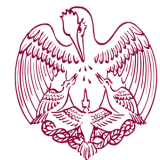


# March / April 2026 Newsletter



Sawston  
Village College

## Dates for your Diary:

<b>13 April</b>	School reopens for Summer term	<b>4 May</b>	May Day Bank Holiday - school closed
<b>14-15 April</b>	GCSE Photography exam	<b>5 May</b>	GCSE written exams begin
<b>16 April</b>	Year 7 Parents' Evening	<b>7 May</b>	The Choral
<b>16 April</b>	NT Live: All My Sons	<b>10 May</b>	Sawston Fun Run
<b>14-24 April</b>	Year 10 exams	<b>11-12 May</b>	Year 10 Drama devised performances
<b>23 April</b>	Downtown Abbey - the Grand Finale	<b>14 May</b>	Year 10 Report 3 issued
<b>20 April - 1 May</b>	GCSE MFL speaking exams	<b>16-18 May</b>	Year 10 Hastings trip
<b>21-22 April</b>	GCSE Art exam	<b>21 May</b>	Exhibition on Screen: Frida Kahlo
<b>28-29 April</b>	Year 11 Drama scripted performances	<b>25-29 May</b>	Half-term - school closed
<b>1 May</b>	Year 7 CEIAG conference day		



We have enjoyed many joyful events this half term not least the annual music concert at West Road and the Gym and Dance Display. Congratulations to all who were involved and thank you for sharing your talents with us.

Over the Easter break, the building work will continue apace. There will be work on the Spicer Drive between the Sports Centre and Marven Centre. As a result, the temporary road to the compound car park will

become two-way, so cars will enter and exit via the Sports Centre gate by the bus bay area. Once school resumes on 13 April, we will revert to the existing one-way flow with the exit being the Marven Centre gate. By then, we are likely to have windows in the new building and the foundations to the new changing room will have been laid.

In staff news, Mrs Jackson returns from maternity leave in late April to take up a new role as Cover Supervisor with Miss Hunt continuing as Year 9 Lead for the academic year. We also look

forward to welcoming back Mrs Jackson-Buckley who returns as a part-time teacher for this year, with Miss Phillips continuing as acting Head of History until September. Dr Dumuje, who has been with us on supply covering in English and Religion & World Views, leaves us at Easter to start a new post elsewhere. We thank him for his service to the College since September. We will use alternative supply in the summer term to cover this position.

In the community, we are aware of some young people trespassing on the old Spicers factory between Whittlesford and Shelford. Worryingly, they are also accessing the roof and causing criminal damage of which the police have been informed. Parents may well wish to remind their children about the dangers of risk-taking behaviour during this holiday period and to keep them safe: avoid disused buildings, railways, deep water and anywhere where there is a risk to life. These are messages we do give at school but we need parental support to reinforce them.

*'It's easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.'* Frederick Douglass  
Mr Russell, Principal

## Update from Science

During this half-term, we celebrated both World Book Day and British Science Week with enthusiasm. British Science Week 2026, themed "Curiosity: What's your question?", inspired a week of thoughtful discussion. The Science Department led a lively takeover of Debate Club, where students considered the motion, "This house believes zoos should be abolished," which was ultimately passed, with 82% ayes and 18% noes.

In mentor time, pupils explored their own scientific curiosities, generating an impressive collection of "big questions." Some particular favourites included: "Why do we sometimes experience déjà vu?", "How do we know that we all perceive colours in the same way?", "Will AI ever gain sentience?", and "How can we picture images in our minds without any light?"

If there are any parents who would be willing to share their scientific expertise with our pupils, we would be delighted to hear from you—please do get in touch with the school office.

Mrs Armsby-Moore, Head of Science



On the Origin of Species, Science Department, World Book Day 2026



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Sports Centre: 01223 712555 - www.sawstonsports.com | Sawston Cinema: 01223 712825 - www.sawstoncinema.org.uk

## Update from English

Year 11s have finished their last round of mocks in English and are in the final push towards preparing for the summer exams, so all lessons are now focused on revision. Year 10s, however, have just started working towards their first round of central mock exams and will be assessed on power and conflict poetry and English Language Paper 1. At Key Stage 3, Year 9s have been thinking about how language changes and whether slang should be banned. Finally, Years 7 and 8 have produced some lovely written work based on The Arrival and A Monster Calls.

Miss Bunting, Head of English



## Update from History

In History this half term pupils have continued to impress everyone with their hard work. Year 11s, in particular, have shown great focus and dedication in the lead up to their summer exams and have started studying their final topic: the history of Sawston Village College itself.

