

The Principal's Desk

As we approach the end of term, I want to share my gratitude and pride for the wonderful start to the school year at Bottisham Village College. We've been working hard on our priorities and areas for improvement, and this newsletter provides a more detailed update on our progress.

Thank you for supporting our shared goal of raising expectations, ensuring students come to school ready to learn, on time, and with a positive mindset. Your partnership is invaluable.

This term, we've offered numerous opportunities to connect as a school community, including information evenings, school tours, and our first in a series of coffee mornings, where parents met senior and key staff. We're thrilled by the turnout at our parent forum—your feedback is helping shape our future plans. More events will follow in 2025, with dates available on our website.

The PTA has been equally busy, with a quiz night (fully booked!) and a Year 7/8 disco. Their fundraising has supported book prizes, celebration events, and reading pens for students with SEND—thank you!

A special mention to Year 11 students, who have tackled mock exams with focus and dedication. Across all year groups, I'm so proud of our students' talents and achievements—please share them so we can celebrate!

A reminder that Facebook is our primary form of social media: please follow us!

Wishing you a restful and joyful holiday, however you celebrate.



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Anglian Learning presents

PLATFORM 24

an exhibition of artwork from Anglian Learning
secondary schools and sixth forms

BOTTISHAM VILLAGE COLLEGE STUDENTS SHINE AT ANGLIAN LEARNING EXHIBITION



Over 30 pieces of artwork by pupils from secondary schools and a sixth form across East Anglia are on display at an art exhibition in Michaelhouse Café, Cambridge.

Platform 24, this year's instalment of Anglian Learning's annual Platform Exhibition, involves over 70 pupils, from Year 7 to sixth form, across the multi-academy Trust's six secondary schools and sixth form. We are proud to have current and former Bottisham Village College pupils featured in the exhibition.

Lesley Morgan, Arts Development Manager at Anglian Learning, said, "Platform 24 empowers our pupils by having their artwork publicly exhibited while providing a vital opportunity for colleagues across schools to collaborate and enhance their creative teaching."

Duncan Cooper, Director of Secondary Education, praised the exceptional quality of the work, adding, "Thanks to our teachers' dedication, pupils thrive in an inspiring environment that nurtures bold, expressive artistic journeys."

The diverse artworks include painting, photography, and textiles in both traditional and abstract styles. A private view on 11 November, attended by pupils, families, and Trust members, also featured live music by Bottisham Village College students.

For more information, visit www.anglianlearning.org.



SPOTLIGHT ON...

SEND



Inclusion is at the heart of supporting SEND at BVC

One key initiative is the introduction of Inclusive Classroom boxes in every classroom. These contain resources such as timers, task planners, and reading overlays, alongside guidance for teachers on supporting different needs. These boxes promote independence, with students regularly using the resources, as evidenced during learning walks.

Adapted Provision

Bottisham also offers two adapted provisions: the Coral class, providing nurture-based learning in smaller groups, and the Reef class, offering a slower-paced environment with higher staff-to-student ratios.

Training

To further enhance support, staff regularly receive SEND training, and the SEND team collaborates closely with external agencies, including Educational Psychologists and SEND services. Termly networking events for parents of students with SEND provide valuable guidance, with the next session on "Understanding Teenage Brain Development" scheduled for Wednesday, 18th December.

Learning Plans

Students with SEND also benefit from personalised learning plans, which detail their needs, classroom strategies, and general information to help teachers support them effectively. This year, these plans have been redesigned for clarity, with updates underway. Parents of students on the SEND register will have the chance to contribute to these plans.

SEND Department

The SEND department includes 11 Teaching Assistants who support students with an EHCP, alongside three specialist Level 4 TAs delivering interventions in English, Maths, and overseeing Learning Support, a base for students needing time away from lessons to learn at their own pace.



HISTORY MATTERS

We speak with Mrs Hill, Head of History, to discover the significance and importance of this subject at the college.

At Bottisham Village College, history is more than a subject—it's a pathway to understanding the world. Led by Keeley Hill, the department fosters curiosity and critical thinking, equipping students with tools to navigate the complexities of modern life.

The history curriculum encourages students to question sources, analyse context, and evaluate evidence. "Our goal is to inspire curiosity about the past while building empathy and understanding," says Keeley Hill. This approach reflects the school's vision of "inspiring, caring, and enriching."

"History helps students connect the past to the present," Keeley explains. "They gain critical thinking skills and an understanding of how societal changes occur, preparing them for today's challenges."

