

Year 7 Information Evening

Monday 18 September 2023

Notes to accompany presentation

Section 1 – Mrs Wilson

At Carre's our culture is focused around excellence – we want all of our students to achieve the best they possibly can in everything they do. In order to do this we must challenge the idea that 'boys will be boys' and that 'it'll do' in terms of work.

Basing our strategies on research e.g. Ron Berger's Ethic of Excellence, teachers endeavour to encourage a passion for learning through excellent teaching, provide work that challenges and inspires students and celebrate excellent effort and achievement.

We provide opportunities for students to share their work within the school community and with the wider community and students are proud when their work represents the school. With this focus on excellence, students are expected to do their best and if a piece of work falls below expectations then students will be asked to re-do that piece of work. Please support your son if this happens so that they can work towards succeeding in their subjects.

We encourage students to persevere when work is challenging – many of them are happy to spend hours improving their skills on gaming, a fraction of that time spent looking at the work they are struggling with could make a world of difference.

What can you do to support your son in developing an ethic of excellence?

- Encourage your son to aim high.
- Look at their work with them and discuss it.
- At the planning stage, encourage them to think how a piece could be improved.
- Challenge them – are they proud to hand in that piece of work?
- Encourage your son to read – reading every day has a huge impact on academic achievement, a UCL research project found that students who read each day did 9.9% better on their maths assessments than students who didn't read for pleasure.

Most importantly, we would like to ask you to join us in giving the message **"It'll do" won't do!**

Section 3 – Mr Newell

- 33. Friendships from primary school may not survive the move (primary school divorce) – be prepared to help your son. If he half-expects this, it is less of a problem if it happens. New friendships will form, in time.**

Relationships – they won't be friends with everyone! There will be someone in the form who they find it difficult to be around. This is part of growing up and will be a test of character. We insist on tolerance and kindness as key values in our students. Also consider having to build relationships with around 15 different teachers, (rather than just one) not to mention the office team, site team and the staff in the Chill. Always be nice to the people who give you food!

Equip – bringing the right books on the right days is always a challenge. We have a 2-week timetable, which requires proper use of the planner! Parents may need to help in the early days – you know your child best. If it goes wrong – loss of equipment life in the 1st instance.

Getting lost – it happens! Teachers are understanding with Y7 of course but by now (2 full weeks in) we expect the boys to know where they are going and to leave enough time to get there. Common pitfall here seems to be immediately after break times. We teach the boys what to do if they do get lost and they all have a map to try to prevent it happening. If someone is frequently late to lessons we will investigate why and support/challenge.

- 34. The foundation of organisation is crucial – we then build upon that as soon as we can!**

- 35. We use a popular system of positive points to reinforce good effort and behaviour – from things like an excellent piece of work down to showing good manners or helping another student.**

Boys receive 3 points for a P1 (higher rewards also available). We find that this motivates the vast majority of our students to try to show positive behaviours. Boys enjoy tracking their 'score' and having a good score leads to certain extrinsic rewards and privileges throughout the year. It's also something boys and tutors will review together at the 3 Progress Grade review weeks. Negative behaviours tip the balance the other way with minus points.

When things go wrong:

I assume you want your sons to come to school to feel safe and to be able to learn without having that learning unduly disrupted by someone else's behaviour. I also assume then, that you don't want any negative behaviour from your son to disrupt others' learning. It's really important on this front that we can work together as a parent-school partnership to promote positive and challenge negative behaviours. Your transition packs included a home-school agreement which parents signed to agree a collaboration with school on such matters. Of course, if you believe a sanction is unjust or that something has been missed, I would expect you to challenge this, but beware of only having one side of the story! Always better to contact me/tutor starting with something like "I appreciate I only have his side of the story but he tells

me that..." rather than assuming he has told you the gospel truth and not omitted anything at all from his account...

We have a detailed, thorough behaviour for learning policy, which you can access online via the school website. You also received a paper copy in your transition packs last summer.

Sanctions for negative behaviour range from advice & guidance (-1) to various levels of detention and in some circumstances isolation and exclusion. For the vast majority the more serious sanctions will not be necessary but if and when they are used, it's important that we all treat it as an opportunity to learn from a mistake – we all make them!

Overwhelmingly, our students feel safe here and behave very positively. Like any school, we rely upon a strict behaviour policy to ensure that remains the case for your sons.

36. n/a

37. A scheme we introduced last year so that our boys know that we expect them to meet the basic requirements consistently. It's what you do every day that makes a difference, not what you do every now and then. This is not something parents/boys should fear, more a method to sharpen focus on a particular element.

