



Friday 10 September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I wish to begin by welcoming all of the brand new parents and carers of students in years 7 and 12. Following those final few days of nervousness before term began, I hope you and they are now feeling more relaxed and confident - and that new routines are being firmly established.

Towards the end of this letter, I shall provide information on those colleagues that families tend to wish to speak to about a range of matters but will begin with some messages and updates.

The Start of Term

So far, so good – well, much better than that actually. It has been a really good week and we valued being able to devote the whole school site to our youngest students who have most reason to fear getting lost. All of the basics have been really strong and we are already getting back into the swing of lessons all over the school *like we used to in the olden days!*

Updated Risk Assessment

You will be aware that we are operating a very different start of term than we did 12 months ago. This has led to a new risk assessment, which is available to any parent or carer on request. Our testing programme did pick up a number of positive asymptomatic cases and this reinforces the value of us all continuing with bi-weekly tests (Wednesdays and Sundays, please). Home testing is not mandatory but we shall continue to resupply your children via their tutors throughout the term as new supplies arrive.

Normal Food Service Resumed

It was very strange to see the canteen fully reopened this week. We now have much more space for dining and we shall be particularly glad of this once the temperatures drop!

It is particularly noticeable how much our older students are befitting from their own very beautiful space to eat, chat and be together. They will be getting their own lanyards on Monday to secure their place in the dining room going forward.



Meanwhile, the main school hall will be the next big area to be tackled as part of our renovation programme. It will cause some disruption in October, but the effect will also be stunning and then benefit students in years 7 to 9.

Continued...

Supporting Our Children's Mental Health

On Monday 13 September, you will receive a letter and invitation from Debbie Earnshaw. Debbie works with CAMHS (Child Adolescent and Mental Health Service) and invites parents and carers to two online sessions (6-7pm) to be held on Wednesday 22 and 29 September. Debbie's letter will set out more but I wish to strongly recommend taking up this great opportunity for all and not just some.

Helpline for Victims of Sexual Abuse in Schools

Right across the country all current and former students can now benefit from a brand new dedicated helpline set up by the Department for Education and run by the NSPCC. The helpline can lead to victims of abuse receiving support, advice and connection to other agencies - including the police, if they wish. The helpline is also there for parents and carers to seek advice.



You can call on 0800 136 663 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

Students' Wellbeing and Personal Development

You may recall that [I wrote to you at the beginning of July](#) following the publication of Ofsted's report into peer on peer abuse. I used that letter to set out our initial thoughts and actions and this will now be followed up with a more comprehensive letter to you from Ms Hancock, next Friday 17 September. The letter will provide further comments and more precise insights into our ever-evolving work in this and all other areas of personal development.

Therefore, Ms Hancock's letter will also summarise the content of our PSHE / Character Education curriculum, and our careers and enterprise programme. Plus, another reminder about our NeverAlone@CNS service.

Getting In Touch...

For new and established parents and carers, it might be helpful to set out some information on the various teams and individuals that you may need to contact during the course of the year.

<i>The Learning Support Team</i>	Led by Mrs Smart (SENCo) and Mrs Saxby (Assistant SENCo), there are ten learning support assistants at CNS who work directly with children on our SEN register to support them in and out of lessons on a range of academic, social, emotional and physical needs. Furthermore, the English, mathematics and science departments have specialist curriculum LSAs who provide additional literacy and numeracy interventions. Also, we are currently seeking to appoint a Maths Catch Up Tutor to support our Year 10s and 11s who have been most affected by the pandemic.
<i>Heads of Key Stage</i>	There are four colleagues, who now have oversight of the pastoral and academic progress of students at this school. They bring together the work of the pastoral, learning support and departmental teams to ensure that all students' academic and personal development is secured throughout their time at this school. Mrs Faulkner (Year 7 and transition), Mr Franklin (years 8 and 9), Ms Hopkins (years 10 and 11) and Mr Ward (Sixth Form) are our key stage leaders and all are members of teaching staff as well.

Pastoral Leaders	Working very closely with the heads of key stage and the learning support team we have six highly qualified colleagues who are not teachers and are, therefore, wholly focussed on ensuring students' day-to-day and longer-term needs are known and supported. Mrs Cottrell (year 7), Mrs O'Brien (year 8), Mrs Davis-Batchelor (year 9), Mrs N Cox (year 10), Mrs Hargrave (year 11) and Mrs Davision (sixth form) are very well known to both students and families.
Wider Guidance Team	In addition, we have a number of staff who occupy important roles that all seek the same thing: engagement. Mrs L Cox is our Attendance Officer, Mrs Budd is our Family Support Worker and Mrs Green is our Vulnerable Learners Coordinator. Furthermore, Mr Parker is our Careers & Enterprise Lead, whilst Mrs Knowles is our dedicated Careers Advisor.

There are of course many others who you may wish to speak to, including teachers (!), but as we begin a new year, we wanted to remind you of the wider team that seeks to create a safety net for every student.

School Improvement Goals

Starting in [mid-May](#) and again in [late June](#), I began exploring what our new school improvement plan might look like. In some ways, the pandemic has paused or even created brand new priorities, but in many other ways, the emphasis on really high quality teaching and learning experiences has not diminished. In the weeks ahead, I plan to put more information on our goals onto our website, and set out what we expect our plan will mean for students and families. The word 'everyone' precedes all four elements in our plan (everyone: achieving; belonging; writing and speaking; connected) and points to a core determination to be a truly inclusive school in every regard.

Good schools do things well for many, whilst great schools do well for all – we are driven to be the best school we can be for all. More on this another time but as ever, do get in touch now if you wish.

Ms Hancock will be writing to you next week and therefore I expect to write again in a fortnight and hope to report back on some of the great things we have already seen around the school this year.

Yours faithfully



Headteacher