

VJJ/HEV

September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers



It has been a pleasure to welcome back our students, parents, carers and staff to the new academic year. An especially warm welcome to our new Year 7 parents and to those families whose children have joined us in other year groups. It is always lovely to see our students return to school after the summer holiday ready to engage with their learning and in smart uniform but has been especially so this year after what has been a challenging time for everyone. The school is now operating much more normally and it is lovely to see students moving around the school again, going to and from their lessons. I have really missed hearing their laughter and excited chatter on the corridors. Our site team have done a wonderful job over the summer holiday getting the school ready for reopening; we are all pleased to be back.

Walking around the school I can see that students are settled in lessons and engaging well with their learning. Now the focus is on getting back to what we do best teaching children and making sure they get a good education so every one of them can achieve their potential.

Many thanks for your continued support

GCSE and A Level Results

This year GCSE and A level grades were graded using a system of where students built up a portfolio of evidence for each subject and this work was assessed and used to determine their final grades. The results were moderated by the exam board and I am very pleased to say that none of the grades submitted by Caldew were changed.

Students worked extremely hard in their final few weeks at school and it is certainly worth noting that these students completed more controlled assessments than they would have done in a normal exam season, and for many it was a much more intense experience than would have been normal. They worked as hard as any other year group before them to achieve their grades and in very difficult circumstances. They deserve the grades they achieved and we are all very proud of them. Staff also worked tirelessly marking, grading and internally and externally moderating the portfolios of evidence. The final results at both GCSE and A level continue the schools strong track record of success. The students achieved results that were very pleasing across all subjects at both GCSE and A Level.

These results have enabled students to move onto the next stage of their lives. Year 13 students have either gone to university, onto an apprenticeship or have started work. We have students going to universities such as Oxford, Durham and Aberdeen studying a range of courses including medicine, science, engineering, maths, politics and nursing. Year 11 have also progressed with many returning in the Sixth Form and others moving onto to college or apprenticeships.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish both Year 11 and Year 13 the very best for the future. We will miss them

Year 11 Prom

The relaxation of social distancing rules has meant that we are able to hold leavers' events, albeit belated, at the start of this term. We felt this was really important as the delay in the lifting of restrictions in June caused some planned events to be postponed at quite late notice and curtailed or prevented some activities that we know the students wanted to organise.

Our former Year 13 gathered for their leaving party at the Halston.

New Staff

As always at the start of a new academic year there have been some changes of staff and I would like to welcome the following new staff to Caldew School:

Miss L Fraser	Head of Year 8/Teacher of Citizenship and IT
Mr M Gaunt	Assistant Head of Sixth Form/Teacher of Maths
Mrs J Grealish	Pastoral Manager for Years 10 & 11
Mrs N Leiba	Apprentice for Business Administration
Mrs S Robertson	Teacher of Science
Miss C Simpson	Apprentice Teaching Assistant
Miss S Turpin	Teacher of Science
Mrs R Barnes	Apprentice Teaching Assistant

Heads of Year

The pastoral care of each year group is overseen by a Head of Year and a Pastoral Manager. This year our Heads of Year and Pastoral Managers are:

Year Group	Head of Year	Pastoral Manager
7	Miss J Atkinson	Mrs S Taylor
8	Mrs L Fraser	Mrs L Graham/Mrs S Taylor
9	Mr B McArdle	Mrs L Graham/Mrs S Taylor
10	Mr C Clarke	Mrs J Grealish
11	Miss H Howson	Mrs J Grealish

The Head of Sixth form is Mr A James (Assistant Headteacher) and the Assistant Head of Sixth Form is Mr M Gaunt.

Summer School

Year 6 had the opportunity of joining us at Caldew for a Summer School in August. This was highly successful with over 60 of our new Year 7 students taking part. They engaged in a wide variety of activities and got an opportunity to meet staff. Students were overwhelmingly positive about the whole experience, and they have found new friends as well as familiarising themselves with the school.

Uniform

As we have started the year the uniform for the vast majority of students are smart and in correct school uniform and I would like to thank all parents and carers for their support with this issue. If there are any issues with your child uniform and these are not resolved by speaking directly to them, a member of our pastoral team will contact you. Our uniform rules can be found on the school website and in students' planners.

Covid-19 Update

Whilst the school is operating more normally we do still have to follow the latest Department for Education guidance and have some protective measures in place. The school's Risk Assessment can be found on the school website and is reviewed regularly.

Control Measures

The Department for Education have asked schools to continue to implement a series of control measures. These include:

- Tissues and hand sanitiser are available in each and every classroom and other points around the school. Students should observe good respiratory hygiene of catch-it, bin-it when sneezing, and regularly wash hands or use sanitiser;

- Ventilation - doors and windows will be open more than normal but not at the expense of comfortable working conditions;
- Students are required to wear a face covering on school buses
- Students and staff are strongly recommended to wear face coverings on the corridors
- All students and staff take twice weekly Lateral Flow tests at home

At the time of writing we have had a small number of positive cases in school and I have written to you about these separately. If there is an outbreak in school we will take advice from Public Health and this may lead to further measures being reintroduced. An outbreak is defined as five cases in a group of people who are mixing closely.

Lateral Flow Testing

All students have been offered two lateral flow tests at school at the start of term. Going forward all students and staff are strongly encouraged to test twice weekly at home using the home test kits that have been issued. Lateral Flow testing is an important measure in reducing transmission as it identifies people who have high levels of the virus and are most infectious. Please can I remind you that students should be tested on a Monday and Thursday morning before school and the results emailed to student.testing@caldew.cumbria.sch.uk and registered with NHS Test and Trace.

