

SAWSTON VILLAGE COLLEGE

July 2010

Dates for your diary

- **12 July**
North v South
Athletics Evening
- **13 July**
Moving On Up
Conference
- **14 – 16 July**
Yr 7 Normandy trip
- **14 – 16 July**
Romeo and Juliet –
School production
- **21 July**
Yr 8 Celebr8 Eve
- **22 July**
End of term
- **2 September**
Year 7 Beg of term
- **3 September**
Yrs 8–11 Beg of
term

Dear Parent

The end of term is rushing towards us all at frightening pace. We always believe that it will slow down when Year 11 have moved on to study leave, GCSEs and the longest summer holiday of their lives to date; it never does, as the imperative to prepare for the new term kicks in.

The end arrives

And so they came in their multi-coloured finery ... in limousines, sports cars, Mercedes, on motorbikes and the more creative in a horse box, in a fairground lorry or, the most original, a tandem with a skater pulled along behind. Yes, Year 11 pupils took their leave of us in grand style last Saturday, a wonderful evening that set the seal on their five years at SVC. There were a few anxious moments in the early part of the evening when the fire alarm sounded and the Fire Brigade joined our celebrations. A surfeit of hairspray, perfume spray and deodorant spray in the girls' toilets seemed to be the trigger ... the Fire Officers had to wear breathing apparatus to go in to check; the rest of us looked after our lungs and steered clear.

We were all very sorry to see them go, albeit fragrant, and look forward to sharing results day with them on 24 August.

Elite Photography has posted the album of ball photos onto their website. If you wish to spend some happy hours browsing, please go to:

- www.elite-portrait-photography.co.uk
- click on client area;
- click on events;
- click on Sawston Village College; and
- enter the password – d0676.

My warmest thanks – and those of the very many parents who have taken time to write to her – go to Mrs Bucklow, Year 11 Manager. She has been a steadfast supporter of her year group through some very difficult times. Without a doubt there are several who, without her care, compassion and active intervention, would not have made it through their compulsory school years. And now she gets to start all over again this week as Year 6 pupils begin their induction process, such is the circle of school life.

Specialist College Activities Week (SCAW)

As you know, we took a new approach to activities week this year. Years 7 and 10 lost out somewhat because of the difficulties of staffing four year groups to take part in residential or other trips concurrently. Having Year 10 in school because they had completed their work experience earlier in the year tipped the balance and meant that we had to focus alternative programmes on Years 8 and 9.

Our usual residential trips took place: to the Ardèche to risk life and limb on

the river and to Barcelona and Rhineland on language-based trips. The Ferry Meadows trip proved to be very popular this year and, as the photographs demonstrate, those who participated had a wonderful time, proving that it's not essential to travel far or expensively to learn and enjoy. Forty Year 7 pupils will be heading off to Normandy in July.

Please be assured that our full programme of visits will take place next year but not all in one week. We are very keen to ensure that those pupils who don't travel abroad, either by inclination or circumstances are able to continue with their learning with specialist teachers. We will publish a calendar of visits as soon into the new school year as possible, to give parents time to plan the outlay and pupils time to save towards their chosen trips.

The Fountain magazine will give you the full flavour of SCAW trips and activities. Look out for circus skills and the climbing wall, two firm favourites with the participants.

International week

We continue to be amazed by the energy and enthusiasm of Miss Haworth who has galvanised and developed our international programme with the assistance of her colleagues and the invaluable work of the Charities Sub-group of the Ethos Forum.

Through the course of this year, each year group has taken a continent as their focus and spent time in the mornings learning about their chosen continent and their individual countries within it. This is all came together this week, when the Charities Sub-group organised a huge range of fund-raising activities to take place every day.

Pupils have been able to participate in or observe a wide range of activities

including: a re-enactment of 'Lord of the Rings' (hopefully the condensed version); Galapagos Islands 'Hook a duck' (I'm not sure that's entirely in the spirit of conservation ...); Egyptian body dissection show and mummification game (no human beings will be injured in the course of these activities); indulge in Australian body art (we've had to waive the uniform rules just a little to accommodate this); enjoy a demonstration of the New Zealand hakka and, of course, sample food from across the world, always a firm favourite. It's intriguing that Zambia's activity is 'Soak the teacher' – who would have guessed that our cultures shared a love of this (mostly) harmless pastime. I'm looking forward to surfing in the multi-purpose hall today, just watching it, you understand.

