

CHD/EC

4<sup>th</sup> February 2010

Dear Parents

## February Newsletter

### Winter Weather

Poor weather has made a tricky start to the New Year for schools all over the country, but in Cambridgeshire the weather has been kinder to us and at LVC we have been fortunate to avoid the levels of disruption experienced by many. Let's hope that it now stays that way, but we have only just said goodbye to January and a good deal of the winter is still to come. Once more I would emphasise that news about school closure is posted up on our recently revamped website at [www.lvc.org](http://www.lvc.org), is communicated to all local radio stations and, when possible, an email is sent to you on Schoolscomm. Telephoning all of our parents is just not possible and telephoning reception to find out about closure is unlikely to work, given the volume of calls we receive at such times. Increasingly we find that parents can only keep fully in touch with college events by receiving the Schoolscomm emails and I would urge you to register your address with us so that you too can receive news. We do send papers copies home to those of you not in receipt of emails. We also send text alerts about incoming mail if we have your mobile number. Please contact us at [joanne.barratt@lvc.org](mailto:joanne.barratt@lvc.org) if you wish to update your details.

### Consultation

In the last couple of weeks we have been in consultation mode, finding out the views of students, parents and staff about a range of issues. A parental questionnaire was posted on the website (top left corner of the home page) and students have been completing a similar one too. We were a little disheartened to discover that, on the last Friday of the month (which was the deadline), only around 150 questionnaires had been completed by parents. It really does take only 5 minutes to do and is very easy: a dozen clicks and then a short written comment if you wish to add one. We would like to make the return as representative as possible so we are extending the deadline until the end of February. Our aim is to get 500 returns, so stop reading now and follow the link to the website! [www.lvc.org](http://www.lvc.org).

### Parents' Forum

Last week we also hosted a Parents' Forum on the topic of communication. The Forum had very strong competition, since Radio 4 and Gardener's Question Time had brought out the community en masse to the College Hall, but 8 parents did make the time to come to share their thoughts and feelings with me and it was a very constructive event. To my relief, the work we had done on the new look website had not gone unnoticed and there were also

positive comments on the use of text message reminders, the Schoolcomms service, the helpfulness of our receptionists and the return to subject evenings.

The following actions will result from the discussions that we held and I will add them to the College Improvement Plan when I revise it:

- We need to check the reliability of our email service on a regular basis.
- We will write a communication policy and train staff in its application.
- We will create a section for parents on the website.
- Weekly events will be advertised on the home page of the website.
- We will create a video newsletter celebrating the achievements of students.
- We will improve our communication to parents in relation to the timings of afterschool activities.

Thanks to the magnificent seven plus one who provided us with these ideas.

### **Building Work**

Whilst it has been very pleasant indeed to have just enjoyed 6 months of quiet on the college site, the cranes, lorries and diggers return once more in March in order to begin Phase 2 of our building programme. Phase 2 will leave us with a new reception area, new office spaces, a library, staffroom, and indoor social areas for students by September 2011. Demolition of the decrepit Vic Hallam building will be the first project and we will brief students on the changes to access and implications as far as health and safety are concerned during the next few weeks. The whole of the Vic Hallam area will be securely fenced off until the new building is ready. Following demolition, the team of Oxford Archaeologists return to the site to dig and given the rich Neolithic and Roman remains discovered here during previous digs, almost anything could happen! During Phase 2, the library and Learning Support will be moved to temporary mobile accommodation.

### **Training Day, Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February**

Sometimes people do wonder what it is that teachers do on Training Days. Our Training Day on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February is a little different from our usual events because our teachers will be going out and about to different schools across the country to 'scan the horizon' for interesting ideas or examples of world class practice. We then meet back for an afterschool training evening in the same week to share our experiences.

Half-term begins on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February at the end of a normal college day and students should return to school, following the training day, on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup>. This term ends on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April at 3.05 pm.



Training days for 2010-2011 have been set. They are: 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2010, 4<sup>th</sup> January and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2011.

Have a good month.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Derbyshire  
Principal

**Events from The College Calendar in February**

- 2 Young Musician of the Year heats
- 3 Year 11 parents' evening A-K
- 4 Intermediate Maths Challenge
- 10 Year 11 parents' evening L-Z
- 12 ABRSM exams
- 15–19 Half-term
- 22 Training day