Meanwhile, Year 7s have started learning about the incredible Eleanor of Aquitaine, Year 8s are thinking about what makes a 'good quality' historical account, and Year 9s are approaching their studying of the Holocaust with real maturity and sensitivity.

At the end of last half term, our Year 11s had a wonderful trip to Berlin where they represented the school brilliantly by showcasing outstanding knowledge and asking intellectual questions of our museum guides.

Miss Phillips, Head of History (Maternity Cover)



## Update from Geography

In Geography, we have been trying to develop pupils independent learning and revision skills. Using Walkthrus, pupils have been trialling some of the strategies to support revision for milestones. For example, pupils have been creating flashcards with questions and answers. Pupils should be able to test their knowledge using their cards, creating piles of correct and incorrect answers so they know what they need to revise in more depth. Another strategy has been 'brain dumps' where pupils write down everything they know about a topic using prompts. They then go and check this using their class notes and add that they have missed in a different colour. Hopefully through these strategies pupils can be even more successful with their revision.

Miss Evans, Head of Geography



## Business Studies Update

The Business Club members hope to run a stall near the dining area on either Friday 27 March or Friday 17 April as part of their learning about marketing and selling. Any profits made (however small) will go to a local charity chosen by the pupils.

They are a great bunch of enthusiastic Year 9s (and all boys - 4 to 6 "core" members). We hope to change the gender mix by looking at another aspect of business in the course of the next term - market segmentation, which may appeal to other would-be Business Club members and/or Business pupils.

Mr Darcy, Head of Business Studies



## Update from Maths

This half term, the Maths department has been trialling a range of strategies to improve oracy in lessons. Oracy is the ability to express ideas clearly, listen to others, and engage in thoughtful discussion. In maths, this is important as it encourages pupils to explain their reasoning, justify methods, and explore different approaches to problems. Through structured talk and collaborative activities, pupils develop a deeper understanding of concepts and become more confident problem solvers. Although we are at the start of our journey, we are confident that strengthening oracy will help learners to organise their thinking, challenge misconceptions, and apply their knowledge more effectively.

Mrs Shearn, Head of Maths



Sawston  
Adult  
Learning



Our Summer term courses are now on the website and are available to book by visiting the website or contacting the office. In addition to our usual courses, this term we are very excited to be able to offer two new Monday evening courses and three new Saturday workshops. On Mondays there will be the opportunity for speakers of other languages to learn English (ESOL), which we hope will be a helpful resource for our local community. We will also be offering a new Ukrainian/Russian course.

Looking forward to our Saturday workshops in June, for the culinary amongst you, there will be Jam making & Preserving, Eastern European Cuisine and Indian Street Food. You will also have the chance to make a swift or swallow in our willow workshop.

Visit our website <https://sawstonvc.org/adult-learning/>  
Email [community@sawstonvc.org](mailto:community@sawstonvc.org)  
Phone 01223 712424

Mrs Catherine Hayes, Adult Learning Manager



As the development work continues, the sports centre remains open as usual, but with a few changes. Currently we have no gymnasium or sports hall, but these will be back in action from August, which is great news for activities such as badminton, trampolining and children's birthday parties. At this time however, we will temporarily lose the use of the swimming pool and the multi-purpose hall. We will endeavour to make alternative arrangements for swimming lessons and exercise classes during this period. The fitness suite and squash court will not be affected by any of the development works, remaining open throughout.

Wishing everyone a very happy Easter!

Fleur Harrower, Assistant Manager



Next up at Sawston Cinema in the Marvin Centre is NT Live's hugely popular *All My Sons*. This is followed by *Downton Abbey - the Grand Finale* and *The Choral*, before we have Exhibition on Screen's Frida Kahlo film. There's lots more besides so, to see what else is coming up, and to book tickets, check out our website: [www.sawstoncinema.org](http://www.sawstoncinema.org).

Ms Lesley Morgan, Arts  
Development Manager



Unlocking Potential | Creating Opportunities | Achieving Excellence

## Drama Update

It has been an exciting and fulfilling half term in Drama!

Year 7s are rehearsing the parody scripts they crafted last half term, showing fantastic creativity as they transform well-known stories into energetic comedic performances.

Year 8s are working on Buggy Malone, creating sharp choreography to "Bad Guys" and developing strong characterisation as they bring these characters to life.

Year 9s are performing sections from Shakespeare, building confidence with classical language while exploring character relationships through performance. They are thinking carefully about how to ensure clarity within their storytelling.

Year 10s are preparing for their mock examinations after Easter, refining both their devised performance and portfolios in readiness for their GCSE exam performances in May.

