

Dates for your diary

- **15 – 19 February**
Half Term
- **25 February**
Yr 9 Parents' Eve
- **26 February-
9 March**
Yr 9 Options
Interviews
- **1-5 March**
Yr 8 Exams
- **2 March**
Yrs 10 & 11 Maths
module exams
- **8-12 March**
Yr 10 GCSE MFL
speaking
- **9 March**
Yr 11 Scripted
Performances
- **12 March**
Options deadline
- **16 March**
Hills Rd & Long Rd
Interview Day
- **18 March**
West Road Concert
- **22 March-1 April**
Work Experience
- **1 April**
End of Spring term
- **19 April**
Summer Term
begins

Dear Parent

What a start we had to the term: early-morning decisions as to whether school would be able to open; a fury of snowballs and a huddle of coats and scarves. Of course, the end of last term was even worse: school closed, losing all of us the opportunity to celebrate Christmas in our time-honoured fashion: so many staff and pupils poised to perform, in some cases rather badly, for the delectation of Years 10 and 11; so many younger pupils looking forward to the promised form parties or to the chance to see a film in our own cinema. If Facebook traffic is to be believed – if ever – it was the one day of the year that our pupils were willing us to stay open.

Of course, it was the right decision to close on the 18 December – I know this from personal experience. Irrespective of whether we open or close, I always try to get in to school – those of our staff who live in the village or close to the school always come in and my Scottish Presbyterian conscience dictates that, as the boss, I should lead by example ... It took me 90 minutes to complete a 20-minute journey. Coming from the Bottisham direction, I somehow managed to get lost and ended up 8 miles from Bury St Edmunds. In my defence, all of the traffic signs were snow-covered ... and I've only been doing the journey for 8 years.

Mind you, the side benefit was that I heard most of the Togmeister's last broadcast. I hope my fellow devotees are managing the transition to the young whippersnapper who has taken

his place. If you don't understand this paragraph, you won't be experiencing the sense of disorientation – or your choice of radio station is different to mine.

Great St Mary's

But, of course, the show must go on – and our Music staff ensured that it did. Our annual Christmas service at Great St Mary's was, as usual, wonderful. Our young people sang and played to a capacity congregation and were an inspiration to us all. There will be a further opportunity to hear them when they take to the platform at West Road on 18 March for the spring concert. Book early to avoid disappointment.

Welcome ...

We were delighted to welcome Miss Harriss to our English Department. She joined us in January from her previous post at Comberton Village College and has made a very impressive start as Second in the English Department.

And farewell ...

We are very sad to be losing Simon Fleming, currently our Sports Centre Manager, when he leaves later this month with his wife and newborn son, Oliver, to emigrate to Australia. He takes our thanks and best wishes with him.

Youth Speaks

The Rotary Club's Youth Speaks competition offers a rare and

wonderful opportunity for young people to experience formal public speaking. Annually, Year 10s from Cambridge rise to the challenge and, each year, pupils from Sawston Village College always represent us with great pride and courage. This year proved no exception as Tom Fleck, Hannah Long and Suzie Curran won the event seeing off competition from Netherhall, St Bede's and the Perse. Overcoming their nerves (as Mark Twain said, 'There are only two types of public speakers: the nervous and the liars'), the team gave a humorous, polished performance on health and safety and its impact on modern society. Suzie set the standard as the chairperson, leading proceedings with consummate ease, followed by Tom whose Christmas anecdotes and incredulity that packages of nuts may contain traces of nuts won the audience over from the start. Hannah confidently proposed the vote of thanks with a winning smile and it was clear to all, as commented upon by the judges, that all three worked together and supported each other as a team. The team will now go on to compete in the Regional Final in Bury St Edmunds on 27 February.

The Henry Morris Community Trust

As you know, we became a trust school last November, forming the Henry Morris Community Trust with our partner primary schools and other partners with a view to supporting the college in the years to come.

The arrangements for trust school governance are a little different to those for foundation schools. We had to re-shape our Governing Body as part of the process, therefore. We now have vacancies on the Governing Body for three community governors and hope you will wish to apply or be able to recommend someone we could approach to undertake the rôle. Community governors are appointed

by the Governing Body to represent community interests. They can be people who live or work in the community served by the school, or people who do not work or live close to the school but are committed to the good governance of the school. Staff are not eligible to become community governors, nor are those who are elected members of the local authority to which the school belongs. Otherwise, anyone who wishes to represent the community in the governance of the school is eligible to apply.

