

Dear Parents and Carers,

The new Cambridge Maths School has welcomed its first-ever students at the start of the new academic year. Teenagers from across the region began their A-level studies at our specialist sixth form. We focus on pioneering learning and increasing diversity in the field of maths. We offer 16-19-year-olds with an exceptional aptitude and passion for maths-related subjects a unique environment in which to learn, and an innovative curriculum that will include talks from University of Cambridge lecturers.

**Clare Hargraves**  
Head of School



## Looking ahead

We were delighted to welcome over 500 people to our open evening in October. The majority of our students and all our staff were on hand to explain why the Cambridge Maths School community is so inspiring, and it was a huge pleasure talking to so many prospective students and their families. We are hugely excited about receiving their applications, the deadline for these is on January 9<sup>th</sup>.

## Global Citizens

We are truly excited about the **upcoming school trip to Kenya** from 7<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> July 2024, a remarkable opportunity for our Cambridge Maths School students. This educational adventure promises a unique blend of cultural exploration, thrilling safaris, and meaningful engagement in charity projects alongside the Nakuru Children's Project.

Partnering with the **Nakuru Children's Project**, co-founded by Rebecca Siddall, an Assistant Headteacher in our Trust, our students will play an active role in funding and executing essential tasks. From building and maintaining classrooms to cooking school lunches and fostering spoken English skills, our students will be instrumental in making a positive impact.

This extraordinary experience is open to all Cambridge Maths School students, offering not just academic enrichment but also contributing significantly to their personal growth, cultural awareness, and social development. We look forward to the transformative impact this trip will have on our students' lives and the lasting connections they will forge with the community in Kenya.

Together, we'll embark on this journey of learning, compassion, and global citizenship.

## Beyond the Curriculum

Your support with paying into the **'Beyond the Curriculum'** fund in iPay has had a significant impact, enabling the support of various enriching activities. Thanks to your contributions, we recently organized a stimulating visit to the Maths Inspiration Day, providing students with valuable insights beyond the standard curriculum.

Additionally, the fund has facilitated our Sports and Games programme, enhancing the well-being of everyone at the school and fostering a sense of community through informal and enjoyable activities. Every Thursday afternoon, students enthusiastically participate in a diverse range of sporting activities, including Netball, Badminton, Ultimate Frisbee, Table Tennis, and Football. Allocating a budget to the Student Council has empowered them to plan additional social activities throughout the year. The upcoming Christmas party is eagerly anticipated, marking the beginning of a series of enjoyable events that contribute to a lively and inclusive school environment. Your ongoing support has truly made a positive difference in the holistic development and enjoyment of our students.



## Expanding Horizons

We're thrilled to report that a majority of students have enrolled in the Duke of Edinburgh program, showcasing their commitment to volunteering, developing skills, and engaging in active pursuits. Furthermore, our array of clubs has expanded to include debating, music, board games, and Dungeons and Dragons club. This diverse selection caters to the varied interests of our students, providing them with opportunities for personal growth and community engagement.

Students have been rising to the challenge in our unique Curriculum over the past term, enjoying their weekly problem-solving lessons and relishing in the super-curricular skills delivered as part of the standard lessons. In addition, students have enrolled in a number of National Challenges, which run throughout the Autumn term; students are working in groups on the N-Cipher Challenge (held by the University of Southampton) and the R-tangle challenge (run by the MEI). In October, all students sat the UKMT Senior Olympiad with all 45 entries achieving a certificate, 18 at the gold level. The two highest scoring students qualified for the first round of the British Maths Olympiad, on which we await the results, with the other gold award winners gaining entry to the Senior Kangaroo. Finally, 10 of our female students entered the Maths Olympiad for Girls, with 6 achieving the highest award (a distinction) and all the others a Merit.



It's been a joy to see our students express their unique perspectives through presentations, covering diverse topics that highlight their interests and talents. Each presentation showcases individuality, fostering an environment where every voice is valued. The supportive atmosphere and genuine appreciation from peers reflect the positive culture we've cultivated. Beyond the visible outcomes, these presentations develop crucial life skills like effective communication and information organization, preparing students for future endeavours. They're not just learning about specific topics; they're celebrating growth, self-expression, and the vibrant tapestry of our school community.

We have been fortunate to host three distinguished speakers who delivered inspirational lectures to our students. Our first speaker, **Simon Peyton Jones**, provided an excellent lecture on the crucial role of AI systems in distinguishing between good and poor-quality data, emphasizing the importance of reliable predictions. Before the half term holiday, we were privileged to welcome **Sir David Spiegelhalter**, who shared insights into his career, highlighting how he uses mathematics and statistics to explain complex topics such as Covid, navigate game shows, and even contribute to criminal investigations. His talk was both entertaining and informative, offering students a glimpse into the diverse possibilities of a career in mathematics.

In another enlightening session, **Jade Alglave** from Arm Computing presented on the topic of "**Herding Cats**" elucidating how modern multiprocessors collaborate to enhance computational efficiency through concurrent computations. The students gained valuable insights into the intricacies of contemporary computing systems.

