



Dear Parents/Carers,

As always, we wish you a very warm welcome to the start of a new academic year and very much hope that everyone had a good summer. All new parents are warmly welcomed; as last year, we have significant number of new students joining our Sixth Form from schools including Cheshunt, Broxbourne, St Mary's, Oasis Academy, the Sylvia Young Theatre School and St Edmunds. They and their families are warmly welcomed, as are all of the students and parents joining us in Year 7 - we look forward to working together for the next seven years.

My start of term letter is always a longer one, but I would be grateful if you could take 10 minutes to read it. I include various bits of important information, including information on our impending move to our new build.

2016 Exam Results

Once again we are able to start the year with news of excellent results in both Year 11 and the Sixth Form. At **GCSE**, as in 2015, almost one quarter of grades were at the top end of A*/A. Performance in "GCSE only" outcomes continues to be exceptionally strong, and all students achieved at least 5 or more GCSEs.

The school target sets significantly above government baseline targets, aiming for each subject to achieve in the top 10% of all schools nationally, as opposed to the top 25%. Within this highly aspirant environment, several subjects have gone above this with their results. Within many successes across the board, highlights include 100% of Triple Science students achieving A*-C, with phenomenally strong performances from subjects including Italian, Spanish, Business, Drama, PE/Sport and RS. In RS almost three quarters of the entry achieved A*/A grades – a fantastic achievement. The vast majority of our students have now joined our Sixth Form, with others going on to study at Hertford Regional College or Capel Manor. The school anticipates that when the DfE publishes its final analysis of outcomes in this year's new performance indicators, the school will again be identified as performing extremely strongly.

All of our students put in a phenomenal amount of work and should be credited for their effort and outcomes. Salvatore Turone exceeded his target grades in all of his 11 GCSE subjects and is delighted that his hard work ensured that he is able to start an apprenticeship in Joinery from September 2016. We wish him every success.

Many of our students produced As and A*s across a multiple of subjects including Aleefa Haque, Abby Clapson, Gabriella Ricotta, Tegan Wollaston and Megan Sheridan, all of whom are staying in our Sixth Form to complete a range of subjects from Science to Spanish.

At **A Level**, once again, outcomes tracked up from last year's excellent results in key areas including grades at A*/A, A*- B, A* - C, and the average grade achieved by each student. The overall pass rate was 99%. Around three quarters of the year group will now progress to university/further education to study courses including Banking Finance & Management, Diagnostic Radiography, Law, Economics, Criminology and Criminal Justice, Pharmacology and Biomedical Sciences. Other students will progress directly into employment and apprenticeships.

Out of many fantastic performances, students with particularly high achievements include: Katie Avril; Thomas Bradley; Becky Humphry; Josh Burns; Lucy Cornish; Olivia Jones; Kiera Noonan; Robert Ottolangu; Abigail Routley; Lauren Tenwick and Marc Young. Huge congratulations go to every member of Year 13. This year group more than deserved all of their success; they were a truly super set of young adults – caring, compassionate, always humorous, and determined. As they move on to the next stage of their lives for university study or employment, we wish them every possible success and happiness, and look forward to hearing more of their ongoing success.

AS results were equally strong, with Year 12 students also outperforming targets in several key areas. As they move into Year 13, this year group is now well placed to achieve an impressive set of A2 outcomes in summer 2017.

We are justifiably very proud of the school and its achievements, in which parents play such a crucial part. Thank you. Equally, there are always areas where we look to improve, and the school continues to be closely focused on what needs to be done next as part of our focus on ensuring that we continue to provide an outstanding learning environment.

Staffing Update

We are delighted to welcome the following staff to our community following various promotions, relocations and retirements last year. As last year, I'm pleased to be able to say that in a period where many schools moved to redundancies as a result of decreasing school funding





nationally, we were able to expand staffing. Several of the appointments below reflect a deliberate decision to overstaff, particularly in the areas of English/Media, Science and PE:

- Mr Bannerman Business Studies
- Ms Brown Head of Photography and Art
- Mr Chowdhury Lead Practitioner Business Studies and Economics
- Ms Connolly Geography - part time
- Mr Foley 2nd i/c PE
- Mr Hopwood 2nd i/c Science
- Ms Shergill History
- Ms Southey Food/Textiles Technician
- Mr Spaul PE teacher
- Ms Thomas English/Media
- Ms Tong Graphic Design & Print Production Technician
- Mr Wemyss-Cook 2nd i/c Science
- Ms Wood Reception
- Ms Suarez Cover Supervisor – 4 days per week
- Mr Jager Cover Supervisor

