



Avanti Insight

Official Newsletter for Avanti Grange Secondary School

Sept 2024

A Message from the Principal

What an exciting and eventful time it's been at Avanti Grange. This week, we had the privilege of welcoming Josh Dean MP for Hertford and Stortford and a former student of mine, to our fabulous school. Josh's visit was both inspiring and heartwarming and it was a pleasure to share the Avanti Grange journey to date. Mr Dean was fascinated by many aspects of school life, especially our focus on building students' mindfulness, capacity to cope and resilience. Mr Dean is planning to return to Avanti Grange in the New Year to continue to investigate how we can share these innovative practices outside of Avanti Grange.

It is that time of year again when Year 6 students and parents are deciding which secondary school to choose for the next part of their educational journey. I am pleased to inform you that our Year 6 parent tours are well underway, and I'm thrilled to report that the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Next Wednesday marks a significant day for our school community as we prepare for our annual Open Evening. This is a fantastic opportunity for prospective families and the wider community to see our school in action and celebrate everything that makes our school a special place to learn and grow. I am also delighted to inform you that once again, for the second consecutive year our Open Evening is sold out. However, we do plan to add extra tour dates after the evening so if you are aware of anyone struggling to visit the school, please ask them to email avantigrange@avanti.org.uk. Wishing you all a wonderful and restful weekend.



PE and Sport Round Up

It has been a whirlwind start to term in the PE department with students fully embracing all the sporting opportunities that have been on offer, both in lessons and with the extensive Co-Curricular Sports Programme. Clubs include football, rugby, hockey, table tennis, yoga, badminton, volleyball, handball and running. I would like to thank both the PE staff and those outside the department who are giving up their time to give the students so many opportunities. I would also like to thank all the parents that have offered support with clubs and lifts to maximise the opportunities we can offer students.

This week saw our first House Sporting Event, Cross Country, with over 250 students taking part, a brilliant effort. Even staff got involved, with Mr Loader and Miss Anthony taking the bragging rights. Our first external fixture saw the year 8 rugby team taking on Edwinstree (Buntingford), despite losing 6 scores to 3, many boys played their first game of contact rugby and equipped themselves extremely well.

Finally, we have set up an Avanti Grange PE Instagram and Facebook Page which will provide updates on all things PE and Sport related. Please follow us on Instagram at [avantigrangepe](#) and Facebook at Avanti Grange PE.

Fixtures coming up over the next few weeks include:

Y7&8 Girls Hockey Tuesday 1st Oct @ Birchwood

Y7 Boys Rugby Saturday 5th Oct @ St Edmunds

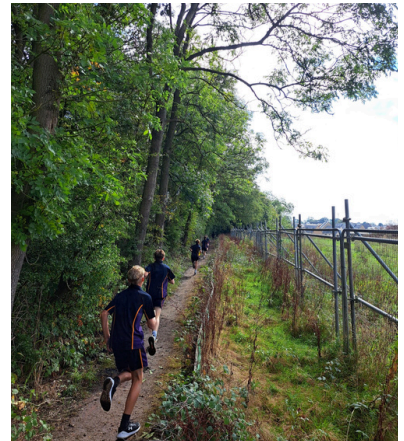
Y7-9 Boys and Girls District Cross Country Monday 7th Oct @ Grange Paddocks

Y9 Girls Football Monday 7th Oct @ St Mary's

Y7&8 Boys Rugby Tuesday 8th Oct @ Helena Romanes

Y8 Girls Football Tuesday 8th Oct @ St Mary's

Y8 Boys Rugby Thursday 10th Oct @ Goffs



Year 8 Geography Field Trip

Year 8 Geographers conducted primary data collection at three sites in the River Stort last week. The aim was to test Bradshaw's model, to establish whether the River Stort has the typical characteristics of a river in the middle course, and whether the expected changes were seen along the course of the river. Students measured the width, depth and velocity of the river, and analysed the size and shape of stones on the riverbed. They are now working on and evaluating their findings. We were very proud of how the students conducted themselves, and we are grateful to Bishop's Stortford Town Council for their permission and encouragement to conduct this fieldwork, and for the provision of resources.

The Avanti Grange Bake Off

Today marked the return of the Avanti Grange Bake Off! This House Competition is always fiercely contested, and this year was no different. Bakers rose to the challenge, with a fantastic range of cakes, cupcakes and cookies, all based on this year's theme, the European Day of Languages. The Bake Off topped a week of linguistic success, with our school community celebrating our cultural diversity, whilst supporting Macmillan cancer support. The winner is to be announced.....

Courageous – Curious - Resilient



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Avanti Service: Making a Difference



Every Monday the Avanti Service club led by our Spiritual Lead Kay Lumbers, encourages students to demonstrate integrity and respect by engaging in meaningful service projects. This week the group focused on litter-picking, helping to clean and improve our surroundings, supporting the local community. Their efforts show how even small actions can positively impact the wider community. Well done to all involved for your dedication.

Humanities Society Special Edition - Visiting Guest Speaker

The Humanities department are delighted to be hosting Emma Oliver from the Bishop's Stortford Museum to give a talk about her work at the museum and an exciting opportunity for young people to get involved with the museum! The talk will be on Friday 11th October 3:50-4:50pm and students are encouraged to sign up through SOCS for the event. It is fantastic for our school to be making links with such an important part of our local community and to be able to illuminate the varied world of museums and heritage.

Fantasy Board Games Club: A New Adventure Begins

We are thrilled to announce the launch of our Fantasy Board Games Club, which has attracted an incredible 40 students eager to explore new worlds through Dungeons & Dragons 5th edition and the strategy card game Magic: The Gathering. The club has quickly become a hub of creativity, strategy, and community spirit, bringing students together in a fun and engaging way. A massive thank you to Mr. Neilson, Mr. Ockwell Smith, and Mr. Holloway, who have not only donated their time but also shared their own gaming collections to make this club a reality.



Staff Spotlight: Sebastian Ockwell-Smith



Why did you want to work in school? I realised throughout my degree that my favourite part of Geography and Geology is getting to enlighten other people about the wonders of the natural world. This love turned into a passion for helping others to learn about my subject, and teaching provided me with the best opportunity to do so!

How would friends describe you? Well, why don't we ask one!...'Having known Mr Ockwell-Smith for over a decade, I can confidently tell you that he loves his subject. More specifically, he loves rocks! I'm pleased his job means he is able to finally speak to others about his love for the outdoors.'

Do you have any pets? Yes! 2 dogs, a cat, and too many chickens to count.

What are your favourite hobbies? I love playing along to rock music on my bass guitar, bouldering with Mr Nielson and hunting for fossils.

Who is your hero? My passion for my subject was sparked by my Geography and Geology teachers, Mr Wheeler and Mr Oxborrow. They're my teaching heroes!

What is your proudest moment? Receiving an award for my degree dissertation project. I mapped an area of the Isle of Skye for a month straight, and I still vividly remember the feeling of completing my map. I'll cherish it forever!