

From the Headteacher:



This term has been very successful for Falmer High School and its community with lots of very positive things to celebrate.

Firstly, this summer's GCSE results were the **best in the school's history**. 37% of students achieved five passes or more at grade C or above giving the school a 15% improvement in just two years.

Furthermore, nine out of ten students achieved five or more passes at any grade and 99% achieved a qualification. These results place Falmer in the top twenty percent of similar schools nationally – something for us all to celebrate and to be proud of. Well done to all of last year's Year 11 and thank you to the staff for their hard work and to our parents and carers for their support. Thank you also to the students who were fantastic during the inspections.

Our **Open Evening** was held at the end of September. This is an opportunity for prospective parents to visit the school and find out more about what we have to offer. The evening was highly successful, and the school was buzzing with a huge number of parents looking around. Our staff and students worked really hard to show how good we really are and the feedback from prospective parents was very positive. They felt we were a friendly and caring school – a view shared by OfSTED!

Another highlight of the term has been the visit of **OfSTED** in early November. I am sure many staff would not see OfSTED as a highlight but the results were very pleasing. OfSTED endorsed all the hard work and progress made by the school over the past four or five years. The reported highlights of the visit were:

- OfSTED identified lots of positive aspects to the school demonstrating that we are moving in the right direction with standards improving and a clear shared vision of where we are going and what we need to do to improve further.
- They found the school friendly and welcoming. Staff and students were open, honest and friendly.

- They felt that we were effectively using our full service extended school provision by providing a whole **range of opportunities** for students and members of the community. They liked MAC's Place, the range of clubs and activities on offer and the partnership with the Bridge that ensures adult learners also have access to learning.
- OfSTED spoke to lots of students who were very positive about Falmer and very loyal to the school and their community. They were impressed by the contribution being made by students to the life of the school e.g. school council, student governors, Bully Busters, prefects, etc.
- OfSTED said that the curriculum we are providing is good, designed to meet the specific needs of the students and having a positive impact in terms of standards.
- They felt that the partnerships the school has developed are **OUTSTANDING** (the highest grade possible).

The final highlight that I'd like to report is the new courses that we now have running at the school for young adults. Firstly, we are offering a BTEC in Care in partnership with Varndean College. The cohort comprises a large number of girls from last year's Year 11. It is great to see them in and around the school and doing so well for themselves. Secondly, we are in the second year of our NVQ Catering course. Ricky Hodgson is the teacher chef leading the course – I can vouch for the quality of their food, it is superb.

Finally, I would like to wish all of 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
- > The Bridge Community Education Centre
- > MAC's Place
- > Clubs and Activities
- > Student News





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

Being an extended school also means Falmer is able to offer more opportunities to pupils. A wide range of **clubs** is available to pupils, giving them the chance to excel in activities outside their normal studies. **MAC's**

Place (the multi agency centre for 11-25 year olds on the school site) has re-opened after a successful launch day and we anticipate many pupils and the wider community will make use of the excellent advice and support services that are available.

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' parents and supporters have been busy organising 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 supported the Bridge and Falmer **Summer Fun Day** which was a huge success with a great turnout. The day included a car boot sale, a BBQ, stalls, a football tournament and loads more.

Falmer Plus Friends recently organised a **Christmas Quiz** at the school. Participants were given a glass of wine or soft drink, a mince pie and tasty canapés made by the NVQ Catering students. Rounds had a festive theme with prizes for winners of rounds and the overall winners.

If you are interested in supporting 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 High 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.

The Gateway to Learning Service at the Bridge helps support learners overcome barriers to learning, for example, lack of confidence, dyslexia, unemployment, disability, lone parenthood and depression. Many more learners now enrol on and complete courses, and are supported so they reach their full potential. The Gateway team will help learners enrol on appropriate courses, sort out practical problems such as childcare and assist learners in deciding what to do after the course.

For more information about the Bridge, its courses and the Gateway team, please ring 01273 294929 or come in to have a chat.



Falmer High School FREE fitness sessions

In Falmer's Fitness Suite with a qualified instructor

Open to anyone aged 16+
Mondays 4.30-6pm

Call Mr. Harris on 01273 691191 to book a place.



Falmer pupils find out about MAC's Place at the launch day.

MAC's Place

MAC's Place recently held a **launch day** for students in years 9, 10 and 11. MAC's Place is a multi-agency advice and guidance drop-in centre for 11-25 year olds that is based in the Bridge on the school site. All the agencies and service providers that work with MAC's Place were invited to the day to give students an idea of what they do. The day was enjoyed by students who showed a real interest in what is on offer.

MAC's Place is open **Monday to Friday 3-5pm** and has a variety of drop in sessions including: a boys' group; girls' group; further education advice; young black persons' group; help with homework; and appointments for counselling. There is also a business club and MAC's Café. There is a group of MAC's Place **Ambassadors** who help signpost Falmer students and there is a **Young People's Board** who represent the community in giving their opinion on what services should be provided at MAC's Place.

For more information about MAC's Place speak to Christine Brady (MAC's Place Co-ordinator) on 01273 294823.

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 has been recognised by **QiSS** (Quality in Study Support), and has been awarded the national **Study Support kite mark** for achievements in developing study support, clubs and activities.

The three week summer programme offered a whole range of activities for young people including football workshops with **Brighton and Hove Albion** that were popular as ever, **Health & Beauty** workshops for mothers and daughters, **trampolining, craft club**, and a film making workshop with **Junk TV**.

New activities this term include **fitness** sessions in the fitness suite, **cookery clubs**, and a **rugby** club. A **gardening** club has also begun this term in conjunction with the **Moulsecoomb Forest Garden Project**. The group has been working on the school vegetable beds and growing loads of great stuff.

Well done to the year 8s who have been attending the **Playing for Success** study support sessions after school at Withdean Stadium. They have been making real progress and were rewarded with tickets to see Brighton and Hove Albion games at the stadium. Keep up the good work!



Pupils at the Playing for Success centre at Withdean Stadium.

French Trip 2006

The Year 8 MFL students recently visited France to put their French to good use in a real environment. There were trips to the Lens Mayor's office, a cheese farm, a traditional French bakery and a week was spent at an activity centre in Hardelot. A hectic and fun packed week!

A highlight of the week was teachers being egged on to go through the obstacle course and then being caked in mud by the students and activity centre staff.



Falmer pupils and staff enjoy the glorious mud in France

Enterprise at Falmer

The Enterprise events are up and running again with loads of events having taken place already and more still to come.



Design your own Eden Project at Falmer

The 'Design your own Eden' project took place in October with the day proving to be a great success.

The students were split into teams and were challenged to produce an 'Eden' dome similar to the one based at Cornwall.

October also saw the arrival of the hugely successful **Sussex Skills Festival**. Every student from Year 9, 10 and 11 visited Brighton Racecourse to look at prospective careers after school and/or college. There were many demonstrations available from Health & Beauty to physiotherapy. The Skills Festival entertained over 400 Falmer High School students in total. Most had lots of positive things to say about the day and many came away with a clearer idea of what is needed to achieve their dream job.

Another huge success was the outstanding 'Girls in construction' day

at Eastbourne College. The trip was aimed at introducing year 10 students to considering a career in construction. Some of the girls have even used their new found skills to put up shelving units at home, whilst others are considering going back to become painters and decorators.



Pupils have a go at bricklaying at the 'Girls in Construction' day

Anti-Bullying Week

Anti-bullying week was 20th-24th November and Falmer took the opportunity to raise awareness throughout the school. Tutor groups made kindness trees, lessons had a focus on anti-bullying, posters designed by students went up around the school and students wore blue on 'Blue Friday'.