

## **Headteacher's Update - April 2025**

As the daffodils start poking through and the sun begins to shine, we finish a very short but busy term. I hope this update gives you a flavour of some of the school developments we have been working on.

### **Inclusive Teaching**

At Cleves, we have been working on making our classrooms and teaching as inclusive as possible. We have researched, trialled and discussed new ideas and methods and considered the different barriers that they address. This has been a focus since September and is also a focus area for education nationwide in recent times. We believe firmly that every child and adult should feel welcomed, valued and celebrated whilst they are in school and this means that we are constantly upskilling staff in the latest educational developments to assist this. Recent pupil voice showed that children are aware of strategies used by teachers to help them learn, which will help them to learn independently in their future. Children are individuals that should not be limited or labelled and this acceptance of everyone's individuality was a positive outcome of the recent neurodiversity week. Thank you to the staff that worked on this to ensure it was a success.

Clearly, this also works alongside our focus on wellbeing, which we marked this term with Children's Mental Health week. When people feel celebrated and valued, they feel more content. When I came to visit the school a year ago, Cleves felt welcoming and supportive. People seemed to enjoy time with each other and I must say that this first impression underestimated the community of Cleves. This term has shown the school community to be resilient, hardworking and focused on achieving the best for children, but also shown them to be the most empathetic, compassionate and supportive group of people I have ever worked with. I thank you all for the kind words and actions you have shared with myself and with others that make this school a pleasurable place to be.

### **Raising the profile of the Arts**

Since OFSTED, Cleves has been working on raising the profile of the Arts. I am very excited by the commitment of staff to achieving this and providing opportunities beyond the curriculum to inspire and extend learning. This was shown in our Young Voices choir singing confidently at the O2 arena in January and in local musical performances at partnership schools and to Trustees recently. The continuation of our Tuning Up concerts also gives every child the opportunity to perform on an instrument over the course of the year. Uptake for private lessons are increasing and we are working with Surrey Arts to be able to ensure our curriculum is exceptional. Art opportunities are also incredibly inspiring. We are very lucky and grateful for children and staff to benefit from the expertise of Sarah Moody, an artist within the school community. Every child has created a postcard, which will be displayed in an art exhibition at the Riverhouse Barn Arts Centre in Walton

in June. Every child is welcome to participate in the inter-house photography competition over half term. As I walk through the school, I've seen such a variety of creativity: plastic being moulded and shaped into sea creatures and team collaborations to make giant Iron Men.

### **Sports**

The sports provision at Cleves is incredible: take a look at the sporting newsletter yesterday for a summary of what our children have achieved. Last week, children that have represented the school stood to be congratulated in our new celebration assembly. It was incredible to see that number of children standing up and to realise the opportunities that the children have been provided with. Sports at Cleves is inspiring: with the right adults leading with such vision and enthusiasm, anything is possible. This is something we can apply to any of the areas of development we wish to address.

### **Behaviour**

At the beginning of the half term, we discussed resetting our behaviour expectations. We wanted to ensure consistency across the school and praise children for reaching our expectations. This assembly with awards had a very positive impact very quickly: we had children choosing to clear up mess in the lunch hall, school uniform became smarter and everyone celebrated each other for making the school a great place to be. The early lunch incentive is also popular! We will continue with this assembly into the summer term, though I have asked children to think about what behaviours are important to them to be valued in case we decide to change any of the awards.

### **Pupil Voice**

The children are the centre of everything we do at Cleves. We aim to provide the best possible opportunities and enable them to fully meet their potential in all aspects of their lives. Pupil voice is key to helping us understand the children's experiences and their ideas for how to improve their school. This term, we have had a number of opportunities for groups of pupils to talk about their school. Children shared that they liked the way teachers model new knowledge and felt this supported them in their learning. They also felt they were given the opportunity to share how confident they felt in lessons. Many reported having devices at home that were their own to complete learning on and that they enjoyed this style of homework. As a result of pupil voice, we will also be looking into technology in every class to enable different styles of scaffolding and thinking about how we can make break times and lunchtimes more engaging for all children. School council has also run a successful Comic Relief fundraiser and PAMS will soon be discussing their ideas for strategic development of the school with the Trustees.

### **Team working**

As we all know, learning is most effective when it is collaborative. It gives an opportunity to see things from a different perspective, expand our field of vision and provides a well of additional knowledge. This year, we are developing our partnerships with other schools and this term, our teachers have had the opportunity to look into the curriculum offered at a number of other local schools. This gives us the opportunity to share our expertise and take away new food for thought to develop our own. This learning is invaluable to our children as it ensures we are constantly evaluating our offer and thinking about how we can best support each other as finances tighten on school budgets.

We also worked with a Literacy specialist to evaluate our Literacy curriculum and consider what we can do to further elevate it. He was highly impressed by the standard of our writing and by the pride the children had in their special writing. He found the quality of our teaching excellent and we are now looking more into supporting children's handwriting. As this becomes less strenuous for children, they are more able to express their ideas and make additional progress. We will keep you updated on this area.

Cleves is a very special school that is special because of the people within the building. Together, we are a strong community, all pulling together to ensure that our children achieve great things and are happy and proud of themselves. Everyone has their own way of doing this: volunteers for reading and trips, standing on the field encouraging runners or checking if your child is fulfilling the expectations on homework or uniform. I'm sure that the PTA would very much appreciate any help for Fete in the Field or the upcoming events we will be planning for next year (especially Firework Night!). Every way is valuable.

Thank you for your continued support and wishing you all a wonderful Easter break.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "N. Green". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line that serves as a separator between the signature and the typed name below.

Mrs N. Green  
Acting Headteacher