

Dear Parents and Carers,

The funeral of Ms Coby Mckeen will take place on Friday February 9th at 12noon. While a number of staff and some Sixth Form students will be attending the funeral, the school will stay open as normal. School will close at 3.10pm that day for the half term break.

Four documents are attached to the e-letter this week and they can also be found on the school website. One of the documents is the first in what will be a series of Post Ofsted updates and is quite an extensive report on what the school had done prior to the visit and will now do. I hope this provides reassurance in the light of the Ofsted report that the school has and will continue to work for the very best for all our students. It is planned to send out an update towards the end of each half term. Two of the other documents are consultation documents asking for any comments on the structure of the school day and a proposal to revise the pastoral structure. The final one is information on how your child can look after their Chromebook to help prevent damage occurring.

Many thanks and best wishes



Andrew Waller  
Headteacher

### Dates for the Diary:

Thursday 8th February:  
Year 8 Parents Evening

Friday 9th February:  
School Closes for half term

Monday 19th February:  
School re-opens

Thursday 22nd and Friday  
23rd February:  
Dance Display, 6.45pm

opportunity for likeminded young people to get together and celebrate who they are, engage in some workshops and seminars and make new friends". Headteacher Mr Waller said, "At Carr Hill we are committed to promoting inclusivity and equality of every student. We welcome opportunities to collaborate with local organisations such as URPotential to improve our students wellbeing, and we thank them for taking the time to visit us today".

If you'd like to find out more about the support group, or speak to Louise about any issues you are struggling with please contact her at: [lousie@urpotential.co.uk](mailto:lousie@urpotential.co.uk) or check out the website.

## Meet the Governors

The school governors have a wide and varied role in the running of the school. Their main objective is to act as a critical friend providing strategic leadership and accountability to the leadership team and staff. They work with Mr Waller and the rest of the SLT to help make decisions on all sorts of matters from setting targets, to authorising policies and appointing senior staff members. Here, Ian Marquis, Chair of the Governors, tells us a bit about himself and his role.



My involvement with Carr Hill stems back some 47 years. Firstly as a pupil, then as a parent of three daughters who attended the school and more recently, as a member of the Governing Body. I joined the Governors 10 years ago, and was appointed Chair of Governors in 2009. As Governors we are committed to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to reach their full potential whilst providing them with the necessary life skills to develop into well rounded individuals.

## Support for LGBT Students

Local organisation URPotential came into school this week to offer support to students who may be struggling their sexuality or gender identity.

Louise Harrison who is a LGBT Worker for the not for profit Community Interest Company, came into school to chat to students and tell them about a local support group that is run specifically for young people who identify as part of the LGBT community. The group was set up to help improve mental and emotional health with a focus on decreasing isolation for young LGBT people. She said, "There are often a lot of mental health and wellbeing issues within the LGBT community, especially amongst young people. The idea of 'coming out', especially to their parents and carers, can cause a lot of anxiety and worry, and it's not uncommon for these young people to suffer with depression."

The support group runs every Monday in St Annes and is a safe and relaxed environment for 11-17 year olds and 18-25 year olds to talk about any issues they are facing and ask any questions they may have. The group also celebrate the events such as commemorating the Stonewall Riots, which lead to the first Pride event, Trans Remembrance as well as organising various events. Louise said, "We're really looking forward to the LGBT Youth Fest 2018, which is taking place on the 3rd February. It's an



## Outstanding Achievement Awards:



Alexander  
Apollo College



Kelly  
Ceres College



Karl  
Juno College



Poppy  
Mercury College



Daniel  
Minerva College



Oliver  
Poseidon College

Well done to all these students who have achieved a superb number of merits this week.

## Students say 'I do' to a Classroom Wedding

As part of their study around 'Relationships and Family' the Year 9 students explored the content and symbolism of a Christian wedding and why marriage is important to both religious and non-religious people.

To experience some of the tradition and symbolism for themselves students staged weddings during their classes with each of them taking on various roles including, bride, groom, vicar, best man, bridesmaids and congregation. The bride and groom wrote their own vows and the vicar delivered a short sermon about the significance of marriage to Christians.

The guests were led through the service by the vicar and this helped them to understand the meaning behind features such as rings, vows and blessings.

