

Abbs Cross School and Arts College



Commitment to Opportunity and Excellence

NEWSLETTER – September 2009

Reflections of the new academic year

I have been delighted at the way the year has started. Year 7 have settled really well and they have been supported by older students in their forms. The mentoring scheme used so effectively last year is now an established, positive feature of the school day. Students have engaged with their tutors and are really enjoying the opportunity for small group and individual attention. Our student leadership has also deepened and developed, taking on a new format and increased responsibility for a large number of students. Each form group has a student leader with senior positions being held by student college leaders. I am pleased to announce that this year's senior positions of Head Boy and Head Girl are Mark Hafford and Olivia Stuart respectively. Their deputies are Ayo Berek and Alicia Murphy.

GCSE 2009 results

I make no excuses for repeating the content of my letter earlier this term. Our results this summer were hugely pleasing. With 74% 5+ A* - C grades and 63% 5+ with English and Maths, we are delighted. These results position Abbs Cross high in the top 20% of schools nationally.

Prospective Parents' Evening

Once again we enjoyed a huge turnout at our Open evening. Staff and students put on a terrific exhibition of our work and there were many favourable comments. No doubt we will be over-subscribed again for September 2010. There were a significant number of student helpers and I was very proud of their support.

New Staff

I am pleased to welcome a number of new colleagues who joined us at the beginning of the year. They are: Mrs A Draper – Assistant Headteacher, Mr D Maclean – Director of Applied Learning, Mrs A Underwood – Head

of Music, Mr A Pau – ICT/Business Studies, Ms S Chiarle – Modern Foreign Languages, Ms M Rohen – English and Mr D Rudkins – English. We also welcome graduate teachers Ms H Flowers and Mr A Coultas-Pitman.

Uniform reminder

The general appearance of our student body is excellent and has received favourable comments from our many visitors. I am grateful to parents for their support. As we make the transition from summer to winter, students may need to wear sweaters and/or coats. Can I remind you that plain black sweaters are acceptable for both boys and girls and overcoats should be sensible and not expensive designer wear. Coats must not be worn in the buildings. Also, hooded fleece-type tops worn under blazers are not acceptable.

School site

With the school Sports and Leisure Centre being open until quite late into the evening, access to the school grounds is easy. It is not surprising that we attract a number of youngsters who use the tennis, basketball and field areas outside school hours, for their enjoyment. I have never objected to this given that these youngsters are better off engaged in this way rather than roaming the streets. Whilst this is acceptable during daylight hours, there is clearly no productive reason for children to be on-site around the buildings in the dark. I am sure you question your children when they are out of the house in the evening, but I urge you to satisfy yourself that what they are up to meets the standards you might expect. I am liaising with the community police team to ensure that there is no anti-social behaviour around our grounds. If students are discovered on site in the dark, then they will be asked whether they wish to remain part of our school community.

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Letters to Parents

Letters sent out since the last Newsletter include the following; please contact the school office if you require a copy.

| Date | Subject | Recipients |
|-------------|--|-------------------|
| 10 Sept 09 | GCSE History Review, offer to subscribe to publication | GCSE History |
| 17 Sept 09 | Offer to purchase Art Pack or A2 folder | GCSE Art & Design |
| 17 Sept 09 | Drama Trip: The Woman in Black, 17 November 2009 | Year 10/11 Drama |
| 17 Sept 09 | Geography Trip: Rainham Marshes, 7-9 October 2009 | Year 7 |
| Sept 09 | ESafety Information Session: 6 October 2009 | Years 7-9 |
| 21 Sept 09 | School Governing Body nominations | Years 7-11 |
| 22 Sept 09 | Wear your Walking Boots Day: 16 October 2009 | Years 7-11 |
| 22 Sept 09 | Change in GCSE Business Studies course | Year 10 |

Pupil Noticeboard

May we respectfully remind parents that admin staff are unable to take messages or equipment to individual pupils during the course of the day.

If your child forgets to bring to school anything they need for the day – eg lunch money, homework, books, PE kit – and you bring items into school, or leave messages for them, a notice will be posted on the board outside the school office.

It is the responsibility of pupils to look on this board and check with the school office if their name appears

Please also note that all items brought in by parents must be named and lunch money must be in a sealed envelope, clearly marked with the child's name and form. Thank you in anticipation!

ParentMail

We would also like to encourage as many parents as possible to sign up to ParentMail. Parents who opt to sign up can receive Newsletters and other general correspondence electronically. Further details and registration instructions are available from www.parentmail.co.uk. The service is free to parents. The school office will assist with registration on request.

Invigilator Vacancies

We are currently looking to appoint, reliable and enthusiastic invigilators to join our team during our examination periods (December, January, May and June). No previous invigilation experience is necessary. Please contact Mrs Kay Fennell in the school office for further information - 01708 440304

kfennell.abbs-cross.havering@lgfl.net

School Office

Forthcoming Events:

6th October 2009

ESafety Information Session: Years 7-9 Parent/Guardian only, 7pm.

7th-9th October 2009

Geography Trip, Rainham Marshes

7th October: Years 7.2 and 7.3

8th October: Years 7.1 and 7.5

9th October: Years 7.4 and 7.6

14th October 2009

Sussex University Trip, for Year 10

16th October 2009

Wear your Walking Boots Day, Years 7-11

22nd October 2009

Jack Petchey Awards, at the Queens Theatre