



# Manor Community College

a DCSF designated Specialist Creative and Performing Arts College  
Principal Ben Slade BA (Hons) Ed, NPQH

Arbury Road, Cambridge, CB4 2JF  
Tel: 01223 508742, Fax: 01223 508747  
Email: [office@manorcc.org.uk](mailto:office@manorcc.org.uk)

24<sup>th</sup> March 2009

Dear parents/carers,

## Principal's Newsletter – Spring 2009

I hope this newsletter finds you well and that you are all fighting fit?

***There is lots of news to update you with and, as usual, there are a few pleas for help and support:***

### Ski Trip

Mr Bedford, Mr McCann and Mrs Heath gave up their half term breaks to take a ski party abroad. As always the trip was a huge success and the students' behaviour was a credit to the college and their parents. My thanks to all involved.

### Reflections on "Oliver" and looking forward to "The 'M' Factor"

I was absolutely delighted with the recent production of "Oliver", directed by Mr. Parry. It was a huge step forward for us as a college with a performing arts specialism. All performers were excellent but some members of the cast demonstrated outstanding performance skills (both acting and singing).

There is no rest for the team as they embark on a series of auditions in music, dance and drama for "The M Factor" – a talent show with a live band which will be staged at the college in June this year. Please encourage your sons/daughters/daughters to audition!

### Red Nose events and Discos with Year 10 DJs

Another great performance initiative! A number of our students are learning how to DJ with Mr Glazebrook and, as part of their assessments, are performing at a number of discos for different year groups throughout the year. Their sets have been impressive – the latest being the Red Nose Disco for students with good attendance and effort.

### The Government's "National Challenge"

**Good news** – we are performing well in terms of all we are doing to raise standards within subject areas. So much so the Minister for Schools and Learning wrote to the MP for Cambridge stating:

*"I was really pleased to see the GCSE results at Manor Community College rise from 23% to 42% of students achieving five or more A\* - C grades including English and Mathematics (in 2008). This substantial improvement is a testament to the hard work of the Principal, Ben Slade, his staff and the students at the College."*

(letter dated 23/02/2009).

Deputy Principal: Jane Davies  
Chair of Governors: Phillip Ward  
PA to the Principal: Lucy Crebo  
Bursar: John Moloney

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## **Areas for improvement - Attendance and punctuality**

*We really must improve this with immediate effect or we could find ourselves remaining in the challenge and potentially in trouble. Please can you do your utmost to support this by:*

- *Making sure your son/daughter/caree is in college on time every day*
- *Making sure they are not hanging around outside of the college e.g. in Campkin Road until after the registration bell has gone at 8:45am. This means they are late and are therefore recorded as "late" on our figures*
- *Helping to ensure that any absence is explained with a note*
- *Not giving your son/daughter/caree time off for minor issues or inappropriate issues e.g. a sore throat or a birthday*
- *Keeping in contact with college about student absences each day*
- *Not taking holidays in college time – this has to be recorded as "unauthorised absence".*

## **Numbers applying for places in Year 7 in September 2009**

The number of students allocated a place in next year's Year 7 has risen significantly. We very much hope this is because of the considerable improvements we have made over the last few years.

## **Intervention programmes for Years 9 and 10**

A programme of intervention similar to the one being used with 29 Year 11 students will be rolled out to relevant cohorts of students in Years 9 and 10 shortly. This may include mentoring, study support sessions, revision days and courses, online tuition programs etc. We think we are doing everything we possibly can to raise attainment but, if you have a good idea, please let us know at [office@manorcc.org.uk](mailto:office@manorcc.org.uk) or via my PA on 01223 508742 extension 214.

## **Free School (College) Meals**

It appears in talking to a range of students and parents/carers that they do not always apply for Free School Meals even though they are entitled to in many cases.

### ***This really worries me because:***

- We cannot ensure students are eating healthily and responsibly – or indeed at all
- You/they may not be receiving the correct benefits to which you/they may be entitled
- This has a negative impact on our whole college funding
- A low percentage of students on FSM also adversely affects our "value added" scores.

I would estimate the genuine need for Free School Meals to be between 35% and 40%. ***Our current figures state 21% which is far too low.***

We will be holding an evening shortly to which parents/carers will be invited. The purpose of this is to show you how much better the canteen food is – you can try it – and to help you to fill in the forms from the County Council Benefits Department. More details to follow...



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## **Expression of Interest in Trust Status**

I have submitted an "Expression of Interest" form for the college to become a Trust School. If this is approved in principle, there will be full consultation with parents, students, staff and governors. This will be a really exciting development for all students and staff at the college if it all goes through.

## **Building Schools for the Future Programme**

We are currently awaiting final approval for Cambridgeshire County Council's submission to the DCSF about building schools for the future in Cambridge City. However I am able to say that The Manor Community College was at the top of the list for the next phase thanks to a lot of work both from governors and me to raise the profile of the building issues at Manor.

## **Existing College improvements: Phase 2**

***New budget permitting (which is tight for the 50<sup>th</sup> year running!), I would like to make further improvements to the college as follows:***

- New library and study zone – fully equipped and staffed
- New bike sheds
- New outside eating and recreation areas
- Improved security and communication – cameras, TV screens, displays
- Resurfacing of car park and playgrounds
- Further re-painting
- Replacement boilers (CCC monies)
- Replacement showers and changing rooms for the Gym (CCC monies)
- New doors, alarm systems etc (CCC monies).

## **Maverick Television for Channel 4**

Maverick TV (working for Channel 4) visited the college on 6th March 2009 to see if we are suitable for a proposed "Cutting Edge" documentary about the college and my role. A number of teachers and a wide range of students were involved and did their very best to promote The Manor. The producer was impressed. We will hear shortly if we have been successful.

## **Website**

I have been working hard (with Mrs Papadopoulo and Mr Knappett) to update the website. There is lots of useful information here which I encourage you to read. If there is something you think we should have on there, please email [david.knappett@manorcc.org.uk](mailto:david.knappett@manorcc.org.uk) directly. The most important section for parents/carers is the 'letters and documents to parents' section under the 'useful information' tab.

Until the next time, very best wishes to all of you.

Regards

**Ben Slade**  
**Principal**

Deputy Principal: Jane Davies  
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