RS Teacher Mr Churm said, "Students thoroughly enjoyed the lessons and found that partaking in a dramatized wedding really helped them understand the importance of weddings and marriage for religious believers. It was good for the students to see for themselves how a Christians wedding fits together and to learn about why it all matters for Christians. We has some fantastic vicars, brides and grooms who played their parts really well."

For more stories check out the 'Latest News' section of the website.



## Contact Us:

Phone: 01772 682 008 Email: [contact@carrhill.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:contact@carrhill.lancs.sch.uk) Web: [www.carrhillschool.com](http://www.carrhillschool.com)



31<sup>st</sup> January 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

### **Post Ofsted Update 1**

Moving forward in light of the recently published Ofsted Report this is the first in a series of regular updates to keep you informed of the school's strategy and progress in ensuring our previous 'Good' rating is reinstated in two years' time when Ofsted are due to return.

In the report Inspectors commented that Leaders and Governors know the school well and this was very encouraging. As a result of knowing the school well we had already started to make the changes needed prior to their inspection in December 2017, but we know there is more to be done as we strive for excellence for all. It is also true that some of the changes take time to work through and show impact but we can see improvement in expected results for the current Year 11 and Year 10.

What was done before the 2017 Inspection:

a) Curriculum

- The curriculum was changed in 2015/16 so that virtually all students now do the qualifying subjects for Progress 8 apart from a small number on a level 1 work skills pathway. In 2016 only 70% had this combination of subjects which expects everyone to have Maths, English, Science and either a Humanity, a Language or Computing as well as three other approved subjects. In 2017 only 64% had this full combination but in 2018 it is 91% and in 2019 it will be 94%. This change inevitably restricts choice for subjects at Options time but meets Government requirements for a broad and balanced curriculum and was necessary if our Progress 8 score and so our place in league tables is to improve.
- We have also changed the expectation regarding Modern Languages to allow students to compete with their peers up and down the country. There is now an expectation that more and more students will take a language so that they achieve the Ebacc of English, Maths, 2 Sciences, a Humanity and a Modern Foreign Language. In 2017 our Ebacc entry was only 13 % but in 2018 it will be 35% and in 2019 42% which shows real aspiration for our students.
- From the Autumn of 2018, students in current Year 8 onwards will follow a three year GCSE programme which will allow them to cover all the content in a less frantic way, finish in time to have thorough revision of the course and allow for the inclusion of enrichment activities such as the visit to Durham Castle and Cathedral for the Normans element of the History course.
- Over the past three years we introduced more vocational courses into Post 16 as well as having to reduce the number of A levels which had traditionally not recruited well. It is ironic that 2017 saw our best Post 16 results for several years with a positive value added score for those students who took exams in that year – at a time when we reluctantly had to make a decision to consult on the future of the Sixth Form as a result of Government funding.

## b) Teaching & Learning

- In 2017 we launched a new Teaching & Learning Policy with an emphasis on challenge, questioning, literacy and assessment & feedback. It is pleasing that the report recognised that impact had been made particularly with regard to oracy, questioning and feedback (assessment and feedback was a performance management objective for all staff as a school priority). We now need to put greater effort into appropriate challenge for all and ensuring that best practice is consistent across the school.
- In 2016 the Cluster model for subjects outside of English, Maths and Science was broken up to provide more specific subject leadership. We have already seen the positive impact this has had especially in subjects such as History where results rose rapidly in 2017, in Drama and Dance which had excellent results in 2017 and Modern Languages which was a high performing subject in 2017.
- There is a very active Teaching & Learning group of staff in school who work with Mr Morton especially on CPD and INSET for staff and in leading the sharing of good practice
- For the past year we have worked very closely with external consultants, especially in the core subjects, to develop teaching and learning and to build on good practice with the new more demanding GCSE content.
- Each Faculty has a programme of monitoring and quality assuring the teaching and learning taking place and the Senior Leadership team also has a regular programme of quality assurance. During the inspection SLT paired up with inspectors for almost all the lesson observations and had to provide the feedback to teachers first. Inspectors were more than satisfied with SLT's ability to judge the quality of teaching and learning taking place.

