

Great Sankey High School NEWSLETTER



December 2023



36 YEARS OF AMAZING SERVICE—THANK YOU!

It is beginning to look a lot like Christmas as we approach the end of term. Congratulations to all of our performers who took part in our annual Christmas Concert earlier this week. There was an amazing array of talent from all year groups with a variety of genres and abilities performing collaboratively! Family ethos at its finest as parents joined our orchestra for the evening. We had performances from our school orchestra, the Sankey Singers, Sankey Samba group, Sankey Strummers, our new keyboard group, an amazing rock

band and also the soloists Georgie, Ethan and Hugo. We would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate our Music Services Manager and woodwind teacher, Margaret Wright as she is about to start a well deserved retirement following 36 years of service at Great Sankey High School. The positive impact Mrs Wright has had on thousands of students since 1987 is simply outstanding. The performances at the concert served as a reminder of some of the brilliant work she has done for the

students and community of Great Sankey. Thank you Margaret! We wish you a long, relaxing and happy retirement.

The Performing Arts department is already preparing and looking forward to welcoming as many of you as possible to the school's performances of "Shrek" in February 2024.

We cannot wait!



CHRISTMAS CONCERT PHOTOS



Headteacher Update

I hope you are well and looking forward to a relaxing Christmas break. School closes next week on Wednesday 20th December at 12.10pm. The school buses will be leaving shortly afterwards. If your child requires a lunch before they leave, please email their Year team so we can arrange that.

Just like last year, on Wednesday, students and staff will be able to wear their Christmas Jumper to school if they want to. If anyone would like to make a voluntary donation they can and we will donate any money raised to St Rocco's Hospice. If students prefer not to wear a Christmas jumper then that is fine. The jumper will be the only non-uniform item allowed on the day.

As is often the case at the end of term, we are saying farewell to a few colleagues. I would like to thank them all for their hard work and dedication. Mrs Wright, Music Services Manager and Peri Teacher, is leaving us after 36 years of great service. I wish her a very long, happy retirement. Mr English (Maths), Mrs Neill (English), Mr Roberts (Business) & Miss Cheung (EAL Support) are also leaving at the end of term along with Mr Wright who has been covering a maternity leave in Maths. On behalf of the students, Governors, parents, carers, and staff I would like to thank them all the very best of luck for the future.

It has been a long but productive term. Year 11, 8 & 9 have completed their first set of assessments recently. Miss Delmont commented that the Year 11 Mocks may have been the best set of mocks she has experienced

since being Exams Officer at Great Sankey. I think this is down to the way the students dealt with the process so maturely and seriously. For other year groups, we have changed the way assessments are carried out. This was very much thanks to feedback from parents. The assessment dates are on the school website. Revision lists and assessment timetables are shared with students and parent/carers a few weeks ahead. This has improved the process and reduced the stress of not knowing when certain tests were. We have also reduced the number of assessment rounds from 3 to 2 to help with staff workload as well as the mental health of our youngsters.

In January, we will open the first floor of our dining facility which will provide a more pleasant environment as well as 10 additional toilets. Students tell me the extra time they have at break now has made a big difference to them and the dining facility is now, across 2 floors, able to accommodate all students on break or lunch. This will open on Monday 8th January.

I look back on the whole year at Great Sankey with some pride. There have been some real highlights. The sporting achievements of many teams, the outstanding Addams Family production, the Dance show, the trips to areas around Europe and the UK, a new Junior Leadership Team, a successful Ofsted inspection, a newly restructured pastoral system with more capacity to work with students on progress, mental health and other needs and the return of face to face events for parents. We do not rest on our laurels however and I know there is still much to do. For now, I wish you all a merry Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Best wishes, Mr G Evans

Year 9 Options - Key dates for the diary

Just after Christmas we will start the Options process for our Year 9 students. This is an exciting time for them as they can choose which subjects they wish to continue to study into KS4.

Further details and all the information you need will arrive just after the Christmas holiday but for now please note these important dates for next term.

Introduction to Options assembly - (Students only) WB 15th January

Y9 Options evening (Students and Parents/Carers) - Thursday 1st February

Y9 Parents evening - Thursday 22nd February

Deadline for Options choices - Monday 26th February.

Kind regards, Dr Hale



Fostering a Love for Reading

In an effort to ignite a passion for reading among our Year 7 students, our school has embraced the Book-Buzz reading programme from BookTrust. This initiative is designed to cultivate a love for literature in young minds aged 11 to 13, fostering a lifelong appreciation for the written word.

