

Dear parents/carers

A warm welcome back to the second half of the Spring term and to the February Headteacher's update.

Mobile Phones

The difference in our school in relation to the new mobile phone policy has been astonishing! We have had far fewer incidents of unkindness/bullying in relation to mobile phone use and at lunchtime, the canteen is alive with the chatter of our students, with no one staring down at a screen. It has been a delight to see. The students themselves have also been fantastic and, even when their phone has been confiscated, they have been mature and understanding about it. On the first day of the policy, 40 phones were confiscated; this is now in single figures almost every day and this is testament to the students' coming on board with the change to the policy so well. I would like to thank all parents/carers who have supported us with the implementation of this policy.

Summer Uniform

After Easter, if the weather warms up, we will let you know when the students are able to wear summer uniform. The move to summer uniform is likely to take place at some point between the Easter holidays and May half term. The summer uniform consists of a pale blue polo shirt (no logo required), or the school shirt worn without a tie. The rest of the uniform remains exactly the same and students are not permitted to wear PE kit to school. Students will not be required to bring their jumper/blazer to school when we move into summer uniform. **Please continue to send students in their usual uniform for now, with a jumper and/or blazer, plus a shirt and tie; and we will inform you when the change to summer uniform will commence.** Let's hope it's sooner rather than later!

Unreasonable Behaviour and Vexatious Complaints Policy

Very sadly, staff at the school continue to receive a very small number of communications or behaviour from parents/carers that are upsetting and unnecessary. To support our Communications Code, in line with guidance from the local authority, we have therefore had to create an 'Unreasonable Behaviour and Vexatious Complaints Policy'. This is on our website should you wish to look at it. On rare occasions when the behaviour of our community is not acceptable, whether than be via email, phone call or in person, this policy will be utilised. Please can I thank the vast majority of our school community for working with us in partnership to support their child's learning. We accept we don't always get everything right and are always willing to listen to our families and take on board constructive criticism. Please do communicate with us using our Communications Code if you ever feel an issue or problem has arisen and we will do our very best to resolve it. The Communications Code can also be found on our website.

Cynefin Day

This year we continue our days of celebration linked to Cynefin – our sense of Welsh identity and belonging. The next one of these days is on Friday 1st March, and we invite students to wear non uniform on this day (preferably Welsh colours). We have lots of Newport/Welsh themed activities for the students to enjoy on this day. A voluntary donation via parent pay would be very welcome, and this will be split between the PTA, FOCCS and Marie Curie.

Decorating and budgets

I am delighted to be able to tell you that I Block and E Block decorating is very nearly complete and we have planned further renovations of the Reset room and the canteen over the Easter holidays, as well as new flooring in some very tired areas! Sadly, some of the boilers in school have also come to the end of their lives and this has been an area we have also had to invest in. You will have likely seen from the news that school budgets remain a challenge within Newport, but we are doing our very best to spend as wisely as possible with a particular focus on the learning environment.

RADY pledge

Last year, Caerleon Comprehensive School took the RADY pledge. RADY stands for Raising the Attainment of Disadvantaged Young People. Research shows that students who are in receipt of free school meals in Wales do not perform as well academically (in GCSE results for example) as those who are not in receipt of free school meals. At Caerleon we believe that this is wrong and that the economic status of a young person's family should not determine how well they perform academically. We seek to close this disadvantage gap through a variety of approaches and this is what is meant by us taking the RADY pledge. We will therefore be holding an information evening at our school in the near future where we will share with families the strategies we are using to ensure that young people here all perform well, whether they are in receipt of free school meals or not. Please do look out for this invite and attend if you can.

Headteacher Question Time

Before half term we held a very successful question and answer session with the students, which involved student reps from each year group, plus the school council and the wellbeing and inclusion student group meeting with me, Mr Jones (Deputy Head), Mr Gardner (Snr Assistant Head), Mr Jenkins (Site Manager), Aspens (canteen service) and Mr Parr (Head of student voice), to ask questions about the areas that mattered most to them. All students have this week received assemblies from Mr Parr to feedback to them about the question time event and give them the answers to the questions shared. Please do ask your child about these matters if you would like to know more!

INSET day 11th March

A reminder that our next INSET day is the 11th March. The school is closed to students and staff will be taking part in vital professional learning sessions. We will be focusing on Doug Lemov 'Teach Like A Champion' strategies for use in the classroom, we are taking part in an anti-racist schools' workshop, and we have some key inputs about the delivery of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

Future Term Dates including INSET days

Please see the attached Term Dates including INSET dates:

- 2023 – 2024 – Unchanged
- 2024 – 2025 – INSET dates added

You can also find this on our website.

Thank you for your continued support of our school,

Mrs L Purcell
Headteacher.