draws to a close, we reflect on recent events and highlights that includes the re-introduction of face to face parents evenings. These have been so well attended and it has been great to get you into the school building and meet key staff and discuss the progress of your child(ren). We have been overwhelmed by the positive parents' feedback.

The ski trip is underway, providing an amazing opportunity for our students to learn new skills, be away from home and experience a different culture and way of life. A special thankyou to the staff that support trips during their own school holidays. I have fond memories of my ski trips both as a student and as a trip leader and know the energy and resilience it takes in providing this opportunity.

Year 11s are really settling in to the swing of assessment and the exam season with interventions running over the half term break. If you have a child in Year 11, please look out for up and coming Easter intervention sessions, aimed to support your child in their GCSEs. It has been a pleasure popping into some of the masterclasses being run and I am very thankful to the staff giving up their free time to run these.

As you may have heard, there continues to be talks of the SHELF project and school expansion in the near future - further demonstrating the Department of Education's and local government's long-term commitment in Stowmarket High School as a good school, providing the community with a quality education and opportunities.

This half term we also say farewell to Head of Year 8, Mrs Goodman who is leaving us to work in a local primary school. Mr McLellan will oversee all aspects of Year 8 whilst we advertise for her replacement. Student and parent enquiries can directly go to Mr McLellan a.mclellan@stowhigh.com. We wish Mrs Goodman all the best and thank her for the commitment and energy she has given during her time here.

On a separate note, the Trust are in the process of advertising for a permanent Headteacher, because I have always been the interim Head supporting the school, while a permanent Headteacher was recruited. Therefore a transparent and fair recruitment process must now take place to appoint the substantive Headteacher.

I hope you will be pleased to hear that I will be applying for the role. You will find out the outcome of this process around the middle of March.

Ms L Hernandez



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Farewell Message from Mrs Goodman

After nearly 5 years, time has come for me to move on. During this period, I've got to know the Stowmarket community well particularly through the transition process by visiting our partner schools. I've been privileged to play a key part in this milestone for students transferring to the school. I've worked with some great teaching and support staff along the way and have enjoyed this chapter of my working life.

Many will know that I was dealt the "C" blow back in February last year and although I have made a full recovery, it is this that has led me to view life very differently and step down from working full time as Head of Year to softer, part time work in another school. I've thoroughly enjoyed my time here. It introduced me to Suffolk schools and I've met some lifelong friends. I wish Stow High well for the future.





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Coming up next term:

All Kingfisher Trust schools will be participating in a student and parent survey set up by an established organisation called Edurio. This survey is standardised nationally and will give us a picture of confidence in the school and key areas for development compared to National schools. The survey is anonymous, students will receive a link via their emails and arrangements will be made to complete this in school from 4th March during tutor time. Parents will receive a unique Stowmarket code to use. The time frame for feedback is: 4th March – 26th March. Please can I remind you that any concerns or enquires should routinely go through to enquiries@stowhigh.com so that we can respond and take appropriate action.

I wish you a restful half term break and a reminder that next term is only 5 weeks. As every day matters in education, good attendance is key to success.

Based on your feedback, our newsletter will move to monthly editions from next term. In the meantime, for any enquiries about curriculum, assessment, progress, behaviour, attendance, trips and enrichment please reach out directly to the relevant member of staff. If you are not sure of the key contact please send your request to enquiries@stowhigh.com.



edurio



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Key Stage 3 Assessment & Reporting Update – Information for Parents

As many may know, we are currently updating our Key Stage 3 Assessment & Reporting procedures to parents. As we speak, we have changed our reporting procedure to reporting to parents 3 times a year, as well as having these reports on Go4Schools, which you can view as a parent live.

