

NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Parents/Carers

The last seven weeks have been challenging times and I fully appreciate how difficult it can be starting back with normal routines after such a long period of time off earlier in the year. The staff here at Crofton have been brilliant, they have embraced all the changes in the way we have had to do things, along with ensuring any work missed is on the website. I would also like to thank the pupils; they look very smart in their new uniform, but they have also embraced the many changes including the constant hand sanitising, one way system, split breaks and lunches; but they are working well in lessons and they are learning. I know this from the dialogue with pupils and their teachers, but also the fact that a senior member of staff is visiting every lesson, every period of every day. I would finally like to thank you, parents/carers, for your support, it has been a challenging term, but it has been a very successful one. Thank you.

The GCSE results of 2020 were very different to any other year. These pupils had major disruption at a crucial time in their lives; we have all had to make sacrifices to our lives during this challenging time but they did not have the opportunity to sit their exams, attend prom and this year we will not be able to have our annual awards ceremony. We will however, be writing to these pupils with details of when they can pick up their certificates in November. We have also included a slot for a professional photographer should they want some photos taken. All the staff here at Crofton are very proud of this year group; their conduct throughout the five years was excellent, but particularly in the last few weeks before lockdown and their results a real credit to them and we offer them all our best wishes as they move to the next phase of their careers.

It is wonderful to have the full school back in, even if we are having to do things differently. Our current Year 11 have returned and we are all working hard to ensure they are ready for their examinations next summer; this has started with their learning in lessons, at home and also with some of the extra classes we are holding after school, for example science on Monday, maths on Tuesday, computer science on Wednesday and English on Thursday. We also have homework rooms available and there will be opportunities for pupils to attend extra sessions during the October half term. Our new Year 7 pupils joined in September having experienced the virtual transition earlier in the year and have settled in very well, as have all the pupils returning to school thanks to the support from all the staff especially the pastoral team.

Peter Walker
Headteacher

ACHIEVEMENT UPDATE

Well done to all Year 11 pupils for their commitment and enthusiasm towards their studies. A huge thank you also needs extending to parents/carers who have been incredibly supportive of everything we are trying to do with Year 11 in order to fully prepare children for their examinations. Year 11 boosters/mega boosters have been a great success in science and maths and attendance has been outstanding. These are to continue after half term, but we will also have additional science groups on Mondays and English on Thursdays from 3:05-4:00pm. We also have a range of boosters during October half term which letters have been sent out for.

Pupils in Year 11 now all have a mentor who will work closely with them after each report cycle to ensure that they are on track to meet their targets and discuss any concerns that they may have. We have three mentors working with Year 11: Mrs McAdam, Mrs Hughes and Mrs Williams.

Mock exams are due to start on Monday 30 November for the three week period before we break for Christmas. Pupils will be given lots of information about these in the first few weeks back after half term so please ensure that you work with your child to ensure they have a plan in place for when they will do their revision.

Year 11 Key Dates:

Reports will be sent home on 16 November, Parents' Consultation Evening 19 November.

HOME LEARNING

Our pupils have worked hard to remind themselves how to use Google Classroom (completely new for Year 7), and have communicated professionally with their teachers where this has been used. Our teachers are very much enjoying checking the super work that is submitted, for example homework. All pupils should be able to use their school email to communicate with class teachers where needed, so that teachers can respond promptly to questions asked. Please do encourage your child to log in to Google Classroom as soon as possible to check they are comfortable using it, should it be required. If you have questions about the use of Google Classroom or have difficulties regarding the use of electronic devices for learning at home, then please contact your child's Year Leader in the first instance.

OPEN EVENING

Obviously, given the current circumstance, we were unable to have our normal Open Evening. This is an opportunity for our prospective parents/carers and pupils to visit the school, hear from myself and some key speakers, walk around the school and ask questions of pupils and teachers. We have, however, made a video which can be found on our website in the Parents' section: open evening. Any questions from prospective parents can be asked by emailing them to openevening@croftonacademy.org.uk.

YEAR 7 & YEAR 11 CONSULTATION EVENINGS

Similar to the Open Evening, we are also having to deal with Parents' Evenings differently. When we return in November there is a Year 7 Consultation Evening on Thursday 5 November. Parent/carers will receive a five minute phone call from their Group Tutor. For subsequent Parents Evenings the School is looking to trial virtual meetings beginning with the Year 11 Consultation Evening on Thursday 19 November. Further information will be mailed out after the half term.

CAREERS UPDATE

In Values lessons Year 11 pupils have been exploring the different choices that they have post-16 and beyond. Pupils in Year 11 must stay in some form of education or training until they are 18 and the Values lessons are designed to enable pupils to make well informed choices. During lockdown, pupils were sent virtual Taster Days clips from our local providers and also were sent presentations about apprenticeships (at all levels) and university. This has been revisited and pupils are now engaging in virtual weekly assemblies from a range of post-16 providers. These are also available for parents/carers to watch at home as Miss Lord is sending these out to pupils on their Google Classroom account – so that genuine discussions based on the latest information is available. Tracey Chapman (our specialist Careers Advisor) is also in school every Tuesday and Thursday, so pupils can see her to get further support. Personal statements were completed by many pupils during lockdown and further help with this is being provided by Year 11 Group Tutors for the pupils still needing to complete this. The application process for many post-16 providers is through the eProspectus platform or by applying directly to the college. Miss Lord and Tracey Chapman are assisting pupils with this process and you can email them should you need further guidance. (sharon.lord@croftonacademy.org.uk tracey.chapman@croftonacademy.org.uk)

Please do remember that all pupils have access to eClips (a platform that enables further careers exploration) and the Careers section of the school website is filled with useful information and links to providers and impartial guidance. Instructions on how to use eClips and eProspectus are available for pupils to access on Classroom. Also links to Barclays Lifeskills and how this can help students to plan for their future has been shared.

Finally the virtual Careers Fair can be accessed until 28 October 2020. If you've misplaced the information about how to access this, instructions are on Google Classroom.

Throughout this busy and important time for Year 11, information from local providers will be shared with parents and pupils. Please contact us if you need any further support.

BUILDINGS UPDATE

Over the summer we have invested over £150,000 on improving the facilities of the school. This has included a new library, extending the rooms used in the languages department, providing a student support area as well as upgrading computers around the school. We also had a new MUGA pitch built and this is ready to be used by the pupils in PE. Over half term we are looking to have some further decorative work completed in some of the English classrooms ensuring the pupils are in an environment they are proud of and also allows them the best facilities to thrive with their learning.

'OUR SCHOOL HAS A MIND TO BE KIND'

Every year we are thrilled with the support that pupils and parents/carers provide for others. Although this year we cannot engage in some of the typical things which we do to support others, we are aiming to still work together and raise money to support **Children in Need**. Please may I emphasise that even the smallest amount of money raised or donated is very much appreciated. Also please keep safe and ensure that all activities are appropriate. The Children in Need website does contain suggestions and the website for donations/funds raised is: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/croftonacademycin>

Thank you for your support.

Furthermore we will be supporting the Anti-Bullying Alliance '**United Against Bullying**' on Monday 16 November by encouraging pupils to wear odd socks. This is not a money raising event, but is an opportunity for our school community to show our determination to work together against bullying of all kinds. Further work will take place throughout the week linked to this theme.

KEY DATES:

Thursday 5 November: Year 7 Consultation Evening (via phone calls home)

Tuesday 10 November: Class of 2020 to collect exam certificates at designated times

Thursday 19 November: Year 11 Consultation Evening – more information to be given after half term

Friday 27 November: INSET day (school closed to pupils)

Friday 18 December: School closes for Christmas