Our international links are building very impressively; we now have partnership with Russia, Rwanda and China. We have also managed to establish a link with the Thomaeum Gymnasium in Kempen, Germany. When our pupils visit Cologne for the Christmas market in November, they will be able to spend a day in school finding out how young German people spend their school days – not much differently to English pupils apart from the 1.00pm finish ... no jealousy here ...

We hope that next year will see a significant expansion of opportunity for our pupils whether electronic or actual.

Cancer research UK

Week beginning 12 July offers yet another opportunity for our pupils to do good things. Master-minded by the Ethos Forum, this week's activities will raise funds towards this excellent cause. The highlight of it is 'Hat Day' when pupils will be able to pay 50p to wear a hat in the lunch hour to promote sun awareness and the importance of protection against skin

cancer. There are many consumption opportunities through the course of the week also, including lucky dips, a tombola and a lolly-pull all taking place in the Henry Morris Hall.

Striking for Bronze

I was delighted to be able to join the audience at the Corn Exchange on Sunday evening at 'Striking Together for Bronze' a percussion-only concert written and conceived by Cambridgeshire Music's Mark Aldous. 'Striking Together' is one of the outstanding projects granted the prestigious London 2012 Inspire Mark, the badge of the London 2012 Inspire programme which recognises exceptional and innovative projects inspired by the 2012 Games.

SVC was very impressively represented by our top percussionists: Luke Bucklow, Nicholas Cowling, Jon Curran, Lauren Hill, William Hopper, Alex Manders and Joe McCrae and, of course, our wonderful Samba Band, directed with great gusto by Mrs Macleod and supported by Miss Haworth, who continue to motivate and inspire their pupils to ever greater heights of performance.

Lower School concert

That held good, too, for our musicians in Years 7 – 9 who performed a delightful programme to a packed audience last week. I am always so impressed by their relaxed confidence, something that comes from sustained practice and the certainty that they will do their best whether individually or in groups. The Junior Choir's rendition of 'Auld Lang Syne', beautifully mastered to a wonderful traditional arrangement, left their retiring headteacher an emotional wreck. I am deeply grateful to them for the effort they made to learn Scottish words, which I'm quite certain aren't, but the gesture from them and their teachers was very touching. Thank you.

Shelford Feast and SYD

SVC life is played out against a background of music that runs like a silver thread through the school and, on Tuesday this week, into the community.

What an excellent organisation SYD is. Mark Long has brought together some 109 young people to enjoy and explore their love of music and drama and, gradually, to step up into leadership rôles within the group as they grow through school.

On Tuesday evening, SYD played to a full house – or marquee – on Shelford rec. If there had been a house, they would have brought it down. The performances, individual and group were exceptional, supported by virtuoso accompanying by Mrs Macleod and Miss Haworth who gave up trying to master a very eccentric electric piano that made its own choices about how loud it might sound. Their hilarity only added to the fun of the evening.

Mark Long and his very able team have my thanks and congratulations on all they do to nurture and develop young people's talents and skills – youth work at its very best.

Parental questionnaire

Thank you to those parents who responded to the Kirkland Rowell survey last term; we received the results last week. This time round, we had only 88 returns; the current questionnaire is long and takes quite some time to complete. It would be sensible to consider using a different method to sample parental opinion of our effectiveness. More of that next year, I'm sure.

Much of the school's work was very highly rated, although there were two areas where more than one or two parents signalled that improvement

was required: communication about progress and uniform.

We have been very dissatisfied with our current reporting system for some time. Mr Russell started a review of assessment, reporting and recording last summer term. With a staff working party, he has now evolved what we believe will be a much more effective reporting system. You will experience it for the first time in the autumn. It will give you much better information about how your son or daughter is performing in each of his or her subjects and outline the areas in which he or she needs to improve.

Further, when the problems we have experienced with our interface with the Local Authority's IT network have been resolved, we will be launching FROG, the best learning platform currently on the market. This will allow you to access our information system from home and have an insight into the work your son or daughter is doing. It has enormous potential to improve the flow of information from school to home. It will allow pupils and parents access at home to the materials pupils have used in lessons. This will support parents to support their children to make progress.

We have taken time to work on both of these major developments because we wanted both to work successfully. I'm sure you will see an exponential improvement next term.

In terms of uniform, it was pleasing that several parents wrote in support of our clear rules and urged us to continue addressing breaches of them. Equally, however, some parents were dissatisfied with the quality of the sweatshirts in particular. We shall consider seeking another supplier in the autumn term and do as we have always done in the past and submit the garments to 20 washes to ensure that they can withstand the rigours of school life and the adolescent wish to

customise any article of clothing with a school crest on it.

