



CENTRAL FOUNDATION BOYS' SCHOOL

29th October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome Back

I hope you have had a good break and we are looking forward to welcoming all of the students back on Monday.

Progress Last Half Term

Last half term, the first of the academic year, was a return to 'normal' school. The students now attend lessons in their specialist subject areas. As a school we are very ambitious as to what it means to be properly educated. In respect of the curriculum this means that we focus on both breadth and depth. With regard to breadth, a part of this is the wide range of subjects that students can and do follow. As well as the core subjects of English, maths and science, the students in Years 7 to 9 follow art, drama, cooking, computing, PE, design technology and music. The students then have the opportunity to follow all of these subjects at GCSE and A level. All of these subjects, as well as science, of course, require specialist rooms. It has, therefore, been wonderful for the students to be able to move around the school and start to engage with all of these different subjects in their specialist spaces.

Co-Curricular

Part of our commitment to a broad education is our co-curricular programme. It has been a complete delight to see so many of our students engage with this programme. The programme is extensive and can be seen on our website. Over 400 of our students have attended at least one of our sporting clubs; over 150 students have engaged with our co-curricular Music programme. And of course, the programme ranges well beyond music and sport; to mindfulness, the history of ideas, book club, creative writing, drama, chess and cooking; there really is something for everyone. We say that we want our students to discover their passions as well as be very well educated; our co-curricular programme is an important part of supporting students to find those passions. In addition, the clubs provide a valuable social opportunity for the students to relate with adults and fellow students in a different way. This is always an important part of students' development and their well-being, but of more importance as we address the impact and challenges of the pandemic.

HEADTEACHER: JAMIE BROWNHILL

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Year 7 Summer School

Our Year 7s got to join school a whole week before the rest of the school. We used this week to provide an extended induction period. It provided a hugely beneficial way to help the students to get into the routines of learning at Central Foundation. We used the week as an extended training week for teachers as well. All teachers who were joining the school, attended the week along with our teacher coaching team. One benefit of the week was that we got to know the students who were joining us very well. On a personal level, I have never had so many of our students' names fixed in my mind prior to them joining the school.

Learning Behaviour

With the students returning to normal school we have had a real focus as a community on the behaviours we need for learning. To really learn something is difficult and requires the right behaviours and frame of mind. All students need to be calm, focussed yet relaxed and prepared to work hard. The challenge is that all 20 plus students in a class need to be in that 'space' for six lessons a day, 5 days a week. Our approach to behaviour looks to achieve this. In the classroom the students adopt a set of routines which mean we maximise every moment, eliminate any disruption, focus on the learning and work hard. We want the students to only be focusing on the knowledge and skills that they need to learn and practise, rather than coping with inconsistencies in approach across teachers and disruption from other students.

Both the students and teachers have worked really hard to achieve the behaviours that are needed with great success. Of course, there is still progress to be made, but we are 'a long way along the road.' The students have been so committed to this approach, and are to be commended for their hard work over the last half term.

Mutual Respect and Compassion

As well as looking to drive forward the students' knowledge and skills across the curriculum, the development of mutual respect and compassion within our students and the whole community is at the heart of who we are. As a community we are looking to retrain our responses and mental habits so that we are kinder, gentler and less fearful of others. We believe that compassion can be a healing force in all of our lives and in the world. We want our students to develop these habits of compassion, for themselves and others, so that they will all be a real force for good. We do this by reading and learning about compassion, but also by modifying our behaviour to act in a compassionate way. We believe that we need to practise this. In school this manifests itself in some of the habits we look to develop within the adults and the students in the school; by greeting each other throughout the day; by thanking each teacher after each lesson; and by looking to carry out an act of kindness each day.

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A focus for the next half term is the language we all use. As a starting point we will be driving forward our zero-tolerance approach to abusive and discriminatory language; be it of a racist, sexist or homophobic nature. What we mean by zero-tolerance is that abusive language is always challenged in an appropriate way, that can include a sanction, but also involves an educative approach. From this starting point, we want the students to not just avoid abusive language, but instead turn their language into a positive, life enhancing tool; a tool to express gratitude, to be kind and to develop precise and concise language to explain concepts and ideas.

Relationships and Sex Education - Curriculum and Policy Review

We are reviewing our relationship and sex education (RSE) curriculum and policy, so we can be sure that our RSE provision is appropriate for our pupils. Both the policy and curriculum can be found on our website.

We would like to give all parents and carers the opportunity to provide input and feedback into our RSE policy and curriculum. We are, therefore, running a focus group event in our Assembly Hall on Tuesday 9th November at 5pm. for one hour. If you would like to participate in the event please e-mail us at info@cfbs.islington.sch.uk, or call the office on 02072533741.

If you are unable to attend this event, but would like a discussion on this topic, please contact the school through the routes above.

Open letter to parents and carers from The Secretary of State

The Secretary of State for Education, Nadhim Zahawi, has written an open letter to parents, carers and guardians about the importance of children aged 12 to 15 getting their COVID-19 vaccine either at school, or at a local vaccination centre. The letter also reminds parents about the importance of testing.

Students and pupils are encouraged to take a lateral flow device (LFD) test at home and report the result before returning to school or college after half-term, and then to test twice-weekly after that. This is a key part of reducing transmission and case rates in secondary schools and colleges, and keeping children and young people in face-to-face education.

A link to the letter is here

https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2021/10/25/education-secretary-writes-to-parents-about-vaccinations-for-12-to-15-year-olds/?utm_source=28%20October%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19

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Upcoming Events

It has been very special to welcome parents back into the school for our curriculum evenings for Year 7, 10, 11, 12 and 13. We will complete these events this half term.

- Year 9 Curriculum Evening – Tuesday 23rd November 5pm – school Assembly Hall
- Year 8 Curriculum Evening – Tuesday 7th December 5pm – school Assembly Hall

In addition, we have the following dates for your diary:

- Friday 19th November – INSET day – school open to staff only
- Year 7 Parents' Evening – Thursday 25th November
- Founder's Day – Friday 26th November – school finishes at 12.05pm
- Year 9 Parents' Evening – Thursday 9th December
- Winter Concert – Thursday 16th December 6pm – school Assembly Hall
- Last day of term – Friday 17th December – school finishes at 12.05pm

Assessments:

- Year 11 mock exams – starting w/c 8th November
- Year 13 mock exams – starting w/c 15th November
- Year 12 assessment – starting w/c 1st November
- Year 10 assessment – starting w/c 22nd November
- Year 8 assessment – starting w/c 6th December

With best wishes,

Jamie Brownhill
Headteacher

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