

Chair of Governors Winter Update 2022

As we draw to the end of the calendar year 2022, I would like to wish all staff, students, parents and families associated with Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School a very Blessed and Holy Christmas and a very Happy New Year in 2023.

In looking back over the year our focus as a school has been on developing outstanding teaching to support outstanding learning and I am extremely pleased to congratulate the whole staff and the year 11 students on the outstanding results achieved in the summer examinations. These were the best results the school has ever achieved and places our school as one of the highest performing schools in Leeds and in the country in comparison tables. We were really excited to celebrate these outstanding results with the students and congratulate them on their commitment to our whole school focus of "Try Your Best". Throughout the year, our students have certainly tried their best, evidenced in the improvements in attendance, outcomes and performance across the school. We will continue to develop this focus in 2023.

At the very successful Open Day on Saturday 8th October, we welcomed potential new recruits for Year 7 2023, and I am very pleased to report that we are once again significantly oversubscribed for the number of places we are able to offer in 2023. Parent comments on the day about the school facilities and Catholic ethos were highly praiseworthy and very positive, especially the contribution made by our students who volunteered to "show off" their school.

Following two years of Covid restrictions, working from home and online learning, it has been lovely to have a full year in school where we have worked hard to re-establish the excellent routines that we had before the pandemic. Our attendance figures are well above the national average, and we appreciate the effort the newly formed pastoral team, tutors, students and families for this achievement. This will continue to be a focus in 2023 as absence does have a significant impact on academic achievement and we want all our students to achieve the best possible outcomes when leaving Cardinal Heenan, allowing them to progress to their choice of Post 16 options.

Safeguarding, behaviour, and safety has been one of the priorities for the school this year following one of the most challenging periods in our school life. With this in mind I welcome the appointment of Suzanne Murray as the Local Authority Governor. Suzanne is a Safeguarding and Child Protection Consultant who has developed safeguarding, child protection, safer recruitment policies for schools and sports organisations in the UK, Vietnam, Honk Kong, Singapore, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, and Australia. We welcome Suzanne to the governing body team.

In finance we are still awaiting the outcome of the unfunded pay award for teachers and the government's response in order to assess the impact on our school budgets. This is a problem for all the public sector funded by government money, and we look forward to, hopefully, a successful financial resolution.

With the economic and social issues caused by climate change and exacerbated by the Russian invasion of Ukraine the Bishops of England and Wales, following their recent conference at Hinsley Hall in Leeds, have issued a statement saying “The Bishops` Conference commends the LiveSimply Award as a response to Pope Francis` invitation in “Laudato Si” to work with generosity and tenderness in protecting this world which God has entrusted to us.” In our own small way Cardinal Heenan has taken a number of initiatives to reduce carbon emissions and to look at ways we can help to reduce the impact of climate change in our own environment. Working with our PFI provider Bellrock we have introduced the following environmentally sustainable actions over the last few years:

- Fluorescent lighting replaced with LED lighting throughout the building & externally
- Lighting on street, upstairs corridors, toilet & changing rooms all fitted with movement detectors so that they are off when no one is in the area
- Zero waste – General, mixed dry, food & glass is all re-cycled
- Dry mixed waste recycle bins in each department & in the dining room
- Water Management systems fitted in all appropriate toilet areas to minimise unnecessary flushing (on movement detectors)
- Removed plastics from use in kitchen where possible, cutlery, condiment sachets.
- All sandwich wrapping, pots & napkins are biodegradable.

We also have an active and energetic Environment Group in the school, and I would encourage all students and parents to get involved and to “Make a Difference” in both school and at home to help save the environment. Any suggestions or recommendations would be gratefully received.

On the PFI contract we are continuing our two monthly meetings to hand back the school in August 2025 in the best possible condition. We have agreed a significant work plan over the next two years to ensure that our school is in the best possible condition when our PFI contract ends in 2025, (including where possible environmentally friendly options) whilst we are also working hard to gain relevant permissions to construct a Multi-Use Games Area to improve the facilities in the school.

On a final note, I would like to thank all the governors and staff in the school and the Bellrock support staff for a successful and rewarding year at Cardinal Heenan. I would also like to thank the students and their parents and families for supporting the school, for contributing to the Friends of Cardinal Heenan activities, for raising money for local charities and for helping Cardinal Heenan in our ambition to be the best school that we can be. Together we can achieve this.

My very best wishes to you and your families for a happy Blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year and I hope to meet up with many of you in 2023.

God Bless

Michael Gardner

Chair of Governors

Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School