



# Sawston Village College

## Parent Handbook

### 2025-26



Sawston  
Village College

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# Sawston Village College

## Safeguarding statement for parents



### Safeguarding children

The College is committed to safeguarding all young people. It achieves this through high quality pastoral care; a PSHE programme that provides appropriate guidance to being safe as a young adult; signposting to agencies and adults who can provide appropriate support; being vigilant for signs that a young person may be experiencing difficulties that may require further help and support.

There are occasions when members of the Designated Safeguarding team may be required to discuss concerns with parents that may be related to safeguarding and child protection. The College has a legal requirement to ensure the safety of all its pupils and communication between the College and parents is a key part of this process.

If you have any concerns about any young person then please do contact a member of the Designated Safeguarding team, however, if you feel a young person is at immediate risk of harm then please do contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on **0345 045 5203** (01733 234724 outside office hours).

One area of focus for the College under the safeguarding remit is to promote positive mental health in all our young people. We have a team consisting of both trained staff and outside agencies that help support the day to day issues around young people's mental health. We also work very closely with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health service (CAMH) in supporting those young people who present with more long term mental health concerns that require specialist intervention. Please see below for some useful sites and potential support if you have any concerns regarding your child's mental health.

[keep-your-head.com](http://keep-your-head.com)

[Kooth](http://Kooth)

[mind.org.uk](http://mind.org.uk)

[centre33.org.uk](http://centre33.org.uk)

[Emotional Wellbeing Services](#)

[YOUnited](#)

# Parent Information Booklet

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The aim of this booklet is to provide you with the information you need to help your child achieve independence, whilst supporting them to make the progress they are capable of. The booklet contains a mixture of information and tips to guide you and your child through the academic year.

## Message from the Year Lead team

Dear Parent/Guardian

We are delighted to welcome returning pupils back to school and for new starters, to wish them a positive and rewarding beginning to their time here at Sawston Village College. A new school year makes for exciting times and exciting opportunities. We are very much looking forward to working with you, in partnership, to ensure your child benefits from everything that college life has to offer.

As an important first step, every pupil has been assigned to a House and a mentor group. Mentors will remain your child's first port of call for both academic and any other support they may require in and out of the classroom. This partnership work also extends, of course, to parents at home, and we would encourage you to get in touch with your child's mentor should you have a query or comment. We all share a common commitment to seeing each individual pupil reach their potential and to be happy in their learning and personal development.

To support this, a rich programme of activities will take place in mentor time. In addition, to assemblies, both aspirational and information-based, there will be a chance for pupils to discuss current affairs, share something of their own interests, broaden their personal reading, work towards their Sawston Pledges and engage in some healthy competition with each other and indeed other mentor groups and Houses. We are also keen to see every pupil find at least one extra-curricular opportunity that they can engage and commit to. Your support in promoting and encouraging this final point will be greatly appreciated..

We are looking forward to a successful year, working in partnership with you.

Yours sincerely

**Mr Davis**  
Year 7 Lead

**Ms Watkis**  
Year 8 Lead

**Miss Jackson**  
Year 9 Leads

**Ms Fane   Mrs Fink**  
Year 10 Lead

**Mrs Riondino**  
Year 11 Lead

# Contacting the College

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Effective Home-school communication is essential and we encourage parents to make contact whenever they have questions, concerns or something positive to feed back. In the first instance, pastoral queries should be directed to a child's mentor. Curricular enquiries should be directed towards the relevant subject teacher.

Initial contact should always be made via phone, email or letter as you will need an appointment if you would like to meet with a member of staff in person.

## Useful Contacts:

### General enquiries:

- Email contact for the school office: [office@sawstonvc.org](mailto:office@sawstonvc.org)
- Telephone contact via the school reception: 01223 712 777

### Reporting a child's absence:

Absences must be reported to the College Attendance Officer, Mrs Chapman, by 8.25am on each day of absence.

