

**Sawston**  
Village College

**Annual Report to Governors**

**June 2018**

## Introduction

This is the fifth annual report by the Principal to the Local Governing Body of Sawston Village College. With some of the functions of the governing body having transferred to the Trust over the past two years this report has much more narrow focus than earlier incarnations but hopefully one that still captures the range of the College's work over the past twelve months. As always, however, it is very much an overview document, attempting as it does to give a flavour of the main developments over the course of the past year rather than a blow by blow account of everything that has taken place.

The report follows the format of its predecessors. Aligned loosely with Ofsted areas of focus, the report begins with an overview of the past year, before drilling down into brief summaries of Pupil Outcomes, Behaviour and Personal Development, Teaching and Learning and Leadership before concluding with an assessment of our overall strengths and areas for improvement, and the challenges ahead for the coming year.

I am grateful, as always, for the contribution of the Senior Leadership Team and my PA, Mrs. Golding, in the production of this report.

Jonathan Culpin  
June 2018



## Principal's Review of the Year

It is fair to say that no one year is like any other in a school environment and the last 12 months are no exception to that rule. Some of the highlights, if that is the right word, have included the arrival of Ofsted, the malfunction of the ceiling of the HMH, and the beast from the east which swept bitterly across the school for what felt like days on end, all of which are covered in various sections below. At the same time, the past academic year has seen numerous success and achievements, a selection of which follow.

In the autumn term, we came back to yet another set of very strong examination results which placed us amongst the best schools in Cambridge and the wider region. We were particularly pleased with the performance in the new GCSEs in English and Maths, and with the progress made by pupils between year 7 and year 11. However, we were not complacent and realised that more hard work was ahead of us if we were to maintain this level of performance across the curriculum in all of the new GCSEs now coming online. In October, we had a very successful Open Evening and it was clear then that the College was proving very popular, a view that would be sustained with the dramatic increase in applications for September 2018 which has led to the College increasing the admission number for Year 7 to 240. The Sponsored Walk took place in lovely autumn sunshine and raised a large sum of money for pupil-led projects.

In November, Presentation Evening took place and we were delighted to welcome Professor Catherine Barnard to award the prizes to what was an exceptional year group, and as the term drew to a close, with the traditional school panto, Great St. Mary's Carol Concert and end of term quiz we looked back on a very successful term, as recognised by inspectors from Ofsted.

Looking back now on the Spring Term, most days seemed to be characterised by the cold fronts that swept across England. Nevertheless, pupils and staff wrapped up warm and continued to provide and take on new challenges. We had the visit of the Brass Funkeys, to which we invited year 5s and Year 6s from local primary schools; the Berlin visit, World



Book Day (with a great range of costumes from both staff and pupils; Holocaust Memorial Day, and we hosted students from the Blessed Imelda's School from Taipei, Taiwan. As always, it is informative and valuable to make these connections with our partners from other countries and we signed an agreement to maintain our relationship in the years to come.

The last few weeks have seen the College say goodbye to Year 11, as they begin their final exams. They have been a superb group of young people and the send off at Leavers' Day, despite the slightly miserable weather, was nevertheless a very celebratory occasion. We have had to make some adjustments due to the problems in the Henry Morris Hall but the exams would appear to have gone well. Year 10 pupils have undertaken the two weeks of work experience, while Key Stage 3 pupils have been involved in Activities Week. Year 7s went to Normandy or remained in school to take part in a week learning survival skills and much more, which was a huge success; Year 8 were in the Rhineland or taking part in arts

related activities, mixing visual art, performance and music; and Year 9 took part in the legendary Ardeche trip, or were either on the UK residential learning an amazing set of challenging outdoor skills or took part in STEM-related activities linked to motion and rollercoasters! Overall, a most successful week and I would like to thank all of my colleagues for providing our pupils with such a varied and rich experience during this time.