Maternity Cover:

- Ms Kelly Art for Mrs Bishop
- Ms Keskinel English for Ms Stewart

For your information, the overall structure of the school's **senior leadership team** is:

- **Mr Denchfield** – Vice Principal/Business & Operations
- **Mr Ellis** – Vice Principal/Aspiration and Achievement incl oversight of Key stage 3 (Years 7 and 8)
- **Mr Pearce** - Vice Principal/Curriculum and Achievement
- **Mr Sparks** – Vice Principal/Achievement

- **Mr Ellard** – Assistant Principal – Pastoral/Behaviour
- **Ms Legg** – Assistant Principal/Sixth Form

- **Mrs Allum** – Associate Assistant Principal – Pastoral
- **Mrs Enstone**– Associate Assistant Principal - Aspiration and Ambition: A*/A Outcomes

All staff direct email addresses are deliberately placed on the school website – please do not hesitate to contact us if you need to be in touch. Please do not “sit” on any concerns at home – if you let us know, we can resolve them together quickly.

Safeguarding

As you would expect, the school has exceptionally robust safeguarding procedures as part of keeping students safe. Students are regularly fully briefed on these, including the fact that they should only communicate with staff on their school email addresses, and that no member of staff should at any time communicate with them on their personal email or mobile numbers. E-safety for students is a crucially important part of this and remains high on our agenda. We will again this year be running e-safety evenings for parents and very much hope that you will be able to attend. I know that last year parents found them incredibly useful. For further guidance about safety online please refer to:

<http://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/>.



Uniform and Attendance

The standard of our uniform is exceptional and is regularly commented on by visitors to the school. A quick reminder that students need to be in full school uniform at all times, with any student not meeting uniform working in isolation until the correct uniform is in place. For girls this includes skirts that must be at knee length minimum, please, with no false nails – there are very important safety reasons behind this. All students need to wear black leather shoes – no trainers. If any parent is having financial difficulties purchasing uniform, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or the Finance team for further advice and support.

A reminder that as part of ensuring that students are in school on time and outside classrooms ready to make a prompt start to learning at 8.30am, anyone arriving to school at **8.27am onwards** is deemed to be late and will need to serve a late detention that night. Students must also come to school fully equipped – it is one of our basic expectations that students have pens, pencils and a reading book on them at all times. If you would like any help at all with engaging your child in reading, please do not hesitate to contact our Learning Resource Centre Manager, Rebecca Grant, who will be delighted to help you with this. We strongly encourage parents to visit our Learning Resource Centre to see what type of literature is available for your child. In addition you will find reading lists for each year group on our website - <http://www.goffs.herts.sch.uk/learning/literacy.shtml> - plus booklets detailing “How to Help Your Child with Learning”. These booklets will go up on the individual year group pages of the website as each Information Evening is run for parents over the next couple of weeks.

With regard to attendance, my grateful thanks go to the vast majority of our parents who are so very supportive of ensuring that time is not missed from school, exceptional circumstances aside. In order to reduce the number of children being taken out of school for holidays by their parents during term time, the Government changed the national attendance legislation. These changes mean that Headteachers no longer have the authority to grant any absence in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is of course imperative that students do not lose time out of school unless absolutely necessary. I have always sought to support parents where exceptional circumstances arise, as they occasionally do, but also want to highlight that if a child is taken out of school without authorisation, the school will follow its policy which includes both fines and legal action.

Behaviour for Learning

The school has an extremely clear policy on behaviour and expectations. Phil Ellard wrote to all parents at the end of last term, and will be contacting you again this week to outline the updates to our Policy. The policy meets all Government requirements and is published in full on the website. Our expectations are clearly set out at all open evenings, information evenings, by letter and in individual meetings. In sending your child to be educated at Goffs, it is implicitly understood between us that parents understand and support the school’s line and policy on behaviour. This includes Saturday Detentions. I make no apology for expecting Goffs students to work hard, aim high, be polite and respectful and to meet the school’s expectations of behaviour. Where that does not happen, the school’s policy will be applied, including the use of isolation, and can result in the permanent removal of a child’s place. As always, if you feel that the school’s expectations of behaviour do not fit with your personal ethos or that of your child, it remains your right to have your child educated in a school whose policies you do agree with. I thank you in advance for your active and committed support of these expectations, having chosen to send your child here.

