

Hitches Lane, Fleet, Hants GU51 5JA
t: 01252 613483
e: Headteacher.pa@cps.hants.sch.uk
w: www.cps.hants.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mr K John



learners who aspire for themselves and inspire others

20 January 2023

Dear Parents,

Building resilience at Calthorpe Park

I am sure we have all been there: those occasions where you would rather be ANYWHERE than the place you are expected to be. Maybe it is for the root canal treatment at the dentist? What about that time when you were at school and everyone was getting worked up at an inoculation, which comprised – according to your peers - no less than 9 needles? The thought of one needle is bad enough, but 9? No amount of wheedling, cajoling or tears could get you out of the situation. (Spare a thought: I had to go through my inoculation twice as they thought the first was a faulty batch!)

How about the times in the office you have needed to present a case about something, from appealing for a rise; giving a presentation to your boss or work colleagues; or justifying your existence in terms of performance management targets? For many – if not the majority of you - I am sure these occasions have been times when your adrenaline has been pumping, your palms sweaty, your heart rate pulsing and your knees quivering. However, you have come out the other side and have lived to tell the tale. If you reflect on the experience, I am sure you will no doubt admit to yourself (if no one else) that there was a genuine sense of relief, but also a touch of pride in what you achieved: whether enduring the dental pain, still standing after the jab or addressing an audience for a particular purpose. These are examples of being resilient and is a concept which we embrace at Calthorpe Park School.

The reason for this article is to ask for your support in embedding resilience in our students. They have been through a tough time – as have we all – with lockdown: fearing the worst; not being able to develop new friendship groups or nurture their previous interactions with friends. Coming back into a 'normal' way of life has been difficult for many, but we cannot allow them to hide away and not confront life's difficulties when they arise.

In life, a necessary skill is to be able to communicate effectively to an audience. Therefore, in English we start encouraging our students to develop that confidence in the lower school, in preparation for when it counts and is a formal assessment, recorded on their GCSE certificates in Year 11. The fear of the presentation for the majority of our students far outweighs the actual delivery, and the sense of relief is both visible and audible when they each finish their 'turn' – but they have shown great resilience in confronting their fears and getting it over and done with. We have seen students with significant speech impediments delighted at what they have achieved, as well as those literally frozen with fear, but they have delivered.

Of course, there are exceptions to the rule, and there are some students who have medically assessed needs and access arrangements, which necessitate alternative provision being made after school but these students are a minority.

This is why we are calling on you as parents to acknowledge your child's concerns, to support them in practising their speeches and help them to overcome any fears they may have. Perhaps you could tell them about an occasion when you have had to face – and overcome – a daunting experience? Help them to realise that in a matter of minutes the task is over and they can heave a sigh of relief – until the next time!

Thank you for your support.

Miss R A Fisher
Associate Leader and Head of English

