



The Crypt School

Newsletter – September 2009

Dear Parents

I am delighted to welcome you back at the start of term. May I extend an especial welcome to new parents, and I very much look forward to meeting you and working with you over the coming years. It is a real pleasure to see the school full again after our summer break. Our students have returned with an excellent attitude, and the school feels very purposeful.

Staffing

We have a number of new staff joining us this term. We wish them all the best with us, and hope that they will enjoy their time at The Crypt.

- Nick Dyer: Deputy Headmaster
- Jon Barry: Science
- Andrew Birkett: ICT
- Ashley Croft: Science
- Rhiannon Duggan: RE
- Hillary Dyer-Price: Art
- Bernard Eccles: Latin
- Linsey Jamieson: Art
- Natalie Jones: School Sports Co-ordinator and VI form Girls PE/Games
- Alex Reeves: GTP Science
- Nick Andrew: GTP Maths
- Steve Sykes: DT technician. Steve joins us permanently having covered for James Illott during his absence last year.
- Eileen Price : Admin assistant, supporting the exams office and VI form.

Additionally:

- Miss Penny Dorward is now Mrs Penny Bennett following her marriage during the summer. Congratulations!
- Neil McLearie will be teaching Geography this year (again!) Welcome back.
- John Aston joined us last term, as our Librarian.
- Anthea Arend and Nick Hutchings joined us last term as cover supervisors.
- Karen Roche is Head of PEd and RE.

Results

This has been another very pleasing year for the year 13 A-level students. 82 candidates sat 305 subject papers and achieved A-E pass grades in 301, a pass rate of 98.7%. The percentage of candidates gaining the top grades was slightly down on last year, with 63% of all papers at A, B or C grades and 37% at either A or B. Whilst the raw scores are slightly lower than 2008, externally validated ALIS and ALPS reports show that the VI form value added score is in line with expectation, and therefore our students are doing as well as is expected. The average total of UCAS points per candidate was 340.9, an average of two B grades and a C grade at A level together with a B grade at AS. Our Oxbridge and Russell Group students were successful in securing their places, and despite the intense competition for University places this summer, the vast majority of students were successful in gaining entry to their Universities of choice.

Our GCSE results were the best ever achieved by the school, and by some margin. 100% of students achieved 5+A*-C grades including English and Maths, which is the statutory measure reported in League Tables. This is a tremendous achievement, and I am very proud of the efforts of our boys, our teachers and of course of our parents. This success is the result of our strong three way partnership. Furthermore 46 boys gained 5 or more A*/A grades, up from 31 in 2008, and 24 boys gained 8 or more A*/A grades up from 16 in 2008. A number of year 11 students also successfully completed AS English Literature this summer. The top performers were Tim and James Keasley, with 25 A* and 1 A grades between them at GCSE, an A grade each in AS English Literature, and an A grade each in A2 Music.

Site News

The John and Joan Cooke Centre is now fully operational, and is providing our VI form students with excellent study facilities. In past years our VI form students have had to use the dining room during private study periods, which has been far from ideal. The new facilities will help them to work productively, and should therefore have a tangible impact on our results. John Aston, our Librarian, is continuing to catalogue books, and to purchase resources. We allocated around £25,000 for new books and resources for the Library. John has been very busy purchasing stock, and getting it onto the shelves. The Library is now taking shape.

In periods where VI formers do not have a taught lesson, their timetables will be marked "supervised study." Supervised study takes place in the VI Form Common Room, is registered and is supervised by a member of staff. This is a time for quiet individual study and attendance is compulsory. Students are free to use our other facilities during private study periods. The Library, VI form ICT suite, Mezzanine, and other areas of the John and Joan Cooke Centre are available during these times.

During the summer the Old Library was renovated and converted into two classrooms. New windows were installed, as well as plenty of power sockets to enable students to use and charge their laptop computers. Room 42 was converted in the summer into an additional ICT suite, with the intention that rooms 1 and 38 would be available for non ICT classes and VI form private study. Room 42 and 43 have brand new ICT equipment, which has enabled us to upgrade the computers in room 1.