A Literary Journey Unfolds:

Our Year 7 students are in for a treat as they recently embarked on a literary adventure with the Book-Buzz programme. Each student has been given the exciting opportunity to choose a free book from a diverse selection of 16 titles. These books have been carefully curated by a panel of experts, ensuring that they not only meet high-quality standards but are also suitable to captivate young readers' imaginations.

Quality Assurance and Literary Exploration:

The books available through BookBuzz have undergone rigorous scrutiny to guarantee their appropriateness for the age group and their potential to inspire a love for reading. The selection process, led by a panel of literary experts, aims to offer students a variety of genres and themes, providing them with the chance to explore different facets of literature.

Courtesy of the Library:

Our school's library is at the heart of this initiative, serving as the distribution hub for these literary gems. The aim is not only to provide students with a free book but to create an environment where reading is not just an academic exercise but a source of pleasure and exploration.

Encouraging a Lifelong Love for Reading:

Beyond the immediate joy of receiving a new book, the BookBuzz programme is a step toward instilling a lifelong love for reading. By exposing students to a range of genres and themes, the initiative aims to broaden their literary horizons and create a foundation for a future filled with books and boundless imagination.

Books Beyond the Programme:

For those eager to delve even deeper into the literary world, these books are also available to borrow from the Learning Resource Centre (LRC), ensuring that the joy of reading extends beyond the initial distribution.

Accelerated Reading Successes:

Year 7 and Year 8 have read a combined total of 44, 827, 785 words so far this year! This is significantly higher than previous years. Year 7 have read a total of 20,450, 509 words and Year 8 have read a total of 24,377,276 (They are currently on track to beat their word count from last year!)

Debate Club

Does your child have a lot to say about lots of different topics? If so, they may enjoy our new Debate Club. Some of the best and brightest Year 9 students have joined Mr. Riley's debate club this term, where they are learning some really valuable life skills. We discuss some important issues such as freedom of speech, and hopefully will be looking to enter competitions later this year. We also get to play some fun debating games to get everyone's brains going - games like 'rebuttal tennis' and 'How would you spend a million pounds?' In Debate Club students are learning how to research, put together and critique an argument, how to project themselves with confidence and we have fun doing it! I will be looking to open debate club to Year 8 students in the New Year, so if your child is interested, please tell them to come and see Mr. Riley in HM4.

Thanks

Mr Riley

Teacher of History

Our SEND Team

Great Sankey staff from Learning Support and the 6th form team recently attended the Year 11 EHCP event at Parr Hall. It was great to work alongside colleagues at the Local Authority SENDIASS team and Warpack. Staff from our SEND team also went bowling last month with students in Year 7 and their families. Thanks to those of you who provided some lovely feedback to Miss Edwards and the team.





ANNUAL SPORTS' AWARDS

There was a dazzling celebration of athleticism and sportsmanship at our annual Sports Award Evening last month. The evening paid tribute to the remarkable achievements of students across all year groups, showcasing the prowess and dedication demonstrated in various sporting disciplines.

Highlighting Excellence Across Diverse Disciplines:

The prestigious awards encompassed a wide array of sports, ranging from football to handball, basketball to cricket, and indoor athletics to netball. Special accolades were also bestowed upon the winners of the Jr NBA Warrington area competition, adding a layer of regional recognition to the festivities. The Dancer of the Year category celebrated grace and artistic expression.

Honouring Legends:

A poignant moment of the evening unfolded as last year's Year 11 rugby team were welcomed back. Acknowledged for their phenomenal achievements, the team secured a place in the school's Hall of Fame, having triumphed in nearly every tournament they entered. Their legacy serves as an inspiration for aspiring athletes, reminding all present of the heights that can be reached through dedication and teamwork.

Crowning Glory:

The grand finale of the evening unfolded with the presentation of the "Sports Personality of the Year" (SPOTY) awards for each year group. These prestigious accolades highlighted the following exceptional students:

Y7 SPOTY: Elliot Y8 SPOTY: Thea Y9 SPOTY: Jamie Y10 SPOTY: Georgia Y11 SPOTY: Daniel

Whole School SPOTY: Isaac

Each recipient stood out not only for their athletic prowess but also for embodying the values of sportsmanship, leadership, and dedication to their respective sports.

As the curtain fell on the Sports Award Evening, the audience departed with a renewed sense of pride and inspiration, having witnessed the remarkable achievements of their peers. The event stands as a testament to the school's commitment to nurturing and celebrating excellence in both academics and athletics, fostering an environment where students can flourish in every facet of their education.

