



CRAIGMOUNT NEWS SEPTEMBER 2008

I hope you have had an excellent summer and that the start of session has been as positive for your child. Best wishes for the new session to all students and in particular I would like to wish our new S1 a very successful secondary career. I am sorry for the messy start to the session, following industrial action by various support staff unions. Despite this the school year has started well.

STAFF NEWS

We have had a number of staff changes over the summer. Mrs Karen Jarvis joins us as Depute Head Teacher and Mrs Alison Crosbie (PT History) and Mr Mike Irving (PT Physical Education) have been added to our management team.

Teachers joining us (or taking up new contracts) are Mr Scott Copeman (Music), Ms Helen Dobson (History), Ms Annette Maloney (Drama), Ms Karin Robertson (English) and Mrs Judy Todd (English).

We welcome Probationer Teachers Ms Kimberley Winning (CDT), Ms Michelle Gilbert (Chemistry), Ms Anna Duncan (Geography), Ms Alison Gow (Mod Studies) and Ms Laura Foster (Religious Education).

Also joining us are Ms Ann Cormack (Learning Assistant), Mr Alistair Rae (Senior Science Technician), Ms Shirley Kinghorn (Classroom Assistant) and Ms Margaret Miller (Senior Clerical Assistant).

EXAM RESULTS

SQA results arrived in August and a great many of our students achieved outstanding results. On the whole S4 results were good, S5 moderate and S6 excellent.

As I did last year, I would ask for your help in the issue of parents and students who press for inclusion in a class against the judgement of staff. Particularly at Higher, a significant number of students failed following their rejection of the strong advice of teachers that the student should take an Intermediate course in S5 followed by the Higher in S6. Teachers do not recommend course levels lightly. Please help your child by urging him/her to follow the recommended course. In this connection please note that with the later timing of S5/6 prelims it is necessary to have finalised all examination presentations BEFORE the prelims. The prelims will be used to gather evidence in the event of appeals; no changes of presentations - level changes or withdrawals – will be permitted after the prelims.

S6 produced much better results this year but again this session S6 will have to fulfil all their academic commitments, including attendance at all examinations for which they are entered, in order to be allowed to attend the Sixth Year Function.

You will be notified of any failure to complete school deadlines, and the student will be given a short period of time to rectify the situation, but where students fail to complete course requirements on time, they are liable to be withdrawn from the course or moved to a lower level of presentation. If they no longer have the necessary number of courses, they will be expected to leave.

DRESS CODE

Students returned in August looking very smart. Thanks to all parents for your support. Please keep the pressure on and ensure that your son/daughter is wearing plain black trousers/skirt (no grey joggers please). We, at Craigmount, want to be the best and for this your continued support is essential. A School uniform can be purchased from our main office throughout the school day. We hope to have the capability in the near future to send you a text to your mobile phone, or alternatively a voice message to your landline, should your son/daughter arrive at school not wearing full school uniform.

HEADTEACHER'S CONSULTATION

You will see in the calendar of events there are entries entitled 'Head Teacher's Consultation'. This is a slot which I clear in my diary for any parent who wishes to come and discuss any aspect of school life. If you wish to make an appointment to meet with me during one of these consultations, please phone my secretary, Mrs Margaret Ferguson on 0131 339 6823.

STUDENT PLANNERS

Every student has been issued with a Student Planner. These Planners are an expensive investment for the school. Used properly, the planner helps organise a typical teenager's busy life. The Planner contains much useful information e.g. term dates, merit stamp records (S1/2 only), study skills advice, contact numbers and a record of when homework is due.

It would be of enormous benefit to every young person if you would

- ensure that he/she is using the Student Planner effectively

- ensure that he/she is bringing it to school every day
- talk to him/her about what he/she is learning in school
- contact the relevant Student Support teacher if you have any concerns.

BREAKFAST

Is your child coming to school well prepared for the day? It is a long time from the start of the school day and lunchtime. We are finding that some students (particularly girls) who have skipped breakfast do not have as much energy as they should have.

Please note that breakfast may be purchased in school from 8am until 8.25am for those who have not eaten at home.

STUDENTS WHO ARRIVE EARLY

A small number of students arrive in school before 8.00am each morning. We would ask parents to note that staff are not available to supervise students in the concourse or school grounds very early in the morning. Parents should realise that we cannot be responsible for students at these times.

VALUABLES IN SCHOOL

I would like to remind parents that the school is not responsible for valuable items brought in to school. Items such as MP3 players, mobile phones and bicycles are brought to school at the student's own risk.

On the subject of mobile phones, our policy in Craigmount is that they are acceptable in school so long as they are switched off in school. Please do not try to contact students on mobile phones during class time, as this can be very disruptive.

ROAD SAFETY

In previous sessions there has been a number of minor accidents and near misses on roads around the school. Some students see road safety as an issue for primary school students. They seem to think that they are invulnerable if they are in a large group. Sadly, many schools have the experience to show that this is not the case. Please encourage your child (of whatever age) to take care on the roads coming to and going home from school. Parents who bring their children to school by car should not enter the school car park when dropping off/picking up your children. This is in order to prevent any accidents.

OPEN AFTERNOON FOR P7 PARENTS

Our open afternoon for P7 parents will be on Wednesday 17th September from 1.50pm until 3.15 pm. More information will be issued via Primary Schools.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Attached today are dates for session 2008/09 and a Calendar of Events for the school. This is a document which is full of useful information and which is worth keeping in a safe place.

The school and the City of Edinburgh Council advise strongly against students against taking time off during term time for family holidays. The calendar of events will help you to avoid doing this.

AND FINALLY

I look forward to the new session and hope all students achieve all they can in Craigmount this year.

Dr John Campbell
Headteacher

DATES FOR SESSION 2008/09

For your information, I have attached below dates for next session as issued by the City of Edinburgh Council. A full Calendar of Events is also distributed today. The information below should help parents to avoid booking holidays in term time.

School term dates 2008/2009

Autumn term

Monday 18 August 2008* - Staff resume
Tuesday 19 August 2008* - Staff only
Wednesday 20 August 2008 - Pupils resume
Monday 15 September 2008 - Autumn holiday, Schools closed
Tuesday 16 September 2008 - All resume
Friday 17 October 2008 - Mid-term, All break
Monday 27 October 2008* - Staff resume
Tuesday 28 October 2008 - Pupils resume
Friday 19 December 2008 - Term ends

Spring term

Monday 5 January 2009 - All resume
Friday 13 February 2009 - Mid-term, All Break
Monday 23 February 2009* - Staff resume
Tuesday 24 February 2009 - Pupils resume
Friday 3 April 2009 - Term ends

Friday 10 April 2009 - Good Friday
Monday 13 April 2009 - Easter Monday

Monday 20 April 2009 - Spring Holiday

Summer term

Tuesday 21 April 2009 - All resume
Monday 4 May 2009 - May Day, Schools closed
Monday 18 May 2009 - Victoria Day, Schools closed
Tuesday 19 May 2009* - Staff resume
Wednesday 20 May 2009 - Pupils resume
Thursday 2 July 2009 - Term ends

*The start date for school session 2009/2010 has been **provisionally** identified as 19 August 2009.*