The following report dates for parents below indicate when we, as a school will send home a school report. The school report will include the assessments that have been completed in that term. For point of reference, assessments 1 & 2 are completed in the autumn term, assessments 3 & 4 are completed in the spring term and assessments 5 & 6 are completed in the summer term:

- 8th December 2023
- 29th March 2024
- 12th July 2024

We understand that parents/guardians want to know how their children are doing, and as such, we want to report progress on a regular basis. We also understand, due to the nature of timetabling and some subjects having more teaching time than others, that some subjects will assess more often than others. Please see below the assessment calendar for 2023/24 for all subjects in KS3.

	Assessment 1	Assessment 2	Assessment 3	Assessment 4	Assessment 5	Assessment 6
English	16/10/2023	18/12/2023	12/02/2024	25/03/2024	20/05/2024	08/07/2024
Maths	06/10/2023	21/11/2023	22/01/2024 <small>(Y9 by 10/01/2024)</small>	25/03/2024	13/05/2024	01/07/2024 <small>(06/07/2023 for Y9)</small>
Science	13/10/2023	16/12/2023		15/03/2024	24/05/2024	05/07/2024
Geography	16/12/2023				24/05/2024	08/07/2024
History		16/12/2023		25/03/2024		05/07/2024
Computer Science	12/08/2023			22/03/2024		28/06/2024
Design		12/08/2023	02/02/2024		10/05/2024	08/07/2024
MFL		20/10/2023		25/03/2024		08/07/2024
PE		15/12/2023		26/03/2024		08/07/2024
Art		15/12/2023		25/03/2024		08/07/2024
Music		15/12/2023		25/03/2024		08/07/2024
Drama		15/12/2023		25/03/2024		08/07/2024

In first two weeks after half-term we will be sending home a guide entitled 'KS3 Guidance to Parents on Assessment' on how to interpret the *Attainment* and *Attitude to Learning* that is reported to you regarding your child, as parents. Please be aware, in moving to our new system where all reported performance is aligned across all subjects, that we are currently updating all assessments and systems, and this should be all correct by the next reporting date which is 29th March 2024.

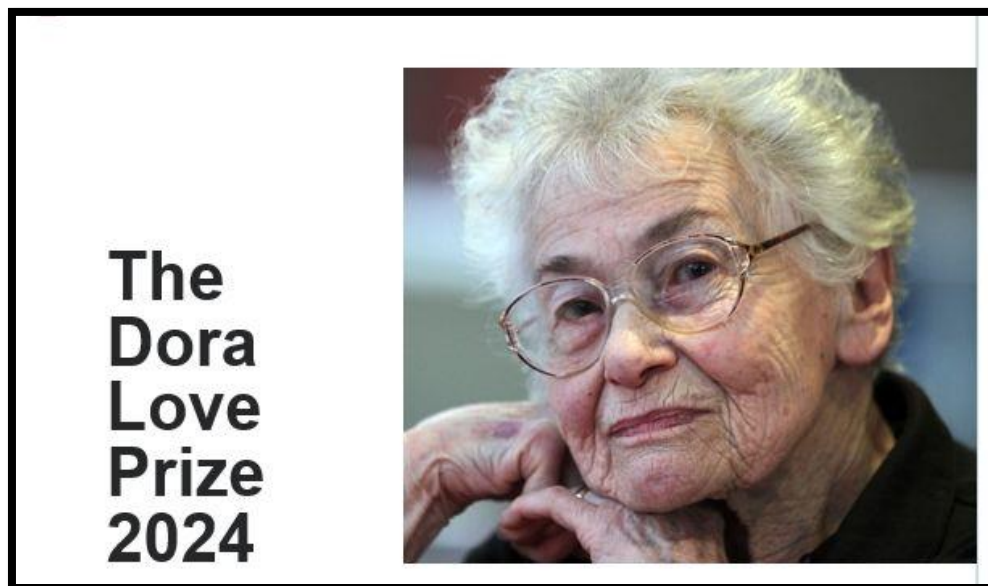
In the meantime, if it any point you have any questions about your child's attainment, please do hesitate to contact the school for a comprehensive discussion and explanation.