Year 11s have a demanding few weeks ahead. Their Concept Pro Forma is due on 16 April, followed by their scripted performances on 28 and 29 April. The written examination takes place on 8 May in the afternoon. We wish them every success with their revision and preparations over the coming weeks.

Rehearsals for Oliver! are ramping up, and tickets will go on sale after Easter for performances on 8, 9 and 10 July. Tickets will be sold via the ticketsource website, watch this space for more information.

Stage Ed recently visited to lead a Blood Brothers workshop for our year 10 pupils. Mike and Steve, two professional actors who have been in the production, brought energy and a wealth of experience to this wonderful workshop day. Pupils enjoyed it immensely.

Mr Bell, Head of Drama



## Creativity in full flow - Art & Photography department Update

Year 7s are exploring anatomy through tonal studies of the human skull, focusing on proportion, structure, and shading. Year 8s are developing observational drawing skills through studies of their own pets, refining texture, form, and mark-making. Year 9s are investigating portraiture, producing self-portraits or studies of others with an emphasis on proportion, tone, and expression. Year 10s have begun their mock exams, exploring the alter ego through staged photography and expressive, exaggerated emotion in Art. Year 11 Art and Photography pupils are entering their final week of preparation - a demanding and intensive period, but one that marks the culmination of their sustained hard work and creative journey.

We wish all our pupils the very best and commend their commitment and creativity.

Dr De Sainte Cluque, Head of Art



## Update from Music

Swaston's Music Department is ending the Spring Term on a real high following our annual West Road Concert. With over 150 pupils involved and representing each of our musical ensembles, this event showcased the outstanding musical talent we are so privileged to have within our school. For our GCSE musicians and our String Orchestra, this was the second concert of the half term. We were blown away by the professionalism and musicianship showcased at the Year 11 Michaelhouse Concert in February, which raised money for the Leavers' Ball. We'd like to take the opportunity to thank all pupils and staff, especially our peripatetic teachers, for their hard work leading up to and during both concerts, and to all members of the school community who supported as audience members.

Our classrooms also continue to be a hive of creativity and learning. Pupils across Key Stage 3 have been composing in a range of styles this term; following on from the Year 9 djembe drum compositions last half term, Year 8 have composed their Rock and Pop pieces, and Year 7s have composed Renaissance dance pieces fit for Henry VIII to dance to! Year 9 have continued their exploration of music from across the world, 'travelling' to Indonesia to study and play gamelan music. We have been very impressed with the level of effort, thought and collaboration between Key Stage 3 pupils across this term. GCSE musicians in Year 10 have moved from the Baroque era to the Classical, studying the conventions of the Concerto in this period. Our Year 11 pupils have been hard at work completing their composition portfolios and have a final ensemble performance left before their coursework is complete. We are very proud of the dedication both year groups have shown to their musical studies.

Finally, we have had a fantastic to end to the term with workshops and performances from a visiting funk band, the Brass Funkeys, as part of the Year 7 Arts Award!

Mrs Johnson, Head of Music



## Build the Burgers

Our kitchen has been buzzing this term, with a real sense of energy and enthusiasm from our Food pupils. Our Year 11s completed their GCSE practical exam with great success, clearly demonstrating the progress they have made. Meanwhile, Year 10s have been working hard to build their skills in readiness for next year, exploring a range of dishes and techniques.

A highlight has been our Build the Burgers challenge, which our Year 10s thoroughly enjoyed. Pupils designed their own burgers in advance and brought them to life by making buns from scratch, then layering ingredients like lettuce, tomatoes, bacon, and jalapeños. They also developed skills in chicken jointing, pastry making, and shaping flavoured fresh pasta into ravioli, laying strong foundations for next year's exam.

Mrs Shaw, Head of Food



## House News

This half term has been full of energy, creativity and community spirit. World Book Day sparked imaginations across the school, celebrating a shared love of reading and storytelling. We also marked International Women's Day, reflecting on the theme 'Give to Gain', highlighting the power of support, equality and celebrating achievements. Red Nose Day brought laughter and togetherness, with a non-uniform day raising funds for a fantastic cause. Meanwhile, Year 9 pupils have been exploring their Key Stage 4 options, taking important steps toward their future pathways. Our Year 11 pupils impressed audiences with their musical talents at Michaelhouse, while the Annual Concert at West Road showcased the incredible range of talent across the school. We were also captivated by the Gym and Dance display, where outstanding performances left audiences truly inspired. It has been a term rich in creativity, compassion and academic exploration. As our Year 11 pupils begin their final exam season, we are thinking of them and wish them every success. We believe in you!



