



‘Cardinal Pole Catholic School is a community of **service** guiding young people on a path to **opportunity**, **aspiration**, and **reward**, founded on Catholic values.’

HEADTEACHERS ONLINE PARENT FORUM

Friday 29th September 2023

Last Thursday and Saturday we had our Open Evening and Open Morning, parents/carers may be aware of the declining school places, back in 2014 the vacancy rate for reception class was 0.5% now it is 23% this is an extraordinary rise and this filters through to secondary schools over the course of the years. I am happy to say however that Cardinal Pole is completely full with a waiting list. We are the only Catholic School in Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Camden and Islington that is full. I would also like to thank those student helpers who came in to assist us with both of these events. Each helper will receive an Amazon voucher as a thank you – they were excellent ambassadors for the school. We had over 160 families visit us over two days.

Year 7 had their Bible Mass recently where they received a personalised bible, this was well attended by parents/carers – thank you.

Our extra curricular programme is up and running and thriving, the programme is on the website for you to view and sign up is carried out using EVOLVE. There are currently over 800 students signed up to various classes, with an expectation that each student does at least one club a week. There are a variety of clubs - Chess, sports, study spaces, a brand new gym, coding club, book club, film, debating, hockey and art/crafts. Hockey is a new club which is run by our new PE teacher Mr Crossley who is a semi-professional hockey player. Next week the first sessions with PSG will start with Cardinal Pole being their exclusive partner. This will start with Year 7 initially and grow from there.

From tomorrow, we are opening the school every Saturday for the rest of the year for Year 11 to have their own study space from 9am-1pm which will be staffed. This will be self-directed and students do not have to come in school uniform or for the whole four hours it is completely invitational, optional and open to all Year 11 students to have a quiet space to carry out home learning or revision. Year 13 will receive a similar offer in the coming weeks once the building works have finished. This is alongside the usual school interventions which will run on a Saturday and during October half term this is longer this year.

Our Black History Month programme is being launched on Monday, a letter will be going out today to parents/carers. This year is even better than last year, it is a very comprehensive programme. All students in assembly have been spoken to about this by Mr Rahman, Assistant Headteacher. There will be a variety of events including trips to see Hamilton, a planned extension of our existing mural, competitions and carnival and steel pan workshops which have a fully funded teacher.

Our PE changing rooms are almost finished (hopefully next week – thank you for your patience), these have received a significant upgrade so the need for students to come into school in PE kit on those timetabled days will shortly finish.

The School has been nominated for another award, last year we were shortlisted for Secondary School of the Year, this year we have been nominated for Mental Health and Well Being Award by FutureEd. Cynthia John, our mentor and Inclusion Manager has also been nominated as Mentor of the Year. The award ceremony will take place in December, we will keep you posted.

We are disappointed with our current food offering so we have decided to part ways with our current supplier, Chartwells as it is still not where I would like it to be. I think we can do it better in-house so from half term, this will be moving across. No member of staff will lose their jobs, they will remain employed by us and work with us. There will be some new additional staff to help us make the transition and hopefully it will be better value for money and better food.

Parent Questions:

Parent 1: Congratulations for the nominations and to Ms John. MS Teams access for Year 12 how is this achieved? AHA: They should have access to this, Year 13 have been using this for some time, we will look into this. Should be straight forward and easy to resolve. Not all subjects use this and some subjects use it more than others.

Parent 1 - Lockers: When will Year 12 have access to these? With two new classrooms currently being built space is a challenge so we need to prioritise the lockers for vocational students as they have the biggest amount of folders to carry. We have a bigger sixth form than ever before so it will be a challenge to provide lockers for all.

Parent 1: My daughter is really enjoying sixth form experience. Thanks to all staff.

Parent 2: Detention for Year 7s could we have some clarity on the rules as they are not clear? AHA: Year 7 have had a briefing with our Deputy Headteacher on school expectations and standards, there are 8 main rules which fall under ready to learn, one voice and work hard, these 8 rules are displayed on the classroom walls and the form tutors have regular talks about them. It is a big change from primary school but we must have standards, rules and clear expectations. Our Year Teams are always available every day in the playground for students to seek clarification on the rules and why detentions are being set.

Parent 3: Cannot sign up to a particular club. AHA: This is most likely because it is full, some of our clubs have waiting lists. For further clarification please speak to the HOY.

The next meeting will be held in two weeks' time.



**Mr A Hall
HEADTEACHER**