- Email contact for the Attendance Office: [attendance@sawstonvc.org](mailto:attendance@sawstonvc.org)
- Telephone contact for the Attendance Office: 01223 712 623

### Year Leads:

- Year 7 Lead - Mr A Davis: [adavis@sawstonvc.org](mailto:adavis@sawstonvc.org)
- Year 8 Lead - Ms C Watkis: [cwatkis@sawstonvc.org](mailto:cwatkis@sawstonvc.org)
- Year 9 Lead - Miss D Jackson: [djackson@sawstonvc.org](mailto:djackson@sawstonvc.org)
- Year 10 Leads - Ms C Fane / Mrs J Fink: [year9lead@sawstonvc.org](mailto:year9lead@sawstonvc.org)
- Year 11 Lead - Mrs C Riondino: [criondino@sawstonvc.org](mailto:criondino@sawstonvc.org)

### Named members of staff:

To contact all other named members of staff: **[initial][surname]@sawstonvc.org**

*(for example: Mr A Brown = abrown@sawstonvc.org)*

**Please note that as per the College's home-school communication policy, we will reply to emails and telephone calls with at least a holding response within 2 working days. Detailed responses will be made within 5 working days.**

# HOUSES, MENTORS & MENTOR GROUPS



Pupils are organised into Houses and Mentor Groups as part of the programme of pastoral and academic support. Typically, Mentors will be the first port of call for parents wishing to raise questions or concerns.

- **Da Vinci** - Head of House - Mr A Davis ([adavis@sawstonvc.org](mailto:adavis@sawstonvc.org))
- **Earhart** - Head of House - Miss D Jackson ([djackson@sawstonvc.org](mailto:djackson@sawstonvc.org))
- **Mandela** - Head of House - Mrs C Wombwell ([cwombwell@sawstonvc.org](mailto:cwombwell@sawstonvc.org))
- **Turing** - Head of House - Mrs C Riondino ([criondino@sawstonvc.org](mailto:criondino@sawstonvc.org))

Email addresses for mentors and other staff follow the same format:

**[initial][surname]@sawstonvc.org** (for example: Mr A Brown = [abrown@sawstonvc.org](mailto:abrown@sawstonvc.org))

## Term Dates

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### 2025

Staff training days (school closed to pupils)

Monday 1 and Tuesday 2 September

**Autumn term begins for Year 7 and 11**

Wednesday 3 September

Autumn term begins for Years 8, 9 and 10

Thursday 4 September

Staff training day (school closed to pupils)

Friday 3 October

Half Term

Monday 27 – Friday 31 October

Staff Training Day (school closed to pupils)

Wednesday 19 November

Autumn Term ends

Friday 19 December

### 2026

**Spring Term begins**

Monday 5 January

Staff Training day (school closed to pupils)

Friday 13 February

Half Term

Monday 16 – Friday 20 February

Spring Term ends

Friday 27 March

**Summer Term begins**

Monday 13 April

May Day Bank Holiday

Monday 4 May

Half Term

Monday 25 May – Friday 29 May

Summer Term ends

Thursday 17 July

## Some other key dates for parents\*

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\*Please note that the following dates are provisional. Typically they remain unchanged but the College reserves the right to alter them if required.

A copy of the full provisional College Calendar can be found on the College website in the Information section.

