



Monday 21 June 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Okay, so my 4:1 forecast for the England / Croatia game was somewhat optimistic, but I am going to stick with that forecasted goal margin for the final group game, tomorrow night. Thank goodness for having the most important, least important thing to keep us all entertained!

### *Letter from the Secretary of State for Education*

Schools have been asked to forward [this letter](#) to all families from Gavin Williamson, MP. It comes at the right time because it focuses on the importance of us all avoiding dropping our guard with respect to twice-weekly lateral flow testing at home. Home kits will continue to be provided and they form one of many mitigations to help us *try* to reach the summer holidays without any confirmed cases.

I am aware of there being confirmed cases in nearby secondary schools. Like us, they take those health and safety measures *very* seriously and therefore we must use this moment to reassert all of the measures we have in place to stay safe.

### *National Thank A Teacher Day – Wednesday 23 June 2021*

On Wednesday, there is a National Thank A Teacher Day. This provides a great opportunity to recognise the amazing work that colleagues in all school(s) do to support students' education and wellbeing. If you are able to spare a few moments, then do please write a message to say thank you to a teacher, support staff member, or the whole school [using this link](#). Despite the title, it is very much about teachers and associate staff who play an equally important role in supporting all of our students.

### *School Improvement Priorities*

A few weeks ago, I mentioned the process that is already well underway to identify our key improvement priorities in the coming years at CNS. Without wishing to suggest that the pandemic is behind us, we are, nonetheless, able to look forward to more normal times.

Our priorities are not fixed in stone. In fact, we shall refine them once we have collected and analysed the results of surveys that all students, and all parents and carers will be invited to complete before the end of term. These surveys will be taking place across *all* RLT schools and are designed to allow us to compare with other secondary schools and agree ways that schools with common goals might work together for success.

With this in mind, please look out for an invitation to take part in those surveys later this month, and also the contact opportunities identified below with the four emerging priorities.

*Continued...*

**Emerging Priority No. 1: Everyone Achieving** please email any comments to [bdoherty@](mailto:bdoherty@)

**Why?** The majority of students are high achievers at CNS. However, the very best schools ensure that high levels of achievement are routinely experienced by all students, equally.

**What?** Over the next three years, we shall continue to ensure that all students can secure further progress at school, but give greater priority to our most disadvantaged students – who are less likely to routinely enjoy secure high levels of achievement at CNS right now.

**How?** We shall continue to refine our high **TEMP**erature teaching, built on a knowledge-rich curriculum that benefits all students - but seek to refine how teachers adapt their teaching, learning, assessments and revision programmes for students with the highest needs. **TEMP** is the acronym we use to summarise high quality teaching and learning at CNS: **t**ask design, **e**xplanations, **m**odels and **p**ractice).

**Emerging Priority No. 2: Everyone Belonging** please email any comments to [ldebruyn@](mailto:ldebruyn@)

**Why?** Post-pandemic, the value of every student feeling that they belong to a school that exists to meet their unique needs and aspirations has never been higher.

**What?** Over the next three years, we shall be paying even closer attention to what it feels like to attend CNS. We want all students to look forward to school, find meaning in their lessons and participate in the wider life and opportunities of our school.

**How?** Success at school breeds self-confidence, rising self-esteem and buy-in - and therefore high **TEMP**erature teaching and learning is our bedrock. However, we intend to expand our student voice programmes, refine our rewards and recognition with a focus on individual connections with staff and rapport, but also review our curriculum so that it better reflects their changing world and needs.

**Emerging Priority No. 3: Everyone Reading** please email any comments to [yarmistead@](mailto:yarmistead@)

**Why?** We need to ensure that all students are routinely exposed to extended reading opportunities, for pleasure *and* within their day-to-day lesson and homework at CNS. Doing so dramatically improves their reading skills, independence, cultural capital, vocabulary and academic expression - and therefore their self-confidence and self-esteem.

**What?** Based around our outstanding library service, we shall significantly increase all students' exposure to reading for pleasure in novel ways. Also, a greater proportion of lessons and homework will be based around reading comprehension activities that promote greater independence and acceleration in learning and thought.

**How?** We are exploring our use of daily tutorial time and establishing best practice in how each subject can create and further promote reading activities that are engaging and allow students to make more rapid progress. We shall also work with families to find ways to extend that culture into more homes.

**Emerging Priority No. 4: Everyone Connected** please email any comments to [dgent@](mailto:dgent@)

**Why?** The pandemic rapidly accelerated our teachers' confidence in the use and exploitation of IT – particularly in relation to the Google Classroom. Meanwhile, we were able to guarantee 100% device availability amongst *all* of our disadvantaged students, whilst many families updated their children's devices - either through the school Chromebook programme or private purchases.

**What?** Over the next three to five years, we aim to update our entire IT infrastructure (e.g. Wi-Fi network, interactive whiteboards and staff devices) and use this to maximise the benefits of IT to improve the standard of teaching, learning and communication at CNS.

**How?** We shall review our curriculum offer so that more time is made available for students to study ICT skills in key stage 3, whilst seeking to simultaneously further upskill our teachers in the use of the Google Classroom to further support our high-**TEMP**erature teaching and learning features.

It was my hope to provide that summary on a single page. I hope that in doing so it still provided you with sufficient information to be excited, encouraged and reassured without overwhelming you with the details. We intend to build on previous successes and the emerging great practice across our school - but also model the humility that is needed to own "our" weaknesses and then set about being even better tomorrow than we are today.

In order to be an exceptional school we have to approach weaknesses and problems together and sometimes seek the solutions in one another. This principle will become a more visible feature of how we intend to support and challenge one another in the years ahead.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barry Doherty'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B' and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Barry Doherty

Headteacher