



change@cchs

Autumn Term 2024 Update

Introduction – Mrs Cross and Miss Harrison

As always, we are incredibly proud of the continued commitment our school community demonstrates towards our change@cchs project and the opportunities it brings. This Autumn Term Update gives us the chance to share the exciting things that have been happening with the incredible student led events of the term, with a summary from our Change and Diversity Prefects, as well as a write-up from Mr Carter about the curriculum developments in English.

This term has been a testament to the power of collaboration and creativity, with students at the heart of some of our most celebrated events. The remarkable Culture Fest, which showcased the rich diversity of our school community, brought together students and staff to celebrate cultures from around the world. The events of the week were not only a vibrant display of student talent, but also a powerful reminder of the value we place on inclusivity and global awareness.

Our Black History Month celebrations were equally impactful, with our Change and Diversity Prefects delivering insightful assemblies throughout the week. This year's theme encouraged students to 'Dig deeper, look closer, think bigger' and to 'Reclaim Narratives'. A key element during that memorable month was our Black Excellence Fest, an extraordinary event where we were all fortunate to enjoy a range of impressive student performances. These events, all student-led, reinforced the strength of our commitment to nurturing a learning environment where every student is seen, heard and empowered to contribute.

Looking ahead, we are excited to continue building on this momentum, ensuring that our change@cchs project continues to enrich our school community. This term has shown us just how much can be accomplished when we work together. We would like to extend our appreciation to our Change and Diversity Prefects, Mrs Watt and all in our community for their work on this project.

A celebration of change@cchs events – Change and Diversity Prefects

We want to tell you that it was our pleasure as Change and Diversity Prefects to bring you Culture Day this year. It was absolutely wonderful to see all your cultures shine through in the beauty, colours and gorgeous fabrics of many of our glorious cultural clothes! Of course, we cannot forget the amazing performances: they were an unforgettable experience. So again, we would like to thank everybody who participated and made Culture Day and the Change Festival a reality. We were awe-struck by the amount of talent and the skills that all who auditioned displayed. We hope that you enjoyed Culture Day as much as we enjoyed organising it!

We would also like to say that we hope you enjoyed Black Excellence Day during Black History Month. It was brilliant delivering our assembly to you all and we sincerely hope that you were able to learn about Black History through the ages. We must talk about our Black Excellence Fest with our lovely performers! The performers' dancing, singing and poetry was a joy to hear and, again, we would like to thank everybody who helped the festival come to life. It was a day of joy! From the food to the film, to the performances and the wonderful atmosphere: we would not have changed a thing!

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to help celebrate our wonderfully rich and diverse cultural heritage together!

The English Curriculum – Mr Carter, Subject Leader of English & School Development Leader

As part of the English Department's commitment to diversifying the curriculum and providing a broader range of reading experiences for our student body, we have replaced previously taught content of *Of Mice & Men* and *Lord of the Flies*, which were variously taught as part of the Year 9 Summer Term novel unit, with a much more exciting approach to novel study.

The new novel unit provides an opportunity for students to dive into a wealth of diverse prose fiction texts, using shorter extracts to provide dynamic introductions to different authors and different writing styles while considering the key literary skills of close analysis and application of historical context. These skills not only coincide with key Assessment Objectives at GCSE across both the Literature and Language examinations, but will also follow directly through to KS5, where breadth of reading and an application of wider literary contexts is an explicit assessment objective in the English A level.

The unit of work itself has been passionately produced in a collaborative style by our Year 9 teaching team and students have been enjoying reading postcolonial and magical realist fiction by Arundhati Roy, Laura Esquivel, Gabriel Garcia Marquez,

Chinua Achebe, R K Narayan and Jean Rhys alongside excerpts, from novels by Jane Austen, Virginia Woolf, Mrs Gaskell, Charlotte Brontë and Naomi Alderman, to name just some of the inspirational writers who students now get to enjoy.

As part of the longer unit, study focuses in slightly more detail, using a number of selected extracts, on the award-winning novel *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamada Ngozi Adichie, who is arguably the most prominent and celebrated female black author in the world today.

The novel tells the story of a teenage Nigerian girl navigating between traditional Igbo life and the colonial world, set against the backdrop of the Nigerian Civil War. The fact that it is an extremely sensitively written book about the experience of being a teenage girl is in many ways as important as the setting.

This is a text of appropriate academic challenge, having been a staple GCSE text for several years, much like the previously taught *Of Mice and Men* and *Lord of the Flies*. One of the novel's more challenging elements comes from a small number of brief but impactful episodes of domestic violence, none of which will feature as studied extracts from the novel, which will instead focus on aspects of the central character and her experiences within her culture. There will also be adequate warnings supplied for those students who are inspired to read further into the novel, a challenge which we hope some students will take up.

Our vision for the unit has been to create 'the best Year 9 novel unit in the country today', eschewing extended group reading through one single novel in favour of a highly challenging, rewarding and rich menu of inspirational writers with a specific focus on women writers and writers of colour. In this way, the unit follows strongly in the footsteps of units elsewhere across curricula from KS3-5.
