



Headteacher's Update – May 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

You may actually be pleased to hear that my update this half term is slightly shorter than usual because this period is always dominated by year 6 SATs and our numerous residential. With one term to go we do not typically introduce any new school improvement work, with a greater focus on reviewing the impact of this year's improvement plan instead. I would not say it is a quiet half term but our attention is directed to a smaller number of priorities. My most important update is therefore to thank and congratulate our staff and children for all they have achieved recently.

Earlier on in the term we carried out a mock SATs week with year 6 to ensure they were ready for the end of key stage assessments. During the mocks we put pupils in the rooms they would be in during the formal tests with the adults who would take them so they are with a familiar adult. We run the process with the same strict test conditions they will face so pupils understand how we are all obliged to behave. I have always found the mock SATs reassures the pupils that the tests are nothing to worry about, they then know what to expect and at the worst it is boring but not anything to worry about. The national SATs ran from 13th May and I would like to offer a huge congratulations to the year 6 children who took everything in their stride and did their very best. As always it is not the outcome that really matters, it is the effort. Regardless of how pupils achieve, all we can ask is that they work hard and do their very best and once again year 6 rose to the challenge. Each and every pupil was calm, focused and took the tests seriously. Well done year 6.

The residentials are another big test of our pupils' character and behaviour and once again the children were amazing and a credit to you as parents. Both year 4 and 5 have now completed their residentials and staff had nothing but praise for the children. They were polite, sensible and supported each other as friends. I do hope they all came back with some great memories. I must thank all the staff and the many parents who join us on these trips. As you can imagine it is a huge undertaking and big responsibility but we continue to offer a residential to every year group because of the benefits it brings. Year 6 and year 3 have their trip still to look forward to and I have no doubt they will all have an equally good time.

My congratulations also need to go to the hundreds (and I do mean hundreds) of pupils who participated in this week's Lower School and Upper School concerts. We were all treated to an amazing night of musical entertainment.

There are several other things worth relaying to you. We have received the key findings from a reading audit we commissioned from a literacy consultant in our drive to move beyond outstanding and continuing to improve in all areas. This has helped us with some new ideas like involving our pupils far more in the running of the library and new book purchases.

Ms Clarke and Mrs Matthews have been very busy this term, leading on major reviews for Well Being and Inclusion. I have good news and bad news regarding staffing. First the bad news - I am sad to report that our year 3 leader, Mrs Harrison, has decided to step down from her post and role as class teacher. Mrs Harrison has done a fantastic job over recent years guiding and supporting year 3 and her contributions to Cleves have been invaluable. We hope she will still do some occasional teaching with us so it is not a complete departure or final goodbye. However, in positive news we have appointed Mrs Ainley-Robinson as our new year 3 leader. As a year 3 teacher she knows the curriculum and demands of year 3 very well and brings a great deal of experience, having been a Deputy Head in another school prior to joining us. I am also delighted to say Miss Robjohn is returning in September after a year travelling and working in Japan. And finally, I can tell you the handover to the new Headteacher, Mr Usher, is well underway. He has offered nine visit dates this term and we have agreed a transition plan that will ensure he has a real head start in September. I can finally announce that we have appointed Mrs Natasha Green as our new Deputy Head who will start in September. Mrs Green is an experienced senior leader and deputy head and we look forward to her joining Cleves. Her current school has also kindly agreed that she can be released to spend some time with us and work alongside Mr Usher before September. I know they are both extremely excited by the prospect of joining Cleves in September.

Once again thank you all for your continued support and have a great half term. I look forward to the final half term and the many exciting events on the calendar including a second attempt to hold a Summer Fete. There will surely be at least one sunny day before the end of term!

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'C Hodges'.

Mr C Hodges
Headteacher