

Sent home via In Touch email 03/10/2018

October 2018

LETTER FROM THE HEAD

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you and your son have had a great start to the term and that you're looking forward to the challenges and rewards the new academic year holds.

I am writing to share how the school performed in last summer's examinations at GCSE and A Level. I know that many of you have been waiting with bated breath to see how the school would fare following what has been the most difficult and turbulent period in Forest Hill's 62 year history of providing a high quality education to the young men of our district of London. We consider ourselves to be experts in boys' education. I am sure you have the highest of aspirations for your son – these aspirations will continue to be matched by Forest Hill School.

I have made no secret of the fact that our 2017 GCSE outcomes were not good enough, having been impacted by 13 days of strike action. I am delighted to tell you that we have seen a significant improvement in GCSE results this year and I have every confidence that this is the first step along the way to further rapid gains. Our A Level performance was also up, with excellent results making SFH6 (the joint provision with Sydenham School) the most consistently high performing post-16 provider in the borough.

Forest Hill is now emerging from the challenging period I spoke about above, with a real step-change in examination results this summer underlining that the school is making rapid and sustained progress. My challenge to the staff to ensure that the school is ready to emerge from our current Ofsted category by the end of this academic year is firmly on track.

GCSE Performance

Highlights include:

- We are one of the top two most improved schools in Lewisham
- Progress in 2018 is twice as good as in the previous year
- The average attainment for our boys in their best 8 subjects increased by almost half a grade – a significant achievement
- There was a doubling in the percentage of top GCSE grades (8-9) achieved this year
- We saw a significant increase in the performance of the overwhelming number of our subjects compared to 2017

A Level Performance

We have a joint sixth form provision with Sydenham Girls' School – SFH6. 2018 A Level results were excellent:

- SFH6 produced its best ever A level results
- It has the best A level outcomes in the borough and has had for several years
- Students on the Forest Hill Sixth Form roll improved their performance compared to 2017
- For the fifth year running we have a student progressing to Oxbridge (Cambridge, to study medicine) and record numbers gaining places at the top Russell Group universities

Last year was every bit as tough as we expected it to be - a weakened set of 2017 GCSE results; considerable number of new staff members and posts to fill; a challenging Ofsted inspection and a new GCSE exam model to negotiate.

Despite all of this, I couldn't be more proud of our Year 11 and Year 13 students who have risen to the challenge in such a difficult year. They showed determination and diligence and are a real credit to the school. They should be very proud of what they have individually achieved.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues and to acknowledge their true professionalism and dedication. It goes without saying that the outcomes last summer would not have been possible without their tremendous hard work.

This is only the start of our recovery plan/journey, and my colleagues and I are spending time at the start of term evaluating these results in more detail and refining our 18 month Ofsted Plan to continue to improve the overall results for Forest Hill, and ensure that our students receive the best possible education in their time at this school. Forest Hill is well on the way to re-establishing itself as school of choice for parents in south London with the highest of aspirations for their sons.

I would like to thank you for your continued support of the school.

Yours sincerely

***Mike Sullivan
Headteacher***