



Dear Parents

I was delighted with the turnout at Wednesday's Open Evening: we welcomed more families through the door than at any time since I joined the school in 2002. Some were visiting us for the very first time, eager to explore our wonderful new building and intrigued, no doubt, by my promise to deliver inspirational learning. Open Evening would not show us at our best if it wasn't for our student helpers. They are our ambassadors, playing a key role in making sure that visitors get a genuine feel for 'the Ridgeway experience'. They are proud of their school and always do a wonderful job; it is particularly gratifying to hear the glowing feedback about them at the end of the evening.



One of the things that I focused on in my Headteacher's Talk was, of course, examination results. As we know, the new 9-1 GCSEs are a lot harder than previous examinations. There is much more to learn and coursework in most subjects has been abolished. All the pressure is now on one set of 'terminal' examinations taken over a few short weeks in May and June of Year 11. That is why I am extremely pleased with - though in no way complacent about - [this year's results](#). Among our successes were students securing the very highest 9-7 grades, including Jakub Tomaszewski, who achieved some of the best results in the school's history.

This did not happen by chance. The students worked extremely hard and staff supported them all the way. As a school, we pride ourselves on 'going the extra mile' - and more. Indeed, [lunchtime and after-school study clubs have already started](#) for the current crop of Year 11 students, and our first Friday night intervention session for performing arts takes place next week. Our focus isn't just on Year 11, of course. We are in the process of finalising our extra-curricular provision for all year groups - everything from computing and fun science practicals to environmental protection and a product design 'Lego league'.

I was particularly thrilled with the news this week that [Ridgeway has been awarded the School Games Mark at 'gold' standard](#). This is a government-led scheme which looks at participation, competitiveness, student leadership opportunities and local links. I am delighted for the PE department, coming just a few months after winning the Echo Schools Communication Award. To be awarded 'gold' at the first attempt is an exceptional achievement. I know that the platinum award - achievable after five years - is firmly in their sights.

We are always looking for opportunities to reward the many students who - day-in and day-out - attend school, behave well and work hard. One way is by awarding achievement points. When a student reaches a particular milestone, it is celebrated in assembly and they receive a certificate to take home. So far, students have earned well over 15,000 achievement points in total, evidence of how hard they have been working since we returned to school.

Students have been sent home today with letters introducing our new parent app. You will also receive an email inviting you to log on. Enclosed with the letter is a copy of our updated parent handbook. I hope you find it useful for navigating school communication systems and for answering any questions you might have.

Mr T Taylor
Headteacher

Upcoming Events

- Monday 17 September: Geography field trip to Llandudno
- Wednesday 19 September: School photographs for Year 7 and Year 11
- Thursday 20 September: Open Morning 9.30am to 11.30am