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Headteacher: Mr D Kelly BA (Hons) NPQH



8 September 2023

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 have returned to school and engaged fully with their lessons, whilst wondering why the lovely summer weather appears to have waited for our return to school, has been excellent and I would like to thank all parents and carers for your support with this.

Congratulations

I would like to formally congratulate and thank our Year 11 students who collected their GCSE results a few weeks ago. It was incredible to see the students 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 on the same day as the students in this year group and feel very proud of the progress that they made, academically, spiritually and emotionally. As a community, we went through issues such as; a global pandemic and remote learning, changes to the taught curriculum, a cost of living crisis and industrial action as well as 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 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 Arscott (Maths)	Miss Buckle (Assistant Head of PE)	Mrs Phelan (Drama and English)
Mr Wolstenholme (English)	Miss Baldwin (Science),	Mr Caden (Head of Science)
Mr Mangeolles (Science)	Miss Lawn (History)	Miss Riley (History)
Mr Chan (Business)	Miss Richardson (Food)	Mr Pidhajeckyj (RE)
Miss Williams (Reception)		

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 are developed 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.

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



We continue to have high expectations around behaviour, uniform, attendance and effort and I again ask for your support. Last year our positive relationships and high standards of behaviour were commented on by a range of visitors, including Ofsted, and we were in the highest top 10% of all schools across the country for attendance, which allows our children to make such impressive progress. Following the pandemic, many of us feel a little unclear about when we should stay at home due to illness. The Chief Medical Officer for England, Professor Chris Whitty sent a letter to schools this week outlining his advice on school attendance, and included some useful links. I have attached a copy of this letter for you and would encourage you to look at the links for guidance on when a child is too ill for school and where a child is suffering from anxiety which could impact their attendance. Our experience at Cardinal Heenan is backed up by Professor Whitty's advice. 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 over 99% 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 [Policies and Statutory Information - Cardinal Heenan](#) for CHCHS policies). 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.

We look forward to working with you in the coming year to ensure that our school continues to be a happy and successful learning environment.

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 offer that we are able to make. 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 etc. Full details are available on the school website. Please do encourage your children to take part in as many activities as possible.

Open Day

Our annual Open Day returns on Saturday 7 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 next week.

School Improvements

As one of the first PFI built schools, we are rapidly heading towards the end of the contract and so 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. As part of this work we have had extensive maintenance completed on the roof of the building during the holidays - work which has been needed for a number of years. None of this is related to the current crisis surrounding schools with RACC in their infrastructure. We have been assured that our building is not affected which is a tremendous relief to everybody.

As parents will be aware, we have for many years been somewhat disadvantaged by the small amount of hard surface playing areas available to the school. I am delighted to say that we have now obtained planning permission and are imminently starting the construction of a multi-use games area (MUGA) on the fields behind St Urbans. This new facility will provide us with four hard court tennis courts, along with three small sided football pitches, netball pitches and more basketball hoops and will allow our children to be more active during break and lunch times, whilst

enhancing our PE provision still further. During construction, students will be unable to use the back of school as an entrance for health and safety reasons. We expect to complete this project just after half term.

In the summer term we were also able to take delivery of a second minibus which allows our extra-curricular offer to run, taking students to fixtures, competitions and visits.

Parental Voluntary Contributions

To aid communication with school and home and to help our students to 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 £3 per child, up to a maximum of £6 per family. I would ask you, if you are able, to support the school by making payment via ParentPay.

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 MUGA;

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; and

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 extra-curricular 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 are able to 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

Friends of Cardinal Heenan

So that we can further engage with our wider community, we have established a Friends of Cardinal Heenan Association. We want to develop stronger links with our local communities, parishes, businesses and our alumni to build on the words included in our school prayer "...to build on the best traditions we have inherited...".

Further details will be announced in the coming weeks but if you think that you could help with this group in anyway, or know of any local organisations that would benefit from our support please do let us know.

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 provided with additional funding to allow us to provide more 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 is 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 sincerely

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

D Kelly
Headteacher

Department for Education

Letter to school leaders on mild illness and school attendance

Published 5 September 2023

Applies to England

Dear headteachers and trust leaders,

As you begin to welcome children and young people back for a new school year, we have been asked by the Department for Education (DfE) to provide you with a clinical and public health perspective on mild illnesses and school attendance.

We are aware that the COVID-19 pandemic may have caused some parents to feel less confident with assessing whether their child is well enough to be in school so we have laid out some information which we hope you will find helpful.

There is wide agreement among health professionals and educational professionals that school attendance is vital to the life chances of children and young people. Being in school improves health, wellbeing and socialisation throughout the life course. The greatest benefits come from children and young people attending school regularly.

It is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with mild respiratory illnesses. This would include general cold symptoms: a minor cough, runny nose or sore throat. However, children should not be sent to school if they have a temperature of 38°C or above. We would encourage you to share the [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/health-topics/when-to-go-to-the-hospital/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/) with parents and carers in your schools and communities which has further information.

In addition to respiratory illnesses, we are aware that more children may be absent from school due to symptoms of anxiety than before the pandemic. Worry and mild or moderate anxiety, whilst sometimes difficult emotions, can be a normal part of growing up for many children and young people. Being in school can often help alleviate the underlying issues. A prolonged period of absence is likely to heighten a child's anxiety about attending in the future, rather than reduce it. DfE has published useful [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/mental-health-issues-affecting-a-pupil-s-attendance-guidance-for-schools) and those who are experiencing persistent symptoms can be encouraged to access additional support.

Thank you for your efforts so far to facilitate immunisation sessions within schools. As we head into winter, encouraging high uptake of seasonal flu vaccination and routine immunisations for eligible children and young people will help to reduce absences and the disruption they cause.

You, and the teachers you lead, are already supporting families to build up children's confidence to attend school regularly. The Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) recently approved [The role of the GP in maximising school attendance – BJGP Life](https://www.rcgp.org.uk/press-releases/2023/09/the-role-of-the-gp-in-maximising-school-attendance). We hope this guidance will support GPs in having sensitive and reassuring conversations with parents, carers and pupils.

Thank you and your colleagues for your continued commitment to supporting the health and wellbeing of children and young people.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer, England
Pat Cullen, General Secretary, Royal College of Nursing
Professor Kamila Hawthorne, Chair, Royal College of General Practitioners
Dr Camilla Kingdon, President, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health
William Roberts, Chief Executive, Royal Society for Public Health
Dr Lade Smith, President, Royal College of Psychiatrists