



From the Headteacher:



I have been really pleased with the way the new school year has started. The whole school appears to be much more focused on learning and there is a genuine desire to improve and make progress. This is all very promising given that our focus for the year is to ensure we have "No Stuck Students". In other words, we are aiming to make sure every single student makes

progress and achieves the best of their ability over the course of the year.

With our clear focus on learning, it is crucial that students are given an opportunity to discuss aspects of their own learning. Mrs Baker (Director of Personalised Learning) and Ms Paine (Head of Art & Design) are working hard with the Student Governors to review how we start lessons in order to provide teachers with advice on what makes a good starter. This is an excellent example of how the Student Voice can have an impact on teaching and learning in the school.

Many parents will know that David Hawker, Director of the Children, Families and Schools Trust, left Brighton and Hove recently. I am thrilled that three Falmer students, Katie Greenway, Marcus Hollingsworth and Gavin Sharpe, have been selected to be involved with the interviews for the new Director. This is a fantastic achievement for the three students concerned and another example of how the Student Voice can make a real difference and influence decisions.

Once again Falmer has shown its support for Anti-Bullying Week. Years 7 & 8 created kindness trees; Junior Model produced posters and poems that were used for an excellent exhibition and assembly for parents and carers. The Peer Support Team planned and delivered a fantastic whole school assembly to raise our awareness of the event. The whole week was crowned by the release of 50 blue balloons as a sign of our support for the anti-bullying campaign.

Another school priority for this year is to become an emotionally literate organisation. This means working together to improve how people work with each other so that our students can learn more effectively. One key development this term has been the opening of the Extended School Centre for Additional Needs (ESCAN). Miss Jemson has worked really hard to develop the centre that provides support for students who are struggling to engage with their learning. It has been a great success

and a number of students have already benefited from the support they have received.

We are constantly working to improve our communication with parents and the wider community. We recently redesigned our school prospectus - many thanks to Mr Easton and Alex MacDonald for creating such an excellent piece of work. Another important development is the redesign of the Falmer website. You really should check it out as it now has lots of up-to-date information about the school www.falmerhighschool.co.uk

I am really pleased with the growing popularity of Falmer in the wider community. Earlier this term we held a highly successful sports afternoon for Coombe Road and Bevendean Year 6 children. Thank you to Miss Johnson, the Year 11 Junior Sports Leaders and our Year 11 Catering students for making the whole event possible.

The sports afternoon was followed by our Open Evening, held in the South Building for the first time in many years. It was a resounding success with a huge number of prospective parents and students looking round the school. The staff worked really hard preparing exciting activities for the evening. Once again, credit must go to the large number of students who gave up their time to support the evening. Many parents commented on what great ambassadors the Falmer students were. Testimony to the success of this event and the growing confidence in Falmer is the fact the number of first choices for Falmer in 2008 have increased significantly compared to last year!

A date for your diary is Falmer's Finest, our annual awards ceremony, due to take place on Tuesday 22nd January at 7.30 p.m. Nominations have now been collected and invitations to parents and carers of award winners will be issued soon.

Finally, on behalf of the staff, students and Governors of Falmer High School, I'd like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Stuart McLaughlin
Headteacher

Read about the Falmer Plus Progress on centre pages and Student News on back pages.

- > Falmer Plus Friends
- > MAC's Place
- > Clubs and Activities
- > Student News





Falmer is an **extended school** and encourages parents and the local community to make use of the school facilities and the range of learning opportunities at the Bridge Community Education Centre.

As an extended school, Falmer is able to offer more opportunities to students. A wide range of clubs is available to students, giving them the chance to take part in activities outside their normal studies. These activities are well attended and feedback is very positive. **Mac's Place** is continuing its success with lots of people from the school and wider community

making use of the excellent advice and support services that are available.

The school and the Bridge are offering free learning, currently Cooking and IT, and support for parents and their children. If you would like to find out more please call Katherine on 01273 691191.

Continue reading to find out more about recent activities and achievements and see how you can become involved in future developments.

Proud to be Parents and Proud to be Friends

'**Falmer Plus Friends**' is a group of parents and supporters which organises social events at the school. These events are great fun - you can bring along your own refreshments and young children as well - so there's no excuse. See you at the next one!

Falmer Plus Friends recently organised a **Quiz Night** with a Christmas theme, mince pies, and prizes for each round as well as the winners. The evening was enjoyed by all and was a great way to get in to the festive spirit!

If you would like to become involved with Falmer Plus Friends please ring the school on 01273 691191.

The Bridge Community Education Centre

The Bridge Community Education Centre is based on the site of Falmer School and offers a wide range of courses including Parenting, Cookery, Health and Wellbeing, Personal Development, Music, Art and Crafts, Work Skills, Languages, Computing, and clubs for young people.