## c) Behaviour and attendance

- In Spring 2017 we completely revised our attendance protocols so that there were clear triggers for appropriate interventions when a student was in danger of falling below the 96% target or the 90% persistent absence threshold. This has had real impact, particularly on the attendance of disadvantaged students which was worse than the national average for this group in 2015 and 2016 but is now more in line. There is still more to do in this area.
- After considerable review and discussion and with a new Assistant Head in place, we launched a revised Behaviour for Learning Policy in September 2017 which has clear principles of rewards, students accepting responsibility for their behaviours, restorative conversations, and staged triggers for sanctions. Inspectors were happy with the policy and the task we now have is to ensure it is applied consistently and confidently.
- In September 2017 we opened our new Behaviour Support Unit called 'Step Up' which provides a facility for those struggling with behaviour and classroom expectations to be withdrawn for up to half a term to work intensively on behaviour matters while continuing to be taught the core subjects in a small group
- In September 2017 we secured a service level agreement for a number of places on the Mckee Centre's new assessment programme for those who we believe should have an EHCP but do not yet have one for whatever reason. There are a considerable number of students who should be supported through an EHCP but are coming into school without one and if we can speed up the process of the EHCP we can access more external help for these students who sometimes have complex learning needs.

- We now have a dedicated exclusion room as an alternative to fixed term exclusion where students are out of circulation and isolated from their peers from 9am till 4pm
- Unfortunately it is sometimes necessary to permanently exclude a student whose behaviour is not changing, which is causing a persistent disturbance or for a one off serious offence. This is not something to take lightly but it will be done and so far this academic year there have been 6 permanent exclusions upheld by the Governors.

We need to continue with the actions outlined above as they are having a positive impact on student outcomes, the quality of teaching, the progress of the disadvantaged, behaviour and attendance. We have to accept that these were not embedded sufficiently at the time of the Inspection and that we do not yet have a set of published results for students who have gone through this more challenging curriculum.

Inspectors gave us 7 areas to focus on in order to improve further.

- The Leadership Team are in the process of revising the School Improvement Plan so that it has the more precise timelines Ofsted requested which will allow for the impact of actions to be measured more effectively. This plan will go to Governors for approval in late February and we will establish a new Governors' Committee to monitor the effectiveness of this plan with the Local Authority on at least a termly basis.
- Inspectors asked us to be more effective in the use of catch up funding for literacy and numeracy in Year 7. This equates to £12,000 currently and we have already set in place a more focussed programme of intervention for this cohort who came to us from primary school with scores of less than 98 in reading and maths. It is worth pointing out that while the plans were not precise enough for the inspectors, we can demonstrate the progress made by catch up students who joined us in September.
- Inspectors asked us to ensure that all staff have the skills and confidence to apply the new behaviour policy effectively. Any new policy takes time to embed but we will do this through more staff training, individual work with staff and staff sharing strategies to be more effective. We were very aware that it is primarily a minority of students in Year 8 and 9 who are struggling to maintain the high standards we expect and will continue to challenge this through the policy and through meetings with parents and carers. If necessary we will also use the route of managed moves or exclusion as no student has the right to disrupt the learning of others. I also recognise that we need to renew efforts in terms of rewards and praise.
- Students cannot learn if they are not in school and there is a proven link between attendance and successful outcomes. When the inspectors came we could demonstrate that overall school attendance was in line with national average and that the attendance of disadvantaged students was better than it had been the year before. This is very much a case of continuing with the policies we have – of responding to triggers, not authorising holidays in term time, home visits and if necessary sending out warning notices and penalty notices.

