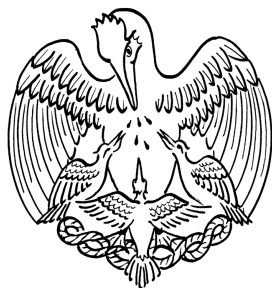


SAWSTON VILLAGE COLLEGE



NEWSLETTER

15 October 2007

Dates For Your Diary

Yrs 9–11 'Romeo in the City' (3.30)	16 October	Spring term begins	3 January
Yr 7 Tutor Evening	18 October		
Yr 11 trip to Paris	20–23 October	Yr 9 examinations	7–11 January
Half Term	22–26 October	Yr 11 Health & Social Care	
		Science Modular examinations	15 January
Yr 8 Royal Opera visit	30 October	Yr 11 Parents' Evening	17 January
PSHE Day	14 November	Science Modular examinations	18 January
Non-uniform day	16 November	Science Modular examinations	21 January
Yr 11 GCSE mock examinations	26–30 November	Science Modular examinations	23 January
Yr 10 GCSE coursework tapes	3–7 December	Science Modular examinations	25 January
Yr 12 Prize Giving Evening	6 December	Yr 8 examinations	28–31 January
		Science Modular examinations	29 January
Annual Review Day (school closed to pupils)	13 December	PSHE Day	1 February
		Languages Mock oral examinations	4–8 February
Gt St Mary's Carol Service	19 December	Intermediate Maths Challenge	7 February
Autumn term ends	19 December	Staff Training Day (school closed to pupils)	8 February
		Half term	11–15 February

Dear Parent

As our October convalescent spell approaches, I write to offer you an update on a range of issues.

Open Evening

Our pupils have, as ever, brought great credit to the College. We held our annual Open Evening on 4 October; the event sparked a great deal of interest in the school from many parents who live outside our catchment area. Many of them have visited during the working day. All of them without exception have commented on the fact that our

pupils have been a key factor in their interest in our school, not only from the open evening but also from the tours of school. Visitors are invariably impressed with our pupils' application in lessons and their very good relationships with their teachers.

We have good cause to be very proud of our young people.

Dates for your diary

Additional training day

You may already know that we are required to review our

curriculum in the light of the new National Curriculum to be established from September 2008. The guidance is not yet fully in the public domain, but the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF, formerly the DfES) has given schools an additional training day to help with the many hours of work we will have to undertake to ensure we implement the new guidance to the benefit of our young people.

I know this will be a further burden for working parents; please accept my apologies for that. We have liaised with our

primary colleagues, however, to make sure that we have chosen a day when they, too, will be having training days. Please note, therefore, that Friday 8 February will be a training day for staff and closed to pupils.

Children in Need

Each year, we allocate three days of the school year to be non-uniform days. The decision as to which they belong to the School Council. This year, the perennially popular Children in Need day falls on Friday 16 November. To be allowed to dress in their own clothes, pupils pay £1; all of this goes directly to the charity. It is worth noting that a non-uniform day is a dressing down, not a dressing up day. The general rule of thumb is that pupils should only wear clothes of which their grandparents would approve ... unless of course, they were Punk Rockers ... A non-uniform day is also a normal school day with normal lessons, a concept that can occasionally be forgotten in the rush to prepare for the fashion statement.

More seriously, no pupil should go home upset because his or her clothes didn't fit with their peers' concept of high fashion. That is a point we make very seriously to our young people each year.

Year 12 Prize-giving

We were very pleased to be able to secure the services of Ade Adepitan as our guest speaker for this year's annual prize-giving. Ade gained a very public profile through the BBC's running link of the wheelchair

'dancers'. More seriously, however, Ade has played competitive wheelchair basketball on every continent and at every level. Beyond that, he has campaigned against racism and disability discrimination as well as being a patron for Scope and the Association for Wheelchair Children. He has just accepted the position of Patron for the Great Britain Wheelchair Basketball Association.

I am confident that Ade will be an inspiration to our young people as they attend their final formal occasion at the College.