For more information about the Bridge please ring 01273 294930 or pop in for a chat.

MACs Place

Mac's Place Young Peoples Board is pleased to announce they have been successful in receiving 3 years funding from **Children in Need** for Mac's Place. One young person said "it's great news, it will make a difference to the community and my friends. We love Mac's Place because it's friendly. I went there because I needed to get some help but now I go to chill out or join in the clubs and make friends."

Mac's Place is a multi-agency advice and guidance drop-in centre for 11-25 year olds which is based at the Bridge on the Falmer School site. The friendly team of workers are there to offer advice, support and information. A sexual health team is also on hand with a nurse available Mondays 2-5.30pm and a sexual health advisor is available 1-2.30pm on Fridays.

Mac's Place also offers free **after school clubs** such as the popular Snack Attack on Tuesdays. Other clubs include Girls' group, Cooking Club and BME groups. Also coming soon on Mondays is the Karaoke Sing Off. If you are interested in joining any of these activities why not pop in to find out more or call Christine Brady 01273 294823. Mac's Place now has a mobile text service, call 07506 326039.

Clubs and Activities

A varied programme of activities is available to students outside normal class time, before school, during break and lunch times, after school and during the school holidays. These include a popular breakfast club, homework clubs, sports activities, music clubs, cookery and lots more.



Falmer Wrestling Club

Wrestling

The after school wrestling club, run by ex-wrestler Ted Hurdle, has been popular at Falmer for many years. The club has gone from strength to strength with boys and girls of all ages attending and learning new moves.

Playing for Success



Playing for Success study support centre

A group of year 7s have been attending the **Seagulls Centre** study support sessions at the Withdean Stadium this term. They have been creating a short DVD which will be shown at the graduation event at the end of the course. A new group of year 7s will also have the opportunity to attend the **Howzat Centre** at Sussex County Cricket Ground next term.



Falmer dancers audition to perform at Falmer's Finest

Dance

This term has seen **JP Omari** of 'Strictly Dance Fever' fame support the Falmer dancers by hosting an after school club. The club is very popular and the dancers are doing brilliantly. Auditions were recently held and those who were successful will be dancing away at Falmer's Finest awards evening in January.

Craft Club

The Craft Club has been running this term and has seen lots of new young people coming along and getting creative. The club involves making things such as beaded bracelets, embroidery, glass paintings and much more. In the run up to Christmas the group have been making greetings cards, table decorations, presents and all things Christmassy!

For more information about clubs and activities please contact Katherine Gregory on 01273 691191.



Students get creative at Craft Club



Blue Peter gardener at Falmer

Blue Peter Gardener visits Falmer

Blue Peter gardener Chris Collins came to Falmer to open a new polytunnel. Chris is from Brighton and an ex pupil of Falmer so it was great to have him return for a visit. The polytunnel will be used by pupils to grow vegetables not just so pupils and teachers can have fresh organic food but also to supply the nearby Bridge Community Centre cafe. The school already has a vegetable garden and a gardening club run by Warren Carter, manager of **Moulsecomb Forest Garden and Wildlife Project**. Chris Collins said *"There's too much pressure on academia in schools which doesn't suit everyone. Education isn't just about sitting in a classroom and if I had been introduced to gardening at an earlier age it would have been better for me and my teachers!"*

Warren Carter said: *"It's great that Chris is showing an interest in his old school. Many of the pupils that help out with the gardening aren't always top of the class, but gardening gives them an opportunity to show just what they are capable of. Let's just hope he can persuade them that weeding is fun too!"*

The Moulsecomb Forest Garden and Wildlife Project community allotment recently won a national award – a fantastic achievement for the Moulsecomb area. Well done to Aiden Robinson, Bradley Goode, Jade Baker, Tony Totty and Jordan Gillingham who have

been working hard at the allotment. The BBC reported on the success of the project on the Politics Show, and Jade's interview was screened across the nation!

For more information call Warren on 07988 837951.

Sussex Skills Festival

The Sussex Skills Festival took place at Brighton Race course and once again was a huge success. Falmer took 400 students from Years 9, 10 and 11, which was more than double the number taken by any other school. Falmer was praised for having the most engaging and well behaved students over the three day event.



Students enjoy researching the Beauty industry whilst getting their nails done

The Skills Festival promotes post secondary school further education and careers. The pupils were able to take part in activities such as brick laying and find out what qualifications would be needed to pursue a career in construction or agriculture.

Airline Masterclass



Young Enterprise Airline Masterclass

The Airline masterclass took place at Falmer in conjunction with **Young Enterprise**. The day was a big success with 60 students in total competing for the chance to prove that their mock airline was the best on show. Students were split

into teams of 6-8 students and assigned an array of tasks such as coming up with a company brand name, designing the tail fin logo, producing a set of airline uniforms as well as deciding which routes and destinations should be flown.