

VJJ/HEV

June 2017

Dear Parents /Carers

The exam season is well underway with not only GCSE and A level exams, but internal exams for other year groups as well. It is how students perform in exams that is the measure of how well they have succeeded at school. This is becoming increasingly true as the reforms to the exam system see a reduction in the amount of controlled assessment students will be doing and an increase in the number of exams. The current Year 11 is the first year group not to have to do controlled assessment in GCSE English for over 30 years. In the next few years, controlled assessments will disappear from many subjects with only a few such as PE, Technology, Art and Performing Arts retaining them. This means that the ability to memorise large amounts of information and perform well in exams is becoming increasingly important. Students need to learn how to revise and remember information. This is why the internal exams in Years 7-10 are so important in helping students learn how to prepare for exams and to give them the experience of working under the pressure of exam conditions. As a school we are adapting our teaching and learning strategies to help students develop the learning skills they need to be successful in this new exam system.

However school isn't just about passing exams. School is also a place that allows students to take part in new experiences and develop their confidence and skills which will help them be successful when they leave school. As usual there have been a whole range of activities taking place at Caldew since the last Headteacher's Bulletin. Year 7 are taking part in the Archbishop of York's Young Leaders Award by organising charity activities, the School Council have been busy fundraising, Drama performances have been staged and our various sports teams have been taking part in competitions including the athletics team who have qualified for the next round in the National Championships.

## **News**

### **School Funding**

I am sure you have seen the various media reports about the state of school funding. Since 2010/11, school funding has reduced in real terms by 14%, most of this due to a decline in funding for 6<sup>th</sup> Form students. Whilst it is true that the Department for Education is spending more money on education than ever before, this is solely due to an increase in student numbers. Costs for schools have also risen significantly over a number of years, most of which are beyond the control of schools such as increased pension and National Insurance contributions. The financial future for all schools is uncertain as we wait to see the outcome of the National Funding Formula consultation. However, I am sure that funding will remain difficult for the foreseeable future and this will create challenges for schools both across Cumbria and the rest of the country. I want to reassure parents and carers that we are working hard to do all we can to protect the high standard of education we aim to offer to our students.

As a result of these funding pressures we have made two changes to our charging policy for next academic year. From September there will be changes to our charges for music tuition. These changes have been explained in a letter sent out to those students affected. We are also introducing a charge of £5.00 for DT materials for students in Years 7-9. This charge will cover the cost of materials used to make products in Graphics, Textiles and Product Design and will allow students to take their products home. If you do not wish to pay this cost then your child will still be able to make the project, but the materials will be recycled and used again by the DT department. This is a charge that other schools in the area make and we have set the cost below most of these schools.

A separate letter will explain this in more detail. We are sad that we have to make these changes and I understand it puts extra pressure on families. However I hope you understand the reasons why we have felt the need to do this.

### Future Headteacher's Bulletins

In order to save on photocopying costs, future editions of the Headteacher's Bulletin will be published on our website only. Parents and carers will be informed by text message when a new edition is available. However if you would still like a paper copy please let Main Reception know and we will make sure you receive one.

### Caldew Friends and Family Association

A group of parents and carers is setting up the Caldew Friends and Family Association. The aims are to strengthen the partnership between parents and carers and the school and to provide funds for "extras" that enrich and have an impact on our children's education.

You don't have to join the committee to support the association; we are also looking for raffle prizes, help at events, or offers of your time in other ways. Further information will be sent out to parents and carers but if you would like to get involved, or want to know more, please email [caldewfriends@caldew.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:caldewfriends@caldew.cumbria.sch.uk) or contact Cheryl Eastburn on (01228) 710044.

### School Council Update

The School Council has been hard at work on a range of projects:

- Our Caldew Ambassadors launched a poster campaign for litter and we have chosen the winning entry.

- Students will have noticed that BBC Breakfast is being shown in the canteen before school. This was suggested by some forms as a way to find out what is happening in the world.

- On Thursday 25 May we held a Quiz Night. We sold over 90 tickets and managed to raise over £400 to go towards the cost of a prosthetic foot for our 6<sup>th</sup> Former, Michael Johnstone. We worked in partnership with businesses such as Aldi, Spar, B&M, Co-op, Belted, Nandos, McVities, Energi Trampoline Park and many others who donated prizes. A fun night was had by all!



### Performing Arts News

Congratulations to all A level and GCSE Drama students who have recently performed their exam pieces to a very appreciative audience. Their performances were of a very high standard and the students showed real skill and professionalism. Congratulations also go to all A level and GCSE Music students who have recently recorded their performances as part of their practical exam to a very high standard.

Heather Cartwright recently organised and performed a concert at St Michael's church. This concert was organised to raise funds to enable Heather to work for a charity which supports primary schools in Thailand next year. The concert was a huge success and attended by the local community as well as dignitaries such as the Lady Mayoress. Special thanks go to Holly Walker, William Nixon, Callan Waite and Andrew Tyson who also performed in the concert. The students showed real musical talent, professionalism and were a credit to the school.

