



Headteacher's Update – February 2024

The joy and excitement of our Christmas shows at the end of the Autumn term now seem a very long time ago but there has been plenty of excitement through January and February and lots to celebrate at Cleves. Our weekly newsletters give you a flavour of the week to week events taking place, but I still hope it adds value to tell you about our school improvement plans and the work behind the scenes in order to keep you well informed about our plans for Cleves.

Raising the profile of the Arts

Since we are focusing on our Arts offer this year it felt important to offer staff some training and inspiration as part of this drive. The Art specialist working with us at the moment delivered a very valuable INSET day on 2nd January. Staff really enjoyed the session, came away with activities that could be offered in class or in clubs, but maybe more importantly an appreciation of the value of art.

Miss Forbes is leading on this school improvement priority and has carried out a thorough audit of our work so far. This has captured an already strong offer across the Arts subjects. We believe we have a very strong curriculum already in place, complimented by lots of opportunities for cross curricula work. We particularly wanted to develop our extra curricula offer in the Art subjects, though with the challenge laid down by our Ofsted visitors that the Arts offer should match our Sports offer.

Our extracurricular program

This continues to flourish, offering students opportunities to explore their interests beyond the classroom. From sports to arts and crafts, drama to music, there is something for everyone to enjoy. I would like to extend my gratitude to all the staff and volunteers who dedicate their time and effort to enriching the lives of our students through these activities. After asking the staff for their help, we have managed to collate an interesting and impressive number of arts-based lunchtime clubs. At the start of this term, we surveyed the children to gauge how many were interested in the Arts clubs we

are offering and had an overwhelmingly positive response. An incredibly high number of children wanted to join the clubs and we had anywhere from 30 - 80 children registering interest in many of the new clubs.

Over the next few weeks, we will have knitting clubs starting, an origami club, several different sewing clubs (including one where the children will use sewing machines), a dance club, a musical theatre club, sketching for beginners, digital art and a clay club.

I should probably add that this has not been at the expense of our sports clubs which remain as numerous and popular as ever.

Supporting pupils with learning

The first weeks of 2024 have not all been about art and self-portraits. Year leaders have written new action plans for the spring term which will guide support and interventions. We assess pupils before and after each intervention so decisions can be evidence based and support groups do not continue if they are adding no value.

Reading at Cleves

With improvement ideas for writing and maths researched last year then implemented this year we intend to audit our approach to reading next with a view to possible refinements in September 2024. We have a literacy consultant booked to carry out a reading audit in March to consider our next steps. Although our end of Key Stage reading results clearly evidence that our attainment levels are very high and significantly above national average year on year, our aspiration remains to have more impact earlier.

Mrs Cannell has been researching new materials we could use with our less confident, less capable readers and is leading our literacy working party.

Pupil voice to see how are changes help

We always build in opportunities to take pupil voice and this term will be asking pupils about their experience in maths, what they learnt in our Black History month and what impact the changes in writing have had. Our year leaders also ask pupils for feedback on the curriculum at the end of the term. On every occasion our pupils offer valid and insightful feedback which does inform change and further improvement.

Well being

In addition to curriculum improvements we remain focused on the wellbeing agenda. Ms Clarke is very busy working through the Well-being Award requirements in order to be ready for our assessment. A working party including staff, parents and pupils are all contributing ideas to how we support each other, what we can offer if anyone needs guidance or help and where we can build in more learning and messaging about wellbeing into our curriculum.

Inclusion / SEND

Inclusion is another of our key priorities this year but this term there is a significant focus on moving forward with our action plan and next steps. The Autumn is often dominated by curriculum changes

and initiatives which need rolling out at the beginning of an academic year. With this work introduced and underway we need to monitor and review our changes in writing and maths before any more change is introduced. In the second half of this year we will be focusing heavily on inclusion. We have an Inclusion / SEND working party made up of Mrs Grafton, Mrs Matthews, Ms Miller and Mrs Batchelor who are all working hard to create an action plan that will guide our provision over the next 3 years. We have a wealth of helpful feedback from our staff INSET day in October and from a parent forum hosted by Mrs Batchelor. This has generated a number of areas to consider -

- School culture and climate
- Staff training and induction
- Leadership structure and capacity for SEND
- Creating a multi-disciplinary team
- Whole school inclusive practice
- Dyslexia friendly approach
- SEND support plans
- Curriculum review
- Interventions
- ASD/ADHD process
- Wellbeing support for parents
- Closer working with Infant feeder schools
- Provision for most complex pupils
- Specialist spaces
- Use of technology

As the year progresses we will share more information about our provision and future plans.

Specialist and therapeutic rooms

Yet another working party met to discuss how we might benefit from new specialist rooms to ensure pupils have all the provision they need. We have an increasing number of pupils who could benefit from therapeutic support and having taken expert advice we hope to create a new multi-sensory room in our new small learning space (funded by Elmbridge grant application)



(Examples not actual room)

ASD / ADHD cases appear to be on the increase and the system to refer pupils for assessment has changed a number of times over the last twelve months alone and become increasingly complex. The gateway for referrals was closed down in the Autumn term due to a considerable backlog of cases in Surrey and there are no signs it will reopen in the near future. With the numbers of pupils increasing and the support or assessment of pupils decreasing we know we need to find our own response to the higher levels of need. Mrs Grafton and Ms Clarke are creating a document that will map out the pathways and support available to ensure our offer and information is clear.

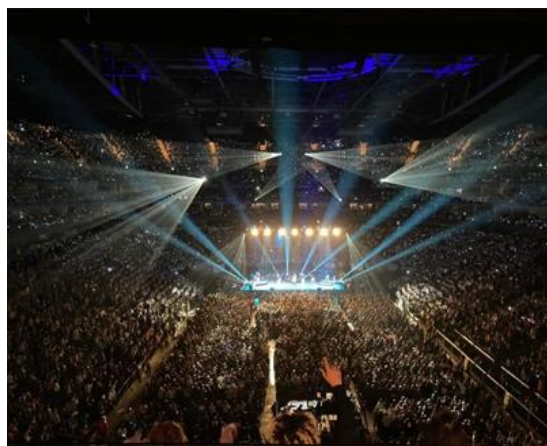
More good news

I am delighted to say our Head Chef, Stacey, was awarded employee of the month by our catering company, Pabulum. She was one of 300 nominees across the country and a well-deserved winner. Stacey has been in the kitchen for some years and risen through the ranks to become our Head Chef. She runs a fantastic team and leads by example, working many hours a week above her contract. She cares for all our pupils and goes out of her way to make sure they are happy, well fed and looked after.



In conclusion

To conclude my half termly update, I saved one of the most exciting events to last. 72 Cleves pupils from year 5 and 6 performed at the 02 on 18th January and enjoyed an amazing evening. They were part of an 8,000 strong children's choir and performed alongside a range of professional performers and musicians. I would like to record my thanks to all the parents and staff that attended but in particular thank Mrs Tao who organised the trip for us yet again.



Finally, I would like to express my continued gratitude to all parents, guardians, and staff for your ongoing support and collaboration. Together, we create a nurturing and inclusive environment, full of activity and opportunity for pupils.

Perhaps even more importantly, I am incredibly proud of our students for their hard work and dedication throughout this term. We have seen impressive progress in various subjects, with students demonstrating creativity, critical thinking, and resilience in their learning. Our teachers have been impressed by the commitment and enthusiasm shown by our pupils. It has been a wonderful half term.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions, concerns or ideas.

Wishing you all a wonderful Spring Half Term break.

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Mr C Hodges.

Mr C Hodges
Headteacher