

Dear Families,

★ Welcome Back and Happy New Year!

It has been great to see students return this week as we begin a busy and exciting Spring Term. While we had hoped to reopen on Monday, the adverse weather conditions meant it was not safe to do so, and we therefore reopened on Wednesday. With Storm Gerotti arriving at the end of the week, and the Met Office issuing an Amber and Yellow warning for Thursday night and Friday morning, a tough decision was made to close today also.

Closing the school is never a decision we take lightly. Our priority is always to remain open whenever it is safe, and any decision to close is based on careful consideration of site safety, travel conditions for children and adults, and staff availability. As the weather continues to change, we will keep monitoring conditions closely to ensure our site remains safe and our school can stay open whenever possible.

We are looking forward to making 2026 a positive and successful year for everyone.

✏ Key Dates for Your Calendar – February 2026

We have a number of important dates coming up in February, so please do take a moment to add these to your calendar.

- **Year 9 Options and KiT Evening – Thursday 5th February 2026**
Our Year 9 Keeping in Touch and Options Evening will take place on Thursday 5th February. Further details will be shared nearer the time, but for now, please save the date.
- **Collaboration and Professional Development Days – Monday 23rd and Tuesday 24th February 2026**
As outlined in our term dates, Spring Half Term runs from Monday 16th to Friday 20th February 2026. This will be followed by a Professional Development Day on Monday 23rd February and a Collaboration Day on Tuesday 24th February. Students will study from home on the Collaboration Day while staff from across our Trust come together to develop shared strategy and strengthen our work for all children and young people. Information about home study tasks will be shared closer to the time. Students are expected to return to school on Wednesday 25th February 2026.

🚦 Road Safety Reminder

As we move further into the darker months, we are asking for your support in reminding students about the importance of staying safe when travelling to and from school, as well as when they are out in the community.

Whether walking or cycling, it is essential that students are aware of their surroundings and visible to other road users. Please encourage your child to wear bright or reflective clothing so they can be easily seen, especially during early mornings and late afternoons.

For those cycling, a properly fitted helmet is necessary, and bikes should be equipped with working lights to help keep them safe on the roads. Thank you for helping us keep our students safe as they travel.



Mr Tim Stonall
Headteacher

Timetable w/c Monday 12th January 2026 – Week B

Rotary Club - In the Heart of Our Communities

👏 We were proud to once again support our local community over the Christmas period by opening our school kitchen to the Rotary Club on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Bob Thomson, a Trustee for the Marches Academy Trust and a local Rotarian, together with fellow Rotarians and volunteers, prepared and delivered Christmas lunches to residents across Whitchurch and surrounding areas.

Oliver in 8.Blakemere.31 was proud to play his part, delivering meals as part of Sir John Talbot's Caring for Our Environment initiative. This reflects the values we hold dear – connection, compassion, and care for our communities.

We are grateful for the Rotary Clubs hard work and commitment, and we are pleased that our school can play a small part in helping make this important community effort possible.



💎 The Rotary Club are hosting a recycling campaign to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support. Please save any plastic sweet, chocolate, or biscuit tubs you may have over Christmas period and bring them into school by the 23rd January, for the Eco Council to collect them and raise money for this amazing charity while cutting down on plastic waste at the same time.

The Shore – Mrs Lewis

☀ It has been wonderful welcoming our Year 7 students back after their extended Christmas break. They've returned full of stories, energy, and enthusiasm, and it has been lovely hearing about all the exciting things they've been up to.

🧊 Some of our Year 7 students made the most of Wednesday's wintery weather by building a snowman together during social time. They worked safely, supported one another, and showed fantastic teamwork throughout. It was a lovely reminder of how our students turn even the chilliest days into opportunities for creativity and collaboration. We are immensely proud of them.

🎯 On Wednesday, we took some time to reflect on the Autumn Term and celebrate the fantastic achievements of every student. From academic progress to personal growth, there was so much for them to be proud of. We then turned our attention to the year ahead and began thinking about our 2026 New Year resolutions. Students set their own goals for the coming months, and we were so impressed by the thought and maturity they put into them. Resolutions ranged from completing homework on time, becoming more organised, or joining new clubs both in and out of school.



The Harbour – Mr Hawke

🌟 It has been a pleasure to welcome students in Year 8 and 9 back to school this week after the Christmas break. While the wintry weather has caused some disruption, it has been lovely to catch up and get back into learning. On Wednesday, students experienced their first Enrichment sessions, taking part in a range of different activities from Circuit Training, to Cooking, to Coding. It was a pleasure to visit several different groups and observe students engaging in learning in diverse ways.

🍳 Next week, we will hold our second rewards breakfast of the academic year for students with the most positive points (top 20) in each year group. Families will be informed if their child has been invited to attend.

📁 This week sees the start of the Options process for Year 9, who have had a special Community Meeting with our Careers advisor Mr. Small. Next week, Year 9 will sit exams in their non-core subjects. More information regarding the full options process will be sent out to families shortly.

👉 The School Immunisation Team will be visiting the school on Thursday 29th and Friday 30th January 2026 to administer the 3-in-1 Teenage Booster Vaccination (DTP) and Meningococcal (MenACWY) vaccination to all Year 9 pupils. A consent form has been emailed today and the deadline to complete this is 9am on Saturday 24th January 2026.

The Quay and Sixth Form – Mrs Elms

👏 It has been great to welcome back our KS4 and KS5 students this week. Despite the disruption at the start of the year, everyone has returned with a positive attitude.

📅 With external exams just weeks away, Year 11 will be off timetable on **Tuesday 13th January** for their *Quay to Success* Day. They will take part in tailored sessions focused on revision skills, motivation, and wellbeing. The day will finish with a session from Karim Al-Abbas, founder of Enlighten Education, on effective revision strategies. This event marks an important milestone in our countdown to exams.

✏ Year 12 and Year 13 begin their mock exams next week. They've been provided with revision resources to support their preparation, and it is vital they use their time effectively to consolidate learning.

📄 On Wednesday, Year 12 also attended a CV-writing workshop led by Joy Brereton from Wrexham University, helping them prepare for mock interviews and future job applications.



Our Curriculum

At Sir John Talbot's, our curriculum reflects the values we live by - excellence, integrity, empathy, creativity, and equality. We use learning journeys to help students understand how each subject develops, so they can follow their progress with confidence and support. For more information, please click on the link here: [Our Curriculum - Sir John Talbot's](#)

ABM Catering Menu – W/C Monday 12th January 2026 – Week 2

Our Spring Menu is located on our school website in the Family Information section under School Life. You can also click on the direct link here: [Family Information - School Meals](#)

📅 UPCOMING EVENTS

Click [here](#) to view our upcoming events. Events at a glance:

- w/c 12th January – Week 1 of 2 Mock Exams Y12 & 13
- 13th January – Year 11 Quay to Success – Y11 off timetable all day
- w/c 19th January – Week 2 of 2 Mock Exams Y12 & 13
- 29th & 30th January – Y9 Vaccination Clinics
- 30th & 31st January – DofE Gold Training, Cynwyd Mountain Centre

Click [here](#) to view our Term Dates.

📢 Stay in the Loop

Catch up on our latest news [here](#), or follow us on Facebook ([SirJohnTalbotsSchool](#)) for updates and celebrations.

For stories across our wider school community, visit [MarchesAcademyTrust](#).