06 October	<b>Year 11:</b> Post 16 Information Evening
07 October	<b>Year 7:</b> Meet the Mentor Evening (by appointment: 3.20pm to 6pm)
21 October	<b>Year 10:</b> Academic Information Evening
03 to 17 November	<b>Year 11:</b> Main mock examinations window
18 November	<b>Year 7 / New starters:</b> Assessment, Recording and Reporting Information Evening
03 December	<b>Year 10:</b> Work Experience (WEX) Information Evening
11 December	<b>Year 11:</b> Parent Consultation Evening (virtual - by appointment: 4pm to 7.30pm)
18 December	<b>All Years:</b> Great St Mary's Carol Service (evening event - tickets on request)
15 January	<b>Year 10:</b> Meet the Mentor Evening (by appointment: 3.20pm to 6pm)
22 January	<b>Year 9:</b> Options Information Evening
05 February	<b>Year 9:</b> Parent Consultation Evening (virtual - by appointment: 4pm to 7.30pm)
05 March	<b>Year 8:</b> Parent Consultation Evening (virtual - by appointment: 4pm to 7.30pm)
11 March	<b>Year 11:</b> Exams Information Evening
14-24 April	<b>Year 10:</b> Main Year 10 examinations window
16 April	<b>Year 7:</b> Parent Consultation Evening (virtual - by appointment: 4pm to 7.30pm)
04 June	<b>Year 10:</b> Parent Consultation Evening (virtual - by appointment: 4pm to 7.30pm)
15 - 19 June	<b>Years 7-9:</b> Activities Week (in-school event with residential visits tbc)
15 - 26 June	<b>Year 10:</b> Work Experience
06 & 07 July	<b>All Years (by invitation):</b> House Prize Giving Evenings ( <i>date for each House tbc</i> )



# Getting organised

## *Timetables, equipment and homework*



### Following the school timetable

Your child will receive their timetable on the first day of term. It will be written or stuck into their planner. Year 7 pupils are taken through the school day and the location of the rooms by their mentor and co-mentor.

#### Tips for parents:

- the school timetable runs on a fortnightly cycle (week A and week B); if in doubt, use the calendar on the school website to confirm which week it is;
- display a copy of your child's timetable at home so that you and your child can refer to it;
- encourage your child to check the timetable and Satchel:one (see section on homework below) each evening to prepare for the next day. It is also a good idea to check the timetable at the weekend to plan ahead for equipment etc;
- provide your child with a watch.

### Bringing the right equipment

Your child is responsible for bringing the correct equipment each day. This will include their planner, relevant exercise books and textbooks, homework tasks that are due, appropriate PE kit on days when they have PE and a well stocked pencil case\*.

*\*As a bare minimum, your child must have a working blue or black pen with them each day. Beyond this, other useful equipment in approximate order of importance would include: spare blue or black pens; a glue stick; a green pen; a calculator; highlighters; a dictionary; pencils, sharpener and a rubber; maths equipment (protractor, compass, set square); colouring pens or pencils.*

#### Tips for parents

- encourage your child to empty their school bag each evening and repack it for the next day;
- designate a box or undisturbed space where they can store all of their exercise books and textbooks when not in use;
- remind them to double check the equipment needed against the timetable, their planner and on satchel:one.

## Managing homework

The homework expectations are on the next page. We regard homework as an essential part of the planned learning and an important part of pupils' development as an independent learner. You can keep informed about the homework that your child has to complete by accessing the satchel:one system. Please email [office@sawstonvc.org](mailto:office@sawstonvc.org) if you are unsure of how to do this.

### Suggestions on how to help your child prepare for homework:

- check satchel:one with your child every day after school;
- agree a routine for homework with your child. e.g. You might agree to start homework after a short break on return from school so that the evening is left free or you might agree the other activities/TV that will need to be planned around homework;
- be available to help establish routines and to support but don't 'do it for them';
- try to ensure that homework is done on the night it is set to prevent build up;
- look at the planner / satchel:one each week to check homework and messages;
- know how long your child should be spending on homework each night (see below).

### Homework frequency

There is no set homework timetable. Instead, the typical duration and frequency information below will give you a sense of the volume of homework your child can expect to receive.

**Duration:** Homework is typically expected to take approximately the following amount of time, per subject, per homework:

- Year 7: 15-45 minutes
- Year 8 and 9: 30-60 minutes
- Years 10 and 11: 30-90 minutes

**Frequency:** Your child should expect to receive homework from subjects as follows:

Years 7, 8 and 9:

- English & Maths: weekly
- PE: no homework
- Art, Music, Computer Science, Drama, Design Technology and PSHE: at the teacher's discretion
- All other subjects: fortnightly (KS3 Science counts as one single subject).

