



THE DOWNS SCHOOL

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Head: V C Houldey BA, MEd

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Dear Parents and Carers

We have been delighted to welcome everyone back this week and to see our new year 7s and year 12s join the school. The new Chiltern house ties look fabulous – as do our students. I want to thank you for your unstinting support with equipping and dressing our students so well in the lead up to the first day back in September.

I wanted to write to you so early in the term to let you know about our students' wonderful successes in recent examinations.

Starting with year 11,

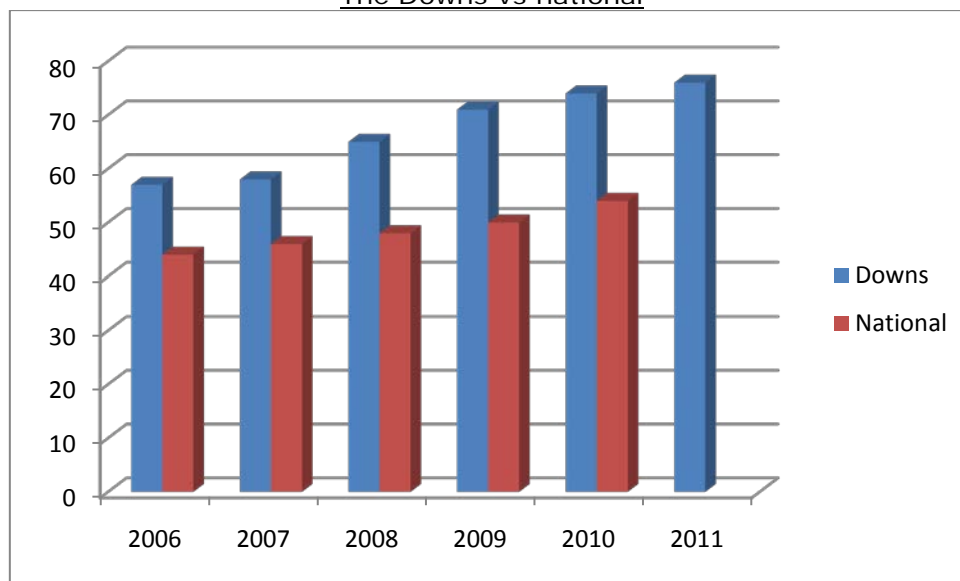
76% of our GCSE students gained 5A*-C including English and mathematics.

This target area is the most important one – it gives students that vital grounding in enabling them to go on to a huge variety of future possibilities. It is such a competitive world; we are keen to see our students go out into it with the very best qualifications they can get.

This result was considerably above any other West Berkshire school.

The chart below shows the year on year improvements we have made in attainment at Year 11.

Percentage of students gaining 5A*-C including English and mathematics:
The Downs vs national



NOTE: the national figure for 2011 is not yet available.

At Key Stage 5 (sixth form), again, there were fabulous success stories.

All our BTEC students passed, the overwhelming majority with merit or distinction.

Our A2 results had the highest point score in West Berkshire,

the highest A/B percentage and

the highest percentage of students gaining 3 or more A levels at C and above.

At A2, 93 students sat examinations.

99.7% of A2 entries gained a pass and

over 64% of A2 entries achieved A and B grades.

Over 31% of A2 entries were graded A or A* and

85% of A2 entries were graded C or above.

At AS level,

76% of entries were grade C and above and

49% of entries were at grade B and above.

These are significantly improved AS level results compared with previous years. As you will know, A2 results always improve further because students focus on their strongest subject areas in their final year.

Furthermore, our results in the sixth form are consistently strong showing excellent value added.

Our value added at A2 puts us in the top 2% of sixth form providers. Our overall results are consistently within the top 15%.

In Year 9 – although there are no longer national tests, we still conduct our own.

In English 88% of students gained level 5 and above (the nationally expected level for this age group),

in mathematics 92% and

in science 93%.

At level 6 and above

66% of students achieved this in English;

77% in mathematics and

71% in science.

I attribute this excellent achievement to terrific team work between students, parents and school and all involved should be congratulated on such a headline success!

Yours sincerely

V.C.Houldey
Headteacher