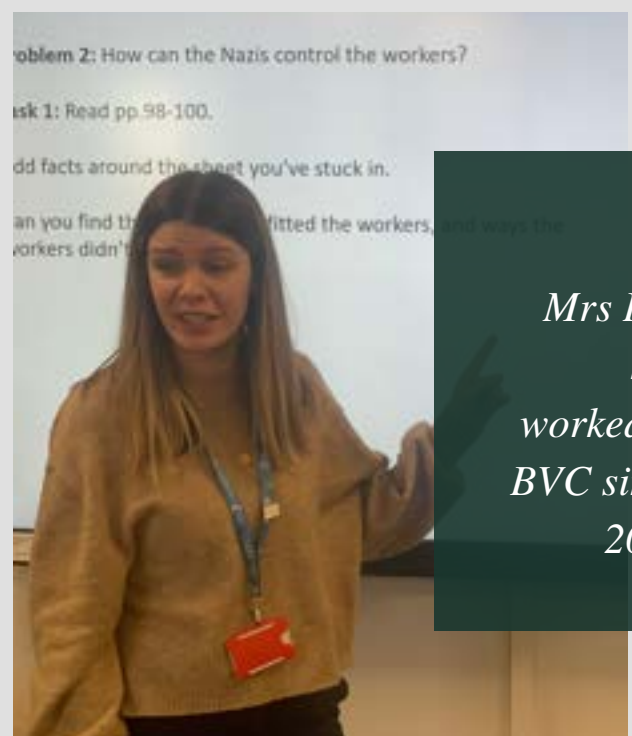
Key themes like monarchy, empire, and social diversity connect historical events to modern issues. Through debates, role-plays, and source analysis, students actively engage with the past.

"We want students to explore history dynamically, forming their own conclusions," Keeley emphasises.

Enrichment activities include a GCSE trip to the Holocaust Exhibition and recommendations for books and podcasts. The department is also developing new trips and local history projects.

Launching the OCR History B course with Year 10 is a highlight, featuring a unit on migration to Britain. "It's an exciting opportunity to explore diversity and how it shaped our society," Keeley shares.

Under Keeley Hill's leadership, history at Bottisham inspires students to think critically, empathise deeply, and understand their role in shaping the future.



*Mrs Hill
has
worked at
BVC since
2011*

The CEO of Anglian Learning

As CEO of Anglian Learning, the multi-academy Trust which supports your child/ren's school, I would like to share some key highlights of the work Anglian Learning has undertaken in the last few months. These activities have benefitted our pupils, workforce and communities of our Trust.

As a large school trust, we received £1.8 million in government funding to enhance the condition of our schools. While this does not meet all our needs, it has allowed us to prioritise health and safety improvements, essential repairs and the energy efficiency of our buildings. A major piece of work was the installation of solar panels across all our schools, reducing energy costs and our carbon footprint. The money saved can be allocated to other areas for the education of our young people.

Other important areas we have focused on include:

- Strengthening our IT infrastructure to protect against cyber attacks
- Reviewing safeguarding in all schools
- Introducing a Teaching and Learning Framework that sets out the principles of excellent classroom teaching to be adopted by each school
- Hosting leadership conferences for headteachers and deputy headteachers on creating strong teams, supporting positive relationships with pupils and much more
- Starting our 'Belonging by Design' strategy to improve pupil attendance, SEND support and mental health, supported by the funding we have received from Cambridgeshire and Suffolk Local Authorities.



Finally, in November, we celebrated our secondary school pupils' creativity with the Platform 24 art exhibition at The Michaelhouse Café. The exhibition featured inspiring work from our talented KS3, KS4 pupils and A Level students.

I wish all families a restful break and thank you for your continued support as we work to transform education together. For more information on our Trust's activities, please visit our website www.anglianlearning.org, or follow us on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Jonathan Culpin, CEO



COLLEGE IMPROVEMENT

Since our inspection of March 2024, the college has been working towards some targeted improvements, as detailed in our *College Improvement plan*. Over the course of the year, the College Leadership Team take responsibility for areas of this plan and, in partnership with the central team of The Anglian Learning Multi-Academy Trust, the areas are scrutinised, quality assured and challenged. These areas are detailed below.



Improve Attitudes to Learning

- Reduce low-level disruption
- Promote Positive Behaviours
- Enhance Anti-Bullying Strategies



Raise Attainment

- Inclusive Classrooms
- Enhance the progress of readers
- Develop assessment
- Accountability and Consistency



Enhance Community Engagement

- Improve communication
- Foster a sense of belonging

Given our increased capacity with both our pastoral and behaviour teams, students will have noticed senior teachers and Heads of Department visiting classes more regularly. Leaders are checking whether the routines and expectations put in place are having an impact across the college, including our teaching and learning approach. Data is suggesting that significant distance has been covered this year in these areas.

Equally, much of our focus with staff training concerns how teachers shape and adapt their lessons based on the needs of students with SEND with learning plans. Our quality assurance this year is incredibly positive in this regard. Of course, our student survey at the end of this term will provide us with some more data to help us move towards this important target.