Years 10 and 11:

- English & Maths: weekly
- Science: one Physics, Chemistry and Biology homework a fortnight (so 3 science homeworks per fortnight in total)

- PSHE and Core PE: no homework
- All other subjects: fortnightly

Pupils will typically be given at least two clear school nights between the day homework is set and the day it is due in.

Unless pupils with good reason request an extension before the deadline, no extensions for homework will be permitted without a legitimate note from a parent.

Teachers may refuse to accept sub-standard homework that shows a lack of effort – e.g. work that is brief, incomplete or messy. Such unsatisfactory homework may be treated the same as though a pupil had not done the work at all.

Absence from the lesson when homework was set is not an excuse for non-submission on time, unless pupils genuinely could not do the work without having been in the lesson. Pupils are expected to check satchel: **one**, speak with peers and speak with their teachers to catch-up.

# What you need to know about attendance and punctuality

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Research shows that pupils who attend school regularly and are on time have a much higher chance of doing well at school. So what is 'good' attendance?

Would you be satisfied with your child attending school for 90% of the time? What would this mean?

That your child might miss school for: 1 day every two weeks – would that be ok?

This is the same as half a day every week or **4 WHOLE WEEKS** in a school year!

Sometimes we miss school because we are ill, this can't be helped. However it is very important that your child attends school as regularly as possible.

## **If your child is ill and/or unable to attend school:**

- **contact Mrs Chapman, Attendance Officer, on each day of your child's non-attendance by email: [attendance@sawstonvc.org](mailto:attendance@sawstonvc.org) or telephone on 01223 712623;**
- **absence without an explanation is regarded as unauthorised absence and is followed up by the attendance officer.**

## **Term time leave:**

We are increasingly concerned by the rate of pupil absence due to holidays being taken during term as this disrupts the educational progress of individual children and can impact wider teaching and learning upon return. Parents do not have any entitlement to expect term time leave for their child. By law, you must ask permission for your child to miss school on non-medical grounds. All leave is granted at the discretion of the Principal and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The College's [Attendance Policy](#) explains the criteria in greater detail. This policy can be found in the Parents > Attendance section of the College website.

## **Requests for leave:**

- A copy of the [Leave of Absence Request Form](#) can be downloaded from the College website. It can be found at the bottom of the attendance page within the Parents' section.
- The form must be completed and submitted **at least** 10 days prior to the first day of absence requested.
- The College will then inform parents whether the request has been approved.
- Should you take your child on term time holiday when a request has not been granted, it will be recorded as unauthorised absence and referred to the Educational Welfare Officer. There is also a risk of incurring a £60 penalty notice, per parent, per child and/or prosecution.

## **LEARNING SUPPORT AT SAWSTON VILLAGE COLLEGE**

The SENDCo (Mrs Morris) and Teaching Assistants (TAs) are based in the Student Centre.

The role of the TA is to support the work of the teacher and pupils in the classroom, suggest teaching and learning strategies and liaise with the SENCo. Priority for TA support is given to pupils with EHCPs.

The TAs also support additional intervention groups, details of which can be found on the school SEND Information Report on the SVC website. TAs can work with individual pupils or small groups as directed by the class teacher or SENDCo. TAs support pupils with exam access arrangements such as practical assistants, readers and scribes. Morning literacy and numeracy interventions are run by TAs for selected Key Stage 3 pupils.

Every lunchtime the Student Centre has a homework club supervised by TAs and is an allocated quiet lunch space for pupils who find busy canteens and the playground difficult. There are specialist Maths and Science homework clubs run at lunchtimes supervised by TAs.

The aim of the Student Centre team is to enable all pupils to reach their potential by meeting their individual needs.

Mrs Morris (SENCo) and Mrs Page (Deputy SENCo) are always happy to meet with parents and pupils to discuss their needs.

## **SUBJECT INFORMATION**

Further information on individual subject areas can be found in the Curriculum > Subject Areas of the the main College website (see [HERE](#)).

This includes Programmes of Study with details of the topics covered each term and the timing and content of key assessments.