### **Achievement and Progress (Mr Burgess and Mr Wallace)**

**Year 11:** There is a great deal of uncertainty around GCSE results for 2018 as this is the first year in which pupils are sitting the new GCSE graded 9-1 in the majority of subjects. The Department for Education have warned that, although they are working towards keeping largely the same percentage of pupils achieving key anchor points, individual schools are likely to see larger than usual fluctuations in their results for the next few years.

The overall picture of achievement for pupils at the College remains very positive, meeting challenging targets for the majority of key performance indicators. For year 11, teacher estimates suggest that 65% of pupils are on track to achieve a grade 5 or above in both English and Maths. If achieved, this will be higher than the College target and will also compare very favourably to the national picture likely to place the College firmly within the top 25% of schools for this measure.

The Progress 8 score for 2018 is estimated to be +0.23; this represents nearly a quarter of a grade higher than expected progress across all pupils nationally. This would be slightly lower than last year's score of +0.30, but would represent another positive result during uncertain times. Attainment 8, which gives an indication of the average grade achieved across 8 subjects, is expected to be a B-.

**Other Years:** Year 10 estimates currently sit at 55% for English and Maths at grade 5 or higher, with a Progress 8 estimate of +0.19. The Progress 8 estimate is slightly down on previous year predictions and staff at the College are working hard to identify individuals and groups of pupils for targeted support and intervention. Progress for all other years is currently very positive but is likely to change as more information becomes available about the new GCSE.



### **Behaviour, Attendance and Inclusion (Ms Abbs)**

Over the last 12 months Cambridgeshire County Council has implemented a new structure to their Social Care model and subsequently to their thresholds and referrals systems. For the College this has not been without its challenges. These challenges have resulted in another new model being introduced from September 2018, however Jonathan Lewis, Director of Education for CCC has agreed to support both schools and Social Care to ensure that there are more frequent 'feedback' sessions between agencies and services over the first three months of its implementation.

Despite these challenges safeguarding remains a top priority at the College. Ofsted positively acknowledged the College's safeguarding approaches. Staff remain vigilant in reporting concerns and subsequently the safeguarding team acting upon them promptly. Reporting concerns has been made easier and more efficient with the implementation of MyConcern. This secure online service is now across all Trust schools and is for Sawston an invaluable resource. Staggered staff training has allowed the system to become embedded and the aim

is that all staff will be trained for September. Governor training will be offered in early September 2018. The level of children at risk remains an ever present concern to safeguarding staff and the College has made five social referrals over the last few months with two being allocated to Social Care teams.

We have had a high intake of challenging young people from the Local authority: one Managed Move; one Looked after Child and one other young person with very specific needs. Two of these young people have SEN and require EHCPs going forward. This has resulted in Compass House being used to its full capacity in supporting existing pupils on Individual Alternative Educational Plans (IAEP) as well as using it for internal isolations and medical needs support and some IAEP Year 11 exam access. Unfortunately, a pupil on an alternative placement broke down earlier in the term resulting in this pupil returning to us on a bespoke timetable. One pupil has been subject to a Managed Move due to a number of factors in and out of school and is now a looked after child. We are currently in the process of trying to find a suitable placement for another pupil through the Managed Move process due to their high level of exclusions and repeated defiance.

Within the 12 month period there have been 16 pupils who have had a total of 50.5 fixed term exclusions. Compass house has had 47.5 internal exclusions by 31 pupils and the Duty room with 166 inclusions (mostly for uniform violations and failed after school detentions) by 68 pupils. There is likely to be a correlation between the higher numbers of internal inclusions due to the new issue of the Behaviour Book, with its firmer expectations, introduced earlier in the year. In addition to this a system has been activated on the management information system allowing staff to record behaviour issues, consequences and actions taken.