Mrs Riondino, Year 11 Lead and Head of Turing House, on behalf of the Heads of House

## Update from Religion and Worldviews

Another busy and fascinating half term for the RW department. In Year 7, pupils are exploring Hindu Dharma and considering the impact of an alternative, feminist telling of the Ramayana from Sita's perspective. Meanwhile, Year 8s are critically engaging with the enquiry question, 'Did life get better or worse after the Fall?', as they examine Christian salvation history. Year 9s are deepening their understanding of core Christian beliefs. Our Year 10 pupils are approaching the submission deadline for their Higher Project Qualification in Philosophy. We wish our GCSE classes every success as mock and summer examinations approach.

Mrs Venn, Head of Religion and Worldviews



## Let's talk languages!

This has been a short but very busy half term in Languages. We are ending the term with Year 10 speaking exams and we have been impressed with the level of maturity and commitment to the subject pupils have displayed on their GCSE course so far. Year 11 pupils will be completing their final speaking exams just after the Easter holidays and are busy preparing and revising too. We wish them the best of luck with this (and lots of practice during the holidays!)

Year 7 pupils are embarking on the new module and learning how to talk about their families and pets. Year 8 pupils are learning about food in Spanish and jobs in French. Year 9 pupils are talking about health and routine in Spanish and school in French.

Mrs Deleplanque, Head of MFL



## Year 10 Design & Technology

This term, the Year 10 DT classes have been designing and making educational toys, laying the groundwork for Year 11 coursework. Pupils have engaged enthusiastically with the full design process, from researching target users and generating ideas to developing functional, creative prototypes. They have applied a wide range of materials and techniques, including woodworking and 3D printing, demonstrating growing technical skill and attention to detail. Many projects show innovation, user-centred design, and clear educational value, with standout work featured in The Fountain magazine. Pupils are encouraged to continue refining their prototypes, documenting design decisions, and incorporating feedback. Overall, the class has displayed impressive creativity, commitment, and progress in preparation for Year 11 coursework. Well done Year 10!

Mr Bannister and the DT department



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## Professional Learning

In this short half term staff have achieved a lot in terms of their professional learning. Our professional learning discussion group, focused on supporting pupils to develop independent study skills, shared their key recommendations with the wider staff. Further staff training is planned for the summer term looking at the 'FACE it' model of revision championed by Tom Sherrington in his Learning WalkThrus. Staff have been upskilling on how to use Trelson, our new software used by pupils entitled to a word processor in exams. Finally, the Excellent Teaching Team met to discuss further plans for developing pupils' oracy skills and how to foster positive relationships for learning.

Miss Gelder, Deputy Principal



## Pupils do school proud at PowerHouse Games

On Monday, 16 March, we took 10 Sawston Village College pupils to the 98th PowerHouse Games held at the Cambridge University Sports Centre and hosted by John Willis (Power2Inspire). Our pupils were absolutely amazing and did themselves and the school proud. The group of Sawston pupils arrived full of excitement and anticipation, and once the day began, their enthusiasm never stopped. Every single pupil took part in every event, working in mixed teams made up of pupils from three different schools, a volunteer charity group, and Cambridge University athletics students. Each child was given a coloured T-shirt to show their team identity, and many of them are still wearing theirs proudly! It was a truly powerful and inspiring morning, where barriers, limitations, and any sense of exclusion in sport simply disappeared. Throughout the event, our pupils worked tirelessly as a team, persevering through each activity, communicating brilliantly, and embracing every moment of the adventure.

Our pupils embraced all eight adapted sports, which included:

- Seated foam javelin
- Seated volleyball
- Curling
- Boccia
- Target throw
- Quick cricket
- Goalball
- Sitting netball



At the closing ceremony of the 98th PowerHouse Games, every pupil received both a certificate of participation and a medal. What a beautiful, uplifting morning it was!

Mrs Dennis PE Teacher



## Book Week

World Book Day on 6 March translated into a whole Book Week at Sawston Village College, ably led by Library Manager, Ms Fincham-Allen.

On Monday we had a library treasure hunt, followed by a whole host of creative activities on Tuesday, such as black out poetry, zine making, and bookmarking. On Wednesday we held our Book Awards Ceremony as we announced the winner of our second annual in-house book awards. On Thursday it was time for pupils to channel their inner Sherlock Holmes to solve a book-themed escape room, while on Friday there was a Book Quiz. At the same time there were further activities in Mentor time, so it was a very busy week with fun for all.

## And finally...

We hope you have a happy and relaxing Easter break. The summer term begins on Monday, 13 April 2026. We look forward to seeing all pupils and staff then.

