

Our ref: ML/AD/Parent Letter/March 2008

March 2008

Dear Parents/Guardians

I hope that you have enjoyed a re-invigorating and enjoyable half-term break and that you and your family are looking forward to the longer days and warmer weather ahead. It has been a busy month for the school – please have a look at the website if you have not done so recently, as plenty has been happening.

School Principles

As a new Headteacher, I am eager that the whole Crofton community should have an agreed set of values, or guiding principles. Members of staff spent some time in January discussing this and have come up with a first draft. This half-term, students are considering the same issue and I would like parents to have the chance to contribute, too.

We wanted to emphasise the inclusive and supportive nature of the school; we also wanted to make it clear that everyone in it is equally valued. We wanted to show that we are energetic and optimistic about the future but that we are also firmly attached to traditional values. Our consensus view is shown below.

In our school community...

- *consideration*
- *achievement*
- *respect*
- *enthusiasm*

...matter for everyone, every day

If you would like to express an opinion about this set of principles, do, please, write me a letter, or send an email to school@crofton.hants.sch.uk.

OFSTED

As you know, we experienced our long-awaited inspection just before the break. As I write, the report is being checked by the senior inspectors and we expect that it will be published some time after 10 March. It will appear first on the OFSTED website and then on our own; we will make paper copies available in Reception; every student will receive a summary letter.

I would like to thank all those parents who returned the OFSTED questionnaire – the turn around time was very short.

I am not allowed to go into detail at this stage but I believe that the draft report that I have seen is both fair and useful. It praises our students and confirms that we have the potential to be an outstanding school. It also helps us to decide on priorities for school improvement.

Kirkland Rowell Survey

We will be running a survey of parents' and student's views in the next couple of weeks. All parents and a sample of students will receive a questionnaire, asking for your opinions about all aspects of school life. The survey is designed and administered by Kirkland Rowell, who are a company that specialise in educational questionnaires of this kind. The results will provide an additional source of evidence as we plan and prioritise, but we really need a large number of returned forms if the conclusions are to be meaningful, so do please fill it in.

I should mention that we were going to administer it before half-term, but the arrival of OFSTED delayed things; as such, the dates on one of the survey forms will be misleading.

'Student Voice' and positions of responsibility

As your son/daughter may have mentioned, we are keen to involve students more fully in the life of the school. As such, this week sees the launch of a new arrangement for consultation – a new Student Leadership Team will meet regularly and will receive the views of Year Councils and Tutor Groups. We will need 2 representatives from every tutor group (who will serve for one school year) – you might wish to encourage your daughter/son to put themselves forward.

Being a Councillor is just one of the opportunities we are planning to provide. Students have already been offered the chance to apply to become members of Student Interview Panels (for new staff) and/or to help new Year 6 students to settle into the school. We are planning to extend the number and variety of positions of responsibility as the year goes on – we hope that both the school and the individual students who volunteer will benefit.

Crofton Hammond Junior School

I have received a request from our friends at CHJS about Crofton students cycling through the Junior School grounds. Please remind your daughter/son that they are not to enter the Junior School grounds unless they are going to the office or accompanying younger brothers or sisters.

Lost property

We have a very large quantity of lost property. Students can collect this at break and lunchtimes and at the end of the school day from Mrs Pinder in the First Aid Room. In an effort to clear the backlog, we will be displaying the entire collection in the Conference Room between 11 and 13 March for inspection and collection. Any unclaimed items will then be disposed of.

Important Date Change

I would like to remind parents that there will be an **additional INSET day on Tuesday 25 March 2008** for curriculum planning purposes. The government has introduced a number of significant changes and suggested that schools add a 6th INSET day in order to plan for them.

Crofton School Association

Our noble friends at the CSA are organising a spectacular 'Rock Night' on Friday 28 March. Two well known local star acts '**In Athens**' and '**Ringmere Avenue**' will be performing, supported by '**Double Deuce**' in the school hall. Please do consider coming along – it promises to be a great night, with an optional supper (courtesy of our local Stubbington Fish and Chip shop). Tickets are available from the Finance Office.

And finally...

As you know, we are approaching the most critical time of year for the school. Public exams are looming and staff are working hard to prepare and support our students. Students' needs are many and varied – some need firm direction in order to get them working as hard as they should; others need to be dissuaded from overdoing things. Many feel more pressure than they show. Please do get in touch if you are worried about your son/daughter – their tutor and teachers are keen to help.

Yours faithfully

Matthew Leeming
Headteacher