Persistent absence remains a concern for the College with a cohort of 125 and 30.4% (38 pupils) being above the 10% threshold. However, there have been four pupils who have come off the school role that have impacted on this data. The whole school figure for the period between September 4 2017 and May 25 2018 (Year 11 Leavers day) stands at 95.1%. We have engaged the services of an Educational Welfare Officer (EIO) who will be supporting us to 'cut in' earlier with pupils and as part of the transition data from primary schools we are now better placed to identify PA pupils and those who present with 'patterns' of absence that occur throughout the year. The EIO also works with the majority of feeder schools and will be sharing details of those pupils on her current caseload in order that we can support, monitor and target pupils sooner by ensuring that we have pupils on Attendance Action Plans earlier and for shorter periods of time.

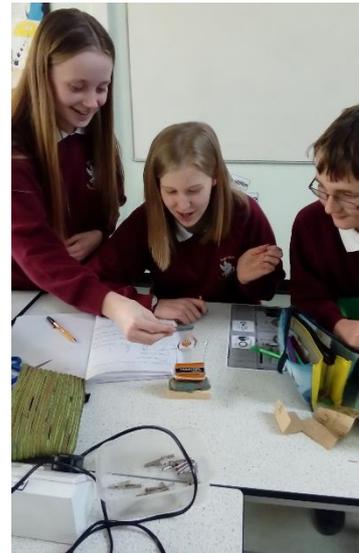
## **Professional Learning and Quality of Teaching and Learning (Mr Woodcock)**

Professional learning (CPDL) continues to be based on the now well-established principle that all teachers should be actively reflective and evaluative of their practice as an essential part of their professional identity. We retain the three-way, reciprocal relationship between (a) individual interests and development needs (addressed through PM and CPDL), (b) departmental development plans and (c) whole school priorities, all informed by routine quality assurance activities. This is designed to ensure that any developmental activity is focused on priority areas and that such activity at each level of the College is mutually-informing and mutually-reinforcing.

The professional programme has evolved again this year, providing a wider range of structures for professional learning, more suited to individual and departmental need and more sensitive to concerns about workload. In particular, teachers were no longer required to complete and present a personal Teaching Excellence Project (TEP). The whole-school coaching

programme, which operated for the last two academic years, was also discontinued, with now-trained in-school coaches available to teachers on an opt-in or directed basis, according to need. In place of TEPs, teachers were offered a menu of pathways, chosen with guidance and/or direction from subject leaders according to each teacher's particular areas of interest and development. We retained a Teaching and Learning Twilight programme, a series of topic-specific seminars addressing issues identified by subject leaders and individual teachers. The model of Teaching and Learning Briefings, reformed last year, has also continued to keep teachers informed of recent debates and research findings. Finally, NQTs and other new colleagues have followed two parallel programmes, through CASSA and in school, to introduce them to school policy and practice and wider educational debates.

We have sustained the methods, introduced last academic year, for how we make judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. In line with research and national best practice, as well as the approach now taken by Ofsted, we do not judge individual lessons and instead look for typicality and make more conscious use of the wider evidence base (e.g. work samples, homework review, pupil panels, etc.). Rather than Ofsted criteria, we also use internally devised expectations at a whole school and departmental level (known as "Sawston Lessons", with departmental interpretations alongside this common framework). This again is in line with research and leading edge practice, which emphasises the importance of subject-specific definitions of teaching excellence and the importance of assessing teaching and learning over time, recognising that learning in particular is complex and elusive to observe and is only meaningfully secured over the long term.



Quality assurance is led by subject leaders, with half termly recording of cumulative judgements of compliance with school expectations. Judgments are made against quality of teaching, homework and feedback, with grading determined by consistency and effectiveness of the application of school and departmental policies. A rolling cycle of subject reviews – in-depth quality assurance exercises – continues to be very insightful and useful in ensuring our understanding of the quality of provision is evidence-informed. Whilst there has been some intermittent variation over the course of the academic year, no individual teacher has been judged in any area to be inconsistent in the compliance or effectiveness of their practice for a sustained period, with examples of strong interventions by subject leaders leading to improved practice. Consequently, at the time of writing, no individual teacher was identified as needing formal support beyond routine, guided ongoing professional learning and performance management-led targets.

