Soham Village College
Achieving Excellence with Care

Parent Newsletter

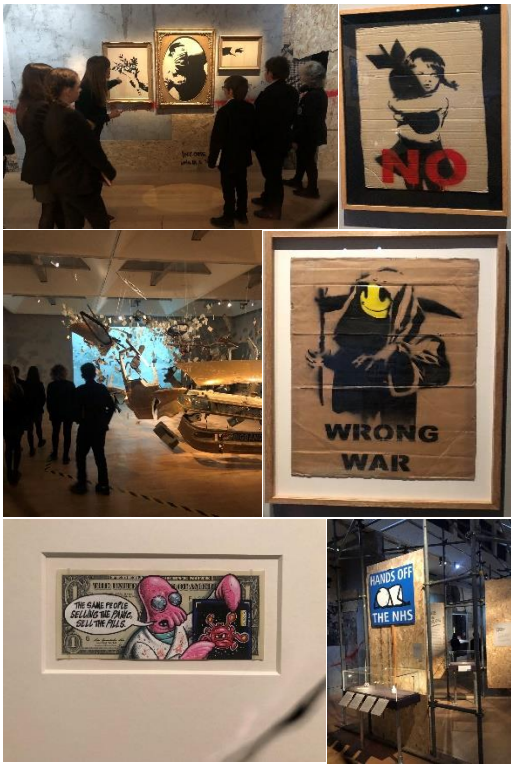
Autumn 2022

Art Department

Congratulations to Year 8 art students who have completed their arts award. Students worked brilliantly in a range of workshops, including drama, art and history discussions. They learned about Tudor history and customs during their workshops and made a range of creative artwork, including their own portrait miniatures, plague masks and designed their own shields. Students were also awarded the opportunity to have a tour around St John's College in Cambridge and learned about life as a student in Cambridge.

Here are photos of the students enjoying the 'Defaced' exhibition. This exhibition includes pieces by Banksy and an exploded car that students found particularly interesting.

Well done to our fantastic students:
Connor, Ethan, Mailee, Emma, Richanna, Ellis, Grace, Skye, Keira and Summer

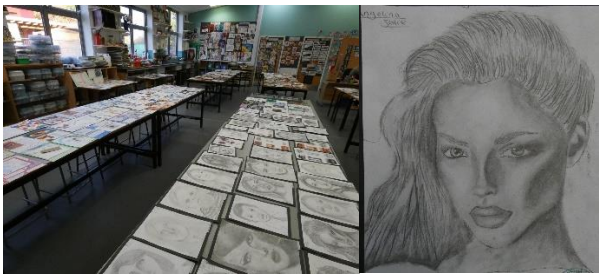


KS3 Art and Design Exhibition

Recently, the Art department held an exhibition to celebrate the creativity and high-quality work of their key stage 3 students.

Work was featured from the 2021/2022 academic year and showcased a range of pieces made by students in Years 7-9. Works covered a wide range of materials and techniques from lessons such as paintings, drawings, digital editing, Lino printing, clay, and artist research. Alongside class work, students submitted personal work including paintings, illustrations, and spray-painted pieces.

The event was well attended and a brilliant opportunity for parents and families to celebrate the hard work of the students.



London Art Visit to the Tate Modern

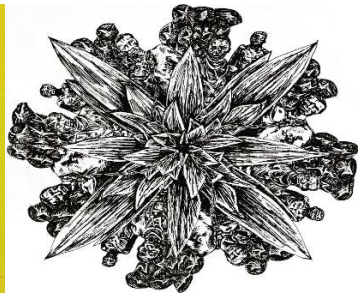
On 6th December, 60 Year 10 students visited the Tate Modern in London, followed by a tour and workshop at the Saatchi Gallery. At the Tate Modern, students enjoyed exploring the permanent collection and at the Saatchi, students experienced a tour of the current 'The New Black Vanguard' exhibition followed by a workshop

where they were able to create their own art work in response to the pieces they had seen. The students had great fun on the visit and all left feeling inspired.

KS4 West Suffolk College Visit

On 12th December Year 10 and 11 art students enjoyed a visit to West Suffolk College's Art and Design Department. They enjoyed a tour of the facilities and workshops with staff, who also shared the commercial work they do for clients such as Timberland, the House of Lords and Horrible Histories.

The students were brilliant and asked many pertinent questions about career options in the creative industries.



Music Department

The Music department is always a busy area of the school and this term has been busier than ever. At the beginning of term, Year 11 Music GCSE students enjoyed a Baroque Orchestra workshop for Cambridgeshire secondary school students, held at Ely College, in which they had the opportunity to listen to an orchestra of authentic Baroque instruments, learning more about this era of music and exploring the Concerto genre in preparation for their music listening examination in the Summer. This was a brilliant and rare opportunity for our students to see such specialist instruments and hear them being played so stylishly.

