



THOMAS MILLS HIGH SCHOOL

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Dear Parents

5th September 2023

Headteacher's Update 2023/2024 – Letter 1 (of 1)

A warm welcome to all members of our school community, as we return for the Autumn Term. I very much hope that you have had a good 'summer' break. These update letters are issued from time to time, on whole school issues. I had not envisaged writing so early but with Education dominating the media and political agenda, I thought it would be useful to be in touch.

Department for Education's closure of some schools

From the media, I understand that some 100 schools have been forced to close or partially open because of a type of concrete that was used in their construction. This followed other news headlines that some relatively new schools have been forced to close following "structural irregularities."

We have been in contact with the Department of Education as they explored these construction issues. We also work closely with Barker Associates, an integrated property consultancy firm. They have overseen many improvements to our site over the past few years.

Our buildings have evolved since the 1930s, with a substantial addition in the early 1960s and this has been reclad and reroofed during my tenure. We have been reassured as much as we can be, that RAAC has not been used in the construction of our school. We don't have any prefabricated buildings which is a key feature in some of the Essex schools affected. In managing our own estates, we are always mindful of what we cannot see. We will of course keep this under review.

Start to Term

I'm pleased to report that we have had a good start to the new term. It's been a pleasure welcoming the new Year Seven and Year Twelve today. I very much hope our students enjoy a well-rounded education as well as achieving highly. My themes in assembly are focused on excellence and engagement.

Warm Weather

It's typical that warmer weather returns at the start of term! Although tutors will be establishing good uniform and routines, we think it is appropriate to allow the continued use of shorts as an option until the October Half-Term.

Tour of Britain Road Cycling Race

As you may be aware Stage Five of this race travels through Framlingham on Thursday 7th September. The cyclists are likely to pass by our school around lunchtime. Mr Chittock, Assistant Headteacher, is co-ordinating an opportunity for students to see this through an 'opt in' process (we need to do this to ensure adequate supervision as well as managing the contingency in the event of a delay).



Summary

I very much envisage this year's focus is on quality teaching and learning. Successful education is based on teamwork with students, parents and staff working together. I will issue a second letter early next week with some other items that are emerging.

Yours sincerely



P J Hurst
Headteacher