

Headteacher's Letter

July 2016

Dear Parent

As I write we are nearing the end of the Summer Term and another school year. I share with you some highlights:

- StockFest was again very well supported and now in its eighth year. Many pupils took part, either on the stage as performers or running stalls to raise funds. We are always grateful for the very generous support of all involved, including the long standing supporters of this event who provide the marquees and sound system as well as the commitment of the staff to make this such a successful event. My thanks to Mr Langdown and the pupil team for arranging this event which raised £1500 this year. A final decision on how to use all the funds is yet to be confirmed as I write, although we continue to commit a small proportion of it to support the education of two pupils in a Uganda school through the local charity 'Education Uganda'.
- Activities Week gave our Year 7 – 9 pupils the opportunity to be involved in a wide range of activities both in and out of school. We had residential trips to Germany, Central Europe, France and the New Forest; from school each day activities going out included Land and Water, horse-riding, bush-craft and fishing; whilst in school were a variety of sports, 'play in a day' and Art workshops. Again the amount of time and planning by the staff to organise this week cannot be underestimated and I am very grateful to all for their commitment to do this. As you will be aware the N.U.T Trade Union had called for industrial action on Tuesday 5th July and, whilst the issues this was about remain of concern for many in the profession, all teachers who could have supported this action chose not to because of the disruption it would have caused to activity week for our pupils.
- Year 10 pupils were also on their work experience placements last week with almost the whole year group taking part. We have already received incredibly positive feedback from many of the pupils and the employers, some of whom have said they would have liked the pupils to stay longer if this had been possible!

Celebration Assemblies on Wednesday 20th July

On the last day of term our annual year group celebration assemblies take place and parents are warmly invited to join us for these at the following times in the Main Hall (please sign in at reception):

Year 7 – 9.15am

Year 10 – 10.15am

Year 9 – 11.30am

Year 8 – 12.30pm

Appointment of Parent Governors

I am pleased to inform you that Mrs Julie Cassidy and Mr David Wilson have joined the Full Governing Body as Parent Governors. We had two vacancies on the Governing Body and, as the only applicants, Mrs Cassidy and Mr Wilson were duly appointed with no election required. Full details of the membership of our Governing Body (including their pen portraits) are available on the school website.

Staff News

We are very sorry to be losing a number of staff at the end of this term with many moving on to promoted posts. We wish all the very best for the future and thank them for their commitment and support to our pupils and school. We therefore look forward to welcoming a number of new staff to our school in September. We are also delighted to welcome Mr Kent as our new Site Manager this week. Full details on staff changes will be included in my final letter of the year to be posted home next week.

Looking ahead to 2016-2017

It is a time of considerable change in education with a number of national changes coming through that we are already moving forward in our school to ensure the least disruption and the best possible provision continues for your children's education. These include:

- New GCSE curriculum starting in most subjects from September for Year 10 (our current Year 9). These will be alongside the new GCSE curriculum for English and Maths already in place and studied for the first time by our current Year 10 this year.
- Introduction of GCSE grades 9 – 1 for the assessment of new GCSE curriculum to replace the current GCSE grades A* - G. Year 11 English and Maths GCSE results in 2017 (current Year 10) will be graded 9 – 1 with majority of remaining GCSE subjects moving to number grades in 2018 (current Year 9).
- New assessment system for Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8, and 9) curriculum starting from September due to the end of national levels being in place. Early in the Autumn Term we will send out further details to parents of the new system we will be using to target, monitor and report on our pupils' progress in Years 7, 8 and 9.

The school continues to respond to these challenges and to thrive. We are pleased to report that our pupil numbers continue to steadily rise with a number of pupils transferring to our school during this year and our New Year 7 from September will be our largest year group. This is supported by our Year 5 Taster Day in June where we were oversubscribed for places despite increasing these.

We are, of course, still awaiting our next Ofsted inspection and hope the inspectors will see the school we are so proud of but, as I always say, we are not complacent and continue to challenge ourselves to improve further.

Start of the Autumn Term

A reminder of the dates for the start of the Autumn Term are as follows:

Monday September 5th: Staff Training Day

Tuesday September 6th: Year 7 only start school (8.50am)

Wednesday September 7th: Years 8 – 11 return to school (8.50am)

Finally, I would also ask that if planning to purchase any new items of uniform for your child between now and September that you check the items meet our uniform code as detailed on the school website. If you have any queries, please do contact us before purchasing new items.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely

L Hiscock (Miss)
Headteacher