Students can also be tested in school if they do not want to carry out home testing, please contact school if you would like your child to be tested in school.

We really do appreciate your support in ensuring your children are tested twice weekly as this helps to ensure any positive cases are identified and do not come into school, especially as society opens up more.

Positive Cases and Close Contacts

Any positive cases identified within the school will now be dealt with by NHS Track and Trace. They will work with the family of the student who has tested positive to identify any potential close contacts, and they will co-ordinate the follow-up. This duty has therefore been removed from school. The main point is that any close contact who is under 18 years and 6 months or has been fully vaccinated is no longer required to self-isolate, but will be advised to take a PCR test, and will be able to attend school if displaying no symptoms, even while awaiting the result. We should therefore see much less disruption to the students from any positive cases.

Please ensure your child comes to school with a face mask. This gives us the ability to ask students to wear them on corridors and in communal areas if we think it is necessary, for example at a wet break or during a fire alarm. Face masks **must** be worn on school buses and public transport.

Term Dates

Term dates for both this and next academic year can be found on our website, at this link:

<https://www.caldew.cumbria.sch.uk/our-school/diary/term-dates/>

Red Box: Period Products

Through the scheme funded by the government, we continue to provide period products to any student who needs them. Students are able to access sanitary towels and tampons whenever they need them in school. They are available at student services and students can help themselves to whatever they need for school and home.

Safety at the Start and End of the School Day

Parking and access to the school is a continuing challenge and more so at the moment as we have more parents dropping off and picking up children. 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:

- Student 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 by 3:00pm or wait until the buses have departed at 3:20pm. Please be aware that there is limited parking in this car park.
- 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 along the front of the school at the end of the school day
- Cars should not stop or park on the footpath opposite the school. It is dangerous for students to cross the road and increases the volume 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 the 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 encourage students to cycle to and from school as this is a healthy and environmental way for them to travel. However we want students to do this safely. The road outside school gets very busy, especially at the end of the school day and students sometimes ride out of the school gate without looking. Students must walk their bikes off the school site. If your child rides their bike to school, please can you talk to them about how to do this in a safe manner. 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.

Applying for Free School Meals and Clothing Grants

At the end of last term, Cumbria County Council launched an online application process for Free School Meals and Clothing Grants. This can be found via the Citizen's portal, at this link:

[https://emsonline.cumbria.gov.uk/CitizenPortal LIVE/Account/Login?ReturnUrl=%2fCitizenPortal LIVE](https://emsonline.cumbria.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/Account/Login?ReturnUrl=%2fCitizenPortal_LIVE)

The online service has a number of benefits:

- Parents/guardians are able to check eligibility without waiting for a phone call/email from the Service Centre
- Reduces the risk of duplicate applications being submitted for the same child
- Reduces the risk of application forms and supporting documentation getting lost in the post
- Provides the Service Centre with an audit trail of applications
- Enables the Service Centre to issue vouchers in a more timely manner; a postal application takes twice as long to process as an online application

Free school meals and clothing vouchers are available if you receive one of the following qualifying benefits:

- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- An income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

- Child Tax Credit, provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) that as of April 2012 does not exceed £16,190. Note: From 1st May 2009 where you are entitled to Working Tax Credit during the four week period immediately after your employment ceases, or after you start to work less than 16 hours per week, your children are entitled to Free School Meals, this may be extended
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Universal Credit

If you receive working tax credits you may not be eligible for free school meals or clothing grants.

Children who receive Income Support or Income Based Jobseekers Allowance in their own right are also entitled to receive free school meals.

Free schools meals are available to statutory school aged children attending full time education (full days only 9am to 3pm), excluding private nurseries and further education colleges.

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:

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

Communication with you as parents is the key to ensuring that together we can improve the outcomes for students. You can find the e-mail addresses on the dedicated staff page on the school website and they will normally respond to you within 24 hours. If you wish to speak to a member of staff then please contact the school's Reception. As most staff teach the majority of the day, they may not be available to take a call. They will return calls as soon as is possible, although in some cases that may not be until the following day. I would encourage all parents to contact us as soon as you have any concerns or questions. Dealing with issues quickly means that they rarely become insurmountable. As always, if you have any concerns about how a matter has been dealt with please do contact myself, Mr Hammond or Mrs Atkinson (Deputy Headteachers) directly and we will make every effort to address your concerns. My personal school email is included at the foot of this letter and I welcome any communication from parents

Caldew Friends and Family Association

A group of parents has set up the Caldew Friends and Family Association. The aims are to strengthen the partnership between parents 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 – we are also looking for raffle prizes, help at events, or offer your time up in other small ways. Further information will be sent out to parents but if you would like to get involved please contact: Caldewfriends@Caldew.cumbria.Sch.uk or contact Cheryl Eastburn on (01228) 710044.

Social Media

You can find out all about the day to day running of the school and the many activities that take place at Caldew on our Facebook page (@CaldewSchool) and Twitter (@Caldew_School) as well as the Headteacher bulletin and website (www.caldew.cumbria.sch.uk)

The social media feed is a great way to not only keep up with events in school but also posts regarding careers Information advice and guidance, open events at colleges and universities, apprenticeship opportunities and community posts.

Yours faithfully

Ms Vicki Jackson
Headteacher

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