Congratulations to all our Sporting Heroes!



Great Sankey Junior Leadership Team

This term, our Year 8-11 Junior Leaders helped recruit our new members of the Junior Leadership Team from the new Year 7. They spoke in assembly to Year 7 about the importance of the team and why they should apply. There was a rigorous selection process involving a written application, shortlisting and a group task. Each month, the team meets with Mr Evans and Dr Hale to discuss the issues they and other students want to bring up. A couple of the team had this to say.

"I joined the JLT because I want to be a voice for other students. Helping to shape the school with our leadership and to make a positive difference" Ava-Mae

"I wanted to make a difference to my school community. I was a member of the School Council in my Primary School, and this gave me the desire and confidence to stand up and present my ideas to others. I am keen to try and improve the school environment and enjoy having discussions with both my peers and school staff. This opportunity has allowed me to meet new people and make new friends." Michael

Our Junior Leadership Team are;

Year 7 - Ava-Mae, Ben, Cameron & Charlotte

Year 8 - Harrison, Isabelle, Jessie & Michael

Year 9 - Chelsea, Chloe, Dylan & Karina

Year 10 - Benedict, Ethan, Georgie & Neve

Year 11—Finlay, Isabelle, Kirsty, Shalom, Shanthi & Tom

School Uniform—A Reminder

As we reach the end of term, we would like to take the opportunity to revisit the uniform expectations so that students are prepared for the return after Christmas. Uniform is an important part of a school's identity. It reinforces who we are as a community and helps allow students to feel pride in their school. It also helps prepare students for life after school where many will have to dress smartly for work. The uniform policy is available on the website for further reference, but please see the additional guidance below:

Socks – black ankle socks.

Shoes – black polishable leather or simulated leather. No boots, canvas shoes or trainer style shoes are permitted, including branded sports makes including (but not limited to) Nike, Adidas, Reebok, Converse, Stan Smiths and Vans. We are aware that companies do market these as school shoes but they must meet our criteria.

Make-up, false eyelashes, nail varnish or jewellery – must not be worn for school. Items of jewellery which are not in line with the policy will be confiscated and students can collect at the end of the day from their year office for first offences.

If you have any questions about the guidance, please do not hesitate to contact your child's year team or refer to the uniform policy on the website. If you are unsure whether a piece of uniform is acceptable, please consult the school before buying. If there are any extenuating circumstances, which mean you are unable to meet the uniform requirements, please email the relevant year team:

Year Group	Contact email address
Year 7	Intake2023@greatsankey.org
Year 8	Intake2022@greatsankey.org
Year 9	Intake2021@greatsankey.org
Year 10	Intake2020@greatsankey.org
Year 11	Intake2019@greatsankey.org

Attendance to School

To report a student absence please use the Bromcom My Child At School App using the message facility. If you do not have the app, please telephone reception. Students should arrive at school with enough time to get to their Form Room by 8.20am. If your child is going to be late for a specific reason, please contact us via the app or by phone.

Every half day absence has to be classified by the school (not by parent/carers) as either authorised or unauthorised. Information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness or medical / dental appointments which **unavoidably** fall in school time, or emergencies.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping pupils off unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time.
- Oversleeping.
- Absence to look after a sibling who is unwell.

Mrs Wardle, Deputy Headteacher



SPORTS' NEWS

An action-packed 1st term has seen students compete in 76 fixtures in Basketball, Football, Netball, Rugby and X-country. It has been fantastic to see so many students engaging in both the clubs and fixtures on offer. Special mentions must go to our new year 7s who have hit the ground running qualifying for the Warrington schools' finals in both Football and Rugby. They will be joined in the Rugby finals night by our Year 10s, with our 8s and 9s also in very strong position to make it through in the Football.

Year 11 and the Barrow Hall college team have progressed in the Cheshire Cup, with the college teams first fixture arguably the most exciting of the term with a 7-5 victory.

Our u13 girls football team have had a great term with our best ever run in the ESFA cup reaching round 5 before narrowly being beaten.

The newly formed Junior NBA team have also made a fantastic start with 2 wins from 2.

Away from the pitch it has been great to see the growth of our sports scholars' programme and it was pleasure to watch them lead at the primary schools, sports hall athletics.

