



CHIPPING NORTON
SCHOOL

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Dear Parents and Carers

After some weighty letters to you in recent weeks on [attendance](#) and [social media](#), I wish to turn our attention towards some of my colleagues. Before I do that, I would like to publicly thank the PTA for their wonderful work in enriching lessons, learning and life at CNS for your children. I plan to share a summary of their 'gifts' to our school in September but for now ask you to consider making [a one off or regular donation by following this link](#).

Final Week of Term

Looking ahead to next week, we have sports day on Tuesday, which means that students may come into school in the PE kits. We have booked an ice cream van for the afternoon and year groups will take turns to get their cones and lollies – and so it might be smart to have your children earn some silver coins for housework in the next few days... If the weather is bad on Tuesday, then we shall move the sports day to the Wednesday.

We finish at 12:15pm on Friday which means that it will be normal lessons and timetable until the end of first break (11:30am). Students will then return to their tutor rooms for some final fun and farewells.

A Few Farewells

My colleagues and I will gather on Friday afternoon to say farewell to colleagues.

Mr John Marshall and Mrs Jenny Wooldridge are both retiring. Mrs Wooldridge has been a member of our associate staff for many years and thousands of children will have seen her in our school; particularly those involved in productions over the years. Her kindness and commitment to this school and our students cannot be overstated. Mr Marshall has worked as a volunteer mentor for many years at CNS, supporting a variety of students and helping them make their way in this world. His kindness is also so evident to us all - but also his relentless compassion, patience and belief in all young people.

Meanwhile, Mrs Nikki Cox and Mr Jason Franklin will be moving on to new adventures. Mr Franklin to another school and Mrs Cox to run a service in a neighbouring authority. Both mean so much to so many students (and staff) and will be greatly missed too. Mr Franklin will always be very fondly remembered for being such an inspiring teacher of drama and a truly caring pastoral leader. Mrs Cox has worked with dedication with all students in a pastoral role, and more recently with children and their families as well. Both will be greatly missed.

Miss Abby Chapman, currently working with us as a learning support assistant, will begin her paramedic degree in September. Her patience and affection to support vulnerable learners is so evident to us all. Mr Stromanis (our cover manager) is relocating and we also thank him for being so creative and unflappable in recent years as he helped us overcome so many unusual demands on cover - with COVID in particular. His ingenuity enabled us to stay open on so many occasions when other schools would have been forced to close.

And finally, Mr Sean Stella (teacher of English), who is packing his trunk and setting sail (or probably flying) off to Australasia to begin a new life with his family. Whilst we would be happy for him to boomerang back to us, we know he will be as great a teacher over there as he is over here.

We all have a pretty good idea what a teacher does, but it is often the case that the essential work of associate staff is less well known or understood. Schools are merely places of learning without people like Jenny, John,



Nikki, Abby and Joe; they may not be known to *everyone* – but what they do for a smaller number of children is often the very thing that makes the school special or accessible.

A Few Thank You's

I just want to use the space I have left to draw attention to three colleagues who have really inspired me this year.

Firstly, Mrs Du Crô's who asked if she could take ownership of our enclosed garden that had become neglected. Those of us who *now* walk past this flourishing space can only smile and relax when you see what she and her young team of horticulturalists have achieved. It is beautiful and inspiring – and in the very centre of our school (opposite).

And also, Mrs Thomas. As well as being our professional tutor (which means she oversees our initial teacher training programme), Mrs Thomas is a wonderful teacher of German (and French) and our EVC (educational visits coordinator). In an era when many schools have abandoned trips and visits as being too complicated and onerous to organise and administer, Mrs Thomas has created slick systems and procedures that encourage us all to consider additional experiences for your children that will help deepen and broaden their experienced insights. Without her supportive approach and guiding hand, we would not have had forty-eight trips and visits this year. That's right - forty-eight trips and visits in just one year. Next year will be the same with Alpine skiing on top of that!

And finally, Mrs Bovington, our school librarian. Our beautiful library is in the oldest part of our school and an appropriate setting for her enthusiasm for reading, books, authors and learning. We have placed so much emphasis on reading at CNS in recent years and she has done so much to fire the passion for reading amongst our students and also inspires so many of us who love the fact we have a beautiful library and also a wider library team who fulfil its potential.

And finally...

I am sure that this focus on my colleagues has been welcomed and is a valued counterpoint to that focus on things like attendance and social media. In the end we are a tribe working daily on making the best of the resources we have on this hill - and seeking to achieve something special during that time we are thrown together. Do have a lovely weekend when it arrives!

Yours faithfully



Barry Doherty
Headteacher

