

## Headteacher's Letter

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September 2016

Dear Parent

With another academic year underway I welcome back all our pupils, staff and parents. I also extend a warm welcome to those who have joined our school community this year.

I look forward to this year ahead and thank you for your ongoing support to ensure a high standard of uniform by pupils on their return. We have had to follow up a small number of concerns and value working with you to quickly resolve these. I would ask parents ensure their child is not wearing non-uniform items such as hoodies to school as the weather changes.

### Celebrating excellent GCSE results!

I am delighted to report that our pupils again achieved excellent results this year and I warmly congratulate them. These results are not easily gained and are down to the hard work of our pupils and the staff who supported and worked with them.

Our results build on last year's high outcomes and the headline figure matches our highest for this measure with **69% achieving five or more GCSE A\*-C grades including English and Mathematics**. As you may be aware this measure will no longer be reported in the future with the focus very much on whether all pupils are making no less than expected progress as individuals, rather than focusing on how many achieved A\*-C grades. We have always worked towards every pupil making the progress they are capable of and I am pleased to report that in this year's GCSE results **76% made no less than expected progress in Mathematics and 69% made no less than expected progress in English**.

Looking forward we also have the introduction of GCSE grades 9-1. Our current Year 11 pupils are already on line to be assessed by these grades in their GCSE English and Mathematics in 2017, whilst our current Year 10 pupils will be assessed by number grades in most of their subjects in 2018.

### New Key Stage 3 target-setting and assessment:

The use of national levels for assessment at Key Stage 3 has now ended and, in line with all schools, we have been working on a new scheme to replace levels. You should have already received a letter from Mr Page (Deputy Headteacher) explaining in detail how this will work this year for all Year 7, 8 and 9 pupils. This can also be accessed on our school website. We welcome feedback and in the letter there are details of how to send in your comments.

### Collecting and dropping off children by car:

As a rural school the overwhelming majority of our pupils travel some distance to our school every day. We also recognise that many of you do not live in our catchment area and this can be a huge commitment for yourselves to organise and fund. This year we have an increasing number of pupils either travelling to school by bus or car, making Roman Road and the bus bays very busy at peak times. The safety and well-being of our pupils using these areas remains our prime concern and I would ask all parents to support us to keep all pupils safe at these times:

- If dropping your child off by car in the mornings to use the bus bays so he/she can walk the short distance along Roman Road on the pavement. A number of residents now park their cars along

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this road and many staff are arriving for work, making it difficult if additional cars are also trying to drop off and turn in the school's car parks.

- If collecting your child by car at the end of the day to be aware that the period from 3.20pm until 3.35pm is very busy with pupils often needing to cross bus bays to board their buses. Our priority between these times is always to ensure all pupils have boarded their buses as safely as possible. We would ask parents to:
  - Wait until the buses have moved off at 3.35pm before trying to drive through bus bays if it is busy (or collect your child a little later).
  - Ensure you do not drive through bus bays on the wrong side of the road if unable to get past buses stopped on the far side; I would remind parents that this area is a public highway with arrows for one-way travel clearly marked and, more importantly, pupils will not be expecting cars from the wrong direction if they are crossing.
  - Drive slowly through bus bays because of the large number of children

Parents will be aware that we have very limited parking around the school site. We would be very grateful for your support if collecting pupils by car to help us to minimise the impact the large volume of traffic has on our neighbours i.e. not accidentally blocking residents' drive ways, waiting with engines running nor using The Body Barn's customer car park to wait or turn. Thank you for your support. We regularly remind pupils about the need to ensure they are keeping themselves safe when waiting for their buses and we are currently going through our Code of Conduct for the bus bays again to remind all pupils what is expected of them.

## Staff News:

We welcome all our new staff from September as detailed in my letter to all parents in July and do hope they will enjoy being a part of our school community as they settle in. This term we are delighted to also be joined by Miss Needs (Librarian). We are currently seeking a part-time Assistant Site Supervisor with full details on our website.

## Diary dates for the Autumn Term:

Monday 26th September 2016	Open Evening 6-8pm
Thursday 29th September 2016	Open Morning 9.15-10.30am
Friday 30th September 2016	Open Morning 9.15-10.30am
Friday 7th October 2016	<b>STAFF INSET: School closed to pupils</b>
Tuesday 11th October 2016	Year 11 Parents' Information Evening: 6.00-8:00pm
Monday 17th October 2016	Year 7 Tutors Evening Main Hall 4.30-6.30pm
Friday 21st October 2016	<b>School closes to pupils for half-term</b>
Monday 31st October 2016	<b>School re-opens to pupils</b>
Thursday 3rd November 2016	Year 10 Parents' Information Evening: Introduction to KS4 6.00-8.00pm
Wednesday 9 November 2016	Year 11 Practice Examinations commence
Monday 21st November 2016	Year 11 Practice Examinations end
Thursday 24th November 2016	Yr 11 GCSE Presentation Evening 6.45 - 8.45pm
Friday 25th November 2016	Whole School PSHE Day
Thursday 1st December 2016	Year 7 Monitoring data published to parents
Friday 2nd December 2016	Year 9 Monitoring data published to parents
Monday 5th December 2016	<b>STAFF INSET: School closed to pupils</b>
Thursday 8th December	Year 8 Monitoring data published to parents
Friday 9th December 2016	Year 10 Monitoring data published to parents
Monday 12th December 2016	Year 8 Parents' Consultation Evening Main Hall 4.30-7.30pm

Thursday 15th December 2016	Year 11 Pupil Monitoring Data and Reports published to parents
Friday 16th December 2016	<b>End of Autumn Term</b>

## Headteacher's Coffee Morning on Wednesday October 12<sup>th</sup> 9.15 – 10.00am:

My first coffee morning for this term will be on the above date and I extend a warm welcome to all parents to join me. As always this is an informal opportunity to join me for a cup of coffee, to hear what is happening in the school and to share your views.

## Trips, activities and events:

We are fortunate to have a large number of staff at our school who are always keen to run a wide range of extra-curricular activities for our pupils. There is no doubt that getting fully involved in school life to try new activities enhances our pupils' enjoyment of coming to school as well as developing new skills, talents and experiences.

A programme listing the extra-curricular activities for pupils to join at lunchtimes and after school during the Autumn Term is available on our school website. In addition there are often other trips, activities and events being organised throughout the year as new opportunities arise.

We do recognise, however, that at times a number of these opportunities can come at parents. It may not always be easy to turn around quickly if they involve a cost or deposit at short notice to secure a booking. Please do contact your child's Year Co-ordinator or the activity organiser if this concerns you as we may be able to find a way forward e.g. phased payments.

Finally, I send best wishes for this term and remind parents that on **Friday October 7<sup>th</sup>** pupils should not attend school as it is a staff training day.

Yours sincerely

**L Hiscock (Miss)**  
**Headteacher**