

4 April 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

There are three parts to this end of term letter:

- Term highlights
- Uniform changes for September
- Staffing update for after Easter

The Spring Term Events and Activities

The Spring Term has been packed with events and activities; and it is fair to say that there has been a good deal of fun had by all – students and staff alike. We now have several school Instagram accounts that are proving very popular, alongside our Facebook page. I am eternally grateful to the Stour Valley staff who go above and beyond to enhance and enrich the learning experiences for the Stour Valley students.

Here are some of the highlights:

Enhancement Day

27 February was our second whole school enhancement day of the year where the usual timetable was suspended and students took part in a range of sessions:

Year 11s focused on Adult Life Skills including: Car Maintenance and Driving Theory with Mr Stephens and Mr Lee; Cervical Screening with the school nurses; the World of Work with a representative from The Department of Health and Pensions; Finance with Reach Haverhill; and they also all had a mock interview. We were exceptionally proud of the feedback we received about the behaviour and engagement of our Y11 students in these sessions.

Year 10s had a range of activities including Spirituality and Art, with Mr Livermore; Careers in the NHS; Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, Contraception and Self-examination with the School Nursing Team and Understanding the Risks of Gambling with GamCare ([GamCare - The leading provider of support for anyone affected by problem gambling in Great Britain](#))

Year 9s had a two hour session with Medical Mavericks ([Medical Mavericks – We inspire the next generation of medics and scientists.](#)), plus used our school careers platform, Morrisby to look for careers that match their skills and aspirations; did a Post-16 options session with West Suffolk College ([West Suffolk College - Diplomas, Degrees, Apprenticeships & T Levels](#)); and a Career Enterprise session run by SVCS staff.

Year 8s did First Aid with Mr Jenkins and Miss Tompkins; a session on Being Brave with Miss Terry; Army Careers with a Royal Engineer Corporal; a STEM session on bridge-building and Japanese with Mrs Magowan; and a separate group worked with Mrs Sedge all day to achieve a Crest Award (CREST Awards)

Year 7s did Speed dating with books in the library with Mrs Gill and Ms Milburn; they also did a musical workshop with Miss Wright; Bingo with Mr Hayes; and had two STEM sessions with external providers in chocolate welding and another with a representative from The Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET - Institution of Engineering and Technology)

World Book Day/Week

This year World Book Day was a fabulous celebration of both staff and student reading with many events taking place across the school throughout the week.

Firstly, we had the House Door competition. This involved each form group creating their own portal to a book of their choice on their form classroom door. We had everything from Coraline to 1984 to The Hungry Caterpillar to The Lorax. After a very difficult adjudication, the winners were announced as 9K for KS3 with their tribute to Alice in Wonderland and 10W with their terrifying 'Chokey' from Matilda.

Throughout the week leading up to World Book Day, students had an assembly entitled 'The Masked Reader'. The aim of this assembly was to remind students of how important reading aloud is, whether it is in small groups, in the classroom or in the form of public speaking. It is important that we all read aloud to gain confidence, improve our communication skills, and embrace opportunities both personally and professionally. In order to show this to our students, we challenged members of staff to read aloud. They were all dressed in inflatable suits on the stage and students had to guess who was reading and what text they were reading from.

As students walked into school on World Book Day, they had a bit of a shock as they were greeted by staff dressed as different book characters. I dressed as the Cat in the Hat, Ms Milburn as Professor McGonagall, Miss Cooper as Maleficent, Mr Jenkins as the Very Hungry Crocodile and many more. All day there was an air of excitement around the school as students wondered which 'book character' would be teaching them next.

Finally, all Year 7 students had the opportunity to meet the writer Muriel Driver, author of the 'Zondor the Magnificent' series. She spoke to the students about becoming a writer, read to them an extract from her novel and then ran a writing workshop on how they might add to her story.

Now we are all thinking about how we can beat the celebrations next year!

The School Production - Aladdin

On 12, 13 and 14 February SVCS presented the performance of 'Aladdin', with a cast of over 50 students from Year 7 to Year 11.

In September students auditioned for their parts in the show and rehearsals started promptly. Both Miss Wright and Mrs Hutchinson were so impressed with the fantastic voices and enthusiasm shown by every single student! The auditions were a great success, and we were especially pleased to see so many Year 7s getting involved, with two students getting main roles having only been at SVCS for a short period of time.

Rehearsals were very busy with students attending two-hour sessions twice a week. Students learnt popular songs from the 70s-90s, dances and acting scenes.

The whole school community were getting involved in the school show and provided students with leadership opportunities. Students in Makers Club with Mr Stephens built our set, for example, fire and ice mountain, market stalls and Chinese dragon. All of the set from the show was created from recycled materials and then taken back to the DT department in order to reduce the amount of waste produced.

The Performing Arts Society supported the advertising, programme, front of house and selling of tickets by taking the Panda into the hall and outside at lunchtime to hand out flyers. Backstage crew, lighting and sound were operated by students at all performances.

Show week arrived and on the 12 February, students performed a matinee performance to Year 6 students from Clare Primary School and fellow SVCS students which was a huge success. Year 6 pupils made some comments after the performance, such as: 'The panda was great!'; 'Wishee Washee is so funny!'; 'I like the songs and dances'; 'Can we come back again?' and 'Aladdin and Jasmine are amazing singers'. This was then followed by three wonderful evening performances. Audience feedback was very positive, and they were amazed with how talented our students are at SVCS.

Uniform Consultation

The uniform consultation has closed and we had 170 responses. The consensus (84%) voted to keep the choice of skirts and trousers (moving to a black pleated skirt for all). Therefore, we will move to one style of skirt, a pleated skirt, from September 2025. Here is a link to the original letter with details of the skirt:

[Years 7-10 Uniform Changes 2025 1.pdf](#)

A number of parents have emailed to request that shorts are added as an option. We will look at that and write to you after the Easter break about how that might be introduced.

Staff Leaving and new appointments

There are no staff leaving at Easter. Mr Livermore (who was covering the Head of RS position whilst Mrs Chester was on maternity Leave) left us on 7 March.

Mr Bird (Site Officer) left us on 31 January.

All that remains is for me to thank you for your ongoing support for the school and to wish you all a good Easter break.

Students return to school on Tuesday 22 April.

With kind regards

Mrs R Kelly, Headteacher