On Monday 17 October, the Year 11 GCSE students then had the opportunity to share their own musicianship skills by performing in an evening GCSE Music Showcase at the Performing Arts Centre. This was a perfect opportunity for them to not only perform to a small, supportive audience of parents and friends, but also to prepare for their GCSE coursework recording later that week. Performance ranged from rock bands to musical theatre duets, and included instruments such as ukulele, guitar, piano, cornet and drum kit. We were so impressed, as always, by the standard of performances throughout. We look forward to the Year 10 Music Showcase later in the Spring Term, the proceeds from which will be going to the Make a Wish Foundation.

Over 60s Performance

After half term, Christmas began in the Music Department! Rehearsals began in earnest for the Ely Cathedral Carol Concert and every extra-curricular music group chose a piece of music to perform in the concert. Traditionally, we have always hosted the Soham Over-60s and performed our music to them, as a rehearsal for our big night, and this year we were once again able to invite them to the Performing Arts Centre to be a supportive audience for our students. They were treated to refreshments and mince pies, served by our Senior Students, and then enjoyed an afternoon of festive music, including choir numbers, a cornet quartet and a performance from the whole of Year 7. They had been learning two Christmas songs to sing at the Cathedral, as a huge choir. Their performance was outstanding, so we knew they would do a great job in the Cathedral.

Christmas Carol Concert

On Wednesday 7th December we spent the day at Ely Cathedral with 170 students, rehearsing for the evening concert. Our students, as always, represented the school beautifully throughout the day, demonstrating outstanding resilience, effort and musicianship. With lighting set, screens up,

camera crew in place and the stage looking beautiful, we were ready for the big performance. Over 400 people performed in the concert that evening, including primary students, members of community choir, Soham Comrades Band and Wicken Coronation band, as well as over 300 Soham Village College students. The evening began with a selection of solos from our GCSE students, and then the audience enjoyed a range of choral and orchestral numbers, joining in with congregational carols and of course the rousing finale of 'Merry Christmas Everybody' by Slade. It really was a wonderful evening and another example of just how talented and brilliant our students are.

Britannica Magazine School Quiz

After qualifying in a virtual competition against a large number of schools from across the country, Soham Village College's team for the Britannica Magazine School Quiz set off to London for the finals. During the morning, the students competed in a written quiz against the other secondary schools who had made the finals. The students had to listen to a talk by author Christopher Lloyd, in which he talked about nature, the ancient world, the modern world and the future. Students then had to answer some very tough questions based on what they had heard, and from their revision of the Britannica magazine and encyclopaedia. After an intense morning, the Soham Village College team made it through to the play-off to determine first and second place in the secondary school category. The students held their nerve in the buzzer round, when they had to answer questions from all areas of non-fiction. They won the final 11-6 and were absolutely delighted to be named overall winners in the secondary school category and to win £500 of non-fiction books for the school library.

If you would like to save 20% on a subscription to Britannica magazine and receive a free hardback Britannica children's book for your child, please visit their website www.britannicamagazine.co.uk and enter the discount code XMAS20. If you do take advantage of this offer, please select Soham Village College from the list at the checkout to help us get free books for our school library.

Debating Club

Each year, Lucy Frazer MP holds a debating competition for schools in East Cambridgeshire. Soham Village College's Debating Society has now become a thriving club where student regularly meeting to develop their skills in oratory. After an initial round in school, eight Key Stage 4 students from the debating society were chosen to demonstrate their skills in front of Lucy Frazer. They prepared by researching their given topic and formulated their arguments. During the debate, they each demonstrated their views through three minute debate speeches on the

notion ‘this house believes that the voting age should be lowered to 16 years of age’. Lucy Frazer commended them on their intellectual arguments, thoughtful points of interest and presence whilst speaking. Two finalists were chosen to represent the school in the next round at parliament where they will debate with other local schools.

Free books for Years 7 and 8

Christmas came early for Years 7 and 8, with every student being gifted a free book by the school. Students chose their book from a shortlist of seventeen titles from Bookbuzz and they have been given out just in time for students to enjoy over the Christmas break.

Future Group

Our fantastic Future Group took part in a student climate change conference at Sawston Village College on Wednesday 16th November, along with fifteen other schools from the region. This conference was set up to reflect the global negotiations about climate at COP27, which happened in Egypt recently. Schools were assigned a country for the main debate and represented Indonesia. The Future group also took part in some environmental workshops and planted a tree for our school on Soham Village College’s site. The group are looking forward to making more connections between schools in the future.

As one student said “That trip was really good. I had a lot of fun with the group and everyone else from the other schools. I'm sure I will remember this for a long while and I really hope we can do something like this again in the future”.

Children in Need Danceathon

Over 100 students from Years 7-9 took part in a Danceathon on Friday 18th November to raise money for Children in Need. The students danced a variety of styles and learnt 5 different dances, whilst having lots of fun with friends. All students worked incredibly hard and raised a fantastic amount of money for the charity. We are so proud of them and their commitment to such a good cause. In total, the students raised £1773.06 for the Dancethon and a further £1073.68 was raised by children wearing non-school uniform. This money will go to Children in Need. Well done to all that took part!

PSHE

In October, Year 11 students took part in a PSHE day; this was mostly focused on completing their college applications for post 16 education and involved a session with the English faculty to help with their personal statements.