Boys will be reminded of the expectations by tutors at the start of the 2-week period. Form tutors will check every morning (e.g. put your planner, pen and pencil on the desk so I can see you have them with you today. Any failure to meet expectations for the current focus will result in an immediate response – a detention at lunchtime that day (next day if it happens in the afternoon).

Parents will receive an email with basic expectations ahead of each focus, so they can support their sons.

38. I am sure you do not want to hear from your son at 11am that such-and-such has pushed him over or taken his pencil case. For a start, it's just going to upset you and there is very little you'd be able to do to help! This is one of the reasons why we do not permit use of mobile phones at school between the times of 0845 and 1545. Boys and parents should instead contact the school office with any concerns, especially in emergencies. The office will be able to manage the communication and any assistance needed.

If you have a concern you'd like to raise or something to make us aware of, please in the first instance contact the school office, who will forward to your son's form tutor. The tutor is the best person to deal with the majority of issues and really only the more significant ones come to me as Head of Year. With 2 YG this year, you can probably imagine that the tutor would be able to assist sooner with a pair of missing shoes than I would. It is a good idea to build a relationship with your son's tutor (they are the closest thing to his old primary school teacher) but please be aware that they have full teaching timetables and may not be able to respond to your enquiry immediately. Our school policy is to respond within 3 working days but usually we manage to do so sooner.

39. Homework and Independent Study in Year 7

Homework in year 7 is designed to develop independent learning skills. Students will receive a mix of formal set homework and a requirement to complete independent learning activities.

Research has shown that students who begin a regular habit of independent study in year 7 make greater academic progress throughout their time at secondary school so it is important that you begin to get used to this straight away.

Students should be aiming to complete around 40 minutes to an hour of homework / independent study a night. You will need to manage your time if you have clubs or other commitments on particular nights of the week so that you have time to do this work on a different night or at the weekend. If you aren't set any homework that night, try an independent study task for each of the subjects you've had that day. IDEALISTIC! Students who do the independent study well will be rewarded with positive points.

Independent study is essentially recapping, revising and reinforcing your learning from a particular day. You will need to spend 15 mins per subject per day doing this if you do not get homework set by the teacher. You will need to record what you have done in a homework planner and your parents will need to sign each week to agree that they have seen you doing this.

Your subject teachers will give you some ideas of how to approach this independent study and there will be a place on the school website where you can access suggested tasks for each subject each term.

Please support your son with his homework and independent study in terms of his organisation – for example helping him to create a positive working space at home which is free of distraction, has lots of air and contains all necessary equipment, books, etc. Please be a voice of positivity when it comes to homework, we need to present a united front in the face of student reluctance.

Ultimately his next steps and the options available to him will be based upon his performance in exams. The ability to effectively retain information, revise it and apply it will be challenged throughout his time at school and I hope this challenge is already underway.

40. *Miss McCarthy has recently written to you all to share details of our new Personal Development Curriculum. Personal Development brings together the statutory content from PSHE, Relationships and Sex and Health Education, Citizenship and British Values. She will be in contact with you throughout the year regarding upcoming events and workshops and to allow you the opportunity to share your thoughts and feedback on the development of the new programme.*
41. The booklet handed out this evening guides you through this process. You should also receive this by email as I'm aware not all parents could attend tonight.
You will receive a further email to allow you to register and log in.
42. These are some of the individuals/organisations that make up our pastoral support team. Students and parents should ensure they know how to contact/find each of these, should they be needed.
If you see anything as a parent that concerns you, it is a good idea to contact tutor, HoY or even the SS desk directly.
Nurse – by appointment
CAYPS – Disability support

CAMHS – Mental Health support

EW – attendance support

If a student does need additional support, early identification and intervention are our goals!

- 43. You could insist your sons stay off-line, but in my opinion, you want your kids learning about this aspect of life from you while they are still at home where you can teach them the skills they'll need**

Parent awareness/role – establish safe rules such as regular phone/device checks and leaving phones downstairs at night. Familiarise with problematic apps

Be an ask-able parent. From an early age, treat every topic like a welcome topic. Make “I’m glad you asked me” and “I’m so glad you brought that up” two parenting mantras. You want them to ask you, rather than Siri!!

In your introduction pack you will have received information on our mobile phone and social media policies, which are crucial

School has invested heavily in training our staff in child online safety – continuous staff development on this topic

Part of the school’s Personal Development (formerly PSHE) delivery – every week

Assemblies – e.g. anti-bullying

Students will be given an - introductory look at online safety – via the PD curriculum and also their Computing lessons

All students are entitled to free Microsoft 365 account for home PCs, tablets etc.