



Leadership Team:

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Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you will find some time to look at the latest CNS Newsletter and share that pride we all feel in the rich life of the school during *and* after normal school hours. Alongside countless local, residential and foreign trips, our Extra-Time programme and after school clubs as well as music, dance and drama productions, not to mention the vast array of sports teams and competitions involving your children, CNS's reputation for opportunities above and beyond the regular curriculum is well deserved and I remain unashamedly proud of and in awe of my colleagues.

In my final letter to you this year, I thought it might be helpful to reflect on where we are as a school with some pointers to our focus next year. Whilst it is my plan for you to receive this letter on Monday 22nd, it has been written beforehand, given that sports day will occupy my full attention 'today'.

The Profession...

You may be aware of the difficulties facing the profession with the retention and recruitment of teachers across the United Kingdom. Yet again, targets for the recruitment of teachers have [fallen short of the national targets](#) set by the Government to ensure our classrooms will continue to be led by seasoned professionals with mastery of their own subjects and the skills to be a great teacher.

The Staff...

We are perhaps fortunate to be fully staffed with subject specialists in all areas at CNS, but no school can relax in this regard. I am personally very aware of the reasons why so many of my colleagues choose to invest the bulk of their career at this school, and the reasons why we have been able to attract new associate and teaching staff colleagues in recent years. Broadly speaking, when a school can say with confidence that its teachers can teach and its learners can learn, they are better placed to retain and recruit great staff right across the school.

The Parents and Carers...

But it is also you, the parents and carers, that make a huge difference and I want you to be aware that your support, encouragement and many kindnesses do not go unnoticed and my colleagues and I are hugely motivated by that fact.

The Students...

This year we have hosted so many visits from staff in other schools. Every visit ends with the same compliment about our students' friendliness and easy-going nature, also their politeness and sheer work ethic when they randomly drop into classrooms. Above all, visitors comment on the warm relationships between students and their teachers, noting how much easier it appears to be to teach at CNS than others have become used to elsewhere. Of course, we have some tricky days and moments, but every single one of our one thousand students are awesome works of art in progress, as are we.

Support and Challenge...

I am as aware of my own strengths and areas for development as my colleagues are of their own professional journeys. I do of course receive plenty of pointers and suggestions (!) and like all of my colleagues, we must remain very open to both support *and* challenge. Without that ethos of being better tomorrow than we are today, we would just plateau as a school.



Next year, perhaps in the autumn term, we shall be visited by Ofsted and they will make a judgement on our school. It is important but does not define us as human beings; we shall not chase one-word summaries of who or what we are and instead simply do what we can to make CNS as good or great as it can possibly be. We hope they will agree that this is a great school filled with great people, young and not so young.

Headwinds

Our headwinds remain the same as they have been in recent years. Attendance has barely budged this year and whilst we have seen a huge rise in the number of students with 100% attendance, and the number who are persistently absent has fallen, attendance remains four or five percent below where it was four or five years ago. We know that the best remedy is to make school as welcoming, enjoyable and successful as possible for all, but retain concern that the effects of sporadic absence can often be downplayed by students.

The negative impact of social media on your children's lives continues to be hugely significant and when it affects children and families so often comes out of the blue with very little warning. The Internet, smartphones and social media are here to stay and between us we have a duty to show children, much like we do with driving a car, that these things can bring huge pleasure and fun, but must be used with care and great responsibility.

On that specific issue, please see the updated mobile phone policy that has now been agreed and will take effect from September. The details appear at the bottom of this letter and will be shared again prior to the start of the new term. May I ask each parent and carer to note the sanction (we hope to avoid!) if your child refuses a very simple request to hand in their phone for the remainder of the day. In this and other areas, we have noted an increase in defiant behaviour this year and will prioritise our responses to such behaviour next year.

Tailwinds...