Rooms 39 and 40, (our outside Elliot Buildings) have also been renovated.

We have been awarded the Full International School Award by the DCSF. This is a prestigious "badge" and is only awarded after a thorough assessment of evidence that we meet the requisite standards. I am very grateful to Mrs Thompson and Mrs Bolton who have co-ordinated the application. The evidence required was gathered throughout the last academic year, and involved projects in a good range of curriculum areas. The award is not a Modern Languages award – rather it requires an international ethos throughout the school, across the whole curriculum. We are accredited until 2012. Very well done indeed to all the staff who contributed and have enriched the curriculum for our students.



Website

The new website is up and running. It has a fresh new look, and I am very grateful to all who contributed to its design: teachers; governors; parents; and of course our students. If you have any further suggestions about its content, please do let us know.

Taking holidays during term time

The Department for Children, Schools and Families has issued tougher guidance regarding pupil absence from school in term time for holidays. In Gloucestershire alone last year some 62,000 school days were missed because of parents taking children on holiday in term time.

The new guidance makes clear that holidays during term time should only be authorised by schools under exceptional circumstances. Formal requests must be made and the school can exercise its right to refuse time off for their pupils. An assessment on the impact the holiday would have on learning must be done before permission is granted.

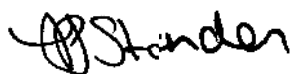
Many parents think the time a child misses for a family holiday doesn't affect their schoolwork. But a child who takes a two-week holiday (10 days off school) every year of their school life will miss 24 weeks of their formal education. This is in addition to unavoidable absences, particularly illness. Missing school through family holidays can damage a pupil's attainment levels and disrupt school routines and the learning of others. Not only do pupils miss work while they are away, they are also less well-prepared for lessons when they return, and teachers find that they need to spend additional time helping a student to catch up work missed at the expense of helping others in class who have been present.

Therefore please note that I shall only authorise holidays in term time under exceptional circumstances.

Swine Flu

We are getting many phone calls from parents whose children are displaying symptoms of swine flu, e.g. high temperature, sore throat, headache, cough, etc. Please could we ask parents that if your child has any of these symptoms, to consult the following website : www.direct.gov.uk/pandemicflu. On this page, towards the bottom left corner is a box 'click for symptoms to be assessed'. This will help to determine if your child is suffering from swine flu. If they are please follow any advice given on line and also let the school know.

Whilst there is no intention at this stage to close the school at any time, the number of absences will be monitored closely, particularly staff absence. Should the need arise for a full or partial closure information will be on our website, and also on local radio (Heart and Radio Gloucestershire).



Jonathan Standen
Headmaster

Report from Mr. Dyer :

As a new member of Crypt School staff, I would like to express my thanks to all pupils and staff who have, over the last few weeks, made me feel most welcome. Crypt is obviously a happy and caring school and I look forward to working with pupils, staff and parents in making this school even more successful.

Bus Travel

Both the School and Stagecoach have received many enquiries about bus travel to and from school, since the start of the new term. School bus services are often run at a loss to the bus company. This is the case with school bus services in this area. Commercial pressures resulted in Stagecoach undertaking a review of all school bus services. As part of that review, Stagecoach held discussions with both Crypt and Ribston Schools. We were fortunate that school bus services were to be continued by Stagecoach, albeit it with some changes to the ticket prices and availability. There are three tickets parents can purchase – a single for £1.70, a Gloucester Day rider at £3.00, a Child Explorer £3.50 and a Flexrider at £17.00 (12 single journeys for the price of 10 between two specified points).

If parents have any further concerns about buses, then please let me know. I am due to have a meeting with Stagecoach in the near future to discuss any concerns.

Unfortunately we have also received a number of complaints from members of the public and from Stagecoach, about poor behaviour on buses; in particular the No.10 bus. Please would parents remind their children of the need for good behaviour at all times on all buses. If poor behaviour continues, the bus company reserves the right to ban individuals from all of its services.

