



Aspire & Achieve Together

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Principal: Mrs J. Diaz BSc (Hons) NPQH

Dear Parent or Carer

18th September 2017

Welcome back to a new school year and to the many parents new to the school, a very warm welcome to our Holcombe community.

This school year has started particularly smoothly, at least partially due to the behaviour of our students, which has been almost exemplary to date. They look smart, are bringing the correct equipment and are working hard in lessons – long may this continue!

I suspect that there will be many headteachers across the country who, like me, are glad that the first year of the new 9 – 1 GCSE examinations and the new specification A-Levels is over. With so little information available, it had been a nerve-wracking year for students and teachers alike. Happily, however, our results were again very pleasing with almost half of all GCSE grades being grade A/7 or higher, more students achieving strings of top A-Level grades and almost all Year 13 students getting their first-choice university. I was particularly pleased for those students who faced various challenges during their GCSE or A-Level courses and who persevered and worked hard to overcome them and succeed. My sincere congratulations to all of them and I wish all of our leavers every success in the future.

As usual, the school site was a busy place during the summer holiday as this year we installed a new computer suite as well as carrying out the usual cleaning. We are currently awaiting the council's decision regarding our application to install an all-weather pitch on our existing tennis courts. This will greatly improve our sports facilities and I will pass on any information regarding this as soon as I have it.

I am particularly pleased that our new school uniform has been so popular and our students are looking very smart! I am aware of some problems at the events run by Simmonds and the unavailability of some stock for which I apologise. It has also been drawn to my attention that some of the Year 11 grey shirts purchased online from Simmonds are of an older stock and are of a brownish-grey shade. I have spoken with Simmonds and they are happy to provide refunds for those shirts so long as they are still in their packaging and you have a receipt. If your son is one of the boys wearing the brown/grey shirts then that is fine for this year.

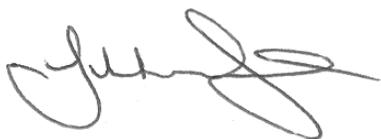
I must raise two issues regarding the safety of our students that are causing me some concern at the moment. One of these is regarding unsupervised students on the school site before and after school, and indeed I wrote to parents about this issue last year. Before school, we run a breakfast club in the school from 8.00am until 8:30am. This is available for any students who arrive at school between these times. Students cannot be on the site before 8am as there is no supervision and no register of the student being on site should there be an emergency situation. After school, students are welcome to stay on in B12 to study until 5.00pm. HW6 is on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 3.05pm until 4.15pm in B12. Many staff also run after school support sessions as well as clubs. We like our students to stay on in school but only if they are in B12 or in a

supervised activity. Your assistance in making sure your son or daughter is not unsupervised on the site before or after school is greatly appreciated.

The second issue concerns the safety of students on our drive and near to our school gate, particularly at the end of school. There are over 850 students in the school, most of whom arrive at around 8.30am in the morning and leave just after 3.00pm in the afternoon. If you are dropping off or picking up your son or daughter by car, please **do not bring your car on to the site, use the school entrance to turn your vehicle, or park on the zig-zag lines.** Your understanding regarding this issue is also much appreciated.

All of the staff here at Holcombe are looking forward to working with you during this school year and jointly supporting your son or daughter to do the very best they can.

Yours sincerely

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

Juliet Diaz
Principal