



change@cchs

Aututmn Term 2023 Update

change@cchs continues to be a central part of our School; our commitment to ensuring that our staff and students are equipped to work against all forms of discrimination and to pursue a fair and more equitable world for all. This term we continue to develop our curriculum provision and have embraced the joy of cultural expression and celebration with our wonderful Black Excellence Fest, our brilliant Culture Fest Week and the amazing Change Enrichment day. We would like to thank this year's Change and Diversity Prefects for their contributions and ideas and look forward to welcoming new students into the roles next year.

Miss Harrison and Mrs Cross, Deputy Headteachers

Change Autumn Bulletin

by Kushi, Stephanie, Chelsea and Mrs Watt

This Autumn Term was marked by a series of celebrations, workshops and performances that made up Culture Fest Week, Black History Month and Black Excellence Fest. These were organised by the hard-working and dedicated team of Change and Diversity Prefects, with help from Mrs Watt.

Culture Fest Week

From the 10th to 13th October, CCHS held its annual Culture Fest Week: a series of lunchtime performances culminating in a Friday finale with a Cultural Dress Day and food-sharing event celebrating the vast range of cultures and backgrounds enjoyed by CCHS students. For the first time, Year 9 students benefitted from a new Enrichment Day on the 12th October, with a series of workshops that truly diversified the curriculum.

The fabulous performances on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday lunchtime were dedicated to showcasing the talents from different year groups with the vibrant finale on Friday. Each day, the hall was packed with students, who enthusiastically whooped and clapped to express their enjoyment. The audience was transported by the mesmerising array of song and dance, including: songs in Greek, Hindi, Polish, Urdu and Yoruba to name a few; Bollywood/Lollywood hits; many dance styles from Bhangra to Odissi, Afro-beat to tap dance, from Bhangra to Bollywood, Bharatanatyam, Giddha, to fusions of Nigerian and Ghanaian dances and more.

Change and Diversity Prefects, Nafisat and Bethany, were the wonderful comperes of the event, and the production, sound engineering and lighting was professional and seamless, thanks to the hard work of Mr French and Mr Rowell. Behind the scenes, Year 11 Prefects, Chelsea, Bethany and Nafisat, worked tirelessly to organise this extravaganza, devoting many lunch breaks to auditioning students. The team had to make some hard decisions, but their hard work paid off.

Year 9 Enrichment Day

On the Wednesday of Culture Fest Week, Year 9 students were also lucky to take part in a Change and Diversity Enrichment Day, devoted to a series of six workshops learning about South Asian and African music and dance, as well as a more modern musical tradition - how to rap. At CCHS, we are incredibly lucky to have so much skill and talent in our midst, so two workshops were delivered by CCHS students: Indian dance and Afro-beat dancing. Some expert Year 11 dancers worked tirelessly throughout the day to teach students a fantastic Afro-beat routine or 2 Indian classical dance routines from two different traditions - Kathak and Odissi. Mrs Watt's mother also helped with this workshop as she used to be a professional Kathak dancer.

The other four workshops were run by some incredibly talented and charismatic professionals who really enthused the students: a great singer specialising in Bengali traditional songs, a tabla player who taught the students the complex rhythms of this South Asian tradition and an African drummer who brought 30 different drums; all teachers allowed the students to drum, sing and chant their stress away, as they learnt about the wonders of the rich musical and dance traditions from around the world. However, for many the highlight was the workshop on how to write and perform rap or spoken word poetry, delivered by a famous visiting Garage producer and founder of the House and Garage Orchestra, DJ Shy Cookie. Thanks to his workshop, many felt empowered to find their voice through creating spoken word poetry or rap, full of innovative rhymes and rhythms.

Cultural Dress Day

The incredible performances of the finale of Culture Fest Week fell on Friday 13th October when students and teachers also wore cultural dress. Students (and some teachers too) dressed in so many colours and fabrics, all somehow finding a piece of clothing or an outfit that felt part of their own traditions, including: shalvar kameeses, lehengas with both long and short cholis, Agbada, Kente, half or full saris, Gele, tikkas, Qipao, Ao Dais, Hanfus, turbans, head scarfs and jewellery. The explosion of vivid colour and beautiful style created an exciting buzz to the air and a festive atmosphere, marked by recognition of and pride in the diversity and community spirit of CCHS.

The final performances were complemented by a food-sharing event in the Hall that also celebrated the diversity of our school, organised by Culture and Diversity Prefects, Kushi, Shreejini, Keerath and Mia. Through collaborative efforts with students of varying ages and ethnic backgrounds, they transformed the Hall into a global feast, with each dish becoming an ambassador of its representative culture.

From spicy curries to savoury pastries, the table was filled with an array of flavours, a melting pot of tradition that reflected the school community. Not only did this event bring enticing food, but it also became a medium through which cherished recipes could be passed down, serving as a bridge connecting different backgrounds, promoting understanding and appreciation among students.

From someone who helped run the food stall, seeing both students and teachers gather to explore new dishes and watch the vibrant performances showed why Culture Fest Week has now become a tradition within the school community. By embracing diversity and highlighting the beauty that emerges when traditions are shared, it was possible to raise money for UNICEF and MSF to support people in need.

Black History Month

This year, the theme for Black History Month was 'Saluting Our Sisters,' which recognised the remarkable contributions of Black women; CCHS marked the occasion with a series of assemblies on the week after half-term, and the fabulous Black Excellence Fest (BE Fest) on Friday. The Hall was transformed into a haven of fun, music, and food, igniting a vibrant celebration of some incredible women's achievements and contributions, from both the past and today. We were able to give out free Kinky hair samples, as well as sell traditional African snacks like plantain chips and Supermalt. We also had a vast array of entertainment - poets, dancers and vocalists all contributed to create a buzzing atmosphere.

To top it all off, there were fun activities like word searches and crosswords to complete as well as an origins map that anyone could mark to showcase the diversity in our school. From captivating performances by talented students that encapsulated the beauty of African culture to tables showcasing afro-centric food and hair products, the event was a testament to honouring diversity and fostering inclusivity in our community. It was an amazing way to end Black History Month and marked the end of a huge amount of hard work over this term from the current Change and Diversity Prefects.

We are excited to see how **change@cchs** unfolds in the future - on their second year, we know that BE FEST and Culture Fest Week are wonderful fixtures in the calendar and the highlight of the year for many. These unique events celebrate the wonderfully diverse cultural riches and traditions we enjoy, as well attempt to communicate the diversity of knowledge and understanding at CCHS, making the school a more vibrant, inclusive and welcoming environment for us all.