Pupil Entry into School

Please would parents remind their sons and daughters of the need to take care when entering and leaving the school site. Those who either drive a car, ride a motorcycle or cycle to school, should be particularly careful when entering or exiting the site and take care not to travel too fast.

Unfortunately, pupils are not allowed into the main school buildings until after 08.30. Those who arrive before that time can, however, wait in the School Dining Hall. The Sixth Form can continue to use the new Cooke centre as before.

Finally – parents are reminded that they should drop off and pick up their sons/daughters at the main school gate, and not drive them up to the main school buildings.

Mr NC Dyer
Deputy Head

Student Congratulations :

Harry Chalklin (Y11) has been awarded the Grand Prior Award from St John Ambulance Cadet. He received it from the Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire. 'Grand Prior Award' includes knowledge, skills and understanding including first aid, expeditions, communication and fundraising. It takes three years of hard work on 24 subjects. Obtaining the award is considered a special achievement within the St John Ambulance community and is the highest award which St. John can present to anyone under the age of 18.

The Yr 8 Cricket Team replayed the County Final from last year against St Thomas Rich's on Monday 7th September. In a glorious afternoon of sunshine Crypt won the toss and chose to field. It deemed to be the right decision with the team putting in their best bowling display of the season.

Sam Peach displayed heroics in the field to run out their opening batsman and Ben Gibbs followed with a superb bowling spell with 3 over's, for 3 wickets with only conceding 1 run. The best figures seen all season by any Crypt bowler. Matthew Sutton took the last of Sir Thomas Rich's wickets in the last over leaving them with the small total of 47 runs.

After an outstanding performance in the field the batsman had the easy task of knocking off the runs, after losing 2 early wickets, Ubaid Bokari came in at number 3 to steady things and hit an unbeaten 27 to secure the comfortable victory for Crypt with 14 over's to spare!!!

Scott Mitchell (Y7) has signed up with Cheltenham Town Under 12's. Scott has just completed a season playing for the Gloucester Primary Schools FA, during the team won both the Berkshire and Cotswold Leagues and the Southern Counties Cup.

Cycling Proficiency

Congratulations to our group of Year 8 who successfully completed their Advanced Cycle Proficiency course this month: Sam Peach, Oliver Greensweig, Luke Stephens, Robert Bendall, Ashleigh Carter, Kieran Bird, Kian Puerta-Terron, Jake Skitt, Harry Greenway, Lee Harris, Adam Rees, Ethan Hawkins, Emile Appolinari, James Davey, Jordan Mills, Lewis Tams, James Bennion, Max Harper-Emerson, Matthew Fry, Tyler Knight, Mike Sullivan and Ferguson Waterson

Key dates for the term

30 th September	Ski Trip parents' evening 6.30 p.m.
5 th October	Early closure, 1.10 p.m. (letter has been sent home with more details)
6 th October	Open Day for prospective Year 7 students
16 th October	PA grades for all year groups sent home
20 th October	Words & Music Evening
21 st October	Inset Day – staff only – no school for pupils
22 nd & 23 rd October	Coursework Clinics – Year 11
22 nd – 30 th October	Half Term
2 nd November	Return to school – Week 1

NOTICES

VACANCIES AT THE SCHOOL

Mid-day Supervisor
Cleaner

If you are interested in either of the above posts please contact Mrs. Baldwin.

Exam Invigilator – if interested please contact Mrs. Evans

Plea from the Librarian :

We would like to build up our collection of current fiction. If your son / daughter has any books they would like to donate, please see Mr. Aston in the new LRC.

If your son / daughter rides their bike to school please ensure they wear their cycle helmets – it won't help in an accident if it is dangling off the handlebars! Thank you.

Already we have quite a few items of unnamed lost property! If items are named we will return them to their owner – if they are not named unfortunately sometimes they sit in a lost property box.



Please see letter attached. We would be most grateful if parents would complete and return data sheet as soon as possible, so that we can get the service up and running as soon as we can to improve communication between the school and parents. Thank you.