After the break we have many more fixtures planned, as year 8 and year 10 look to continue their quest to retain their Northwest and National titles. Students will also have the chance to compete in inter form competitions in a range of activities. Mr Garry - Head of PE



Whilst this festive period is usually a time of happiness and celebration we understand that not everyone will feel that way. If you, or someone you know needs support over this period of time the following services are available:



Useful contacts



Citizens Advice Warrington

Food and pre-payment meter fuel vouchers
Open 26-29 December (emergencies only) 10am-12pm
Closed: 22 Dec at 1.30pm, 1 Jan
Phone: 0808 278 7993 if busy or urgent, email or visit the Gateway
email: admin@warrington.cabnet.org.uk
Web: warrington-advice.co.uk
Address: the Gateway, 89 Sankey Street, WA1 1SR

Holiday Activity and Food

For children and young people on means-tested Free School Meals, a free nutritious meal and fun activities in the school holidays. For places and dates sign up online.
Website: warrington.gov.uk/haf

Warrington Foodbank Main Hub

Food parcels for people who are struggling. Vouchers needed from Citizens Advice, GPs, Warrington Wellbeing.
Open: till 22, 27 to 29 Dec, 2 Jan visit the website for opening times
Closed: 23-26, 30-31 Dec, 1 Jan
Phone: 01925 977630
Email: info@warrington.foodbank.org.uk
Web: Warrington.foodbank.org.uk
Address: Unit 2 Tanning Court, WA1 2HF

Warrington Open Door at Xmas

Food parcels, hot meals, warm clothing, activities and support. Transport available.
open 25 Dec to 1 Jan 9.30am-3.30pm
Phone: 01925 568400
Email: helpp@wodac.org.uk
Web: wodac.org.uk
Address: St Johns Church, Wilderspool Causeway WA4 6QE

Warrington Disability Partnership

Energy saving support - advice on all energy matters, energy saving tips, financial support, grants, home visits. Community Cafe with lunch clubs. Credit Union.
Phone: 01925 240064
Email: e.houghton@disabilitypartnership.org.uk
Web: disabilitypartnership.org.uk
Address: Centre for Independent Living, Evelyn Street, Warrington, WA5 1BA

Warrington Youth Zone

Open: Over Christmas and New Year
Closed: 25-26, 31 Dec, 1 Jan
Phone: 01925 977277
Web: warringtonyouthzone.org/young-people/sessions

Safeguarding concerns

If you urgently need advice or support during the Christmas period or have any safeguarding concerns please ring MASH on 01925 443322 option 1 (9am-5pm)
Out of hours 01925 443322 option 2
If there is an immediate emergency call 999



Useful contacts



Community Shop Bewsey

Community Shop for affordable food, must be on means-tested benefit to become a member
Open: till 23, 27-20 Dec, 2 Jan
Closed: 24-26, 31 Dec, 1 Jan
Phone: 01925 940833
Web: companyshopgroup.co.uk/company-shop/
Address: 8 Bewsey Park Close, Bewsey, WA5 0AN

Financial Support

Unify Credit Union
Phone: 01942 245656
Web: unifycu.org
Money Helper
web: moneyhelper.org.uk
Money Saving Expert
web: moneysavingexpert.com
Money and Debt Advice
web: warrington.gov.uk/debt

Helpline details

Housing out of hours - Emergency number 01925 444400
LGBT Foundation Helpline - 0345 3 30 30 30
Drinkline - 0300 123 1110 www.drinkaware.co.uk
Frank (national drugs helpline) - 0300 123 66 00
www.talktofrank.com
IDVA - 01925 243359
Foodbank - 01925 977630
Wakefield House - 01925 415176
Pathways - 01925 415176
Kooth - Kooth.com
Childline - 0800 11 11
Samaritans - 116 123
Get Connected - 01873 858811
The Mix - 0808 808 4994
St Joseph's Family Centre - 01925 635448
Mind - 0300 123 3393 text 86463
Health Visitors - 01925 946904
Midwives - 01925 662092
NHS Direct - 111
Warrington Hospital - 01925 635911
Women's Aid - 01925 417138
National Gas Emergency (gas leaks) 0800 111 999

Samartians

Samaritans
24/7 Helpline
Phone: 116 123

Happy? Ok? Sad?

Mental Health Resources
Web: happyoksad.org.uk

Kooth

Kooth's live chat hours over the holiday period:

24th December (Christmas Eve) 4pm-8pm
25th December (Christmas Day) 4pm- 8pm
26th December (Boxing Day) 4pm-8pm
31st December (New Years Eve) 4pm-8pm
1st January (New Years Day) 4pm-8pm
Other days over the holiday period will follow the usual live chat hours of 12pm-10pm on weekdays and 6pm-10pm on weekends
www.kooth.com



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