- Without losing the focus on assessment, feedback, questioning and oracy in lessons we will have a renewed focus on challenge for all (differentiation) through questioning, tasks, expectations and feedback so that learning matches prior attainment more consistently across the school. This will be monitored through the Quality Assurance process, work scrutinies, new lesson feedback documentation and it will be a focus of the appraisal cycle for 2018-19. The consultants who have been working with us in the core subjects will also make this a feature of their development work. Differentiation will also be the focus of staff CPD and Middle Leadership development work.
- As stated above there has been a focus on questioning and students' oral reasoning which Inspectors commented on. Students in Year 7 come to us with their best piece of writing so that we can see what they are capable of when they start and the new demands of extended writing at GCSE are evident throughout the year groups – even year 7 use GCSE question stems. We now need to be more explicit in our development of literacy and particularly with extended writing. In the week beginning February 5<sup>th</sup> we will also be conducting a work scrutiny of random students in Years 8 and 10 to look at teacher expectations of them across a range of subjects. This will further help us to identify good practice and challenge any areas where expectations may not be as high.
- We will continue to share good practice in school through INSET days, weekly Teaching & Learning briefings, Faculty briefings and Faculty development time on Tuesday evenings. This has been very much a feature of school over the past 18 months and staff are very willing to share ideas, strategies and experiences with one another. We are all learners and can never say there is no room for further improvement no matter how well we achieve.

I do hope this update provides you with the reassurance that we have not been complacent and that we are all committed as a staff to achieving the very best for every student at Carr Hill. Future updates will not be as long but will hopefully be a means of reassuring you as parents and carers.

Yours faithfully



Andrew Waller  
Headteacher

29<sup>th</sup> January 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

### **Consultation on the pastoral structure at Carr Hill**

For several years now Carr Hill has operated a vertical pastoral structure with the 6 Colleges and mentor groups of mixed ages from Years 7-11. There are undoubtedly many strengths to this system which has become a feature of the school but there are also a number of drawbacks which are perhaps becoming more apparent as a result of the educational changes nationally. It is also the case that we need to review structures in face of the very difficult financial situation which all schools are facing. Staff, the Parents Forum and Governors have reflected on the advantages and drawbacks of the current system and, after careful consideration, the Governors have agreed to consult on reverting to a year group structure from September 2018 onwards. This would be an important change and one which is not to be taken lightly, but any change will only be made for what we believe to be in the best interests of all the students at Carr Hill.

Rationale for the proposal:

1. We are increasingly needing to spend time with whole year groups especially in Years 10 and 11 as they prepare for public exams or in Year 8 as they prepare for options. This means that there are very few days where the whole mixed age mentor group is present.
2. Single age mentor groups will allow for age appropriate input on a variety of issues either in mentor or assembly time
3. There are concerns that when addressing any issues within a year group or a class, the current system means that there are 6 college leaders potentially involved as opposed to one Head of Year. A single Head of Year can ensure consistency of approach within a year group.

Further thoughts on the advantages and drawbacks of the current system which have arisen in discussions are to be found at the end of this letter.

Proposal:

- From September 2018 students will be in year group structures with a member of teaching staff as Head of Year. Mentor groups would therefore be made up of students from one year group
- The Head of Year and Mentors would follow the students through the school in order to provide continuity and effective communication with families. However we would appreciate comments on the idea that the Year 7 team be fixed to provide expertise in welcoming new students into the school and leading transition- if this were to be the case then the Head of Year and mentors who pick students up in Year 8 would take them through the rest of their school years
- One member of the School Leadership Team will take overall responsibility for progress of students at KS3 and another at KS4
- There will be two Pastoral Support staff who are not teachers to support the Heads of Year
- There will continue to be a Pupil Premium Mentor to work specifically on attendance and progress of those students who are in receipt of pupil premium as a result of free school meals, being on free school meals in the past 6 years or being Armed Service families.
- The changes, if agreed by Governors at the end of the consultation, will not have any financial impact on families

If you have any comments you wish to make on this proposal please forward them to [pastoralstructure@carrhill.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:pastoralstructure@carrhill.lancs.sch.uk) . The consultation will close on February 21<sup>st</sup> 2018.

Yours faithfully



Andrew Waller  
Headteacher

In the course of our discussions over the past few months these are some of the ideas which have been raised regarding the advantages and drawbacks of the current College system:

### **Some strengths of the current College system**

- The opportunities for peer support between age groups
- Vertical mentor groups can break up the divides between students that can exist among year groups
- Older students can help younger ones
- Older students can be good role models for younger ones in mentor time
- There can be good interaction between different aged students.
- The College system can create a real sense of belonging
- The College system allows mentors the opportunity to know a wider group of students and their needs than year groups would
- It's good for year 7 – breaks down worries
- The advantage of families only having to deal with one set of pastoral staff who know the sibling links and families well
- It can help the aspirations of younger students
- It is a selling point of the school – the USP
- Mentors can offer support to particular groups of students at key times because there is only a small number of any year group in a mentor group
- It has allowed for smaller mentor groups which is a benefit