I would like to extend a particular thank you to those few who took the time to write at length and with considerable good humour. If I knew who you were, I would telephone to discuss the issues you raised, some serious, some light-hearted. The benefit of a confidential survey is that we don't know who you are; the drawback of a confidential survey is that we don't know who you are ... Your time is appreciated nonetheless.

Gearing up

You will no doubt wish to equip your young people in fine (regulation) style for the new term. Can we ask that only sensible purchases be made in terms of shoes, skirts and trousers, the items most likely to be customised in homage to fashion. I am attaching a uniform list to the newsletter so that you have a ready point of reference when resisting high-fashion items.

The uniform shop in the Spicer Wing (follow the entrance to the College that runs alongside the Youth Centre) will be open on the following days from 10.00 am – 3.00 pm 26 – 28 July; 31 August and 1 September. On 2 September, school will be open as usual and uniform can be purchased through Reception.

End of year arrangements

As you are aware, term finishes on Thursday 22 July. We are keen to end the year positively and to that end, intend that our final day be an opportunity for staff and pupils to spend time together in an enjoyable and light-hearted way. Registration will take place as normal; Lessons 1 and 2 will be slightly shorter normal lessons; after break, Years 9 and 10 will assemble on the school field for a range of sporting competition and activity. Years 7 and 8 will be

entertained by their peers to a concert in the Henry Morris Hall. All year groups will be dismissed at midday. The majority of school buses are scheduled to arrive on the college site at 12.05pm. The buses will follow the normal routes and all pupils should arrive home in the usual time-frame.

Unfortunately, Stagecoach is not prepared to run the Citi7 school bus at this adjusted time to pick up pupils in the playground. Pupils who would normally travel by this service will be accompanied to the bus stop at the top of New Road and supervised until they depart on the public Citi7. Please remember that this is a public service bus and pupils will be expected to have change or a return ticket. Parents may wish to make alternative arrangements for them, of course.

The 596 bus will not be able to come to collect those pupils who usually travel on this route. However, we have managed to provide places for the pupils who travel on the 596 to Duxford and get off opposite The Plough. They are to travel by the 592 bus with Kenzies.

Herbert, Kenzies and Whippet coaches will collect pupils from the playground as usual.

For those pupils who travel to Linton or Babraham we will make the school minibus available and deliver pupils home unless parents make private arrangements.

Please accept my apologies that it is not possible to offer the usual school bus service to all pupils.

Hauxton, Harston and Thriplow buses from September 2010

Mrs Maltby will be writing shortly to all pupils in advance of a letter informing pupils of minor changes please note the following:

- those pupils catching the 588 (Whippet) please note that as from September, to accommodate our growing intake of new pupils, those pupils who get on to the 588 at The Courtyards, Great Shelford will instead need to catch the 597 (Whippet);
- those pupils living in Harston who are not entitled to free school transport should apply for their bus pass direct to Education Transport; application forms are available from reception or online and not through the school office as was the situation for this academic year;
- Whippet 597A will continue to pick up pupils embarking at Thriplow. Application for bus passes should be made direct to Ms Perry at school reception.

Start of term arrangements

The arrangements for the start of next term follow.

Term starts for Year 7 pupils on 2 September, when they will be the only year group in the College. This is intended to give them the chance to settle in without the worry of having to adjust to being in a bigger school with bigger pupils, something which Year 7s tend to find very daunting.

We are very grateful to those of our Year 10 pupils who will join them on the morning to act as their guides and mentors. School buses will follow the published timetable at the start and end of the school day. In order to assist the new Year 7 pupils on their first morning journey we are aiming for at least one senior pupil to travel on each bus. New pupils will be sent the appropriate information and bus passes directly from the Transport Department at Shire Hall.

All other year groups start school on Friday 3 September. They will spend their first lesson with their form tutors or in assembly; beyond that, they will have a full, normal school day.

Leavers 2010

Mrs Street leaves us only for a short time. She is being seconded to Thomas Clarkson in Wisbech for this coming academic year. Her long experience of school improvement will stand her and the school she will be supporting in very good stead.

Mrs Maltby will be stepping down from her rôle as Year Manager to focus on her family at a difficult time. She has our warmest thanks for all she has done for her year group. Mrs Maltby takes up a post as Cover Supervisor, a job she can finish at 3.15, from September. We are very pleased we have been able to keep her with us.

Mr MacFarlane leaves us to take up a place on the PGCE course at Homerton following his year as Cover Supervisor. He has our thanks and best wishes.