## **Extra-curricular and Arts (Ms Morgan, Arts Development Manager)**

### **The Arts**

This year has seen great focus in school on the Arts Award, an accredited qualification managed by Trinity College London in association with Arts Council England. Year 7s have been completing portfolios for the Bronze Award, a level 1 qualification, in ASPIRE lessons, while Year 8 pupils recently had the opportunity to work towards achieving the award in Activities Week. An estimated 300 portfolios will be submitted for moderation in July, underlining the school's commitment to providing high quality opportunities in the arts.

## Sawston Cinema

Sawston Cinema, which operates from the Marven Centre, continues to develop. Since 2015 we have maintained an average of 30 screenings a year, supported by a small volunteer team. The mixed programme of popular titles and National Theatre Live live/encore productions attracts a range of audience members, including those in the local community and those travelling from further afield. The Drama Department also works hard to promote relevant productions to its GCSE cohort. However, further audience development and improved marketing continue to be key aims for development.



## Marven Centre

Development of Sawston Cinema is linked to development of the Marven Centre and, recognising the urgent need for repair and refurbishment of this building, time has been spent this year looking at options for securing the funding required to cover the substantial cost of this work. In light of the significant heritage of the building, discussion has been held with the Heritage Lottery Fund, and an application submitted to its Heritage Grants programme. This application is currently in its assessment period and has provisionally been allocated to a meeting in September for a decision. If successful, the school will still be tasked with raising a substantial contribution towards this project before progressing to capital works.

## Adult Learning

We have had another successful year in Adult Learning with nearly 1000 learners attending courses this year. Whilst funding was cut by 20%, we exceeded both our universal and targeted targets for funded courses. We have recruited several new tutors and have many new weekly courses and numerous Saturday workshops planned for 2018/19 which we believe will appeal to the whole community. Funding has been cut again for 2018/19 but we are introducing on-line enrolment and expect this to be popular and attract new learners. Our brochure will still be delivered to nearly 33,000 households by Royal Mail and local free papers.

## Sports Centre, (Mrs Wilson, Sports Centre Manager)

It has been another very successful year in the Sports Centre. The AstroTurf had regular bookings for 80% of the prime evening slots throughout the winter period and remains an important part of the income generating activity. In terms of membership there are 415 members paying a direct debit subscription, producing a monthly income of approximately £11,000. There are 41 Squash members, giving an income of £3,974. Squash membership fees were increased in September 2017. Swimming lessons remain a popular part of our offer with 580 children currently enrolled in swimming lessons, which is the highest enrolment in 10 years. Income to date for swimming lessons is £60,000.

Another feature of the Sport Centre is birthday parties. 210 parties have been booked during the period of September 2017 – June 2018, the highest number ever for this period; Nerf Wars parties were introduced in January 2018. Initial expenditure was £500, income to date in 6 months is £3,600.

In order to keep generating income, promotional activity has been increased with specific offers to customers, including an Advent Calendar promotion and a New Year's Resolution offer which were advertised via Facebook and Twitter to enhance our social media presence. Attendance at many local community events has offered great promotional opportunities, including SCDC's Parklife event, Sawston Fete, Shelford and Stapleford Strikers end of season presentation, Sawston United football tournament and Bar Hill School fete.

However, the Centre requires significant investment going forward. We refurbished the male community changing room in June 2017; the disabled changing room was refurbished in March 2018, and the automatic swimming pool cover was installed in May 2018, to reduce our energy costs. The poolside changing rooms are in need of serious renovation and we are developing a written specification to be produced for a Sport England funding bid.

Finally, our actual Income/expenditure for 2017-18 is on target to slightly exceed the 2017-18 budget.



