



Rupert Moreton, Head Teacher

16 July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Strap in folks there is a huge amount of information to come.

What a year it has been! This time last year I wrote to you saying:

“It makes me proud each day to say I lead such an inspiring school. The positive reputation of Cheney continues to grow locally, and this is down to our young people who are a testament to the school and the staff who work so hard on a daily basis.”

And although this is my last year as Head Teacher of Cheney, I am still extremely proud to say I have been a member of this very special school.

We have, once again, continued to shine in our local community and beyond, both before and during lockdown. Evidence of our growing reputation as a fantastic school is the fact that we are significantly oversubscribed for Year 7 places for the second year in a row. Some of the key highlights include (please click the blue links for more information):

Progress

- Cheney is in the top 300 schools in the country as identified by Parent Power Sunday Times Schools Guide 2020, which recommends 2,000 schools across the UK based on exam performance.
- Cheney was the 16th most improved school in the country as measured by Progress 8 at GCSE.
- Cheney's Sixth Form has a Progress Score of +0.07 which puts it as the best state funded school in the city.

Sixth Form

- The A-Level Media Studies students' trip to Birmingham to visit the BBC was an absolute delight for all involved. It was fascinating to see the inner workings of a TV studio, to sit in Producers' and Directors' chairs and to look into a busy newsroom.
- Election fever took over school on Wednesday 11 December. Our Sixth Form students canvassed the whole school who then had the opportunity to vote. This was a great student led initiative to help our community understand politics and democracy.

Sport

- Both the Boys' and Girls' basketball teams were on course to be the County Champions and ranked No. 1. The Girls made the last 16 of the National Cup in football.
- We were nominated for Active School of the year and one of our students was nominated for Young Sports Person of the Year!
- Our SEND students took part in the Parability Day.

- 2019-2020 was another very successful year for basketball including:
 - U13 Boys, U14 Boys, U14 Girls County Champions.
 - U15 Girls, U15 Boys, U16 Girls, U16 Boys, U19 Girls, U19 Boys won all of their games prior to lockdown and were all highly likely to also become county champions.
 - U14 Girls and U14 Boys made it through to the last 24 in the national competition, the boys are still in this competition!
- Football: U15 Girls made it to the last 16 in the national competition.

Creative Arts

- In Creative Arts we have been dazzled by the exceptional creativity of our students over the lockdown period. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the exceptional artworks which are showcased in our online gallery, and the tremendous participation from performers in this year's Summer Show.
- We all enjoyed the fantastic Christmas Miracles and spring Shrek productions. Thanks to all students and staff who have up so much time to make these shows so wonderful.
- The annual Year 7 exhibition 'Are You Curious?' took place in the Art Department and celebrated the fantastic artwork and cooking skills of our newest students.
- Our choir spread their festive cheer singing at the Children's Hospital at the John Radcliffe - a wonderful community focussed event.

Humanities

- One of the real highlights from a Humanities perspective has been the involvement and interest in key social issues such as climate change and Black Lives Matter. Many of our A-level lessons online, in Geography and Sociology, have been able to focus on discussing these issues. We have been really pleased with the participation in our Humanities projects for Years 7 and 8.

Design Technology

- In D&T, we have really enjoyed all the wonderful photos coming in of practical tasks going on at home and in the library. Please check out the gallery shared on Facebook to see our students' wide range of creative monsters, beautiful bug hotels, clever weaves and many healthy and fun dishes cooked at home.

Modern Foreign Languages

- Y8 French: the fashion shows were so much fun and teachers were really impressed by their creativity. This has continued into lockdown with Year 8 being the best year at completing and submitting closure work that is of a great standard.
- The Year 8s took part in a delicious German Biscuit making competition.
- Modern Languages students attended an Open Day at Queen's College.

Rumble Museum, Classics Centre and the Festival

- The [Rumble Museum](#) at Cheney School became the first Arts Council Accredited Museum in a UK school yesterday as it was awarded Full Accreditation by the Arts Council.
- The Classics centre ran a hospital [radio series during lockdown](#) and we watched our robot installation at Cheney for the [Festival of the Future](#).

Environment

- Members of our school community planted 420 saplings along the perimeter of the school that faces onto Gypsy Lane: watch the hedge as it grows over the months and years! Thank you to Ms Henderson for organising and the Woodland Trust for the donation of saplings.

English and the Library

- The English Faculty's essay writing competition was very popular and saw our students discussing the pros and cons of comprehensive education.
- World class author Tade Thompson visited Cheney to talk to GCSE and A-Level students about his work and what inspires him in his writing.
- Students and Staff from across the school voted on their chosen book for their year group for the Cheney Book Canon.

Maths

- KS3 Maths have excelled in thinking outside the box and created some excellent tower structures and boats during the Summer term.