To do so, simply send a brief biography (200 words) outlining why you would wish to become a community governor to me or to our Clerk to the Governing Body, Ruth Whitlam at the following address: ruth.whitlam@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

Thank you very much to those of you who offered to participate in our trust conference for Year 6 pupils on 13 July. We were inundated with offers and had to turn down a significant number. It's good to know that we have such a supportive, interested and interesting parent body.

Congratulations

We are always delighted to hear about our former pupils' successes. Our congratulations go to Rhys James, who has gained a place at Peterhouse, Cambridge to study Law, to Declan Corr who has a place at Cambridge to study Medicine and to Charlotte Bransfield-Garth, who has a place at St John's to read Natural Sciences. Emma Pritchard will be studying English Literature at Oxford and Tom Curran – a name of which we will hear more in the world of the arts – has a place to the Guildhall to study Music. If you know of any other alumni who have news to report, please let us know. Just because they are no longer pupils at the school, they will always be pupils of the school and we enjoy

enormously hearing about their successes.

Despite the winter rigours, our cross-country runners performed wonderfully well representing Cambridgeshire at the District Cross Country Championships on 21 January. George Schwiening (Yr 10) and Max Holden (Yr 7) won their age group races and Hannes Whittingham, (Yr 10), came sixth in his race. All three now go through to the Anglian Regional Championships and take our very best wishes with them.

George, Max and Hannes might well be among the target audience for the next announcement ...

Shelford Community Sport Relief Mile

The finely-honed athletes among you will have the opportunity to demonstrate your prowess on 21 March when the Shelford community takes to its heels to raise funds for this excellent cause. Full details have yet to be published, but put the date in your calendars and step up your training forthwith.

Community Education

You may already participate in our community education provision – if you do, please keep it up! As the first community college in the country, Sawston is committed to the continuance of adult education. To that end, we're looking to boost the number of courses we offer from September particularly. Whether you are already an experienced tutor, or whether you have a skill or knowledge you would wish to contribute to our adult programme, please get in touch; we should be delighted to hear from you. Please contact our Adult Manager, Sue King, at sking@sawstonvc.org

If there is a course you would like to undertake as a learner, please let us

know. Our aim is to provide courses that people will attend. How better to do that than to respond to demand.

International Award

Miss Haworth has been very busy this year focusing on leading our bid to gain the official designation of 'International School Award'. Whilst our pupils have many opportunities to travel, we have never applied for the official recognition. However, with the help of Miss Lock and other interested colleagues, Miss Haworth has begun the process to gain us the designation. A group of interested pupils, Student International Coordinators, is working alongside their teachers to ensure the success of the project.

The major focus for their energies at the moment is the organisation of an International Week in June when all lessons will have some kind of global focus – more of that in a future newsletter.

Impressively, however, Miss Haworth has already established two link schools: one in Russia and one in Rwanda. The Russian link has already been very successful. Our pupils have exchanged correspondence and presents with their Russian counterparts and are very interested in a visit to meet them. If any parent can put us in touch with a Russian speaker or teacher, we would be able to start a twilight class for those interested in learning the language – what better incentive to learn a language than the possibility of using it in the country where it is spoken. Please contact me directly if you are able to help.

The Rwandan link is proving more challenging, as the teacher in charge in Rwanda has only infrequent access to the Internet. However, we're very hopeful that a correspondence link can be established between pupils in our respective schools by Easter and that we can gain British Council funding to

support a teacher exchange this summer or early autumn with a view to securing the link for the future. Our pupils will be working to send a package to Rwanda in July and will no doubt be seeking your assistance to collect shoes, clothes, glasses and books to take to our Rwandan partners.

Plans are already underway to establish a link with a school in China.

This work is crucial if we are to prepare our young people to understand more than simply intellectually the world in which they live. It will be good to have the official acknowledgement of our outward-facing ethos, but the reward will be rather more than the badge on the letterhead.

