

Headteacher's Letter

November 2015

Dear Parent

As reported in my last letter to parents in September we are very pleased with our GCSE results again this year. Our final headline figures for this year were: 67% of pupils achieved 5 or more A*-C grades including English and Maths, 80% of pupils achieved A*-C grades in Mathematics and 71% of pupils achieved A*-C grades in English.

We look forward to congratulating our pupils at our Annual Presentation Evening on Thursday (26th November) and hope many of the year group will be able to join us with their families to celebrate their success.

Diary Dates for December:

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| Thursday 26 November 2015 | GCSE 2015 Presentation Evening Year 8 Pupil Monitoring Data published to parents |
| Friday 27 November 2015 | STAFF INSET: School closed to pupils |
| Monday 30 November 2015 | Year 8 Parents' Evening Main Hall 4.30-7.30pm |
| Monday 7 December | Parents Coffee Morning 9.15am – 10am |
| Friday 11 December 2015 | Year 11 Pupil Monitoring Data and Reports published to parents |
| Thursday 17 December 2015 | Years 7, 9 and 10 Pupil Monitoring Data published to parents |
| Friday 18 December 2015 | End of Autumn Term |
| Monday 4 January 2016 | School re-opens - Spring Term |

Please note that this year there will not be our usual Christmas Concert at the end of term as Mrs Leyman (Head of Music) has now started her maternity leave. We do, of course, send her all our best wishes at this time.

My next Parents' Coffee Morning is on Monday 7th December at 9.15am. I was delighted so many parents were able to attend our last gathering and discussions included national curriculum changes, new GCSE grading systems and the possible changes to Key Stage 3 levels in the future, use of student planners for communication, new attendance legislation, new online system for booking parents evening appointments and home learning tasks. As you can see a very wide ranging number of topics were covered and I extend a warm welcome to all parents to join me for this informal opportunity to meet again over a cup of coffee.

On Friday 18th December, the last day of term, it is normal lessons up until at least break-time. Pupils who have reached the target set for achievement points and attendance this term will then be able to participate in the activities organised for the remainder of the day. Parents of Years 10 and 11 pupils have already received letters outlining the trips their child can choose from if they have also reached the target set for achievement points and attendance this term. All pupils do not need to wear school uniform for the day but should ensure their choice of clothing is appropriate for the activities.

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Pupil Attendance:

As you will be aware from my previous letters, new legislation came into effect from September we are required to comply with regarding pupil attendance. This includes leave of absence requests for pupils which can only be authorised now in exceptional circumstances with very limited discretion around this.

Parents may be aware of a recent case on the Isle of Wight regarding a parent who had removed his child from school for a holiday during term time and local magistrates deemed there was no case to answer regarding a Penalty Notice issued. Hampshire has advised schools that we must continue to follow the law on attendance and implement the government's guidance around attendance and this remains unchanged. They have posted further details on their website for information at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/hias/learning-behaviour-attendance/attendance-guidance-for-parents/possible-penalties.htm> I appreciate the changes have caused concern for some parents but trust that you understand the school's position and requirement to comply with the legislation.

Charity Fundraising:

I am delighted to share with parents that over £630 was raised by our non-uniform day for Children in Need recently. This also included two pupils doing a sponsored silence! The Year 11 Charity Committee have requested a Christmas Jumper Day before the end of term as another fund raising event and the details will follow shortly.

I am also pleased to report that following our popular Stockfest event held in May we have been able to purchase a new specialist microphone system for use in our drama productions. We also continue to fund the education of a pupil in a Ugandan school through the charity 'Education Uganda'.

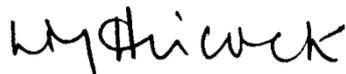
The Governing Body

Mr Simon Port was recently confirmed as the new Chair of the Governing Body. The Vice Chairs are Mrs Emily Cooper and Mr Mark Wall. Further information on our Governing Body can be found on the school website.

Staff Training Day – Friday November 27th

Finally, I remind parents that this coming Friday pupils should not attend school as it is a staff training day.

Yours sincerely



L Hiscock (Miss)
Headteacher

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