

Our ref: MLG/ADL/Headteacher letter/July 2010

Dear Parents/Guardians

I hope that this final letter of the year finds you and your family happy and healthy and (perhaps) looking forward to some well-earned time off in the next few weeks.

We have had a really first-rate end of term. Our Year 11s left us with the best leavers' assembly and the best prom that many of us could remember – 62 staff attended the prom and there was scarcely a dry eye in the building. This group of students have had a tremendous impact on the school and we are very sorry to see them go.

We have also enjoyed a wonderful "transition day" – this is the occasion at which we formally welcome our newest students. The Year 6 children who came seemed to enjoy their day with us, but it was our existing students that really did us proud – our team of Year 9 Transition Prefects were simply outstanding as they looked after the new folk and supported the tutors. The scene at lunchtime, with 200 10 and 11 year olds happily mingling in the sunshine with our teenagers was one of my favourite moments of the year!

The end of the summer term is a frantic time but a highly enjoyable one. We have enjoyed two fabulous Summer Concerts; an eventful visit to Paris and Poitiers; exchange visits with our neighbours at Baycroft; visits by the infant schools and the junior schools; science challenges; various visits to London and a weekend in Kent; a day out with the army and all the usual sports fixtures and transition activities. As I write, we still have the Crofton Debate, our first ever house day out and Sports Day to look forward to.

Action plan headlines

Parents will perhaps be interested to know about our plans for next year- our action plan for 2010/11 is now complete. It has 6 sections, with a member of the Senior Leadership Team leading in each area, as follows:

- 1. Progress (Mrs Badesha)** – focusing on monitoring and intervention to ensure that underachievement is spotted quickly and appropriate intervention takes place; also on the contribution of the science specialism to raising standards.
- 2. Teaching and learning (Mr O'Dowda)** – focusing on OFSTED "Good" teaching criteria, teacher training and the better use of assessment to support teaching and learning; also focusing on our VLE and use of new technologies.
- 3. Curriculum (Ms Knight)** – focusing on the development of students' generic skills; on developing our provision for culture and community; on increasing opportunities for performance, for real purposes and to real audiences and on new opportunities for assessment and accreditation.
- 4. Care and support (Mr Naylor)** – focusing on the role of tutors, on behaviour management, on transition, on attendance, on emotional health and well being, on safeguarding and on stretching the most able, especially in years 8 and 9.
- 5. Resources (Mr Glasspool)** - focusing on our programme of building works and on the management of our resources in what will clearly be a difficult period.
- 6. Community (me!)** – focusing on a range of initiatives, including links with former students, the PTA, links with the local church and old peoples' groups, with the junior schools, with our linked overseas schools and also on changes to our curriculum.

I should emphasise the fact these are areas where we believe that we have substantial new work to do – my colleagues will, of course, be busy with the day-to-day business of running the school!

We are also excited about some substantial new extra-curricular opportunities next year. We will soon be launching "World Challenge", which will lead to a party of 10-30 students spending 3 weeks in Tanzania in the summer of 2012; we will also be launching the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme for Year 10 students from October 2010.

Staff

This is that sad time of year when we must say farewell to some of our colleagues.

We are very sorry to say good-bye to Sarah Evans (formerly Subject Leader for Geography, and a very long-established member of staff) and also to Paul Hillier (History Teacher and, again, a very long-serving colleague). Both have given many years of distinguished service to Crofton and its students and both will be greatly missed.

We will also be saying good-bye to Lauren Powell (Technology), Dan Marshall (ICT), Laura Martin and Maud Attrill (Science), Sarah Walbeoff (MFL), Zahara Khan (maths); and to Rosie Norman (support team). We are also sorry to say farewell to Peter Deering (Head of Year 7).

We have been delighted to welcome back Mrs McNally and Mrs Deering, following periods of maternity leave.

PTA

Crofton School PTA are planning to organise an Autumn Fair on Saturday 13th November. They would love to hear from any parent or friend of the school who would like a stall for their business or craft activity. Stalls will cost £10 and the Fair will be open to the public between 2 and 5pm.

We are very grateful to all those parents who support the school by giving their time to support PTA activities – we are also always keen to welcome new volunteers. If you think you could help out, please contact Estelle via pta@crofton.hants.sch.uk. This is a great way to meet other parents and to get to know the school and its staff better.

Shoes

Many families will be buying new school shoes this summer. The school uniform guidance states that students must wear plain black shoes without substantial heels. Fashion is a powerful force – a few students came into school recently with the wrong kinds of shoes.

The most important consideration here is their health and safety. Most of our students work in technology rooms; all of them work in science labs. They must have shoes that will protect them from a dropped chisel or spilt chemicals. They also need shoes which are suitable for walking around our open site on rainy days, when there are puddles on the ground.

If you are buying new shoes in the near future please bear these points in mind. Our website now has some pictures showing what we consider to be suitable shoes – please have a look before you spend any money!

Parent Support – “drop-in” mornings

If you need any help, advice or support during the summer holidays your Parent Support Adviser, Lisa Dalglish, will be available and can be contacted on 07867970024 or lisa.dalglish@hants.gov.uk.

A drop-in surgery will be also available every Tuesday between 10am- 1130am at Stubbington Library.

From September there will be a number of workshops and groups running for parents and carers which include:

1. Positive Parenting Programme for parents of children 0-11 and 12-16 years
2. Dealing With Bullying- help, advice and strategies for parents to raise their child's self esteem, build friendships and how to be assertive.
3. Speakeasy- guidance and advice for parents to give confidence and support in speaking to their children about body changes, sex and relationships.
4. Talking to your Teen- understanding your teen/ pre teen and building conversational skills
5. Family Rules- setting clear, firm and fair rules for the family to enable positive behaviour and relationships.

Please see text messages, e-mails and posters/ flyers for details or e-mail Lisa Dalglish for more information.

Photographs

As you may remember, we take photos of students in Years 7 and 10 and these are offered to parents for sale. A couple of parents have asked whether we could offer photos of students in other years and also whether we could arrange photos of brothers and sisters. We would be delighted to organise this – if you would like such a special photo, please contact Steve Glasspool, our School Business Manager, by telephone, letter or at SGlasspool@crofton.hants.sch.uk by 7 September 2010.

Contacting you

Please remember that the September edition of this letter will be the last that we send out on paper to everyone. If you would like to receive a paper copy thereafter, please inform the school office; if we do not have an up-to-date email address, please let us have one.

End of the Summer Term

Students will be dismissed from 11.50am on Friday 23 July 2010, with everyone off site by 12.05pm.

Start of the Autumn Term

Students in (the new) Year 7 (along with their Year 10 Transition Prefects) should come to school for 10.55am on Monday 6 September 2010. All other students should arrive by 1.25pm on that Monday. Tuesday 7 September will be a normal school day for everyone.

Dates of terms for 2010-11**Autumn Term**

6 September-22 October 2010
1 November-17 December 2010

(School closed 1 and 4 October and 3 December 2010)

Spring Term

4 January-18 February 2011
28 February-8 April 2011

(School closed 28 January 2011)

Summer Term

27 April-27 May 2011
6 June-27 July 2011

As I hope I have said often before, it is a very great privilege to work at Crofton, with our extraordinary staff and your amazing, talented and charming children. I have thoroughly enjoyed the year now passed and eagerly look forward to new challenges and new achievements in 2010/11.

Yours faithfully

Matthew Leeming
Headteacher

Be kind; Be curious; Always try your best