



Leadership Team:

Barry Doherty (Headteacher)
Natalie Hancock
Alan Trainer
Daniel Gent
Yvette Armistead
Lisa De Bruyn

Thursday 24 August 2023

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

Summer 2023 GCSE and BTEC Results

I wanted you all to be amongst the first to learn of the truly superb results our wonderful year 11s have secured today. Following last week's great A level results and exciting destinations for our students (including three who are off to Cambridge), I am now able to go one step further and share news of our truly exceptional GCSE results.

Before I do, it is worth remembering that the national cohort faced normalised / pre-COVID grade boundaries that lend themselves to comparisons with results from 2019 and not 2022. You will be aware that our results in 2022, were our best ever to that point. And so, it is with immense pride in our students and my colleagues that I am able to share news that in 2023 our GCSE and BTEC results are the best in the school's history.

Progress:

- Our provisional Progress 8 score is +0.64. This means that students at CNS typically secure grades that are two-thirds higher than those achieved in similar schools with similar students.
- In English and in mathematics, the figure is even higher (+0.91 and +0.89) – which means that CNS students secure one full grade higher in those subjects than similar children in similar schools.
- The progress rate of our disadvantaged students has never been higher and now means they progress in line with all students nationally – and secure over two-thirds of a grade higher in every exam than all disadvantaged students in similar schools across the country.
- *All of these figures were even higher amongst those with 95%+ attendance.*

Attainment:

- The average grade amongst all of our students rose to 5.6 – almost a full grade higher than where we were back in 2018.
- 86% secured five GCSEs or more including both English and mathematics.
- 44% of students achieved a grade 7 to 9 in English, whilst 92% again secured a grade 4 or above (the national figure is 73%).
- 43% of students achieved a grade 7 to 9 in mathematics, whilst 89% secured a grade 4 or above (the national figure is 61%).
- 82% of all students secured a grade 4 to 9 in at least two sciences (biology, chemistry and physics), with approximately one third once again securing the top grades (7 to 9) in biology, chemistry and physics.
- Close to one third of all grades were in the 7 to 9 range, with one fifth of all grades being 8s or 9s.
- Whilst direct comparisons with non-core subjects are flawed because they do not include all students in the year group, we have been thrilled by the performance in business studies, art, PE, drama and technology - for example two thirds of students who studied textiles secured the very highest (7-9) grades.
- Outcomes in history, geography, French and German continue to be outstanding, whilst RE also flourishes at both GCSE and A level with, for example, 58% of students celebrating 7-9 grades.
- Outcomes in our BTEC subjects are similarly impressive with 91% grade 4 or above (equivalent) in dance, 86% in health & social care, and 75% in hospitality and catering.
- *All of these figures were even higher amongst those with 95%+ attendance.*



The Gender Gap

Quite rightly, much is made of the gender gap that has seen boys' performance lag behind that of girls up and down the country. The great news is that the average attainment and progress of our boys rose for a fourth consecutive year.

- On average, our boys now secure a full grade higher in each exam than their peers at CNS did back in 2018/19.
- Meanwhile, the progress and attainment of our girls has also risen at the same rate.
- Both boys and girls are equally flourishing at CNS.
- *All of these figures were even higher amongst those with 95%+ attendance.*

Congratulations and thank you...

The governing body, leadership team and I wish to shine a few lights.

Congratulations and thank you **to our students**. You have done so well but this should not be a surprise given your work ethic, your willingness to have faith in what we do, and your broad humour, kindness and team spirit. You are the daftest and most serious bunch we've all ever seen through their GCSEs - and that combination was magical for those with the privilege to be your pastoral carers, teachers, school leaders and cheer leaders. We look forward to record numbers coming back to our outstanding sixth form, or wishing you every happiness in the world if your journey at CNS ends today.

Congratulations and thank you **to our parents and carers**. We know that in those exam weeks you will have bitten your tongue and taken many deep breaths – but also felt immense anxiety in the days leading up today. Your little ones did you proud and so make sure you take time out to be kind and generous to yourself.

Congratulations and thank you **to our non-teaching staff**. Starting with 'Mama Lee' and Mrs Gannon, and never forgetting all of our SEND team and LSAs, especially Mrs Schofield, the success of our students relies on being surrounded by the love and care of dedicated professionals who can help pick up the pieces on the sad and the bad days. Added to this is Mrs Lawson and her team of invigilators who work wonders behind the scenes so that our students can experience perfectly calm, consistent and conducive environments to receive, complete and hand in tens of thousands of papers each year.

Congratulations and thank you **to our teaching staff**. You are, quite simply, brilliant: humble, passionate, committed, highly skilled, engaging and fun. You know your students so well and continue to finesse a knowledge rich and high-TEMPO curriculum that allows all students to flourish. We have been on a journey together and we head back into the new term with renewed faith and drive.

HMS Chippy

We set sail again in a few short weeks. We know where we are going, we know how to sail this ship, and we know what conditions on board need to be like to reach our destination safely and successfully. We are certain that with all hands on deck we shall be just fine.

All hands on deck...

So, why did we do so well again this year? Much is to do with our culture of high expectations (in all things) and the ambition that no child will be left behind. But it is also to do with superb curriculum design and delivery by teachers at the very top of their game. We cannot of course ignore those students who have been up for the challenge and are willing to place their trust in us. But let me leave you with one little nugget, something I shall return to in September (and endlessly beyond that point).

Can you guess which year 11 cohort had, to the very best of our knowledge, the highest attendance locally? Now, more than ever before, the rewards for being on deck, every day, come wind, rain or snow, have never been



greater. Children who routinely attend CNS and buy into what we are offering can expect to leave with superb GCSEs and A levels.

And so, please forgive our relentless pursuit of pre-COVID attendance levels because we know that so much of this year's and last year's success is tied to the fact that attendance enhances individual potential, enhances life chances and secure futures - whilst absence silently chips it away.

And finally...

This time last year I shared news of our 2022 results. I wrote: "Neither the past nor the present determines the future and so we 'go again' in a few days' time with renewed excitement, determination and ambition."

This sentiment remains true in 2023 - and whilst this is not the time or place to nit-pick, you can be assured that our attention is already on who has not achieved or who have achieved less well than others – and therefore what could we do differently or better next year.

Yours faithfully



Barry Doherty
Headteacher