Learning and Teaching – Iris Camera

Last year the school trialled the use of a portable camera used by staff to record themselves teaching, and to then watch themselves back, working with a staff coach. As you can imagine, the ability to watch yourself in action and develop your practice accordingly is invaluable. From this September, all staff will routinely be using the IRIS camera in lessons. It is portable and discreet, and the vast majority of our students are already absolutely familiar with it. All footage is kept on a secure server and is only accessible to school staff.

Catering

We were delighted to hear that our fantastic catering team has been awarded Cucina’s School Catering Team of the Year Award. The team deliver food of an exceptionally high standard, working closely with our Student Parliament to hear their feedback, and take on suggestions, and we are delighted for them.

Goffs Multi Academy Trust – “Generations”

I’m delighted to be able to tell you that as of 1st September, the Goffs Multi Academy Trust is in operation. Multi Academy Trusts are a central





part of the Government's education policy, with their stated aim being that all schools should be in Multi Academy Trusts by around 2020. Each Trust comprises of a group of schools working together, with one lead school. In our Trust this will be Goffs. I was absolutely delighted to be contacted by Government in January 2016 and asked if Goffs would apply to become a sponsor school, supporting and working with other schools and establishing its own Trust. Following an application process, we were advised at the end of last term that our application had been successful. MATs can include primaries and secondaries, and I very much want us to have both in our Trust.

The name Generations was decided on deliberately, reflecting our roles growing future generations of children, teachers and leaders in partnership with the schools that will join our Trust.

Nothing will change about your child's learning at Goffs. I will keep you updated with the next steps for our Trust, and hope that you are as proud as we are to be approached by Government and asked to be system leaders in this way.

Priority Schools Building Programme

If driving past the school or visiting, you will have seen that our new build has moved on apace over the summer break and is now well on its way to being complete. Tours of the new building for both students and staff will continue this half-term, as part of familiarising them with the building layout.

The plan remains that the school will move into the new build over the 3 week October half-term. I anticipate taking possession of the keys on Thursday 10th November 2016, with students returning to school on Monday 14th November 2016.

The programme requires us to close for three weeks in order for the current buildings including all of the ICT, servers etc, to be moved over to and set up in the new building. This has been deliberately tied in with the two week October half-term break in order to minimise disruption as far as is possible. For the 2016/17 academic year this two week half-term for all students runs from **Monday 24th October – Friday 4th November 2016**.

Arrangements for all students for w/c **Monday 7th November to Friday 11th November 2016** will be as follows:

- **Years 7, 8, 9, 10** - full suite of work for all lessons set online and must be completed at home
- **Year 11** - mock examinations in the current school's Sports Hall. As always, the outcomes of these mocks will be used to inform final exam entry decisions, application to Goffs' Sixth Form, and also used on all external references
- **Year 12** - reading week at home to mirror the University style week. Staff will set work to be read which will then feed into seminar style discussions/student presentations first week back
- **Year 13** - 'retake mocks' for any Year 13 students resitting AS units
- Any **Year 13** students not retaking units, will be set work for completion at home as above for Year 12
- Any **Year 13** sitting medical/Law/Oxbridge papers, plus any additional GCSE English and Maths retake students, will also be required to come in for formal examinations, plus complete the reading work as detailed for Year 12

In summary, for the period Monday 24th October – Friday 4th November 2016 (3 weeks):

- Two week half-term for all students runs from **Monday 24th October – Friday 4th November 2016**
- **w/c Monday 7th November to Friday 11th November 2016: Years 7, 8, 9, 10, 12 and some Year 13** – working at home on a full suite of work set by the school
- **Year 11** – in school as required to sit mock examinations. Revising at home when not in mock exams
- **Year 13** – undertaking mock examinations in school and/or set reading work at home

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RESPECT ♦ CONFIDENCE ♦ ACHIEVEMENT

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The entire school will return as normal on **Monday 14th November 2016** to our new building

Several parents of students in Years 7 – 10 and Year 12 have asked if the work set by the school has to be completed in that third week, or can it be completed in any of the three weeks? It absolutely can be completed at any point in the 3 week break, as long as it is complete for the first day back. Should you have any queries at all about the 3 week half-term, please do not hesitate to contact me.

The building looks amazing, particularly now that furniture is starting to be fitted, and I very much look forward to showing it to you once we have moved in. Aside from the £20 million invested in the build itself, we have invested a further £200,000 in additional ICT and new furniture.

In the meantime, our attention is very much fixed on the logistics of packing and the move itself, with Pickfords imminently about to deliver 2,000 packing cases. The mind boggles.

This year promises to be another hugely exciting and successful one. I very much look forward to working with you throughout the year.

Yours sincerely,

Principal