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9 September 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

As we begin another school year, I would like to welcome our Year 7 students and those who are joining our school in older year groups. The way that our students returned to school last week, fully engaging with their lessons and reconnecting with their friends has been excellent and I would like to thank all parents/carers for your support with this.

Congratulations

I would like to formally congratulate and thank our 2024 Year 11 students who collected their GCSE results a few weeks ago. It was once again a record-breaking year for our school where the students achieved the highest grades in the history of the school – beating a record which was only created last year! It is always a privilege to share results day with the students and their families, seeing the young people receive the grades that they worked so hard for and deserved, placing Cardinal Heenan once again amongst the top performing schools in Leeds. I started at Cardinal Heenan the year before this cohort and so they are the first students that I saw come from primary school all the way through to their current post 16 provision and I am immensely proud of the progress that they made, academically, spiritually, socially and emotionally. As a community, we went through issues such as a global pandemic and remote learning during Years 7 and 8, changes to the taught curriculum – moving to a two-year Key Stage 4, a cost-of-living crisis in addition to the normal challenges of teenage lives. Throughout it all, this cohort worked hard, grew as a community and have certainly passed on some excellent traditions to our younger students. As they embark on their Post 16 experience, I ask you to keep them in your thoughts and prayers and wish them the best of luck.

New staff / roles

At a time when recruitment into schools is increasingly difficult, I am pleased to report that we are once again fully staffed in all areas. We welcome a number of new colleagues to school, and I am sure that you will join me in offering a warm welcome to our school community.

New staff:

Mr J Coe (Maths)	Mrs L Dwyer (MFL)	Ms K Frazier (Science)
Mr P Kyriacou (Learning Support)	Mrs K Roberts (English)	Mr Warren (Maths & Head of Year 11)

Pastoral team

Our Pastoral Team continue to ensure that we provide appropriate support for all members of our school and to work in partnership with home. The relationships that develop in our school community are outstanding – we know our children and will do all that we possibly can to support them.

Our Pastoral Team is led by Mr Mangan (Deputy Headteacher) who is supported by Mr Easter (Associate Assistant Headteacher – Pastoral) and the Heads of Year.

Year	Head of Year	Assistant Head of Year
7	Mrs Hayden	Mrs Marshall
8	Mr Edney	Mrs Hansbro
9	Ms Stainton	Miss Adamson
10	Mrs Millington	Mrs Brumskill
11	Mr Warren	Mrs Forbes



We continue to have high expectations around behaviour, uniform, attendance and individuals trying their best and I again thank you and ask for your continued support.

Attendance is incredibly important for both attainment and wellbeing. We have worked very hard to promote positive attendance over the years and we are incredibly proud to be in the top 10% of all schools in England – thank you for your ongoing support. Any attendance level below 95% is a concern and will have an impact on attainment and achievement. Statistically a student with 90% attendance will achieve at least one grade lower in each subject than a similar student with 100% attendance. Our attendance team work incredibly hard to support good attendance and we do everything possible to limit the impact of genuine illness and absence. We have noticed over the last few years that sporadic absence – e.g. several short periods of absence have a significantly negative impact on attainment and achievement. Please continue to support your child and the school by encouraging and supporting full attendance and punctuality. The most appropriate place for our children is usually in school. I am delighted to report that in the first week of term we have seen our pupil attendance at almost 97% (with 99.66% attendance in year 7). I hope that we can maintain this excellent start to the year.

Our uniform policy is clearly laid out and shared with students and parents and it is important that it is adhered to (please click here for CHCHS policies [Policies and Statutory Information - Cardinal Heenan](#)). If you are contacted by school about inappropriate uniform, we will work with you to resolve any issues in a timely fashion and, as always, I would like to thank you with the support that you give to this area of our school. Our students are some of the smartest students in Leeds and this really adds to our community ethos and culture. We are part of the Leeds Uniform Exchange, which can help out with the cost of uniform items.