Dora Love Prize Induction

Last Monday we took eleven year 10 students to 'The Hold' in Ipswich to take part in the Dora Love Prize Induction. This is a prize run by the University of Essex in memory of Holocaust survivor, Dora Love. Here they took part in a variety of workshops with other schools. These workshops included looking at primary documents, public speaking and using art to express ideas. The students then travelled to The University of Suffolk to listen to a talk by Holocaust survivor Maurice Blik. Here they heard about his experiences as a child survivor of the Holocaust and were given the opportunity to ask questions. This was an amazing opportunity for the students, who asked some very interesting and well thought out questions.

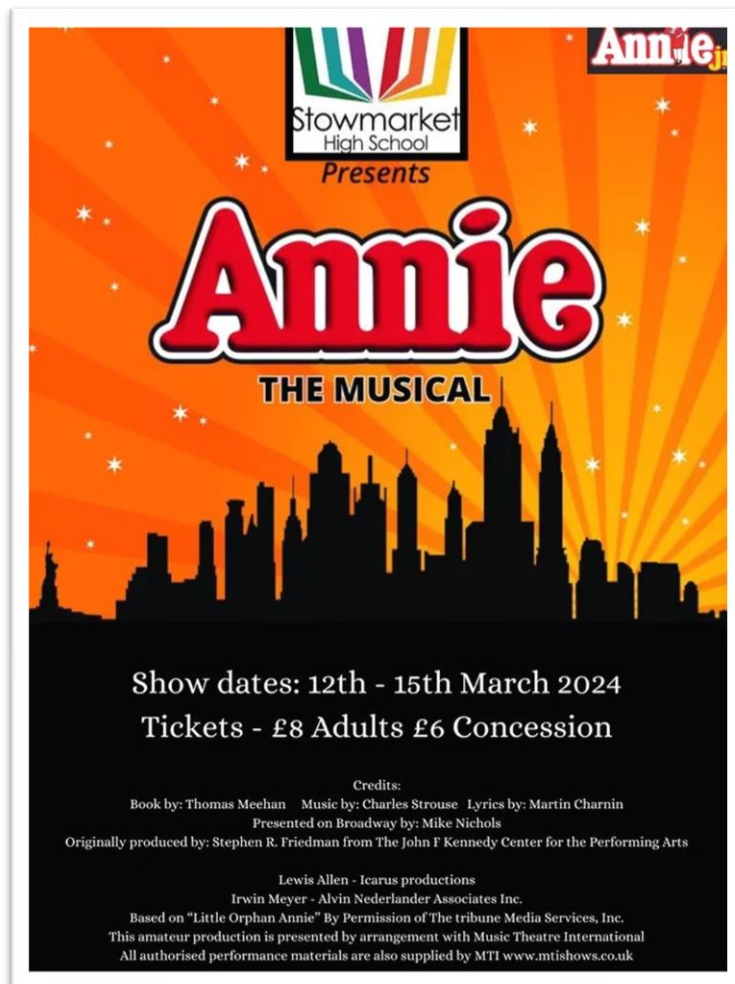
The students represented the school fantastically and this was commented on throughout the day from multiple members of the organisation and teachers from other schools. The students did themselves proud and I really look forward to seeing how their project develops over the coming months.

Miss Hewitt



Annie Jr.

4 weeks of rehearsals left until we open our production of Annie Jr! Our cast have put in hours upon hours of work to create a show that we are very excited to share with everyone. Tickets are on sale now, please support our students and future productions by purchasing a ticket to see the show between 12th - 15th March 2024.



