

Wednesday 9 September 2009

Dear Parent,

Now that we have settled into the new academic year, I would like to offer you a brief update on various matters of interest:

- As you may have heard, our examination results are the best ever with 69% of students achieving 5 A\* - C grades (60% in 2008) and 59% doing so with English and Maths (49% in 2008.) We are very proud of our achievements and my congratulations go to all of the students. Many thanks to parents, staff and governors for the hard work and support! We expect to continue to raise standards whilst supporting every child.
- We are now 3 months into the first phase of building works that are part of our Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. A lot has been achieved over the summer holidays and it is exciting to see some older parts of the site being transformed. Work has included the remodelling of 2 English Classrooms, a new Science prep room and sixth form room for the Science department, the raising of the hall floor to allow for improved dining facilities and repairs to our older roofs. There have also been improvements to the school's IT capacity with new laptops and interactive whiteboards in place. Before Christmas we hope to have a new Inclusion area and new school toilets. Some Science lessons will take place in temporary classrooms this term - these are now ready for use with interactive whiteboards installed. Already this term students have been given important health and safety advice about the building works; precautions have been taken to keep students away from areas where work is being carried out, but it is important that students act sensibly and safely at all times. I will share details about phase 2 with you as the year progresses.
- In the summer term Newsletter, I explained that I wanted to make further improvements to our communication with parents. In order to achieve that, we have made changes to the phone system, as outlined below. I hope that you will be able to get a swifter response and know who is dealing with your calls. The new system is expected to come into effect during the week beginning Monday 14 September and I look forward to hearing your views on whether it is an improvement. The options on the school telephone system that you will hear when calling the school switchboard will read as follows:
  - To report a student's absence, please contact Keep Kids Safe on 0845 3570213
  - Please press 1 for concerns regarding students in years 7, 8 and 9
  - Please press 2 for concerns regarding students in years 10, 11 and 6<sup>th</sup> form
  - Please press 3 for all Premises related matters
  - Please press 4 for all Finance matters
  - Please press 5 to speak to the Headteacher's Personal Assistant

Please also take time to have a look at our website: [www.crawshawschool.org.uk](http://www.crawshawschool.org.uk) which is now being updated more regularly. This is a work in progress but improvements have been made and we will continue to develop the site in the coming months. This will include information about the Governing Body, a list of school policies to download and much, much more. If you have any suggestions of information that you would like to be available on the website, please let me know.

- As you have read, our building programme is in full swing. Health and Safety is our first priority and I ask that parents do not drive up to the main building. We urgently need to limit the number of vehicles accessing the site and I thank you in anticipation of your support. Obviously, this does not apply if your child has a disability and a pass system is being set up for such circumstances. If you are entitled to a pass, you should hear from us soon.
- Lastly, this term has seen the introduction of changes to our Behaviour for Learning Policy and I have been very impressed by the students' response to it. They have listened carefully and we have listened to them by allowing them to wear coats (not cardigans) in school provided that they remove them when entering a classroom. We have also given them permission to listen to music on their phones and mp3 players provided that they are switched off and put away when they enter the building. Every day I see how happy the students are with these changes. Please note that whilst we still prefer students to not bring in their phones etc and cannot be held responsible for losses or damage, these are changes from the information in planners. We had to place our requirements for the planners well in advance of the changes to the Behaviour for Learning Policy. Obviously, if students ignore instructions, these items will be confiscated or sanctions will be applied as before. We want to reward our students as much as possible and if they have any suggestions, please ask them to mention them to their Form Tutors or Directors of Learning.

I look forward to writing to you again in the Autumn Newsletter. In the meantime, I would like take this opportunity to once again welcome our Year 7 parents and others who are new to school and to thank you all for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Ruse  
Headteacher