When I first used those 'headwinds and tailwinds' metaphors with you in [a letter last June](#), I might have guessed that, twelve months later, they would be the same. We have great students, talented associate and teaching staff, a super [curriculum](#), brilliant [teaching and learning principles](#) and skills, rising student numbers and a clear set of [values and beliefs](#). Our staff turnover is low, teachers continue to refine and perfect their curriculum, and so, as has always been the case, if our students are here in both mind (engaged and not distracted) and body (in attendance), then we remain confident we can secure success for your children.

School Improvement Goals...

I hope that our 'everyone achieving' and 'everyone belonging' mantra is well known by families but perhaps will be unfamiliar to our new parents and carers. Those words capture the vision for the school and the two umbrellas beneath which our school improvement goals are listed as follows:

In order to ensure that **everyone achieves**:

- We shall continue to seek to improve outcomes and experiences for children with SEND;
- We shall further strengthen and embed [High-TEMPO](#) classrooms;
- We shall support and challenge one another to ensure that all teachers and all departments are equally inclusive and successful.

In order to ensure that **everyone belongs**:

- We shall seek to remove all barriers to engagement and learning, including helping to improve the social, emotional and mental health of students;
- We shall seek more opportunities for students to feel a sense of connectedness to CNS within and beyond their day-to-day lessons;
- We shall seek exemplary behaviours and attitudes amongst all students - not simply the vast majority.

I am afraid to say this kind of stuff really excites and energises me. In sharing these details with you, I know I risk boring one or two of you – but genuinely hope that in doing so you are reassured that we are under no illusions about our relative weaknesses, as well as our strengths.



Safeguarding

During the summer holiday 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 email account will only be checked occasionally and therefore only suitable for non-emergency advice, reassurance and guidance if needed.

And finally...

The school reopens for Year 7 students on Wednesday 4 September, with all other students returning the following day, on Thursday 5 September. In the meantime, on behalf of all my colleagues and the Governing Body, we wish all of our wonderful students and their families a happy, restful and rejuvenating break and look forward to seeing one another again in September.

Yours faithfully



Barry Doherty
Headteacher

MOBILE PHONE POLICY FOR STUDENTS – UPDATED FOR SEPTEMBER 2024

Members of the sixth form are permitted to have a mobile in school and use them without permission. All usage in lessons must be with a teacher's permission. All usage outside of lessons must be in the sixth form areas only. The updated policy does not affect sixth formers. As influential members of a wider community, we ask that our sixth formers (just like our staff) support our younger students by keeping their phones out of sight when moving around the site. This request extends to headphones which must not be worn outside of the sixth form area.

Students in years 8 to 11 are permitted to take a mobile phone to school as long as it remains switched off and completely out of sight from the moment they walk on to the school site, until *after* 3:15pm (and not until they have left the final lesson). If a mobile phone is heard or seen (even if it is not being used but clearly visible in a pocket, for example), it will be confiscated and always returned to the student at the end of the same school day. The student will also be issued with a detention.

Students in Year 7 are not permitted to take a smartphone to school. The same sanctions will be applied to year 7 students should *any* mobile phone be seen or heard during the school day. However, smartphones will only be returned to the parent or carer of a year 7 student. In rare and exceptional circumstances (e.g., special health monitoring apps on a smartphone), permission may be granted to take a smartphone to school. Each request will be considered on its own merits and directly with either [Mrs Faulkner](#) or [Mrs Davis-Batchelor](#).

Students will be provided with paper copies of their timetable and will not be permitted to use their mobile phone to check the location of their next lesson. The form tutor will have spare copies of those timetables should the tutee need to be reminded.

Students will no longer be permitted to use their phone at the start of a detention in order to check their homework. Instead, after school detentions will now be sat in computer rooms to facilitate the completion of private study and homework without any need to own or use a mobile phone.

Parents and carers are asked to avoid anything that would appear to undermine this policy. For example, two-way messaging with their child during the school day, or facilitate their child (in Year 7) possessing a smartphone in school. We can send and receive messages to and from children and families via our reception and always ask that parents and carers support these rules at all times.