

6 January 2023



Sawston
Village College

Principal: Mr J P Russell

Dear Parents/Carers

Weekly Round-Up

Happy New Year! We ended the year with a wonderful carol service at Great St Mary's. As one parent put it, 'it made our Christmas with its amazing presentation, content, quality & performance by both your students & obvious hard work put in by staff.' We are grateful to all those involved who performed so well.

The first week back has been short and sweet: we have reset expectations with pupils; on the training day teaching staff reviewed assessment strategies; and, we have been monitoring the impact of the flu and Covid spikes on staff and pupil absence. Let us hope we all keep well and can look forward to a more uplifting 2023.

NEW Staff Update

At the end of the autumn term, as reported in the newsletter, we said goodbye to three members of staff. Miss Farrow, English and TH10, has been temporarily replaced by Miss Richards. Mr Bond, PE, has been temporarily replaced by Ms Whitaker. Ms Wilson-Owen, Librarian, has been permanently replaced by Miss Allen and we look forward to the library now being open five days a week. Ms Page, Science, is currently recovering from illness and we wish her all the best and look forward to her return in a few weeks' time.

NEW National Advice to all schools from UK Health Security Agency

All schools nationally have been informed of the following.

Flu and coronavirus (COVID-19) are [currently circulating at high levels](#) and are likely to continue to increase in coming weeks. High numbers of scarlet fever, which is caused by group A streptococcus, also [continue to be reported](#).

Professor Susan Hopkins, Chief Medical Adviser at the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), said:

- It's important to minimise the spread of infection in schools and other education and childcare settings as much as possible. If your child is unwell and has a fever, they should stay home from school or nursery until they feel better and the fever has resolved.
- Helping children to learn about the importance of good hand hygiene is also key, so practice regular handwashing at home with soap and warm water. Catching coughs and sneezes in tissues then binning them is another simple way to help stop illness from spreading.



- Remember that flu vaccination is still available for all eligible groups and is the best protection against the virus. The NHS has seen good uptake in older age groups but vaccination among young children remains low. Flu can be very unpleasant and, in some cases, can lead to more serious illness. Getting your child vaccinated protects them and others they come into contact with, and it's still not too late.

NEW Advice on Spending Free School Meals (FSM) Allowance

Pupils who receive FSM have a daily allowance of £2.50 which covers the price of both a main meal and dessert in the canteen. Pupils have the choice of when and where they use this money but if it is spent at breaktime they may not have enough left for lunch. Please ensure that your child is informed on their options for spending this money.

Please also note that a meal of porridge is available, free of charge, to all pupils before 8:25am. If you have any further questions or queries please email Ms Tuckwood, PP Co-Ordinator, (mtuckwood@sawstonvc.org).

NEW Pupil Premium (PP) and Free School Meals (FSM)

We would like to share more information about applying for FSM. Once a pupil has FSM they are considered as PP. If you would like more information about what this means, or to look at the strategy, please follow this link: <https://sawstonvc.org/information/pupil-premium/>. Below are the eligibility criteria taken from the gov.uk website:

Your child will get free school meals if you receive any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit - but no element of Working Tax Credit - and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)) that does not exceed £16,190
- If you are supported under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after your employment finishes or after you start to work less hours per week
- Universal Credit with an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400 (as from 1 April 2018).

Follow the link below to apply for Free School Meals:

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/schools-learning/help-with-school-learning-costs/free-school-meals

NEW Spaces for instrument lessons

We have a fantastic group of instrumental and singing teachers at Sawston VC. Currently, we have spaces for lessons on oboe, bassoon, French horn, trombone and tuba. A presentation giving more information can be viewed [here](#). These are all super instruments and give pupils an opportunity to play with other pupils in our bands. If your child would like a taster lesson on one of these instruments, we can offer this for free. We can also provide financial support for those eligible. If interested, please get in touch with Miss Irwin, Head of Music, via email cirwin@sawstonvc.org

NEW Year 11 photographs

Year 11 pupils will be having their individual photographs taken on Thursday 12th January. Pupils must be in full school uniform, no jewellery may be worn except for two small stud earrings in each ear and make-up is not permitted, with the exception of a light covering of skin coloured foundation. Proofs of these photographs will be released in conjunction with the proof of the year group photograph, which will be taken on Monday 13th March.

NEW Immunisations

A letter from the Community School Aged Immunisation Service regarding Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio and Meningococcal ACWY vaccinations has been sent to Year 9 parent/carers today. Vaccinations will take place on Thursday 23rd March. Please contact the immunisation service directly on 0300 555 5055 if you have any questions.

If your child is in Year 10 and above and has missed this vaccination, they may also be offered the vaccination on this day. The immunisation service will identify these pupils so that parents/carers have the opportunity to consent.

NEW Safer Schools Newsletter

January's Safer Schools Newsletter can be accessed [here](#). It includes a parents/carers guide to online safety, guidance on how to secure vulnerable items, awareness about nitrous oxide canisters and information about 'Dry January'.

REMINDER Year 9 Core Exams

Year 9 exams in Maths and English will be taking place on 17th and 18th January 2023. Further to information sent out before Christmas, pupils will receive a copy of their individual timetables early next week.

REMINDER Year 11 Business Studies trip

Today is the deadline for the year 11 Business Studies trip to the SnoZone in Milton Keynes. If your child would like to participate, please follow the link in the letter that was re sent to parents/carers on Thursday 5 January.

COMMUNITY Parent Hub event – Improving Maths skills

In association with iXion, Parent i3 Hub, Anglian Learning's community group, would like to invite you to a free virtual event to increase your Maths skills on Wednesday 11th January at 11am-12pm. The introductory session and question and answer workshop is designed to help you help your child with their study, up skill work or develop your own confidence. If you are interested, you can register using this link: <https://bit.ly/i3ixion>

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Wishing you a peaceful weekend,

Jonathan Russell