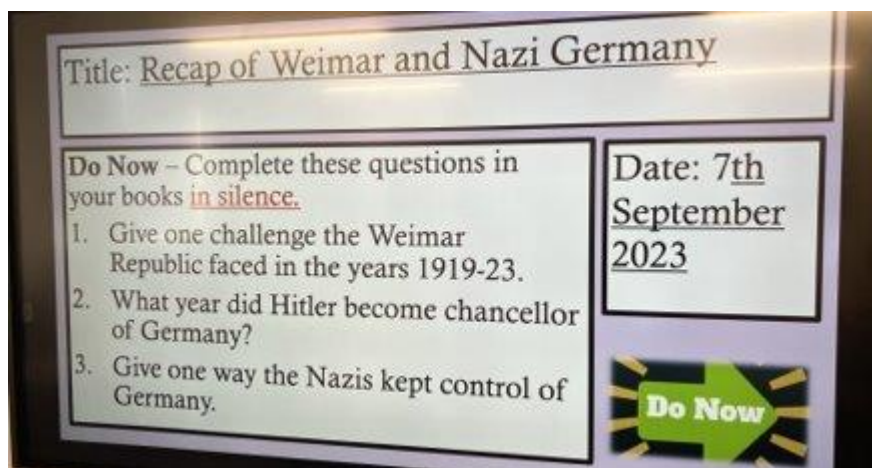
Tickets are available from ticket source: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/stowmarket-high-school/annie-junior/e-oqbyqm>

Teaching and Learning

This year we have introduced a whole school approach to the start of each lesson called 'Do Now'. Inspired by the work of Doug Lemov, 'Do Nows' are short activities that focus students on starting work as soon as they enter the classroom, without waiting for a teacher direction to start class.

An effective "Do Now" benefits both student and teacher. It allows students to transition from previous lesson(s) and what was learned to what is being presented today and create connections. It encourages student focus, self control and responsibility, and an environment where students learn as a class.

Student surveys carried out reflect a really positive response to the new routines. For example, one pupil commented that 'it allows me a chance to recall what I was taught in the previous lessons'. Many pupils commented on the consistency of the start of lessons, enjoying the opportunity to retrieve knowledge over time. This was supported by a recent trust visit from the CEO Craig Morrison. His student panel highlighted that 'Do Now tasks in silence are a big improvement' to lessons.





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School Uniform and Equipment

We value the support of our parents and carers in ensuring our students are dressed and prepared correctly for each school day.

We welcome the support of our parents and carers with making sure students meet our high expectations and are proud of their association with Stowmarket High School by wearing the correct uniform. We have had issues with small numbers of students wearing facial piercings, leggings and hoodies, and we politely remind you to ensure your child does not have any of these items ahead of coming into school each day. It is also important that our students wear their blazer and tie every day. Our uniform expectations are on our website:

<https://www.stowhigh.com/statutory-information/uniform/>

With regards to equipment, it is imperative our students have the equipment needed to learn effectively in the classroom and these include:

- Pens (black or blue), 1 Purple pen, 2 x pencils; ruler; rubber; pencil sharpener; protractor; compass; scientific calculator; a bottle of water as a minimum expectation.
- Appropriate kit for PE lessons
- Ingredients for Food Technology lessons
- An appropriate bag (one which is big enough to carry all the necessary equipment and kit)

In addition, students benefit from bringing other basic stationery including colouring pencils, rubbers and specialised equipment for particular lessons.

To support our expectations, tutors undertake regular uniform and equipment checks. As part of this, any banned items (such as facial piercings and hooped earrings) are confiscated and securely stored at Student Services until the end of term. Where any student presents an issue they cannot resolve in that moment, tutors issue a uniform pass in the first instance (e.g. no tie/blazer, wearing leggings or white trainers) and will make contact with you. However, if the student's uniform infringements persist, tutors and the leadership team alike will issue a C4 after-school detention as a minimum and consideration will be given to a student being placed in our Reflection Room until the situation is resolved.

We thank you in advance for your support with this.

Stefan Stoneman
Assistant Headteacher



Year 11 Child Development

The year 11 child development class have been taking it in turns to take home the simulation babies overnight.

The babies are programmed to imitate the actions of newborns by crying at different intervals. The girls then had to identify what their need was and insert appropriate key to stop the crying. The babies tested the girl's patience and resilience and highlighted the pressures of new mums.