Finally, our concerted effort to engage with our community has been well received and thoroughly enjoyable. Over the course of this term, our coffee mornings and tours around the college during working time have taken place. Parents have commented on how useful it is for them to go into lessons to understand some of the great work that is taking place here at the college.

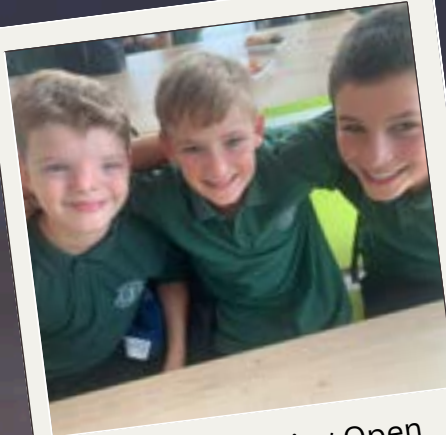
Do keep your eyes peeled on social media for more opportunities to come into BVC.



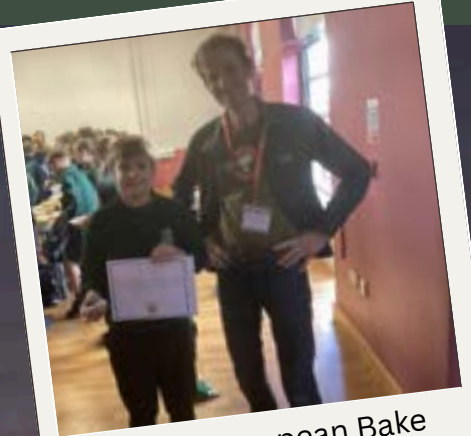
GALLERY



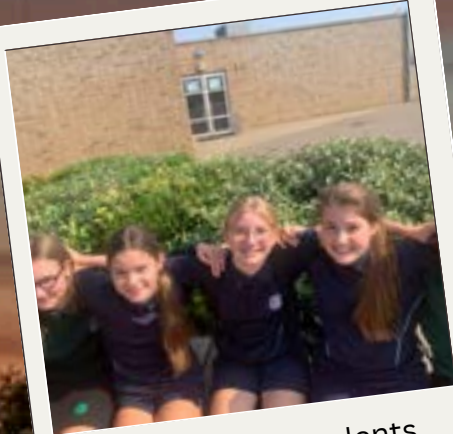
Rosie collects her Sparx Reader award



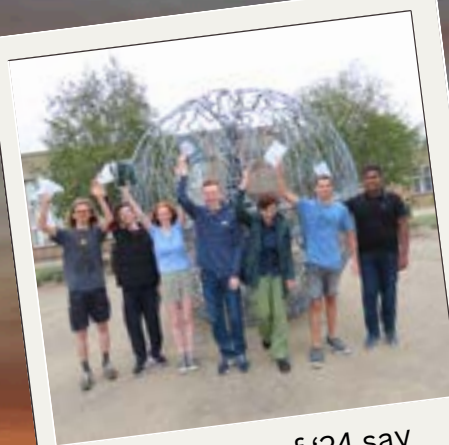
Year 8 getting Open Evening ready



Our European Bake Off winner



New Year 7 Students making friends



The Class of '24 say goodbye



US Election assemblies



Mr Brewer on ITV News



Bottisham remembers



Children in Need

COMING HOME TO INSPIRE

FORMER STUDENT ELLA FOSTER RETURNS TO TEACH AT BOTTISHAM



*Ella in
2016*

Bottisham Village College has long been a place of inspiration for its students, and few exemplify this more than Ella Foster. A former student who left in 2017, Ella has now returned to Bottisham as a teacher in the English department, bringing her passion for education and a commitment to academic excellence.

Reflecting on her time as a student, Ella describes it as pivotal in shaping her career aspirations. “My experience here was both inspiring and rewarding,” she shares. “The opportunities I was presented with sparked my passion for learning. The positive and lasting impact my teachers had on me influenced my decision to pursue a career in teaching.”

Returning as a member of staff, Ella has been struck by the school’s inclusive and welcoming culture. “The support I’ve received from colleagues and leadership has made me feel valued in the school community,” she says.

Regular meetings with other new staff and tailored professional development have been instrumental in helping her grow in her role. “The opportunity to work with experienced colleagues and receive personalised feedback is integral to my development,” she adds.

Ella has already experienced inspiring moments, particularly as a Year 7 form tutor. She highlights the students’ efforts during Children in Need fundraising events as a standout experience. “It was special to see them work together, demonstrating leadership, collaboration, and organisation to engage the entire school community,” she explains.