### **Some Drawbacks of the current system**

- Real integration between year groups in mentor time is sometimes limited
- It is difficult to have age appropriate input when dealing with 11-16 year olds in one group
- Mentor time is disrupted by assemblies for different year groups so it is rare to have everyone present
- Does the mixed age system make it harder for students to make friends with their own age group?
- There can be a lack of consistency for students in a year group when there are 6 college leaders
- If there is an incident or concern with particular year group staff have to speak to several different pastoral leaders
- It makes it difficult to focus on a common issue across a year group
- It makes communication in school harder – a message for a year group has to go to all mentor rooms
- Mentors end up prioritising their time between the needs of different age groups – and some year groups lose out
- Prevents a lack of overview of the whole year group
- Mentors don't get to hear what a year group is being told in assemblies
- Students are not in mixed ages for the rest of the day so why have it for the first 15 minutes?

29<sup>th</sup> January 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

## Consultation on the school day

During the course of the last academic year we ran a consultation on the structure of the school day. It became apparent that we were not in a position to change the timings of the day because of the financial implications with regard to school transport. However we did move mentor time to the beginning of the day and believe this to have been a positive move as highlighted in the recent Ofsted report.

The way lessons and break times were arranged for 2017-18 was initially a temporary measure and we are aware that for a small number of parents and carers there was a concern that lunch was very late at 1.25pm. The current timings are working and are not raising any issues for us in school and it is also generally recognised that only having one period after lunch is better for student concentration and overall behaviour. However we are now consulting staff, students and parents/carers on a possible alternative structure for the school day.

Current		Possible alternative	
8.50am	warning bell	8.50am	warning bell
8.55-9.10	mentor time/assembly	8.55-9.20	mentor time/assembly
9.10-10.10	period 1	9.20-10.20	period 1
10.10-11.10	period 2	10.20-11.20	period 2
11.10-11.25	break	11.20-11.35	break
11.25-12.25	period 3	11.35-12.35	period 3
12.25-1.25	period 4	12.35-13.05	lunch and warning bell
13.25-14.05	lunch and warning bell	13.10-14.10	period 4
14.10-15.10	period 5	14.10-15.10	period 5

Rationale for the alternative:

- Having lunch 50 minutes earlier alleviates the concerns of a small number of parents/carers that the current lunch time is too late and a slightly longer mentor time could allow for more input. However it would mean that break and lunchtime were quite close together and the shorter lunch would limit the extra-curricular activities that are possible within the current 40 minute break.

If you do have any comments regarding this revision to the structure of the school day could you please forward them to [schoolday2018@carrhill.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:schoolday2018@carrhill.lancs.sch.uk). The closing date for the consultation is Wednesday February 21<sup>st</sup> 2018.

Yours faithfully



Andrew Waller  
Headteacher

# CARR HILL HIGH SCHOOL & Sixth Form Centre

## Taking Care of your Chromebook

### ALWAYS

- Carry your Chromebook in a suitable protective case, such as the case provided by School.
- Plug accessories into their proper slots at the correct angle.
- Store your Chromebook in its case somewhere it will not get knocked or crushed and out of public view when not in use.
- Avoid taking your Chromebook into bathrooms or extreme temperatures (below 0°C or above 32°C).
- Allow the battery to run down completely from 100% - 0% once per month, to extend battery life.



### NEVER

- Place items such as food and drink in the same bag/case as your Chromebook.
- Leave items such as pens etc. on the keyboard and close the lid.
- Leave cables dangling where they can get caught and your Chromebook gets pulled on to the floor.
- Swing the case in which your Chromebook is contained; it may hit something and damage your Chromebook.
- Leave your Chromebook unattended.
- Place your Chromebook under other items, the screen may get damaged.
- Place your Chromebook on uneven or unstable surfaces.
- Hold and lift your Chromebook by the screen.
- Use your Chromebook whilst on the move e.g. going up/down stairs, walking or moving around.
- Insert any foreign objects into your Chromebook or force any cables into ports.