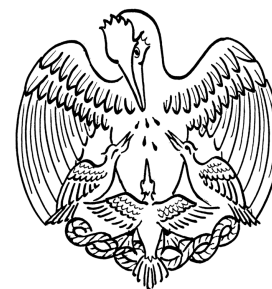


Newsletter

June 2008



Dates for your diary

PSHE day	17 June	Jubilee Cup athletics competition	2 July
Year 7 Parents' Evening	19 June	Year 6 Parents' Evening	3 July
Lower School Concert	24 June	Geography field trip to Sheringham	8 and 9 July
Geography field trip to Swanage	25 to 27 June	North vs South athletics competition	14 July
Year 11 Ball	28 June	End of Term	18 July
Year 6 Induction day	2 July		

Dear Parent

I hope you survived the rigours of the wind and rain over the half-term holiday – not a problem if you travelled beyond Cambridgeshire by all accounts.

Specialist College Activities Week

It seems much longer than a week since our normal school routines were in place, no doubt because of our Specialist College Activities Week (SCAW) that took place the week before the holiday.

We were relieved and delighted to welcome everyone back from their travels, having had a wonderful time and having represented the school terrifically well, wherever they

went. On Languages trips: 74 Year 7s went to Normandy; 50 Year 8s went to Barcelona and 55 Year 8s went to the Rhineland; 82 Year 9 pupils travelled to the Ardèche for an adventure experience and 35 Year 7 pupils took part in a joint language and history trip to Italy. My thanks go unreservedly to my colleagues who year on year continue to offer these wonderful opportunities to our young people.

Back at base during SCAW, the activities provided for our pupils were many and varied, based largely around our specialist status subjects of Maths, Science and Design Technology, although Art and Music were heavily represented with printing t-shirts, making

African masks, Aztec Art, pan pipes, drumming, salsa and Samba.

Groups of pupils visited Anglia Ruskin University for an insight into Science at ARU. Others went to Wicken Fen or visited the London Eye, having found out in advance how it worked – although one group was extremely disappointed to find that it was out of action on the day of their visit; ice-cream compensated somewhat for their disappointment, as did a visit to Greenwich and the Maritime Museum there.

Back at base, pupils had the opportunity to make bath bombs or rockets (I stayed in my office that day ...), to work with a team of industrialists on problem-solving and to cook

either African or South American food – it has to be said that a focus on chocolate was by far the most popular: healthy schools’ initiative triumphs again.

Then, of course, our Year 10 pupils were out on their annual work experience while our Year 11 pupils slaved over their GCSE examination papers – the only members of our school population for whom the week was less than enjoyable; let’s hope the rewards will more than compensate them.

We are very lucky to have so many staff that are willing to provide such wonderful opportunities for our young people whether at home or aboard.

Primary liaison

Now is the time of year when we meet our new charges, not only in Year 6, when they visit for the induction day, but also in Year 5 when they join us for an insight into secondary school. We believe this puts their minds at rest about the transfer to secondary school before they have to deal with the pressure of Year 6 and SATs (or ‘the Voldemorts, those that shall not be named ...’ as one of our local headteachers quite sensibly tells his pupils ...)

We were very pleased to learn recently that we have recruited the largest number of Year 6 pupils for many years for this coming September, no mean feat, given the low numbers of pupils in our partner primary schools. Sadly, our success

impacts negatively on other local secondary schools, but ensures that we remain financially secure; we were able to return a balanced budget with a significant carry-forward again this year for the fifth year in succession, this despite a major expansion of our facilities and a reduction in our class sizes at KS4.

We are very conscious that our numbers continue to rise because our established parents (and pupils) largely give us a very good press with prospective parents. Please keep up the good work – and if bribes help ...

Federation bid

You may already know that the Local Authority has recently launched a competition for the new secondary school in Trumpington. Bids from organisations that wish to run the new school have been invited.