February sees our first full PSHE day of the year, with all the students from each year group taking part in a wide range of activities that deal with aspects such as alcohol and drug awareness, work related learning, teamwork, dangerous driving and more.

Careers Activity round up Autumn 2022

Year 10 Ely Cathedral Careers Fair

The whole of Year 10 went to Ely Cathedral in November to take part in the East Cambridgeshire Careers Fair. Around fifty local businesses, colleges and universities were present to talk to students about what they could offer in the future. The students used their time very constructively, asking lots of great questions and finding out what businesses did and what they looked for in potential employees. Feedback from students and exhibitors was very positive, showing the value and benefit of this event.

Year 9 Careers Support Workshops

Selected Year 9 students took part in a one-off careers workshop during this term, delivered by the Careers Team. This was an opportunity to understand a little more about the qualification options available after Year 11, and also talk through what 'having a career' actually means. Students discussed what key skills businesses look for in employees, and they also talked about what jobs or careers they might be interested in in the future. The workshop is just one part of the extensive careers programme, designed to help all students prepare themselves for their next move after Soham Village College.

Year 8 Mushroom Farm visit

As part of our ongoing collaboration with local produce grower G's Fresh, two classes of Year 8 students visited their mushroom farm in Littleport. Students learnt how G's operate and run their businesses. They were then kitted out in fetching hairnets and overalls, and had a tour of the factory. They were shown the various stages of the growth life of a mushroom, and even got to pick their own for tasting.

Year 11 Mock Interview support request

On Wednesday 8th February, Year 11 will be having their mock interviews. These interviews are extremely beneficial to students, for both their college guidance meetings and also future job interviews. For most, this is their very first experience of an interview with someone they don't know. Students are given the opportunity to prepare, and they all come away with some positive learnings and a feeling of achievement.

The success of the event relies heavily on having enthusiastic volunteers to act as interviewers. We are still a few interviewers short, particularly from the following professions – ***Construction, Art/Fashion, Childcare, Engineering and Science*** although all other professions or industries would be considered. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Nick Oakhill (NOakhill@soham-college.org.uk) for further details.

Primary STEM week 2022

401 Year 6 students from our feeder Primary schools arrived at the college to take part in this year event. We completed maths exercise and travel to over 40 different countries. Eventually we became stranded in Madrid. The Year 6 students learnt how aircraft fly, with a number of different Science experiments with the help of the Year 8 & 9 STEM leaders. With all flights now grounded and no means of sending a message home. We began designing and testing a flying machine in order to send a message home, to Soham. We completed over 300 test flights over the week to see who landed the closest to Soham. It was a fantastic week and plans are already being made for STEM 2023 at the college.

Soham' s Got Talent

One of our favourite times of the school year is when 'Soham's Got Talent' arrives. This year's evening was filled with some exceptional acts. Ranging from singing, dancing and instrumental pieces, all the way to rock bands and cheerleading, it was truly a very entertaining evening.

There could, of course, only be one winner and this year that honour went to Markus Langler with his fantastic performance of 'Forever'.

Such a wonderful night could only end one way: with the annual tradition of a performance by our heads of houses. This year, they sang 'Bohemian Rhapsody' by Queen.

A big thank you goes to the hard-working tech crew, without whom the evening would not have been possible.

Duke of Edinburgh

In September, twenty four students from Soham Village College took part in their Silver Duke of Edinburgh assessed expedition. This was always going to be a challenge as we were travelling further afield to the hills of Shropshire, something obviously quite different to Fens. The students worked really well in teams to navigate around challenging terrain, set up camps over two nights and cook for themselves each evening. They had to be self-sufficient throughout, carrying everything they needed to survive. They experienced some poor weather conditions, which added to their difficulties, but lots of success was had. One student, Fern Miller (Year 11) has this to say about her personal experiences: "During my silver DofE expedition, my group and I worked together and encouraged each other. We had to work together to climb steep hills and set up camp, which at times was difficult but was very rewarding at the end. The highlight was definitely being at the campsite as I got to make new friends and relax after working hard earlier in the day. The views we got to see on the expedition and the new skills I learnt were really worth it".

Lost Property

Please can uniform and any other items brought into school be clearly labelled with your child's name. This helps Student Services get it back to students if it gets lost. There is an area outside Student Services for lost property, so if you have something missing please ask your child to check there first. At the end of each half term, the lost property area will be cleared. If you do think your child has anything missing, please make sure you ask them to check.

Flu vaccinations

A letter has been sent home to all parents of students in Years 7,8,9. The children of parents/carers who complete the online consent form will be immunised on Wednesday 11th January 2023.

An update for schools and colleges on the additional bank holiday on 8 May

In light of the announcement of His Majesty's coronation on Saturday 6 May 2023, an additional bank holiday has been announced on Monday 8 May. Settings that are normally closed on a bank holiday will close on this day. This will include schools and colleges.

Back to School Reminder

A reminder that the new term will commence at 8.30am on Wednesday 4th January 2023 for all students, which will be week A.