



CHIPPING NORTON  
SCHOOL

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Friday 16 December 2022

Dear Parents and Carers



**Leadership Team:**

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Every Christmas I try and draw attention to a collection of students who are truly inspiring. Adults are able to think of and name those teachers or staff members who inspired them to learn, believe in themselves or raise their ambitions. It is also true that members of staff are as likely to be inspired by the children in their care.

*Courageous. Compassionate. Creative. Curious.*

The image below shows you the faces of some of the children I wish to write to you about today.



**Sporting Heroes**



We begin with our sporting stars. **Tahlia Davidson-Wright** (ice hockey), **Amber Davies** (swimming freestyle, backstroke and breaststroke), **Archie Street** (athletics), **Alice Davis** (sailing) and **Becca Warner** (trampolining) have all competed at a national level and been chosen to compete for their country. Archie (left) has also been accepted on to the England Athletics Youth Talent Programme, a pathway to Olympic and Commonwealth representation. In order to perform at their level, they all have



**RLT** RIVER  
LEARNING  
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EVERYONE ACHIEVING EVERYONE BELONGING

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to demonstrate an exceptional level of determination and resilience in order to balance intense training and coaching, travelling, competing and studies – whilst being young and living their lives.

Spanning both sports and performance, we also have **Cadence James**. She competed at the cheerleading championships in Paris in November with her team and won – meaning they will now be competing in Florida at Easter in what is the equivalent of the world championships!

### High Performing Artists

In terms of performance arts, we do not need to go very much further than the entire chorus, cast and crew from the recent *Matilda* production. Digging a little deeper, we have all known **Charlie Jennings** for many years, but his performance as Trunchball brought so much joy to so many that many of us shared the desire to mention him by name and express our pride and admiration. In addition, **Evie Noble** and **Emily Cutter's** performances of Miss Honey were exceptional and deeply moving. **Honour Nolan** and **Vivi Walkden** as *Matilda* embodied the feisty, smart and determined spirit of Roald Dahl's most exciting child character. **Alex Jackson** and **Dolly Ogier's** Mr and Mrs Wormwood were perfect and hilarious – again, we were stunned by their stage transformations from super students into those obnoxious parents. And Michael, their somewhat unpleasant son, played with such clever comic timing and daftness by the wonderful **Logan Drysdale-Mills**. I teach Dolly and Logan and for me it was inspiring to see the wider gifts of those children and to be surprised, amazed and proud. And finally, **James Panting**, our very own Bruce Bogtrotter. He had the (chocolate) cake, he ate it, and then topped off the show with an incredible solo performance that would have put *The King* to shame in 1970s Vegas!

And how often do we forget the magic that takes place behind the scenes? My colleagues were as keen that **Verity Lewis** is publicly honoured, given the way she tirelessly did everything and anything that was needed to get the show on the road in the months leading up to the performances. My colleagues do not believe it could have happened without Verity and she has a future in the world of TV, film or theatre production – or just running the country instead.

These shows are not simply put on to entertain but also because colleagues know they provide a unique opportunity for so many students to take a risk, find out something new about themselves - and then never look back. Whilst every member of the chorus, cast and crew will have grown as a result of their participation, several students notably grew in confidence and presence throughout the autumn term and excelled on the night itself. And so, it's when youngsters like **Darcey Davis-Batchelor** and **Sophie Bearpark**, surprise and delight the production team, they are the ones who make it all worth every hour, evening and weekend devoted to the show. *Matilda – The Musical* was indeed a massive team effort, but the burden was heavy on those main characters and we are filled with admiration for such courage and talent – as were many hundreds of other people on those nights.







Further afield, **Emily Ridgway** continues to build her incredible resume with her latest performance as Zip the Mouse in The Oxford Playhouse's production of *Cinderella* – Emily's fifth panto and her third at the Playhouse. Emily manages to juggle performing with her schoolwork and can look back with pride to past

performances that include being cast as Bibi in *Aladdin* (Chipping Norton Theatre) and Mayzie la Bird in PQA Bicester's *Seussical Jr.*

### **Human Generosity of Spirit and Kindness**

Whilst treading the boards and winning medals is wonderful, there are also the less prominent but no less inspiring actions of students in other ways. For instance, **Lewis Lamb** and **Will Porter** who have found time to develop video recorded and edited curriculum resources to be used across the school (whilst preparing for their University of Cambridge interviews). Or **Archie Whitmill**, **Johnny Taylor** and **Chris Taylor** who, when it counted most, proved what wonderful young men they have become. Without disclosing too much, they went out of their way to support an elderly lady in distress and in doing so triggered a flurry of admiring and heart-warming responses from members of the public. It was the instinctive nature of their kindness that inspired others then and since.