We are currently preparing a bid, believing that we can significantly enhance the offer we make to our own pupils if we take on the leadership of a second secondary school. Being involved in the early stages of planning for the new school would allow us to impact upon its design and its focus. We would, therefore, be able to ensure that its curriculum offer complemented that of the College and opened opportunities not only to the new and existing communities in Trumpington but also to our own pupils. For example, we would seek to ensure that the

new school was able to provide top-quality vocational education facilities for those areas of study currently under development nationally.

We face stiff opposition in the competition from other local secondary schools and from national and international organisations so it is by no means a foregone conclusion that we will succeed. We believe, however, that we have the capacity, drive and community commitment to offer the existing and new communities in Trumpington a high-quality education on their doorstep; further, we believe we could contribute significantly to the new community by extending our community work in terms of adult and community learning, sport and leisure and support for families.

The deadline for submission of competition bids is 15 August. At the start of September there will be a public meeting at which all proposers will present their plans. I shall write to you more fully in September to outline the parameters of our bid and hope you will feel able to support our plans that we feel will secure the College’s future as well as play a significant rôle in the founding of a new community in Trumpington.

Catch-up

Of course, normal school life produces more than its fair share of excitement. We have been delighted to learn of the many achievements of our pupils in other spheres.

- Tom Borrowdale, Year 10, was voted the 'Most improved student' from all the schools that participate in Cambridge Regional College's Catering course. We are all very proud of Tom's achievement and have already been promised free first night meals when he opens his own restaurant ...
- The annual quiz night, organised for us by Neil and Denise Adams, ably supported by Dr Newman and her husband raised £1,000 to allow us to support young people for whom the cost is an issue to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Last year's winners, Pinky on a G String, not only set the quiz questions, they also doubled up as markers on the evening. Honours this year went to team Granta in 1st place, Babbling Brooks in 2nd and 3rd place went to Brian's Brains.
- Sawston Fun Run confirmed the excellence of several of our runners: John Baslington and Nicky Savill were the first SVC pupils home in the Years 7 – 11 category.
- Nicky went on to confirm that she is a first class all-rounder by winning the district Rotary Club Young Designer Award against entries from Linton and Bottisham Village Colleges. Nicky's hand-made waistcoat won the day.
- Matthew Meacher played in the Norhalne Cup competition in Denmark with his team, Norwich City Academy Football Club. The

team won the cup, the first time Norwich has won it since 1999, in the process scoring 22 goals; Matthew has every reason to be proud of his winner's medal.

- And then there was Pop Idol 2008 – the winner was Amy Fallon, Year 7, who won the day against 9 other contestants to take this year's much-coveted title, singing the Amy McDonald number 'Mr Rock and Roll'. Amy just pipped Cameron Carr, Year 11, to the post. Cameron sang 'Electricity' from Billy Elliott wonderfully well. The judges' vote was split between Amy and Cameron; the audience vote favoured Amy, hence her winning the title. Congratulations to Amy and Cameron and to Grace Furbank and Hayley Allen who won second and third places respectively. This year's competition held over several heats, has raised over £1,000 that will go towards stage, sound and lighting equipment in the Youth Centre. Our thanks go unequivocally to Mr Holloway who, year on year, organises this event for our young people and provides a great evening's entertainment for the capacity audience.

Congratulations to everyone on their individual successes and the contribution they all make to the richness of College life.

Cinema

The project to re-establish cinema in the Youth and

Community Centre continues apace. Pupils from the school interested in being involved in the cinema's operation meet up every Thursday after school; the hope is that they will undergo training in the skills required to run a cinema before the end of the year. This training will be conducted by the Cambridge Film Trust, in association with the Arts Picture House in Cambridge. While pupils await confirmation of this, they have busied themselves writing a blog at www.sawstonfilm.blogspot.com and are also about to get involved in a new and separate project, the Sawston Cinema Archive Project, which has been funded by the Young Roots Heritage Lottery Fund.

The Sawston Cinema Archive Project has three strands. One strand will involve making a film. Pupils from the college who get involved in the project will be trained in oral history skills and will then interview members of the community about their memories of the original cinema. While some pupils interview, others will be filming/editing. The second strand will involve the setting up of a dedicated website for the display of project findings, while the third will involve making an artwork for display in the Youth Centre.

