

October 2016

Dear Parents/Carers

It has been an extremely positive and busy start to the school year; it is hard to believe that it is already nearly half term. It is really encouraging to see our students applying themselves to their learning. Year 11 students are often found working after school and Sixth Formers are industrious in their use of the Library or in study areas around the school. The younger students are engaged and all are being challenged and stretched to achieve their best. As I have said to students during assemblies, the best learning takes place when we find things difficult and the key to success is persevering and not giving up. I believe school is place where “we don’t do ‘easy’, but we make ‘easy’ happen by hard work and learning”. It is important for students to remember that it is OK to get things wrong. Some of the best learning takes place when we find things hard, get things wrong and work out what mistakes we have made. The next few months bring challenges as the mornings get darker, it gets colder and students get tired. It is important to remember that time never comes back and we all need to keep focused on learning and to keep trying to be the best we can be.

## News

### National Poetry Day 2016

In order to develop their understanding of poetry, Year 7, 8 and 9 students have been busy writing their own poems during their English lessons as part of a poetry competition. This culminated in students reading out their poems in the Theatre in front of their peers. It was lovely to see students proudly reading out their own work and I was very impressed with their efforts. The winners have been announced and are as follows:

Year Group	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Special Mention
7	Kyle Fontana	Kieli Wood	Oriana Young – wisest advice
8	Alicia Mandale	Holly Davidson	Anthony Devlin – most spine chilling
9	Elisha Wharton	Amy Lee	Kiar Wilson – most original concept

The winning poems will be displayed in school and are attached to this bulletin.

## UCAS

Year 13 students are busy applying for university places. Many students have already made good progress with their applications which will be completed and sent before the deadline. Mr James and Sixth Form Tutors are working hard to ensure students prepare the best possible personal statement. It is encouraging to see the ever-increasing proportion of students applying to the Russell Group Universities and we wish all students the best with their applications wherever they are intending to study. When looking for university places it is also worth checking carefully the criteria for Access Schemes that many universities have put in place. All universities are required to widen participation in terms of the background of their students. This is particularly true for students who will be the first generation in their families to go to university. Some have schemes giving support through events, money in the form of bursaries and, in some cases, reduced offers. They recognise that being the first in a family can be a significant barrier, stopping students with talent and potential from attending university.

Recently we have received information from the University of Leeds about their Access to Leeds 2017 Scheme. On the successful completion of a study module with the university, a reduced UCAS tariff offer of two A level grades for students who meet the criteria will be made. For several years we have been part of a similar scheme which has helped a number of our students go to the Newcastle University. It is worth checking if any universities which your child is interested in have a similar scheme; they can make a difference.

## **iPay**

The school is now in the second year of operating iPay, the online payment system for school meals. I would encourage you to use this method of payment as it is quick and easy to use, avoiding the need for cash to be brought into the school. The registration process is simple and you will also be able to see what your child buys. If you would like to register to use this system, please email [office@caldew.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:office@caldew.cumbria.sch.uk) and we will send you the details.

## **PE News**

### **Games Night is back!**

The PE department introduced Games Night last year to make extracurricular sport available to all our students. This takes place every Tuesday night and a free bus is available to take students back to Carlisle at 4:30pm. Students should sign up in advance by 1:00pm on Mondays at the PE Office if they wish to take the bus. The activities are open to all year groups and at present are:

- Football (on the field). Squad members from Years 8 and 10 must attend.
- Rugby (on the field). Squad members from Years 7 and 9 must attend.
- Netball (on the courts). Squad members from Years 7 and 8 must attend.
- Hockey (on the Astroturf). Squad members from Years 9 and 10 must attend.
- Badminton (in the Sports Hall).

With fixtures taking place on Wednesday and Thursday nights along with various other after-school activities, we hope that this approach will enable as many students as possible to participate. So far this seems to be a success with well over 150 students attending each Tuesday. The games on offer will change as the year progresses and the weather and hours of daylight change. The latest news on Games Night, the wider offer of extra-curricular sport and lists of fixtures are all available to access on the school website.

### **Some Individual Highlights**

Congratulations to Hannah Graves and Adam Willis for individual sporting success. Hannah has been selected for the Team GB Under 21 Equestrian team and is now on the Elite Sport Podium Pathway with a view to reaching the Olympic Games in 4-8 years' time. Adam finished 15<sup>th</sup> in the Junior Boys age group at the English Schools' Athletics Combined Event Finals in Exeter last month.