Year 9 options

We launched our new programme for next year's Year 10 pupils this week. The curriculum offer is growing exponentially. Our young people now have a very wide range of options subjects to choose from. New additions include: diplomas in Hospitality and Catering and Sport and Leisure, taught at the College and five others taught at other centres; Engineering, taught at SVC as opposed to at Linton Village College, and NVQ Business Languages. I am very grateful to my colleagues for their willingness to work hard on new courses to allow our pupils maximum choice in their learning at Key Stage 4.

In order to be able to offer Hospitality and catering, we will very shortly be embarking on the next phase of our building programme and creating a custom-built catering facility with an integral café where our pupils will prepare food for the public, although in the early stages, the 'public' is likely to be some of our staff or pupils – best to practise on us before launching professionally. I think this may be a pleasure I will delegate to our senior

team in the first instance ... it would be unfair to hog all the privileges for myself.

The headship process

This week, the Times Educational Supplement will carry the advertisement for my successor. Our governors will be running the process to find the new Principal of the College from 15 – 17 March and expect a strong field of applicants. Crucially, of course, our pupils will play a significant role in the process as they do in the majority of our recruitment processes. Their judgement is just as good as, if not better than, ours.

We will inform you shortly afterwards of the outcome of the interviews.

In the interim, business as usual.

June Cannie
Principal

INVIGILATORS NEEDED

to work in the Exam Hall

We are looking for responsible people to join our team of invigilators.

Duties will include

- preparing the Exam Hall for exams;
- assisting with the distribution and collection of exam papers;
- aiding candidates with special arrangements;
- maintaining the integrity of all aspects of the exam process.

For further details please contact
Mrs Anne Martin, Exams Officer
Sawston Village College
01223 712610

ACE Music Courses

The ACE Foundation, a non-profit educational trust founded in 1958, has been based in Babraham for many years together with subsidiary company ACE Study Tours (www.cestudytours.co.uk), which is renowned for its art history and classical music tours. Now ACE is planning a series of playing days for musicians, to be held in and around the Cambridge area. ACE is also hoping to develop Bury Farm in Stapleford into a purpose designed study centre for music and the arts. The aim is to convert the historic buildings into a centre of excellence for the region, placing music at the very heart of the community. Whilst it will be a year or two before our new home is ready, you won't have to wait that long to enjoy a playing day as our next event will be held in your very own school! Details of this and other forthcoming courses are listed below.

The Cambridge Clarinet and Saxophone Day with James Rae will be held at Sawston Village College on Sunday 28 February. The day caters for players from Grade 1 to Diploma, and will include a large Single Reed Choir playing a special version of James Rae's Toccata Brillante with parts for all abilities (including some to stretch any player!), Cinerama by James Rae and several jazz arrangements by Jon Halton.

Everyone will have the opportunity to take part in a junior/senior clarinet or saxophone ensemble, coached by professional players and teachers with James Rae attending each group. A James Rae master class will follow for selected musicians. Course participants will also benefit from lecture demonstrations on mouthpiece and reed selection, and the Wood Wind and Reed music shop will exhibit a wide range of instruments, music and accessories. The course includes a free jazz concert at lunchtime and participants will perform an end of course concert for the enjoyment of friends and families. The course fee, covering all activities, is just £40.

The Jazz Day on 4 July 2010 is hosted by saxophone great Alan Barnes (www.alanbarnesjazz.com) and will offer coaching in improvisation skills for different levels of abilities, with particular focus on the requirements for both Big Bands and smaller ensembles. The course will be held at the Cambridge University School of Music, where the facilities include the 500 seat West Road Concert Hall, recently refurbished and blessed with superb acoustics. Alan Barnes will be assisted by local jazz musicians and educators and Wood Wind and Reed will provide a special jazz education stand. The course fee is £40.

We are also in the early stages of devising a Folk Music Day for Summer/Autumn look out for it on our website: www.acefoundation.org.uk

For further information or to book either of the above courses please contact the ACE Foundation at ace@acefoundation.org.uk or telephone 01223 499707.

Blood Donors Needed

On Tuesday 16 February there will be a Blood Donor Session in the Henry Morris Hall between 1.00 - 3.15 pm and 4.30 – 7.00 pm. All welcome!