



Aspire & Achieve Together

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Principal: Mrs J. Diaz BSc (Hons) NPQH

Dear Parent or Carer

11th July 2017

It is the end of another school year and an apt time to reflect on our achievements, experiences and developments at Holcombe.

Academic year 2016 – 2017 started well with the opening of our state of the art gym facility and three re-furbished science laboratories. Last summer's results were also very good – indeed the GCSE results were the best ever, and it made me proud to see how well we compared with the other local grammar schools.

No sooner does any school year get started though and is it time to start the recruitment drive for the following year. We ran two very successful recruitment events for Year 7 and Year 12 students which have resulted in an additional Form of entry joining Year 7 in September 2017 (just over 150 students), and a very healthy 120 Sixth Form students attended our Induction event last week suggesting a full and thriving Sixth Form next year. It is a very positive development to see Holcombe growing in size again after a number of years of small year groups and the associated loss in income.

Although academic achievement is obviously at the core of what we do, we firmly believe that there is much more to an education than just that. This is why we encourage our students to get involved in a whole host of activities, trips and teams. I cannot possibly include in this letter details of every single extra-curricular success of our students this year but some which stand out include:

Regular attenders at lunchtime Book Thieves:

Matthew Cross, Joe Roots, George Driscoll, Theodor Novetschi, Leon Rai, Jack Langdon, Martin May, Ben Button, Lenny Gorham.

Our Spelling Bee team very narrowly lost out in the final to RGS. The team comprised of

Chris Chacko, Tyler Diaper, Raphael Iwuji, Tal Murphy, Matthew Exley (Captain), Emily Crowley

Our Debating Society has grown from strength to strength over the past few years and we have a large contingent of keen participants who regularly meet to keenly debate a range of diverse issues. There are too many members of the club to mention; however, the following students regularly set the motions to be debated and help organise meetings:

George Driscoll, Kacper Dziadosz, Archie Bean, Martin May, Jack Langdon

Maths Challenge successes this year include:

Gold and Best in School: Robbie Bridges

Gold: Joseph Meaney, Louie Patching

Silver: Michael Cameron, Thomas Emery, Louis Harvey, Edward Peters, Bobby Coleman, Lewis Campbell, George Lawrence, Lewis Mason, Igor Lawinski, Adetunji Adeniyi, Igor Pereira-Martins, Lucas Ball, George Cook, Kacper Dziadosz, Tyler Diaper, Harvey Austen, Samuel Brisley, Joshua Loates, Theodor Novetschi

Holcombe also experienced success at the University of Greenwich's Faraday Challenge Day. The competition comprised a STEM project task where students had to develop two real-life products that could help the British Land-rover team win the Americas Cup. There was tough competition to get on to the Holcombe team but eventually Seyi Ogundogba, Adam Lawrence, Lanre Salami, Oliver Curd, Luke Cherrill and Harvey Cotton were chosen.

The team worked together to identify, design, develop and create two products; one that could measure the flex in the mast of the sailboat and adjust direction when needed; and another that measures the temperature of the sailors, and warns of overheating. Students used all of their STEM skills as well as skills in teamwork, perseverance, creativity and innovation to beat the four other teams from schools including Rochester Grammar School and Invicta Grammar School. The Challenge Day leader said that he had never seen a group of boys problem solve and communicate as a team so well. This was a great achievement and well done to Seyi Ogundogba – 8Sh

In the area of Art a number of students have had their work exhibited this year. This includes Ben Baker, Jake Christie, Matthew Cross, James Dunn, Leon Rai, Mark Taylor-Chacksfield, Mazeed Towobola, Hathem Trabelsi, George Driscoll, Arturo Naclerio-Pantojo and Ethan Kerr who have had their work exhibited at the Rochester Guildhall. Thomas Phillips Katie Sheehan Olivia Johnson Nikolas Siltanen-Tinsley and Alex Griffiths have also had their work exhibited at the prestigious National Awards in London.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award attracts a large number of students each year, most of whom go on to achieve at least Bronze Awards. Again there are too many names to mention in this letter, but nevertheless, congratulations to all of them

Sport is another area where Holcombe has a proud history of student success and this year has been no different. In summary:

