

TRANSITION NEWSLETTER NO. 3

Hello everyone,

We hope you are all well and safe. Thanks to those of you who have submitted your 'One Island, One School' posters, all about 'Me as a learner'. They're wonderful, and really do what we need them to do, which is give your teachers at Castle Rushen a snapshot of you as a learner, but also as an individual. Some of you have some fascinating hobbies and some of the work is so creative, we were hugely impressed! Keep them coming in. Remember, they can be scanned and sent to CRHSenquiries@sch.im or they can be sent by post. If you have forgotten what you need to do, then remember that the instructions are in Newsletter 1 or you can watch Episode 2 of our videos.

You should have all had a pack of information through the post this week too. Please contact us if you do not have yours. Parents and carers, please complete and return your registration form and the friendship form. Year 6 students, you need to fill out your friendship form too and all of these can be sent back to us in the envelope provided. Thank you!

QUESTIONS ? ? ? ?

Don't forget to send us your questions for the weekly question competition. We are going to answer a number of them this week, as this helps everyone with any worries they might have about coming to big school.



The first was from **Phoebe** from **Victoria Road** - "**I really enjoy swimming and wondered if this is an option with sports?**"

Good question, Phoebe! Yes, you do have the chance for do swimming, as part of PE in Years 7 and 8. We also have a yearly Swimming Gala where the houses compete against each other.

Arlo, also from **Victoria Road**, asked: "**Does Year 7 have their own football team?**"

Yes Arlo, they do! In fact, there's usually more than one team. We are a small school, but it would be correct to say that we win more than our fair share of sporting competitions across the Island against the other high schools.

Arlo also asked: "**What lunch time clubs do you do?**"

Great question! We think it's a really good idea to keep busy at lunchtimes. Episode 4 of our transition videos will be live next week and it's all about lunch. We will also put a copy of this year's club list in the transition section of our website. Just to give you a sample, there are lots in sport, like basketball and hockey, but also in tonnes in music and drama too. Do you fancy being in next year's school show or learning to play the ukulele?! We have had science clubs and there are homework clubs too. Check out the list on the website.



QUESTIONS



Stanley from **Arbory** asked - "Can you please tell me how we are sorted into houses and classes? My Dad said that the year used to be split in half with forms of CAS and TLE so that you wouldn't be in any classes with students from the other half of the year until in Year 10. Can you explain how it works now as I have three friends who I would really like to be in class with?"

Very detailed question, Stanley. Well done! We have changed things a little since Dad was at school! So, in video Episode 2 we talked about filling in your friendship forms. Don't forget to send these to us. Your tutor group normally has an equal mix of boys and girls and we make sure that each group has a range of children in it, with different academic abilities and interests. Your tutor group is a bit like your Year 6 class, and that's the group of people who you register with in the morning with your form tutor. It's also the group with which you have your Quest lessons, so if you have filled in your form, and your parents agree with your choices, at least one of the people you have nominated should be in the same tutor group. In reality, there's usually more than one. We don't use CASTLE any more to name the tutor groups, but use a number 7 and your form tutor's initials. As an example, Mrs Williams' initials are LSW, so her group is '7LSW'.

For other lessons, you may be in groups of people of a similar ability to you. We don't have 'sets' at Castle Rushen in Key Stage 3 and never say 'You're in the top group' or 'He's in the middle group'. We think you should be able to learn in a group of people who are roughly of the same ability as you. This helps you to make progress and stops you feeling that you're struggling, as the work you do should be at the right level for all of the students in the class. If your friends work at the same level as you, they may be in the same group. Some groups are a mix of different people, so that you can use the facilities in the teaching area. For example, Design and Technology classes are usually about 22 students for safety reasons.

We have four houses, which are named **Bradda**, **Carrick**, **Langness** and **Scarlett**. Each one has a different coloured stripe on their school tie. Houses are mainly for sports competitions, so your tutor group will have people in each of the four houses in it. In the past, we used to try to put you in the same house as any older siblings at Castle Rushen, but now we allocate them more randomly. One thing we try to do is split the people who are sporty across all four houses, as it would not be fair for all of the sporty students to be in the same house. Phew! That was a long answer. Hope that all makes sense, Stanley!



Finally, the last question for this week came from **Ella** from **Ballasalla**. Well done, Ella! "Will we be able to visit the school and meet some teachers before September?"

That's a brilliant question, but one that's hard to answer at the moment! All we can say is that we will do anything possible to make this happen, if we are allowed. We don't yet know which year groups will return to Castle Rushen and when. Social distancing rules mean that we will have to spread out our students a bit more so that everyone can keep their two-metre distance, so this could make the building full with fewer students.