## **Information**

### **Homework**

Learning at home is a very important part of all students' development at Caldew. Through homework students develop skills, attitudes and extend their knowledge and they will be better prepared to make the transition onto the next stage of their education or employment. Key Stage 3 students are set homework in line with the Year 7, 8 and 9 homework timetables found in student planners and on the school website. GCSE students receive an average of one hour of homework per week for each subject they take. A level students are expected to do fifteen hours of homework per week on average, which may include wider reading and research. We will endeavour to inform parents when a student does not complete tasks or their work is of a quality that is below their normal standard. We monitor homework failure and have a system that supports students and informs parents if issues arise.

If you have any concerns about homework, please contact the subject teacher. If your concerns are wider than one subject area, please contact your child's Form Tutor.

A Level students are available to support younger students with their homework in the Library at lunchtime and the Library is also available after school for those students wishing to stay behind and complete their homework.

### **Safety at the Start and End of the School Day**

Parking and access to the school is a continuing challenge. The road at the front of school gets very busy especially at the end of the school day and the safety of our students is obviously our priority. To that end I would like to remind you that:

- Students should not be picked up or dropped off in the Visitors Car Park (next to Reception).
- Parents picking up students from the Sports Hall Car Park need to park in a designated space either by 3:00pm or wait until the buses have departed at 3:20pm.
- We do stop cars from leaving the Sports Hall Car Park until all the buses have left. To ensure students' safety, no cars should be moving through the car park when students are walking through it to reach their buses.
- No cars should be parked in the bus bays at the front of the school at the end of the school day.
- Cars should not stop or park on the pavement opposite the school. It is dangerous for students to cross the road and slows the flow of traffic.
- Parents should never park in the roadway leading to Nestlé. This is a private road and is extremely busy with lorries constantly needing access to their site.
- If parking is not available at school there is a car park a short walk away in Dalston village.

### **Students Cycling to School**

We have now made arrangements for students that cycle to school to exit the school premises directly onto the cycle path via a gate at the rear of the Agriculture Block. This will enable them to access the village at a safer point or join the road to Carlisle away from buses, pedestrians and other road users. The gate to the cycle path will also be open each morning and I would encourage students to enter the school via this route rather than from the front of school. We also strongly encourage students to wear cycle helmets. As we move into the darker mornings and evenings, please ensure students wear appropriate bright/high visibility clothing and their bikes are fitted with lights.

### **Attendance**

The Department for Education defines any student whose attendance falls below 90% as 'persistently absent' from school. If your child falls into this category then you may be contacted by the school's Education Attendance Officer so an Attendance Plan can be put into place to ensure attendance returns to acceptable levels as soon as possible. In cases where attendance does not improve, parents may be prosecuted for not ensuring their children attend school regularly. If you need to discuss your child's attendance or if your child will be absent from school for any reason, you need to contact the school **before 9:30am on each day of the absence**. You can either 'phone to speak to Mrs Richardson, our Education Attendance Officer, on 01228 710044 or send a text message to 07860 002169.

### **Holidays and Other Absences in Term Time**

I would like to remind parents as usual at this time of the year of the following extract from the school's Attendance Policy (which is also available on the school website):

*Parents should not book family holidays during term time as they will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as a parent returning on leave from active military service. Parents may request other leave of absence, however, authorisation of this will be at the discretion of the school, and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. This means that in the majority of cases requests will not be authorised unless there are clear immediate family reasons or educational benefits.*

*Penalty Notices may be issued by the Headteacher against parents who take unauthorised holidays or leave of absence in term time. Each situation will be considered on an individual basis.*

*If leave is granted, parents must appreciate it is their responsibility to ensure their child catches up with any missed work upon their return.*

## **Contacting Staff**

I would like to remind parents that we welcome prompt contact with the school over any issue. There is an email link under the Staff section on the school's website for all staff. We aim to respond to these within the maximum of one working day and they are often a good way of contacting staff in the first instance. It can be difficult to respond to 'phone calls due to teaching commitments, meetings or missing callers when returning messages. If you do 'phone, please try to leave times when it will be possible to contact you so we have the best chance of reaching you. Please remember that it is usually impossible for a particular member of staff to meet with you without a prior pre-arranged meeting. Teachers have only limited non-teaching time within their working week and this time is normally used for planned meetings or lesson preparation. All of our senior staff teach and have diaries that are full often months in advance so meetings at short notice are simply not possible. In the first instance any pastoral issues should be directed to Form Tutors or Heads of Houses and similarly, subject matters to the Class Teacher or Subject Team Leader.