Looking ahead to the next term, we eagerly anticipate lectures from **Matthias Dörzzapf** and **Julia Gog**, both esteemed members of Cambridge University. Their talks promise to further enrich our students' understanding of cutting-edge developments in their respective fields.



**In response to the parental feedback about CMS, it is truly gratifying to hear such positive comments from parents. The acknowledgment of CMS's outstandingly inclusive provision and responsiveness to individual needs underscores our commitment to fostering a supportive and enriching educational environment.**

We are delighted to witness the evident positive impact on students' well-being and academic experiences, with the emphasis on our approach to teaching maths standing out as a distinctive and appreciated approach. The recognition of excellent leadership at all levels within the school is a testament to the dedication of our staff. We are particularly pleased that, despite being a new school, the seamless organisation during the first half term has left a lasting impression. It is heartening to learn that families feel well-supported, and we are encouraged by the satisfaction expressed with our teachers and the school overall. The enthusiasm for math and science aligns with our educational ethos.

We also appreciate the acknowledgment of our fantastic environment, diverse curriculum offerings, and the positive experiences reported by students. Knowing that our efforts are contributing to a better quality of education and enriching experiences is deeply rewarding. We are delighted that you value the programme of organized talks, speakers, and extracurricular activities, all of which contribute to the holistic development of our students.

In response to some of your feedback with regard further improvements or developments you would like to see at CMS in the future please see overleaf.



**You said,  
we did.**



**We would like CMS to continue to give students assignments relevant to their level, so they are appropriately challenged and learn at the highest possible pace.**

We are delighted that you recognise that we have endeavoured to do this from the start. We very much intend to continue to do so to ensure students are both challenged and supported.

**We would be interested in hearing a little more about the clubs that are now on offer at CMS.**

We are currently running the following clubs:

- Debate Club on a Tuesday after school
- Dungeons and Dragons Club on a Friday after school
- Music Club Wednesday after school
- Christian Union Monday Lunchtime
- Board Games Club Tuesday Lunch time

**Duke of Edinburgh**

As the majority of students have signed up for the Duke of Edinburgh programme we have ring fenced time in our E block (Beyond the Curriculum) slots.

**Sports and games**

Students have chosen from Ultimate Frisbee, Football, Netball, Badminton and Table Tennis for Thursday afternoon E block.

Students are very welcome to come to any member of the CMS team with suggestions for new clubs and societies: we will do our best to facilitate.

**We would like to hear about the tutoring system: are there named tutors who mentor and discuss students' progress with them?**

Students are each allocated a tutor, who meets with the students both as part of a tutor group and in 1-1 sessions. These personalised 1-1 sessions provide a dedicated space for students to connect with their tutors, offering invaluable mentoring opportunities. During these 1-1 sessions, students can discuss academic progress, set personalised goals, and receive tailored support to address any challenges they be facing.

**We would like to know how CMS will prepare students for their university applications.**

We will be running a range of activities for the students over the next few months including talks by Universities and Degree apprenticeship providers.

Students will also have the opportunity to attend an apprenticeship provider fair.

All students have a Unifrog account, and we will be working through the activities on the careers platform through the second half of the year. Mrs Hutchinson will be sending out a letter to parents/guardians with their own login to Unifrog. This will allow parents to support the students and see what they are doing to prepare for university.

There will be a careers parent information event in the Spring term.

Tutors will support the process of writing personal statements, beginning in the summer term. We will also plan bespoke mock interviews for students.

Students are regularly extended in their academic lessons to prepare them for university entrance exams such as STEP and MAT.

**We would like to see more work done towards achieving a 50/50 allocations of places for girls and boys.**

The Equality Act prevents us from allocating places according to gender. We are keen to work towards this target however and are delighted that we have well over the national average of girls studying Further Maths.

In order to continue developing this trend we are planning outreach activities designed to support and encourage more girls to apply to CMS and other similar providers.

**We would like to see regular after-school homework support clubs, as we are unable to help with the subjects at home.**

We have started planning in some additional study support sessions and are keen to hear from individual students and parents what would be particularly beneficial. Please email your child's personal tutor and subject teacher to discuss this further.

Personal development is also an integral part of our curriculum.

At CMS we believe in nurturing well-rounded individuals, and personal development plays a crucial role in this endeavour. While there hasn't been specific homework assigned for personal development this term, work set to complete outside the classroom has been allocated lesson time.

We understand the importance of a balanced approach and have carefully integrated these opportunities into the school day.

Should you notice any time management concerns related to completion of activities, we encourage open communication between students and tutors.

**How will next year's cohort will fit inside the space at CMS? Our young adult feels that the space can seem quite full with just the current intake of students.**

The building was chosen and designed alongside the Department for Education to ensure teaching and social spaces are sufficient for the full cohort of two year groups.

There are plenty of unused spaces currently in the building, so there will be plenty of spaces for teaching and independent learning slots.

We will be working with the student council in the new year to think about break and lunchtime spaces and how best to expand these.