Well done to all the girls who have trialled the babies and congratulations especially to Layla White and Evie Woodger who started off the process and managed the whole night with great success, despite the sleepless night!





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Parliament Trip

Our students leaders and members of the student union took an exciting trip to London last week. We arrived in Liverpool street and for some of our young people this was their first time in the London Underground. We all enjoyed a wonderful walk along the South bank along the River Thames. Seeing some great sights such as the London Eye and the Houses of Parliament. We ate our lunch in Westminster square watching people protest, learning from the emotion and power that comes from expressing freedom of speech outside London's most powerful palace.

In the afternoon we were taken on a tour of the Houses of Parliament, learning all about the history of the building, formally a church and then a palace for Kings. The students were amazed to learn that the main hall where Queen Elizabeth and many others were laid in state, was once Henry VIII's indoor tennis court. They were taken to the public gallery of the House of Commons to watch a debate followed by a trip to the strangers gallery to observe a debate about the power of the Arts in The House of Lords. Some of us even bumped into Baroness Tanni Grey Thompson on the way out. We ended our day with a workshop in the education centre, where students were able to learn about the suffragettes and all the ways they could lobby parliament to make a change.

The students' knowledge of the way our democratic system works was amazing and they represented our school with pride.

This week are setting up our mock polling station with the help of the student leads we hope the whole school will feel empowered to cast their vote and make a difference.



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Design Faculty

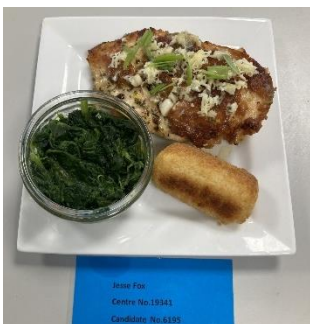
It has been a busy few months within the Design faculty with students beavering away with various projects and design work. Here at Stowmarket High School, we have had an amazing term and a half planning, designing, and making so many products! From creating scrumptious sausage rolls to designing and making a whole host of modern-day desks! I have no doubt that we have children who will one day become the next generation of inventors, designers, engineers, and inspirational chefs!

Year 11

The main focus at this time of year for year 11 is making progress on their individual projects and non-examined assignments within Food, Resistant Materials, Graphics and Engineering as the finish line is in sight (May!). Staff have been really impressed with how this year group have taken to these all-important tasks and we are confident that students will achieve great results in the Summer. A reminder that finished work will be on display in our annual Design Exhibition later in the year.

Year 10

Textiles students have been making water themed collars. The Resistant Materials groups have been busy making their modern furniture pieces. The Engineering group have been casting their Pewter projects and have recently completed a centre lathe project. The Graphics groups are nearing the end of their drinks packaging project.



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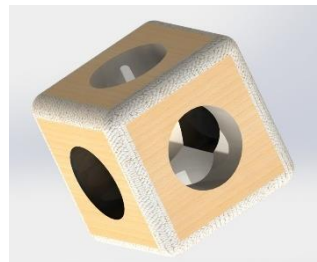
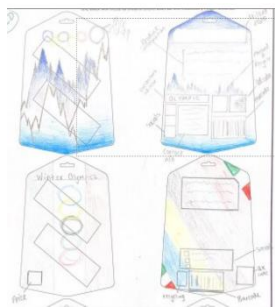
Year 9

Mrs Brewster, Subject Lead of Food, managed to secure some ingredients from the British Nutrition Foundation and our school caterers, Edwards & Blake, to cook 'Orange Glazed One Pan Pork' for all year 9 Food students. This was a wonderful opportunity for the students to develop their cooking skills and they all did a great job! The Resistant materials groups have recently finished their castle joint box project. In textiles, students have been experimenting by making a range of samples using different techniques. The Engineering group have been getting to grips with Solidworks, our computer aided design software.