Extra-Curricular Offer

We are fully committed to ensuring that every student in our school is given a full range of learning opportunities both within the taught curriculum and in the extra-curriculum that we can offer. We are delighted to be able to offer a full programme this year, ranging from participating in a range of sports, music and drama opportunities, to debating, Faith-in-Action, art clubs and a range of foreign visits – including our annual pilgrimage to Lourdes with the Diocese etc. Full details are available on the school website. Our new Year 7 students signed up for many extra-curricular clubs on their enrolment evening and I know that students and staff are excited to see the extra-curricular programme begin. Please do encourage your child to take part in as many activities as possible.

Open Day

Our annual Open Day returns on Saturday 12 October and we are delighted to once again invite children and families from Year 6 into our school to speak with our current students and staff and to see our facilities in person. We will be asking our current students to act as ambassadors on the day; further information will be sent home later this week.

School improvements

As one of the first PFI built schools, we are now in the final year of our PFI contract, meaning we will take control of the building and all facilities in the summer of 2025. In preparation for this handover, we are conducting a series of life cycle work to ensure that the building and facilities are in good order. This means that from next summer, we will have more control over our facilities, including the availability of community use to support our local area.

Over the summer holiday we have been able to refurbish our food technology room and art rooms, in addition to the refurbishment of the student bathrooms in the early summer and the completion of our tennis courts earlier

in the year – providing more specialist teaching spaces for our PE department and a more suitable play area for Years 7, 8 and 9.

Parental Voluntary Contributions

To aid communication with school and help our students organise their work, we give them all a planner which is monitored by the form tutors and yourselves. Please can I ask that you continue to check the planner and use it to communicate with your child's form tutor in the first instance. The planners are incredibly expensive and every year we ask parents for a voluntary contribution of £4 per child, up to a maximum of £8 per family. I would ask you, if you are able, to support the school by making payment via parent pay.

As a school we are fully committed to providing our children with the best facilities and experiences both within the classroom and in our wider curriculum. The funding that we receive from the Government is sufficient to staff and deliver our taught curriculum, ensuring that our children are educated by experts, in specialised classrooms, with specialist equipment. With careful and prudent financial management, alongside successful applications for grants and the support of our community, we have recently been able develop our resources in areas such as:

Sport - with the installation of four indoor cricket nets, indoor and outdoor basketball hoops, table tennis equipment and the tennis courts

Technology – with the purchase and installation of 3D Printers, laser cutters and related technology

ICT – with the installation of a new Computing Suite and the purchase of notebooks for each department

Music – with the purchase of new instruments and technology

Drama – with the purchase of new set lighting and related equipment

In addition, we have been able to provide financial support for many of our most disadvantaged students, ensuring that they can take part in extra-curricular activities, including our annual pilgrimage to Lourdes, our annual Battlefields trip and other residential and day trips.

To supplement the wider curriculum, including things listed above we have a Parental Voluntary Contribution scheme (PVC) in school. The PVC is set up so that parents and carers who are able to, can set up a standing order, or make a one-off donation, helping to ensure that we can offer a comprehensive and accessible extracurricular offer to all students. All monies donated to the school through the PVC will be spent for the additional benefit of our children. If you can support this scheme, please set up a standing order for a monthly payment of any amount that you are able to donate. All monies donated are spent on projects and resources that provide additional benefits for our children.

Sort Code: 05-01-21

Account Number: 32081978

Account Name: CHCHS Capital Fund

Are you getting the support you are entitled to?

In these financially challenging times, it is important that you have access to all financial support that you are entitled to. If your personal circumstances have changed or you simply haven't checked for a while, please look at our website for details about free school meals and assisted transport which you may be entitled to claim. By claiming your entitled support, you are not only helping your own situation, but the school is also allocated additional funding to allow us to provide more targeted academic support. If you have any questions about your own situation, please contact your child's Head of Year in the first instance.

And finally...

Cardinal Heenan continues to be a wonderful school and I am blessed to lead our incredible staff and students. I would like to thank all parents/carers and wider family networks for the support that you provide to our students and our school, for the trust that you place in our school staff by choosing our school and for your ongoing prayers as we move through another academic year. We will be producing regular newsletters to keep you updated about the fantastic things that our students get involved in.

God bless.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Kelly', written in a cursive style.

Mr D Kelly
Headteacher