Year 9 and 10 Drama students are now working very hard to prepare for the performance of 'The Crucible' which will take place on Wednesday 5 July. Tickets will be available in the next few weeks and will be advertised on the school website.

Both Music and Drama students from all years are working very hard to prepare for this year's Summer Concert. Two primary schools, Cumwhinton and High Hesket will also be joining us in this event. The theme for this year's concert is Absolute 80's and it will take place on Tuesday 11 July and Wednesday 12 July. Tickets will be available in the next few weeks and will be advertised on the school website.

## **Information**

### **Student Safety – Front of School**

We recently spoke to students in all year groups about how they were finding life at Caldew and what we could do to improve things for them. One of the things which came to light from our discussions with students was their concern about the traffic at the end of the school day, especially the number of cars parked outside the school making it difficult for them to see clearly when crossing the road, and the speed of some drivers. The School Council have asked for this message to go in the bulletin:

*"Please could parents not rush to pull out into the road as we, the students, might be trying to cross. It often feels like a racetrack with the speed some of the cars are being driven. We will ensure that we follow the Green Cross Code and THINK! Education (road safety guidelines) but we ask that you do the same. It is important for us to feel safe in, and on our way to and from school."*

As we are all aware, the road outside the school gets very busy at the end of the school, however as I am sure everyone will agree the safety of our students is paramount. Please do not park directly on the road outside the school. There is a car park a very short distance away in Dalston where you can wait for your child. Please can you also be mindful about the speed at which you drive. Many thanks for your cooperation in this matter.

### **Spare Uniform**

It would be appreciated if you can donate back to the school any uniform you may have that is in good condition but you no longer have use for; this includes jumpers, ties and PE kit. Please can you bring any items to either Main Reception or Student Reception.

### **Sporting Successes**

We had a very successful time at the County Athletics Championships:

- Megan Busby Year 11 1<sup>st</sup> Long jump (county record)  
1<sup>st</sup> 200m
- Meg Postlethwaite Year 11 1<sup>st</sup> Pole Vault
- Adam Willis Year 10 1<sup>st</sup> Triple Jump  
2<sup>nd</sup> Hurdles
- Ewan Beverley Year 10 1<sup>st</sup> Pole Vault
- George Nixon Year 9 2<sup>nd</sup> Discus
- Kian Martin Year 9 1<sup>st</sup> Javelin
- Alex Thompson Year 9 3<sup>rd</sup> High Jump
- Lewis Heaton Year 8 1<sup>st</sup> Pole Vault
- Meredith Kerr Year 7 1<sup>st</sup> Pole vault (junior girls' county record and 1<sup>st</sup> in England in her age category)

Peter Mullins in Year 10 has qualified for the National Disabled Horse Riding Competitions.

Congratulations to ex-student Connor Murtagh who won his first race as an apprentice jockey riding Symbolic Star at Newcastle.

### **Attendance Matters**

Caldew School attaches great importance to our work on improving school attendance in line with targets set by both the Local Authority and the Government. Attendance is monitored closely and we have seen an improvement this academic year. Schools that work hard to improve attendance, like ours, see a

measurable improvement in students' exam results. We are currently in exam season where school attendance is vital for students and teachers to see what progress has been made over this academic year. One day's absence means five hours of learning is lost that could hinder exam success.

### **Punctuality**

We appreciate some of our students make very long journeys to school. However, this can never be an excuse for habitual lateness. Please make sure that your child leaves in good time to take into account any difficulties made by overcrowded buses or heavy traffic. Students who are late will complete a detention for 10 minutes the same day. Parents and carers will be advised of this by text.

No student is allowed to leave school between 8:40am and 3:10pm without permission from their Head of House, Attendance Officer and confirmation from their parents or carers.

### **Parent View**

As you may be aware Parent View is an online questionnaire that records the views of parents and carers on the school that their children attend and is referred to at times by OFSTED. Feedback from parents and carers is always helpful to us and I would like to remind you that the questionnaire is available to complete at any time at [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk)

### **Upcoming Events**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>
21/06/17 – 05/07/17	Year 10 Exams
21/06/17	A2/AS/GCSE Art Exhibitions
22/06/17 – 30/06/17	Year 9 Exams
23/06/17	Year 11 Leavers' Assembly
23/06/17	Year 11 Prom
28/06/17	Year 8 Parents' Evening (5.30 – 8.00pm)
29/06/17	Year 7 Young Leaders Day
03/07/17	Year 6 Induction Day
05/07/17	Year 9 and 10 Drama Performance of 'The Crucible'
14/07/17	Sports Day
17/07/17 – 18/07/17	6 <sup>th</sup> Form Induction
19/07/17	Awards Day
17/08/17	A Level Results (from 8.00am)
24/08/17	GCSE Results (from 8.00am)

Yours faithfully

Ms Vicki Jackson  
Headteacher

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