

Year 8 Parents - September 2009

Don't panic!

Next school

Really important that make decision soon. Make an informed decision on what is best for your child. Kenya or overseas? Boarding or day? Mixed or single sex? Come and talk to me. Make a choice, apply for a place, then stick to it. Children who know where they're going are settled.

NB School registers CE candidate (confirmation required in January)

Parents register pupil

Senior Schools

Parents enter the child. We support the application. Must be done ASAP but I send to ISEB in February as we register the children for the exam.

Common Entrance Exams

CE is difficult. 3 maths, 2 English, 4 French, 3 sciences, history, geography, RS, Latin (Kiswahili) all in the space of 3 ½ days. Never again! GCSE and A or IB much more relaxed, spread out and modular / course-based.

Fee is £100.

If not going to CE school, still registered and do exam.

Grades on school reports are on what child is doing now, **not** a projected mark.

It is NOT COMMON! Papers are marked by senior school to which child entered. Get a grade or %age at the end of it. That's all! Schools mark differently.

TRIALS:

Used to be after ½ term this term but this was v disruptive, so we have a longer teaching and learning period with trials in week 13, Dec 1st to 4th. Marks will NOT be in reports but will be communicated separately. Parent Teacher Meetings early in January term. Marks may look low (45% can be a good mark) but this is a trial not the real thing and factors such as timing and technique play a big part.

Another trial late Feb. (then plenty of time to "brush up")

Another PTM early in April Term

Projects

Project work in Geog (this term) and RS (next term).

CE v Head's Report

Exam is important but not the be-all and end-all. Many schools use the CE exam for setting purposes and very few fail. (There's no Pass Mark in CE, despite what people say). Many UK schools now pre-testing at 11 anyway.

More importance on the Head's report that I write in March / April.

Revision

Mostly done in school. Your way is not necessarily your child's way. We know what we're doing and what we're talking about. Children given notes and guidance and it will be differentiated.

Buying past papers is no good. We do them in school.

No need for extra tuition unless we say so – just confuses matters; we will say if needed.

Let children be children

Senior schools want lively, responsive, well-rounded young adults. Not a child who has been locked away for a year studying!

Responsibility of being a senior pupil. Time for big growth in self esteem.

Lots of work but lots of play as well – keep a balance.

Sport, Music, Drama all are vital parts of the school year so don't say no!

Scholarships

Thorny issue. All schools do differently. Most are based on CE. Also sport, music, art, drama, all-rounder. Worth between 5% and 20% sometimes as much as 30% but unusual. Above that is bursary. There is no system of allocation. Competitive tests, based on a day or 2's trial. The earlier we know the better. Parents enter the child and we (normally!!) support that application but LET US KNOW!