

Dear Parents

Thank you for your continued support of students, staff and college activities. Time is certainly 'flying' at the moment and I give below some information which I hope you will find useful.

1. Staffing

We have recently appointed the following staff:

Mr. S. Brown	-	Maths (started March 2009)
Mrs. T. Cutler	-	ICT / Business (starting following Easter break)
Miss N. Nance	-	P.E. " "
Mr. R. Compton	-	English / Media Studies (starting following Easter break)
Miss J. Eggerton	-	English (starting September)

There are currently no resignations and the additional staff will enable us to reduce group sizes even further and boost our attempts to raise attainment.

2. Curriculum

- KS4 Headlines

- From September, in English / Maths / ICT / Science and Design and Technology we hope to provide 10 teaching groups for our 190 students, giving us an average class size of 19 students.
- All our teachers are fully qualified.

- KS3 Headlines

- Our current Year 9 have all been fast tracked to GCSE work in some subjects. It will mean that those who prove able, will sit some GCSE's at the end of Year 10 - a full 12 months early! More advanced courses will then be undertaken.
- All students will be entered early (at the end of Year 10) for Mathematics and English at KS4 to give students greater opportunities to succeed.

3. Attendance

Attendance currently stands at 90% so we are behind our target of 92%. Please do all you can to encourage good attendance.

Good attendance has a major impact on examination grades. All our Reward Trips (including the Year 11 Prom) have 90% as a minimum requirement.

The recent 'snow week' dealt our attendance a major blow. College was only closed Monday pm and Tuesday. Students should have been present throughout the rest of the week and any absence may cause students to fall below the 90% benchmark and rule them out of the next rewards trip.

Please do all you possibly can to avoid taking holidays in term time. Only in the most exceptional circumstances can I authorise them. Reasons such as being cheaper, booked by relatives without knowing, mistaken holiday dates, family holiday etc. are **NOT** exceptional circumstances.

4. The National Challenge

Although our 5A* - C's totals remain healthy and above Government floor targets, when we include the subjects of English and Maths, we are just below a different target!

To enable all schools / colleges in such a position to improve at a faster rate, the Government is providing an additional £750,000 over the next 3 years to support progress.

Clearly this is a real bonus for us and is a reason why we have made additional appointments (see 1. Staffing) in order to keep class sizes low and provide the best possible opportunities to our students.

Extra resources will also be forthcoming meaning there are more opportunities than ever to succeed at Bristnall Hall.

5. College Dress

A reminder that in September 2009, the whole college will move to ' House Ties '. These are based on our current tie but the thin silver stripe will be replaced by one of three colours - red (Telford), yellow (Brindley) or green (Darby) signifying a student's House. They are ' clip-on ' and so should look smarter.

Please support us in our attempt to provide a ' House' identity and improve the standards of our dress.

These 'clip-on' ties will be available from around Spring Bank Holiday from A. Oakes and Clive Marks retailers. The cost will be approximately £ 6.99.

6. Post 16 Study

We are offering a package of Post 16 courses, including ICT, Art, Sport, Design and Technology, Maths and English from September 2009 as we are developing 6th Form Studies.

We now have brand new classrooms to accommodate our 6th Form including a common room, with kitchen facilities, flat screen TV and leather sofas!

Further details can be provided by Mr. Usherwood, on request.

7. Building Schools for the Future

I would like to update you on Sandwell Council's plans to transform secondary schools through the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme.

The council has appointed Environments for Learning (E4L) as its selected bidder to start the crucial building work later this year. E4L will now become a partner in Sandwell's Local Education Partnership, joining forces with the council and BSF Investments Limited.

E4L, which is made up of market leaders Interserve and Agilysys, will bring its expertise in construction, educational transformation, facilities management and ICT to the project. Planning applications for the sample schemes are expected to be submitted over the next few weeks.

A Design Showcase event, held for local people to see the proposals and meet representatives from E4L and the BSF project team, will be held on Thursday 30th April 2009 from 9.00am - 4.00pm at the Council Chamber, Sandwell Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury. Similar community events will also be held shortly.

For more information, please contact the BSF Project Office on 0121 569 6761 or go to the website at www.bsf.sandwell.gov.uk

We are in Wave 5 and due to open in 2013 in a purpose built £23 million State of the Art College in Moat Road.

We are scheduled to have 8 forms of entry and so our intake is due to increase from the current 190 to 240 students. I will try to keep you up to date with progress / developments.

I hope you have found this Newsletter informative and on behalf of students, staff and Governors, we hope your Easter is enjoyable and restful.

Below, you will find a reply slip. Please sign to indicate you have received this letter and return the slip via your child to Reception by Monday 30th March. All slips (where parental signature matches those on our system) will go into a draw and the first three slips drawn will be given an Easter Egg.

Yours faithfully

S. W. Venross
Headteacher

Dates for your Diary

Friday 3rd April

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College Closes for Easter at 3.10pm

Continued over ->

Summer Term 2009

Monday 20 th April	-	Training Day (College closed to students)
Tuesday 21 st April	-	College re-opens for Summer Term
Wednesday 29 th April	-	Year 8 Parents' Evening
Monday 4 th May	-	May Day Holiday
Tuesday 19 th May	-	Year 10 Work Experience Week
Friday 22 nd May	-	College Closes for Spring Bank Holiday
Monday 1 st June	-	College opens
Thursday 4 th June	-	European Elections - College Closed
Wednesday 8 th July	-	Year 7 Parents' Evening
Friday 17 th July	-	College closes at 12.30pm.

Autumn Term 2009

Thursday 3 rd September	-	College Opens for students @ 8.55am You will be informed if this is to be a Training Day. (Next Year's Calendar has not yet been decided)
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Please return this slip to be entered into a draw to win an Easter Egg.

I, Parent / Carer of _____ of Form _____ have received your
Newsletter.

Signed _____ Date _____