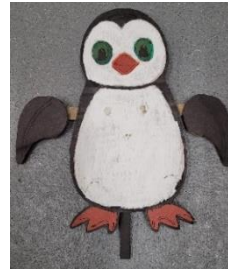
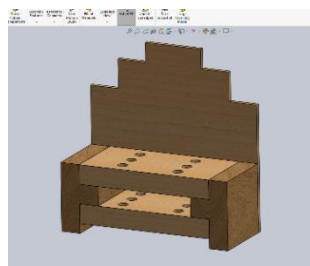
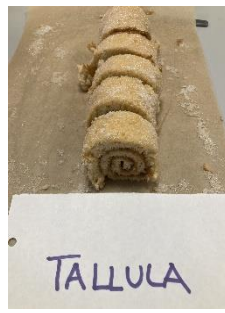
Martha Allum, Yr 9
Final Snowboard Designs for Milan Winter Olympics

Coraline Thomas, Yr 9
Final Snowboard Designs for Milan Winter Olympics



Year 7 & 8

Year 7 & Year 8 students' study 2 out of the 4 design disciplines (Food, Graphics, Resistant Materials & Textiles) for the first 20 weeks of the academic year. They have recently completed studying their first two design subjects and have now rotated to the next two. Teachers have been impressed with their efforts and students have really enjoyed themselves learning new skills within Design Technology.





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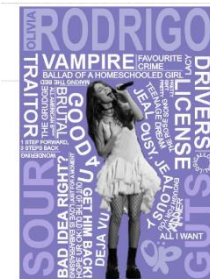
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Design Clubs

Lunchtime and afterschool Design clubs have seen plenty of students developing their passion for the subject by making a range of projects.



Sam Maxfield, Yr 11
Work in the style of Lesley Barnes



Laura Karkoska, Yr 11
Work in the style of Paula Scher

Are you missing any plastic tubs?

The food department have collected all these plastic containers since September in the food rooms, and we are running out of space to store them. If you are missing any, please encourage your child to go to see Ms Romero to reclaim them.



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Opportunity for Students – Free Drumming Sessions @ The Mix

WE DRUM	MIX DROP-INS
4:30–6pm MONDAYS FEB 12th, 19th, 25th MAR 4th, 18th	
FREE DRUMMING SESSIONS @ THE MIX	
	
Years 7 & 8 No experience necessary	www.wedrum.co.uk @wedrumuk
WE DRUM	YOUTH MUSIC
	

WE DRUM	JPC SESSIONS
6:30–8pm WEDS FEB 28th MAR 13th & 27th	
FREE DRUMMING @ THE JPC	BOOK HERE
	
Ages 12–18 No experience necessary	www.wedrum.co.uk @wedrumuk
WE DRUM	YOUTH MUSIC
	

Free Drumming Sessions

Our amazing WeDrum club run on a Friday in school 3.10 to 4.10, many of our students have also taken part in 1-2-1, small group and taster sessions during school time.

To book your free sessions at The Mix in Stowmarket, scan the QR codes above.

Year 7 & 8 are now invited to join The Mix drop-in at the John Peel Centre, fortnightly on a Wednesday 6.30 - 8.00.

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Upcoming Events:

27 th February 2024	Year 11 Photographs 2.10pm – 3.10pm
29 th February 2024	Year 9 Options Evening
Tues 12 th March – Friday 15 th	School Performance of Annie Jr.
Thursday 21 st March	Year 11 Tripod Evening
Thursday 28 th March	End of term, early close 1pm (further information to follow)
Thursday 28 th March	Year 7 Easter Egg Hunt

Useful Contact Information:

Head of Year 7	Miss R Harrigan	r.harrigan@stowhigh.com
Head of Year 8	Mr A McLellan	a.mclellan@stowhigh.com
Head of Year 9	Mrs N Goss	n.goss@stowhigh.com
Head of Year 10	Mrs L McLoughlin	l.mcloughlin@stowhigh.com
Head of Year 11	Ms Z Rudling	z.rudling@stowhigh.com
Finance		finance@stowhigh.com
General Enquiries		enquiries@stowhigh.com
Attendance/Student Absence		attendance@stowhigh.com



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