This exciting project is led by the Arts Development Manager, supported by Youth Services. Project partners include Sawston Village History Society and the Sawston Archive Group, part of the Cambridgeshire Community Archive Network. The project

will be officially launched on 19 June at 3.30pm in the Youth Centre when any interested members of the community are invited to attend. If you would like to find out more about this project, you should contact: Lesley Morgan on 01223 712825.

The Academy

We had a successful two-day Mini Academy musical theatre workshop at Sawston Village College over the May half-term, which finished with a sharing of work with family and friends. The week-long Summer Academy, which will lead to a full performance of *The Jungle Book*, now moves on to Linton Village and will take place from 4 – 8 August. It is open to young people aged 8 – 16. Anyone interested in attending or finding out more, should contact 01223 712825.

A fresh start

Every new half term presents us with an opportunity to remind our young people of our expectations of them in and out of the classroom. It is so easy for standards to slip towards the end of the school year; it is so essential that we keep them high, if our pupils are to achieve their potential and we are to maintain a calm, orderly school.

We have been focusing this week on re-stating our school rules. For example, at this time of year, it is occasionally the case that some of our pupils

will slip into trainers, claiming that they have outgrown their shoes and that there is little point in buying them until September – however, rules are rules and trainers are not shoes!

We have been very concerned recently by the number of our girls who are wearing extremely short fashion skirts that are flounced and multi-layered, despite a clear statement in the rules that skirts must be *'black; plain fabric, not denim; conventional school uniform style, approximately knee-length'*. Our concerns hinge not only on the breach of the school rules but on the inappropriateness of such clothing for school. In many cases, too, girls' choice of 'school' trousers verges on the unacceptable because they are so low-slung that even leaning forward in their seats presents an arresting view to those in the row behind, particularly to those who are not girls ...

As teachers, we accept that whatever uniform style we adopt, pupils will do their best to customise it. However, there are serious issues linked to some girls' choice of clothing. We have no wish to change our uniform or to prescribe the make and style of trousers and skirts, but we do need parents to buy trousers and skirts that conform to the rules and stand up to the hurly-burly of school life and preserve their daughters' modesty, even in high winds or on steep staircases!

Recently, too, we have noticed a sharp increase in the number

of mobile telephones in school. As you know, we do not allow these in school. The reasons for this are clear and very well-documented in the press:

- if a mobile telephone is lost or stolen, school has to invest a great deal of time in resolving the situation;
- schools that allow mobile telephones in school find that lessons are often disrupted while pupils text one another or check their text messages in class;
- text bullying is extremely common at the moment; school must be a safe place; ensuring that there are no mobile telephones in school supports that;
- similarly, in some schools, pupils use their mobile telephones to film bullying incidents then post them on networking sites for the 'enjoyment' of others; we are keen to protect all of our pupils from such exploitation.

If any of our pupils need to use the telephone during the school day, they have access to the Reception telephone. This removes the need for a mobile telephone in school. We have recently strengthened our procedures; mobile phones will only be returned to *a parent* after confiscation; further, if a telephone is confiscated twice, the phone will be retained in school for longer on the second occasion. These measures, we believe, will help to reduce the instances of telephones being brought to school. Most effective, however, would be parents' support in ensuring that mobile phones are

distinctly *not* mobile during the school day. Thank you, in anticipation, for all you will do to ensure that your young people focus on the primary purpose of school: their learning.

**June Cannie
Principal**

Wanted from September 2008

Minibus driver

As our curriculum develops in association with Linton Village College, we are increasingly finding it difficult to free staff to drive our young people in the school minibus to and from the College each week. To that end, we are looking to recruit an excellent driver with a clean licence to undertake the responsibility.

The successful applicant should have the authority to gain the respect of our pupils and the ability to establish a good rapport with them.

It is likely that the need for the appointee's services will expand through the course of the academic year.

The salary will be £6 an hour to include the appointee's own travelling time to and from Sawston Village College.

Please contact Mrs StJohn, my PA, at mstjohn@sawstonvc.org or on 01223 712818 no later than 25 June should you wish to apply for the position.