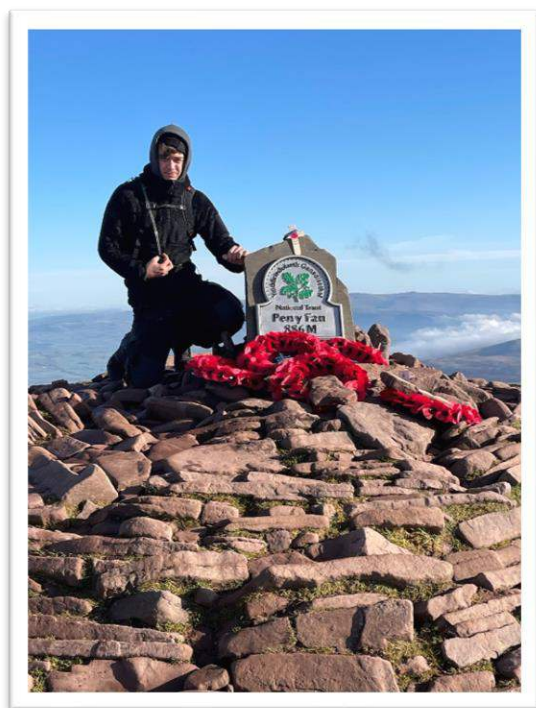
We also wish to mention Tillie and Roman. **Tillie Wyatt** is well known amongst many staff for her irrepressible gift to smile, say hello, check out how our weekends have gone and generally show us all how much more pleasant the world is when surrounded by such a kind and jolly spirit. And finally, **Roman Jones**. Apart from the fact that come wind, rain, shine and snow he will always say hello with a smile and appear genuinely interested in how you

are, he has now channelled his boundless energy into raising money for others. Roman forced his way up Pen y Fan in mid-November alongside ex-special forces personnel and raised almost £500. Undaunted, he then took part in a second 21 mile, 1866m metre elevation walk, raising a further £1250 for charities. Knowing Roman, he probably had energy left to do it all over again without a break.

All of these students, these *children*, illustrate the infinite ways in which we can and sometimes do excel as individuals and make our school, local community or world a better place. Each of them draws on different shades and degrees of compassion, courage, creativity and curiosity. Each one inspires others and the staff at CNS, we are very proud of them all.

But there are others we agree not to mention here. There are **many** individuals at CNS who have experienced or are currently experiencing, great hardship and difficulties. They and we choose to avoid shining a light on such private details but we want them all to know that they are also truly inspirational and humble us with their own courage, resilience, determination and compassion as well.

I hope you have enjoyed hearing a little bit about a handful of students at CNS who remind us that future is in very safe hands.



## Annual Report to Stakeholders

In my letter to you last week, I summarised the latest peer review with our River Learning Trust (RLT) partners. This week, please [follow this link](#) to the RLT Annual Report to Stakeholders: December 2022. This report provides a brief review of the past year across the River Learning Trust.

## And finally...

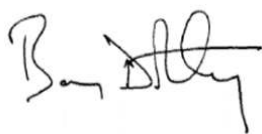
And so just a few days left, with the last day of term on Tuesday 20 December. School will finish that day at the end of period 3 (12:30pm) with buses leaving 10/15 minutes later.

During the school closure, if you have a concern about a child, please call the MASH team (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) on **0345 050 7666** during office hours (8.30am – 5pm, Monday to Thursday, 8.30am – 4pm, Friday). Outside office hours you can call the Emergency Duty Team on **0800 833 408**. If you are concerned that a crime may have been committed, then you can call the police on **101** for non-urgent concerns. For urgent concerns, call **999**. Our [safe@chippingnortonschool.org](mailto:safe@chippingnortonschool.org) email account will only be checked occasionally and therefore only suitable for non-emergency advice, reassurance and guidance if needed.

The school reopens for all students on Thursday 5 January 2023. In the meantime, all of us at CNS wish all of you a peaceful and festive rest with family, friends and neighbours.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Yours faithfully



Barry Doherty  
Headteacher

