

30 November 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

Headteacher: Mr A Hunter

We're over half way through the half term now. Year 11 have finished their Preparation Exams and are awaiting the results. We will give those out at a formal results event to make it as much like receiving real results as we can. Some students will be delighted, some will be disappointed, but it's better to be disappointed now than in August. The rest of the school are working away quietly in their lessons. I'm still dismayed by the amount of litter that students drop on the site, but in general I'm very pleased with their levels of effort and engagement. I've included in this letter some things that you might be interested to know about the school, and some things that I think we need to celebrate. There are also plenty of useful dates. As always, if you would like to discuss anything further, please don't hesitate to email or arrange an appointment.

### Options

We've been looking hard at our options offer to see if we can increase choice for students to take the courses they really want to, whilst keeping pace with the highest achieving students in other schools. It's a complex task, but we're well on the way with it and certainly hope that it will be in place in time for this year's Year 9 students to have an improved curriculum to follow for the next two years. As part of our planning, we'll be asking Year 9 to complete a set of completely non-binding, predictive options choices, showing us the subject they will probably want to do. This gives us the opportunity to map the curriculum and be sure it works well ahead of the actual options choices in the spring. If your child comes home saying they have picked their options, don't panic; they haven't. We'll be discussing that, amongst other things, at the Parents' Forum on 12 December at 6.30 in the canteen. Please do come along.

### Go4Schools

We are excited to have launched our new online reporting and assessment system, Go4Schools. The package allows parents to see regular live assessment data as well as written reports and other information such as attendance figures. If you have not yet accessed Go4Schools for your child, please refer to the letter and attachments that we sent by email on Wednesday.

### Sixth Form

Our Sixth Form students are applying for places in universities for next year, and their interviews and offers are starting to come in. Five of our students have been offered interviews at Oxbridge colleges, which is a huge achievement in itself. They have all met this week with senior staff from SWA and Dr Chris Warner, Fellow and ex-Admissions Tutor of Robinson College, Cambridge for a practice interview. We wish them all the very best of luck. Another student has been offered a place at the prestigious Norland College, the training centre for Britain's finest nannies (Prince

*The best way to predict the future... is to create it.*

Chalkstone Way, Haverhill, Suffolk. CB9 0LD. Tel: 01440761511 Fax: 01440761899. [swa@samuelward.co.uk](mailto:swa@samuelward.co.uk) [www.samuelward.co.uk](http://www.samuelward.co.uk)

George is looked after by a Norland Nannie). Well done to her, and to all of our ambitious, capable students getting ready to make their next step.

It was a pleasure to meet this week with the trustees of the Samuel Ward Educational Trust, a fund established through a generous donation to support SWA students when they leave us to go to university. We interviewed a number of students who had applied for some support from the fund and made some grants as a result. There were only a few applicants this year, but I hope there will be more interest next year in taking up this valuable offer.

## Careers

Our careers and guidance events continue under the heading of #Aspire\_USP. On 6 December there is a workshop on Jobs in Construction in collaboration with Wates, suitable for Years 11-13. On 14 December, Dr Sharkey, Director of Medicine at the University of Cambridge, will visit us along with an ex-student of ours, Andy Quarrell, for a workshop on Medicine and the Sciences at Cambridge, suitable for Years 10-12. Looking further ahead, on 16 January the University of Suffolk will visit us to run a Law workshop suitable for Years 11-13. All of these events provide excellent opportunities for students to get some insight into different aspects of these potential career pathways.

## Sports

The Year 7 boys' football team won the Western Area 5-a-side tournament last Tuesday, and in doing so qualified for the County Competition. Sadly, they then lost in the semi-final of the County Competition this Tuesday. Well done to all of them.

The Year 8 boys continued their good form, winning the western area league with a win against Mildenhall Academy in the county cup. After coming from behind to go 6-2 in front, they managed to hold off a brave fight back from Mildenhall, eventually winning 6-5.

The Year 10 football team won a thrilling county cup match against St Benedict's, drawing 1-1 and winning 5-4 on penalties. Going into sudden death during the shoot-out, the boys thought they had won when Ali Parico saved a penalty. After celebrating and realising they still had to score another penalty, Kieran Woodley kept his cool to step up and score the winner. Congratulations to all involved in that.

In Basketball, the U12 and U13 Boys played their first game on Tuesday and lost by one basket. It was a great first effort. Both the U14 Girls and U16 Boys Basketball teams are one game away from the Western Area semi-finals. Good luck to them.

The U16 Boys' Badminton team came 2nd in the western area tournament hosted at Samuel Ward. Well done to them, and a big thank you to our sports leaders for helping to run that event.

The U14 Girls' Netball team beat KEGS 15-13. Good for them.

Congratulation also go to 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 for completing their basic first aid awareness course. They all passed both practical and online exam to receive their certificates.

We're also working to raise aspirations in sport. We took a group of Sixth Form sports students to the University of Suffolk this week for a taster day, and tonight some of our netball team are going to the London Copper Box to watch England play Uganda.

## Christmas

We will be collecting for the Haverhill Food Bank .....

The Sixth Form, the Christmas Formal is being held on 13 December at Sturmer Hall. Tickets are a very reasonable £10 and are available from 6LT or Miss Hopkins.

Christmas lunch will be served this year on 19 and 20 December. We will have a Christmas Jumper Day on 19 December, when we ask students to wear a Christmas jumper with their uniform and contribute 50p to Save the Children. Please make a note in your diaries of the Christmas Concert on Thursday 20 December; I'd be very surprised if it wasn't absolutely outstanding. The following day, the last of term, will be a non-uniform day as usual, with funds raised from the £1 donation going to support the house charities: Help for Heroes, Make a Wish and PLAN. On that final day of term, school will close for students at 1.00pm.

Have a good weekend



Andy Hunter  
Headteacher