Mr Davies who stepped down from his post as Head of PE some years ago is finally leaving us. He has been our sports coordinator and worked across our primary schools supporting additional sporting opportunities for primary children. His joie de vivre will be greatly missed by our primary colleagues as he starts retirement for real in his new home in Shrewsbury.

Miss Perkins, teacher of French and Spanish, leaves us to take up her post at the Rugby School. We will miss Miss Perkins' lively energy in the classroom but she is keen to gain 6th form experience which her new school will offer her.

Our congratulations go to Miss Bennett and Miss Brown of our Design Technology Department; both have gained promoted posts, Miss Bennett

as Head of Food Technology at Samuel Ward School in Haverhill and Miss Brown as Head of Design Technology at King's School, Ely – a just reward for their hard work and industry on behalf of the College during their time with us.

Congratulations, too, to Mr Stavrou, who leaves us to take up a post as Assistant Headteacher at Swavesey Village College. Mr Stavrou has transformed Maths at SVC into one of our leading departments. His positive influence has impacted at every level: in his own classroom where he has taught with energy and enthusiasm; in his department, where he has created a wonderfully positive esprit de corps and to his leadership rôles where his 'can-do' attitude has helped to move the school forward significantly. It is no greater compliment to his leadership that two of his colleagues are now stepping up into the gap he leaves: Mr Burgess will be our new Head of Maths and Mr Tanner will support him as second-in-department. Both are exemplary practitioners who will continue Mr Stavrou's excellent work without a misstep.

Mrs Lockwood has always wanted to write and has in recent years been stepping down her teaching to allow her to step up her creative writing. This is the year when she has decided to take the full plunge into an alternative lifestyle, part of which will allow her also to continue her very successful yoga teaching. Mrs Lockwood's relationships with her pupils have always been wonderful. Her gentle encouragement of pupils of all abilities will be much missed by those she has taught.

Mrs Konig, Head of Modern Foreign Languages, moves off into retirement. She has run her department with great conscientiousness and experienced significant success. In recent years, the department has had quite a number of young people who have

come in the top five nationally at GCSE. Hundreds of pupils have experienced wonderful foreign trips because of her commitment to ensuring her pupils have a rounded and real experience of language learning. It was almost inevitable that Mrs Konig would join her husband who retired from his post as Head of English last year and is thoroughly enjoying living a different lifestyle teaching circus skills to a very diverse range of people. Whether Mrs K will join him in his new pursuits remains to be seen but her contribution to school over many years is greatly appreciated.

What can we say about Mr Reynolds? My Reynolds is the kind of teacher children remember long after what they have been taught has been forgotten. His commitment to young people is exemplary. He has done so much outside the classroom to offer them opportunities to succeed: he has always been the encouraging voice in Pop Idol; he pitches in as our concert impresario at the end of the Christmas and summer terms; he has taken to the stage regularly in the staff revue undeterred by an approximate sense of rhythm. His encouragement of his pupils and his colleagues, his sunny nature and his sense of humour will be greatly missed ... although not for too long, as he will be back to undertake some targeted supply work next year.

Mr Thompson's classes are distraught that he is finally stepping down from his long career at SVC firstly as Head of Maths, then as a Maths teacher and latterly as a part-time Maths teacher. He is a prime motivator of young people. In Mr Thompson's classes, everyone loves Maths – quite an achievement ... His robust good humour, his own enthusiasm for his subject and his connection with his pupils have been exemplary and will leave a real gap in his department.

Miss Plant's contribution to SVC has been second to none. As a teacher, whether on the sports field or in the classroom, her practice has been exemplary. She motivates and encourages her pupils to give of their best; she accepts no less. As a Head of Year, she supported her charges tirelessly and with great skill and professionalism. Many benefited from her hard work, her practical compassion and her brisk encouragement. She could quell bad behaviour with a glance. Most remarkable, however, was her talent for bonding any group of disparate young people into a year group. She built a team ethos across the year groups she managed and made sure that no individual was excluded. She was a Head of Year par excellence. Miss Plant also served as a staff governor for many years, serving the interests of the staff on the Governing Body, a task she undertook with great integrity. She can step into retirement with the satisfaction of a job very well done.

Our colleagues take with them our very best wishes for the next stage of their lives whether in or out of the profession and our thanks for all they gave to our school and our pupils over their many years of service.

The last word ... probably

At the time of writing some 10 days of school remain, 10 days until I take my leave of our pupils as they embark on the summer break. I should reassure staff and governors that I will continue working until my contract ends on 31 August, but the last official day of the school year will mark the end of some 37 years spent in the company of young people in schools in England.