Success for Holcombe Grammar School

- In football, all teams in year 7-13 finished in the top two positions in their respective league competitions.
- Jake Forrest of 9Sh has won: The RYA London & South East Honda Rib Challenge and will be going to the Southampton boat show in September for the final.
- In trampolining, Nathan Johnston, Braden Cox (both year 8) and Nathan Johnston (year 9) all competed in the National Championships

- In Cross-country Oliver Curd (year 8), Alex Donnelly and Johannes Sadler (both year 10) represented the school at the Medway cross country championships. Each finished in the top 10.
- In Rugby, SeyiOgundogba (year 8) and George Ayers (year 10) have both been nominated by the school to attend Kent trials.
- In Hockey, Robbie Tarrant, Joshua Sandys (both year 8), Oliver Walker, Harvey Welch and Kallum McIntyre (all year 10) have all been a part of the Junior Development Centre (JDC), part of the England Hockey player development pathway.
- In Basketball, Joseph Dyson (year 10) was selected to represent Kent Crusaders.
- In Cricket, Joshua Sandys (year 8) has been playing regular County level cricket.
- In Athletics, both school teams (Juniors & Inters) made it through to the Regional Final stages of the English schools athletics competition.
- Johannes Sadler, Harry Osborne and Alex Donnelly (all year 10) took part in the Kent schools athletics finals.

Finally, at this time of year it is usual to say our farewells to departing staff and welcome new colleagues. Leaving this year:

- Mr Wynne and Mr Leckraz who have been with us on temporary contracts
- Mr Heaton who is off to undertake voluntary work in Vietnam
- Mr Puxty who will be joining another Kent school
- Mr Patt who has earned a well-deserved promotion
- Mr Nield who is sadly hanging up his white board pen
- Mr Borges who is going to the Middle East
- Dr North who is joining another Kent school
- And finally, Mr R Gardner, who after a very long career at Holcombe has decided to retire.

I thank each of those colleagues for their contribution to Holcombe and wish them every future success.

I am very pleased to be able to tell you that we have recruited a number of new staff for September, and a number of trainee teachers as well – some of whom are no strangers to Holcombe having been students here themselves!

Our new colleagues are:

- Mr Diaz Teacher of Spanish
- Mr Hodges Head of Business and Economics
- Mrs Smith Teacher of Business and Economics
- Ms Panayiotou Teacher of Mathematics
- Mr Brock Teacher of Physics/Science

- Mr Milne Teacher of Physics/Science
- Mrs Uzochukwu Teacher of Chemistry/Science
- Mr Pay Teacher of PE
- Ms Goodwin Teacher of English
- Mr Welbourne Teacher of RS
- Ms Ghellab Trainee teacher of MFL
- Ms Blackledge Trainee teacher of Art
- Ms Enwright Trainee teacher of Maths
- Mr Simons Trainee teacher of History
- Mr Field Trainee teacher of Biology/Science
- Ms Wheeler Learning Support Assistant/Cover supervisor
- Ms Carpenter Learning Support Assistant

Pastoral organisation

To clarify responsibilities and increase accountability across year groups we have made the decision to move from a Head of House system to Head of Year with effect from September 1st. The Heads of Year are as follows:

Year 7 & 8	Ms Martin
Year 9	Mrs Lee
Year 10	Mr Still
Year 11	Mrs Manning

Further promotions and role changes within the school as follows:

- Mr Hayes Promotion to Assistant Principal Pastoral and Safeguarding
- Ms Martin Associate Leader of Lower School (Years 7 and 8)
- Mr Campbell Promotion to Head of DT
- Mr Davies Promotion to 2nd in English
- Ms Senges Promotion to Head of MFL
- Ms Jhaj Head of Psychology, Sociology and Sixth Form Lifeskills
- Ms Rust Deputy Director of Sixth Form
- Mrs Childs Promotion to Leader of SEN Support
- Mr Elad Leader of Year 7 – 10 Life skills
- Mr Foley Returns from Trust secondment and takes on SENDCo, Pupil Premium, Alternative Curriculum and History

With a slightly longer than usual summer break please remember that term starts on Monday September 4th at the usual time. If you have not yet purchased any required school uniform please see my most recent letter/email regarding uniform requirements and the dates of the Simmonds pop-up shop at The Victory Academy.

I wish you a pleasant and relaxing summer.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Juliet Diaz', written in a cursive style.

Juliet Diaz
Principal