We are looking at other ways for you to meet teachers if we cannot bring you into school before the end of the year. The most important thing to remember is that we are like a big family and you will soon be part of that Castle Rushen family! Although some of you may be concerned, Castle Rushen is a nice place to be and everyone cares about all the other members of the school community, so don't worry.



ALL ABOUT ME!

Year 7 Student Profile



- Name:** Ella-Grace
- Primary School:** Victoria Road
- How did you feel before you started Castle Rushen?** I was nervous but I knew I would make loads of friends.
- How easy was it to find your way around?** I did not get lost at all. I was really surprised, it's small really. The building looks bigger at night time, like when you come in for Open Evening.
- What was it like at Castle Rushen once you got used to it?** I like the fact that it's more free at high school. We can move around to lots of different places and it's not like primary school where you are told where to go by the teachers all the time.
- Did you make new friends?** I'm in a little group. There are six or seven of us. One was from Rushen and one from Arbory and the others are from Vic Road. Some of the Vic Road girls weren't my friends before, but have become my friends since I came here. It's a really fun group.
- Which are your favourite subjects?** I don't really have a favourite, but I like D&T. I really liked cooking and I liked making my Blockbot in Product Design. I like all of my subjects most of the time.
- What are the teachers like?** It depends which teachers you have, they're all right, some just think they are very funny!
- What advice would you give to a Year 6 who is coming to Castle Rushen in September?** I have said to some of my Year 6 friends, the school is not that big and you probably won't get lost, so don't worry about that.
- Finally, what is your favourite thing about being at Castle Rushen?** The food! I like loads of it.
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YEAR 7 TUTOR PROFILE



- Name:** Mrs Williams (the shorter one!)
- Subject taught:** Science, but I'm in charge of Chemistry specifically.
- Background:** After I left school, I trained to be a vet, something I had wanted to do since I was very young. My first job was on the Isle of Man, where I intended to stay for a year...20 years ago! I loved working with animals, but eventually felt the need to try a new challenge. I was lucky enough to be offered the chance to do my teacher trainer at CRHS while doing my teaching qualification at UCM and I haven't escaped yet! 😊
- Describe a typical day at Castle Rushen:** Busy! For me, it starts with making sure I have all the resources I need for a day's teaching before heading to a staff/department/team meeting. Then it's off to Tutor Time for a full-on 25 minutes of doing the register, hearing news, sorting out any niggles or queries, or maybe an Assembly. I teach all year groups so I have a really varied day of lessons, experiments and other practical work. When the bell goes at 3.45pm, it's time to get things set up for the next day, or do some planning for the following week. And there is coffee. Lots of coffee!
- What's the best thing about Castle Rushen?** I know it will sound like a cliché, but it has to be the people who make up the CRHS community. I have fantastic colleagues who go out of their way to do their best for students. And the students themselves - caring, entertaining and just plain lovely.
- Why do you like being a Year 7 form tutor?** Year 7s are great! New students bring all the best bits of their different primary schools to the tutor group and it makes for a fabulous mix. I get to hear about new ways of doing things, different experiences and jokes I haven't heard before and some even make me laugh, rather than just groan!
- What do you do to relax?** I used to do a lot of sailing, but I'm more land based now. I enjoy walking and, when the weather isn't so good, I like to do 'sitting for active people', which is also known as knitting.
- What interesting thing would you like your new tutor group to know about you?** Hmm. I once calved twin heifer calves in the building that is now the Fun Barn. Or, yes, I am married to Mr Williams, but not the one in school!





EXPERT ADVICE

The other competition we have kept going has been for current Year 7 students to give you some advice about being at Castle Rushen. This week's winner is Thomas, who came to us from Kewaigue last year.

Here's his advice:

My first bit of advice would be to do all the sport you possibly can. The reason for this is that you will then make a lot more acquaintances and friends at CRHS, and it makes you really feel a part of the school.



My second bit of advice would be to keep up with your homework and don't save it until the last day, or it will pile up and you won't have time to do it.



And don't worry about getting lost. You'll start to find your way round after a few days. I was very worried about that, but if you do get lost just ask, everybody is very helpful.

Brilliant advice, Thomas! Thank you!



That's all for Newsletter No. 3. We hope it was helpful!

Until next time, stay safe!

Mr Kay

Assistant Headteacher

Mrs Kneen

Head of Year 7