## **Leadership and Management (Principal)**

The leadership of the College has been very active throughout the year, at all levels, on delivering six particular objectives, as part of our development plan: improving retention, recruitment and professional development; enhancing behaviour and attitudes through greater consistency of approaches; raising levels of engagement and participation, in particular attendance; reviewing the curriculum; supporting mental health of pupils; and improving parental engagement. In all areas, the majority of the intended outcomes have been achieved though the impact is more variable and some of the areas in the plan will need re-visiting next academic year. These include retention and recruitment which is being developed at Trust level, the introduction of principles and practice around cognitive science and improving attendance which remains an area for improvement. Of course, the unknowns around the new GCSE courses may require a greater focus on raising achievement and intervention too, something that will become apparent in August.

Leadership also had to respond to Ofsted in the autumn term and, while we disagreed with some of the conclusions reached by inspectors, we were pleased that our QA processes, preparation for inspection and areas such as safeguarding, all ensured a relatively stress free experience. Middle leaders worked hard on delivering the new GCSEs and, with more stability in curriculum and assessment systems going forward, may now be able to raise their heads above the parapet to look at other, longer term, strategic improvements they would like to make in their subject areas. Heads of House continued to work tirelessly, especially with the most vulnerable and I would like to take the opportunity to thank them for their leadership

over the course of year. At the same time, it has become apparent that, with the school's expected growth next year and beyond, that the pastoral system will need to adapt to respond to this.

Other challenges have included incredible pressure upon the school budget. The Trust and our own Finance Team have worked hard to balance the budget for this year and next but it is not being achieved without pain. This remains a constant struggle, not helped by rising costs to maintain the school's premises. However, leadership has been successful in resolving the delayed project for the library roof; getting funding for lighting and heating; installing new boilers; a pool cover to reduce energy inefficiencies in the swimming pool; and, more recently, responding to the failure of the HMH ceiling which, hopefully, at the time of writing, may not be a cost to be incurred by the College. I would like, at this point, to thank our Head of Premises for his active and energetic work to improve the estate since his appointment in January.

The College also remains committed to system improvement. Various leaders have worked across the Trust, supporting and learning from other schools; we remain strong supporters of the CASSA teaching alliance; are influential in developing safeguarding practice in the Trust and beyond; and individual leaders are involved in numerous groups across the county, influencing policy. This is an important part of our work, building capacity across the system and learning from others, and this is work that needs to continue.

Clearly, at the time of writing, leadership is in a state of flux with Jonathan Russell about to take over as Principal in an acting capacity. However, his experience and skills, and depth of knowledge about the College, will ensure both continuity and judicious change, supported by a dedicated, professional and hardworking group of leaders, at all levels.

## **Looking Forward**

Clearly, the new Principal, when appointed and in consultation with governors, will set their own stamp on the future direction of the College and it is right and proper that this may take a different path to the one that I have set out over the past eight years. However, there are some clear areas for development if the College is to maintain its current status as a provider of high quality education. Firstly, teaching and learning is always on the agenda and over the next few months there will be emphasis on going back to basics, especially looking at aspects such as independence, lesson structure and questioning; secondly, behaviour and attitudes will be a key focus, building on the work of this year and looking at how we build a positive ethos in all pupils; and thirdly, the school will continue to develop its curriculum and assessment, and look at how we can integrate some of thinking around cognitive psychology into our approaches into how pupils learn. At the same time, finances need to be constantly on the agenda together with how we respond to predications of increased growth in pupil numbers in the years to come and responding to this with appropriate staffing and premises that are fit for purpose. It is an exciting time for the College.

This is, of course, my last report to the governors. It just leaves me to finish by saying that it has been a real privilege to have led the College for the past eight years. It has been a time of considerable change in education – in 2010, academies didn't really exist, never mind MATs; the change in GCSEs was not even on the agenda; and the past eight years has seen three Education Secretaries, each with their own vision and much more. However, what has remained true are the core aims and values of the College, of providing high quality comprehensive education for local children and a rich experience for adult learners and customers. Sawston Village College remains a beacon for excellence and inclusivity, of cradle to grave learning and a firm belief in the role of schools to unlock potential and create

opportunities for all, to change society for the better. That core purpose will remain unbroken as we move into the next chapter in its history.