Hallowe'en

A letter from the Police is attached to this newsletter. We endorse the points it makes wholeheartedly as, I am sure, will you. I should be grateful for anything you can do to ensure that the event passes positively for those young children, usually accompanied by their parents, for whom it is genuinely an occasion for innocent fun.

Charitable endeavours

In November Yr 9 pupils will be staging a sponsored charity event, using spinning bikes, to raise £2,000 to help purchase refurbished bikes from Opportunities without Limits (OWL), the charity for young people with learning disabilities that is located on our campus, and to pay for the shipping costs to send them to Africa.

The project entails filling a 40-foot container with bikes and spares to ship to developing world countries in Africa.

Ideally the location will be a Centre Bali project in Lesotho, where one of our pupils, Oliver Newnham, is hoping to follow in his brother's footsteps on Year Work Experience in May. Alternatively, the destination could be Ghana, a developing country currently being studied by Year 9 pupils in Geography.

We should be grateful if in the next month, you could help by donating bikes in reasonable condition, that you no longer use or want. Alternatively, given our pupils' and parents' usual proclivity for environmental friendliness and, indeed, fitness, you may wish to retain your cycles ... in these circumstances, you could, if you wish 'adopt a bike' from OWL – they will then refurbish it ready for immediate use by health workers, doctors or teachers, when the bikes reach their destination in Africa.

If you wish to know more about this project that is being led by Mr Holloway and Mrs Bucklow, please contact either of them via the College Office on office@sawstonvc.org

I am delighted that so many of our staff are prepared to give freely of their time to support our young people towards active citizenship and to benefit such worthwhile causes.

Building project

If you have visited the school campus recently you will be aware that the project that will bring us a new Science Block by the end of next year is gathering momentum.

Over half term, our Maths Department will move into their new accommodation which is vastly better than their current situation. The Burkitt Wing, their current home, will then be prepared for demolition before Christmas, leading to the new build starting in January.

We are very optimistic about the development of the campus and delighted that the Local Authority is committed to mirroring the style of our heritage courtyard by building a single storey block in and beyond the footprint of the existing building.

And finally ...

My best wishes go to all of you for Saturday's match against South Africa ... let's hope that Johnny's golden boot can do it again!

It's been interesting living with a rabid supporter of the Scottish Team who continues to wear his 'Famous Grouse' Scotland rugby top to watch all the games, despite our country's exit from the World Championship – as I explain to people, he's not that famous ... Anyway, no Scottish sour grapes here! Best foot forward, Johnny!

June Cannie,
Principal



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Dear Parent

Subject: **Hallowe'en: Wednesday 31 October**

I am writing to you via your child's school, and with the support of the school.

Hallowe'en is an opportunity for family fun and entertainment. It can also be one of the busiest nights of the year for anti social behaviour.

There is no issue with children accompanied by their parent(s) or a responsible adult calling at houses in the neighbourhood where they know they will be made welcome. The tradition of dressing up as witches and ghosts can be fun for children and adults.

Unfortunately, "Trick or Treat" has – on occasions – caused Police some concern. Large numbers of children or teenagers roam the streets calling at every house with the intention of obtaining money.

However it is no fun being on the receiving end:

- many residents are frightened by groups of strangers calling at their door at night;
- the elderly and vulnerable can be intimidated into handing over money;
- sometimes a refusal can offend, and this may lead to verbal abuse, and malicious damage to property, increasingly by eggs being thrown at houses and cars.

No-one wants to be a spoil-sport. But please imagine you, or a friend or relative, becoming the victim of verbal assault or criminal damage. It is no longer fun. Last year, one Hallowe'en prank ended up in court.

The message to you as a parent is simple. Please do not allow your child to be a nuisance to your neighbourhood. Do not encourage visiting unless you know children will be made welcome. Explain this to your child, and you will contribute to avoiding the unpleasantness described above. Please also ask yourself if you want your children knocking on strangers' doors asking for sweets.

If you would like a "No Trick or Treat" poster, please access the Police website (**www.cambs.police.uk**) or contact me on the above direct line phone number.

Please call me if you have any questions about the points raised.

Yours sincerely

Pc Alison Jones
School Liaison Officer