Since her time as a student, Bottisham has expanded with new facilities and a growing student body, but Ella believes its core values remain unchanged. “The school fosters an environment where students and staff thrive,” she explains. She is particularly impressed by the wide range of extracurricular opportunities that enrich students’ experiences.

Looking ahead, Ella is excited to guide her Year 7 form through their school journey and foster a positive learning environment. “Through my passion for teaching, I hope to provide students with opportunities to thrive and become confident young people,” she shares.

Ella’s journey from student to teacher showcases Bottisham Village College’s commitment to academic ambition and its lasting impact on those it inspires.



*Miss Foster in
2024*



STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Who are The Student Leadership Team (SLT)?

After applying for the role and undergoing a rigorous interview process at the end of year 10, our SLT consists of 7 students. During the course of this year, they shall work close with our Deputy Principals to help improve and lead on a range of aspects relating to college life.

We thought it would be useful to introduce them to the Bottisham Community.

Sam

Why SLT? To help students get as much out of BVC as I have.

What would you like to improve? To help shape activities for all students.

What is a strength of BVC? The teachers and the sense of community.

What is your favourite BVC Memory? Derbyshire trip: karaoke on the bus!



Erica

Why SLT? To make students' voices heard.

What would you like to improve? Curriculum enrichment.

What is a strength of BVC? Teachers and students working together.

What is your favourite BVC Memory? Stepping out of my comfort zone in Derbyshire.



Eleanor

Why SLT? To help SEND and younger students.

What would you like to improve? More school hours enrichment for all.

What is a strength of BVC? Extra-curricular: great for new friends and skills.

What is your favourite BVC Memory? GCHQ Cyberfirst Hacking Competition.



Olivia

Why SLT? To provide younger students with a stronger voice.

What would you like to improve? Understanding of SEND in the classroom.

What is a strength of BVC? Dedication of the teachers.

What is your favourite BVC Memory? Becoming a year 11 student.

Harmony

Why SLT? To give back to the school which supported me.

What would you like to improve? Year groups working together.

What is a strength of BVC? The sense of belonging.

What is your favourite BVC Memory? Duke of Edinburgh Bronze.



Alysia

Why SLT? To help students feel supported.

What would you like to improve? To work with less confident students.

What is a strength of BVC? Care and support for each individual.

What is your favourite BVC Memory? Health and Social Care at KS4.

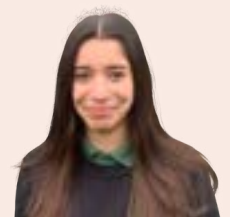
Anita

Why SLT? To support all students' experiences of school.

What would you like to improve? To help all students speak up.

What is a strength of BVC? The teachers' care and friendliness.

What is your favourite BVC Memory? Trip to nursing home to work with the elderly.



ENRICHMENT UPDATE



Our visit to Twickenham to watch England play rugby was a triumph.

A feature of our school is the range of opportunities we offer our students outside of the curriculum: trips, visits, clubs and experiences. Here's a brief snapshot of the events which have taken place this academic year so far.

Sporting success



Debating Society



Parliament



Ely Court



Manufacturing

Nursing Home



Key Dates

SPRING
TERM
2025

JAN

3

PROFESSIONAL
DAY (NO
STUDENTS)

FEB

5

YEAR 8 X BAND
PARENTS' EVENING

JAN

6

START OF TERM
FOR ALL

FEB

12

YEAR 8 Y BAND
PARENTS' EVENING

JAN

8

YEAR 9 X BAND
PARENTS' EVENING

FEB

14

PROFESSIONAL
DAY (NO
STUDENTS)

JAN

13

YEAR 9 Y BAND
PARENTS' EVENING

FEB

17-21

HALF-TERM

JAN

20-24

YEAR 11 MOCK
LANGUAGE
SPEAKING EXAMS

FEB/MAR

24/7

YEAR 11 MOCK
EXAMINATIONS

JAN

21

YEAR 11 MOCK
INTERVIEWS

MAR

17-27

YEAR 10 MOCK
EXAMINATIONS

JAN

28

YEAR 9 PATHWAYS TO
THE FUTURE LAUNCH

MAR

20

YEAR 7 X BAND
PARENTS' EVENING

MAR

25

YEAR 7 Y BAND
PARENTS' EVENING

The Archive

BVC STAFF

WE THINK THIS IS FROM THE EARLY 1970S...



Of course, the college was much smaller than now: staff briefings used to take place in The Staffroom but we now must have them in The Evans Auditorium, with almost 200 staff members. We recognise a few faces here: Mr Hanlon and Mr Humphries, to name but two.

We think the photo was taken in The Rose Garden, which is now a part of the year 8 social area.

If you have any further information about the faces in this picture, do feel free to contact us at the college.