If you do feel that a matter has not been resolved, then please do contact Mr Hammond or Miss Nordon, the Deputy Headteachers, or myself.

## **Parent View**

As you may be aware Parent View is an online questionnaire that records the views of parents on the school that their children attend and is referred to at times by OFSTED. Feedback from parents 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**

### **Caldew Musical - 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dream Coat'**

Fifty students from Years 7 to 13 are taking part in this year's school musical 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat'. Performances are on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>, Thursday 20<sup>th</sup>, and Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October starting at 7:00pm. Tickets are on sale now from Main Reception, priced at £4.50 for adults and £3.00 for concessions.

The talented cast will be ably supported by the school orchestra. Students have shown great commitment to this production including regularly rehearsing at weekends, after school and during lunchtimes. It will certainly be a show well worth seeing and we would advise you to book early to avoid disappointment.

### **Senior Awards Evening**

The Senior Awards Evening will take place on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November. This night celebrates the success of those students who were in Year 11 last year as well the achievements of Year 12 in their AS exams. Invitations to the award winners will be sent out in the next week.

### **Year 7 Parents' Evening**

Year 7 Parents' Evening takes place on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November (5.30pm – 8.00pm) and gives parents and carers the opportunity to meet their child's subject teachers, discuss how they have settled into secondary school and the progress they have made. We are looking forward to meeting you at this important evening to continue to build a partnership where we can work together to ensure the best possible outcomes for your children.

### **Year 11 Mock Exams**

These start at the end of November. Students will receive an exam timetable nearer the time.

As the remaining days of this half term pass, may I thank you for your support for both the school and your children. It is through partnership and positive support that students will make the best progress and we readily acknowledge the influence that parents have in helping them achieve that.

Yours faithfully

Ms Vicki Jackson  
Headteacher

[Vicki.jackson@caldew.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:Vicki.jackson@caldew.cumbria.sch.uk)

## National Poetry Day 2016

### Year 7 Winner: Kyle Fontana

#### The Life of a Bottle

There's a message in a bottle, drifting from the rocky shore  
And it's a letter as to what's next from everything that came before  
Inside its glassy walls is all the proof that I was here  
And it holds my whole existence as I watch it disappear  
And I know it isn't easy to survive the stormy sea,  
For the ocean's not forgiving to a tiny drop like me,  
But still I beg the wind to guide it safely on its way.  
The sun kisses the water to salute the end of the day.  
While the memory of me fades with every minute that will pass,  
The legacy I leave behind is trapped inside that glass  
And since there's every chance that it will never reach the shore,  
I hope that bottle stores my life at the sea floor

### Year 8 Winner: Alicia Mandale

#### Love to Keep

Hundreds of feet churning the ground  
Piercing gunshots shaking the earth  
Rain falls fast, the tears of the sky  
Like all of the earth is saying goodbye  
Soldiers fall as fast as lightning  
Cold and still as night.

One young soldier, too scared to sleep  
Penning his thoughts in the dark, dreadful night  
Fears prayers and longings, messages to loved ones  
Pouring out his soul, there's no holding back  
Then tuck away safe to treasure and keep  
Now can we get some sleep?

Rising up for your country, your time has come  
Finding bravery from deep down, strength from within  
But loud is the fight and cruel is the loss  
Tomorrow won't come and the earth's arms will catch you  
The pain is gone quickly, the fear even quicker  
No more goodbyes.

Belongings come home instead of her son  
She opens his messages and catches her breath  
The love pours out; it's like she can hear him  
Prayers, love, thank yous: "I'll see you soon"  
She holds the messages close to her heart  
A son is lost but not the love – the love is hers to keep.

### Year 9 Winner: Elisha Wharton

#### Messages

The small neat note has fallen to the floor  
You sit silent on my bed  
Shocked by what you saw.

As my hand etched out the careful cursive  
I felt all the weight  
Fall away from my shoulders.

The terrors and the fear scripted on my page  
Need to be told  
So dim the lights and set the stage.

For this is what it says:

"All these pretty words, petty words, childish words  
Chip away at my soul.  
Sweat, geek, nerd, freak  
Turn my mood to coal.

The simple terms taken as playful banter  
The more they come, the more powerful they seem  
Until they come in a steady stream.

These words come at me,  
Festering at the wound.  
The scar reopened by the blades of human speech.

All that pain and torture builds up over time.  
That forces me to put up a wall of  
Emotionless calm."