

Our Ref: BSN/KON

20 May 2015

ALL PARENTS

Dear Parents/Carers

As always it has been a very busy half-term. At this time of year there are a number of key issues that exercise a Head Teacher's thinking. In no particular order, GCSE Exams, staff recruitment, reviewing the targets that we set ourselves at the beginning of the year and putting the final touches to the changes we would like to make for next year.

GCSE Exams

We are doing things very differently in preparation for the GCSE exams this year. We have decided to keep pupils in school longer than before so that we can control their revision and give them access to their teachers for as long as possible. Pupils have received Strategy Packs for all their subjects; consisting of revision guidance, past exam papers and mark schemes. Staff have had a sharper focus on exam preparation than was previously the case. I have to say that the attitudes of staff and pupils have been first class. There is a palpable desire for the children to be successful which is terrific to see and be a part of. Clearly it will only be in August, when we receive the school's results, that we will know the impact of our actions but we are certainly giving it our best shot as a partnership.

Staffing

Perhaps the thing that gives me most sleepless nights is staffing. I dread knocks on the door at this time of year when colleagues tell me they have decided to apply for other jobs. However, as I have said many times before, this is an ambitious school and that means that we have very high aspirations for everyone who walks through our doors. A number of great colleagues have secured new positions for September but they are all leaving for the right reasons because they have secured promotions and are moving on with their lives. Our staff are becoming highly sought-after in the area because they are talented teachers and know a lot about how to improve schools. At the same time it is always exciting recruiting new staff and thinking about the impact that they will have on our school. Happily we have successfully filled all our vacancies and are fully staffed for September.

Uniform

The Governors have agreed to my suggestion to make some changes to our uniform from September. The school has decided that pupils will no longer be allowed to wear trainers, canvas shoes or boots of any description. Instead every pupil will be expected to wear traditional school shoes. At the start of the summer term I will send all parents and carers an updated version of our uniform policy and a fuller description of what is acceptable from September.

Extra-Curricular

Many things have changed a lot over the past 18 months and one area that we are working hard to improve further is what we offer our pupils outside of the classroom. During the next half-term we will see some of our major new offers take off including; Master Chef, Lamda, Running Club and Trampolining Club. Well over 100 pupils have decided to take up these opportunities. The summer term will also see our first Activities Week where pupils have been given the opportunity to take part in educational trips and visits which are very different from a normal school week. I hope that as this becomes part of school this will grow and include more residential trips.

I hope that this gives you a flavour of what is happening in school. As always thank you for your continuing support.

Yours sincerely

Mr B A Stitchman
Head Teacher