I can honestly say that I have loved it all. Teaching is a wonderful profession. Yes, there are hard days, and yes, it

can be exhausting, but most days are wonderful days when the exuberance of the young people we are privileged to work with, their robust good humour, their courtesy to adults, their care of each other and their willingness to do their very best lifts one's spirits and gives one a belief in the fundamental goodness of humanity and great optimism for the future. There is categorically never a dull day. I am so grateful to all of them, even the occasionally naughty ones, for making my days at SVC such a delight.

To you, my unreserved thanks for your unequivocal support and many kind messages. Working at Sawston has given me the chance to end my career very positively working with an excellent team in a wonderful school. I couldn't be more grateful. Thank you.

I leave knowing that you can have faith in Mr Culpin to move the school forward seamlessly. He has the support of a terrific Senior Leadership Team who, under his leadership, will continue to strive for excellence. Our pupils deserve no less.

You have my warmest thanks and my very best wishes for a relaxing and enjoyable summer break.

June Cannie
Principal

Uniform 2010/2011

To ensure their smart appearance in and around the College and on their way to and from school, it is important that all of our pupils conform to the College dress code.

Girls

Skirt	Black; plain fabric, not denim or denim-look or fashion fabric; conventional school uniform style, not flounced, approximately knee-length
Trousers	Black; plain traditional school uniform fabric, not denim or denim-look; conventional school uniform style, not fashion trousers. For example, combat trousers, flared trousers, or trousers with studs, fashion belts or beads on them are not acceptable. Trousers should sit on the waist, not the hips. No underwear should be on show at any time.
Polo shirt	White with school crest
Sweatshirt	Burgundy with school crest
Socks	Black or dark-coloured
Tights	Black or natural; unpatterned
Shoes	Conventional black leather-type shoes, with back with no logos, stripes or coloured laces; no platform soles; all shoes must be either flat or with a low heel for reasons of safety. No boots or trainers may be worn.

Boys

Trousers	Black; plain traditional school uniform fabric, not denim or denim-look; conventional school uniform style, not fashion trousers; trousers should sit on the waist, not the hips; no underwear should be on show at any time.
Polo shirt	White with school crest
Sweatshirt	Burgundy with school crest
Socks	Black or dark-coloured
Shoes	Conventional, black leather-type shoes with no logos, stripes or coloured laces. No boots or trainers may be worn.

Sports Kit

Maroon rugby shirt
 Maroon polo shirt with school logo
 Black games shorts
 Long maroon socks
 White ankle socks
 Swimming trunks (boys) and towel
 One piece swimming costume (girls) and towel
 Trainers or plimsolls
 Football boots or hockey boots
 Shin pads and gum shield (**very strongly recommended for boys and girls**) for hockey and rugby.
 Hair tie to tie back long hair for safety reasons

Optional Extra

Black jogging bottoms (if weather is cold outside)

General

- Trainers may be worn in the school buildings **only** for PE and Drama lessons. They may **not** be worn in the buildings at any other time. If pupils choose to wear them **to play games** in the lunch hour, they **must** change into shoes before entering the buildings. Provision of a boot bag, or similar, for trainers would be sensible.

- It is expected that all pupils will wear the polo shirt and sweatshirt together. The collar of the polo shirt must be worn over the sweatshirt. Pupils may, of course, remove the sweatshirt if they wish to adjust their temperature. However, it is important to note that no other garment may be substituted for the sweatshirt. It is not, for example, acceptable to wear the polo shirt with an outdoor coat or jacket worn over it.
- If a pupil is cold and wishes to wear an extra garment **under** the polo shirt it must be white, without a logo and **not visible** above the neckline of the polo shirt.
- Outdoor coats and jackets must be removed in classrooms.
- No denim or denim-look clothing may be worn in school. This includes denim jackets worn as outdoor coats.
- It is not acceptable to wear a fashion sweatshirt or hooded top as an outdoor coat. An outdoor coat should be plain without fashion logos.
- Scarves and pashminas may only be worn with suitable outdoor clothing not as fashion items.
- Baseball caps are not allowed in school.
- No jewellery may be worn except stud earrings, one in each ear. No charity, friendship bracelets or coloured bands may be worn.
- The wearing of nose-studs, tongue studs or any other face piercing is strictly forbidden.
- Shaven heads (below grade 2), extreme styles or colours are not acceptable.
- No make-up, including nail polish, may be worn.