Trips and visits

- The Year 8 students went to Youlbury Campsite for the first time. Students got the opportunity to take part in Archery, Climbing, Tomahawk throwing, Pedal Buggies Racing and Jacobs Ladder as well as picking up some camping and outdoor skills. The whole of the Year 8 cohort hiked through the town and countryside using their navigation skills to get to Boars Hills and half of the year group also camped overnight. The Youlbury trip developed our students' inquisitive nature to learn, teamwork and resilience.
- Some students visited the Middle East Centre for a question and answer session with Professor Eugene Rogan.

During lockdown our staff have worked extremely hard preparing and delivering online learning and resources, making contact with every child/parent/carer every two weeks and delivering food parcels and free school meal vouchers. They have also supported safeguarding concerns that have unfortunately arisen, supported the on-site learning of our key worker children, vulnerable children, Years 10 and 12, and over the last 3 weeks, supported specific children in Years 7, 8 and 9 in school. They have also been focused on transitioning the Year 6 children from over 25 primary schools to Cheney with school visits, meeting families and children both in the primary school and with visits to [Cheney, videos, FAQs documents and virtual introduction meetings](#) (click link).

Goodbye Year 11 and 13s

The end of school for our Year 11 and 13 students has been very strange, and it has been so sad that we could not, as a community, celebrate their final year at Cheney. I would like to wish all students every success on their results in August, and I know that the results day will, for many students, be even more stressful this year. Please be assured that we will continue to support all students in August and September, to the best of our ability, to plan for an appropriate pathway after their exam results. However, it is important to remember that exam results are never the end of the journey and are only one facet of success.

Arrangements for Results Days

Results day is an important time for our students and we are happy to say that we are looking forward to welcoming our Year 13 students on 13 August and our Year 11 students on 20 August. Social distancing measures have been taken into account and [letters](#) have been sent to all students who are aiming to receive their results this Summer.

Unfortunately, at this time we will not be asking our year 10 and 12 students to come in on these days, however support will be available via email.

Summer Show - Livin' La Vida Lockdown

It's here - Livin' La Vida Lockdown is ready to go! Get your popcorn ready, set up the big screen and be prepared for a very different Summer Show! Click on the below link at 6.30pm tonight (you won't be able to watch it until this time)!

Please share this link with your family, friends, neighbours and pets and let's all enjoy La Vida Lockdown together - there are definitely some surprises in the show!
<https://youtu.be/7JE9nH7dme8>

See you all there!

The Music department would like to thank you all for your continued support through what has been a very strange year. We look forward to making lots of Music next year!

New Year Teams

Your Heads of Progress and Pastoral Leads for 2020-2021 are now on the [website](#). Your new tutor teams are also available on the Year Team pages: [Year 7](#) , [Year 8](#) , [Year 9](#) , [Year 10](#) , [Year 11](#) , [Sixth Form](#)

Library Reminder

In order for the library to function well in September, Mrs Fenton really needs everyone to return their library books. In the week before the school closed in March, the library issued nearly 2000 books to students to encourage them to read at home. We now need the books back so that the shelves look a bit fuller for when we return in September.

The box in the school reception area will remain throughout the summer break; it is really easy, just to drop off your books and make your Librarian very happy!

Plan for Returning to School

[Mr Pavey's letter](#), sent earlier this week, outlines the plans for reopening the school in September, and details the measures we are putting in place to keep students and staff safe.

Term dates 2020/21

Term dates for 2020/21 are on the [website](#), with a staggered start for students in September:

- Thursday 3 September 2020 for Year 7 and Year 12 students
- Friday 4 September 2020 for Year 7 and Year 12 students
- Monday 7 September **all** students in school

Covid-19 and Systems of Control

Cheney School has invested a significant amount of time to ensure that the appropriate measures are put in place to protect the health of the staff and students. It is important that our parent/carer body supports us in ensuring that students follow the measures that have been put in place. Please read the information shared in Mr Pavey's letter about how we are keeping the site safe and discuss the measures with your children. In particular it would be helpful if you could discuss and reinforce the following:

- No-one who is ill should come to school
- Please minimise contact between year groups and maximise social distancing where

- possible
- All students must wash their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds
 - On leaving home and arriving at school
 - After breaks
 - After sporting activities
 - After using the toilet
 - Before food preparation and before eating **any** food
 - Before leaving school
 - Students should avoid touching their eyes, noses and mouths with unwashed hands
 - Ensuring students practice good respiratory hygiene by using a tissue when they cough, sneeze or blow their nose and then dispose of it in a bin before washing their hands
 - If students do not have a tissue available they should cough or sneeze into the crook of their elbow
 - Students must **bring the appropriate equipment each day**; including a bag and a **fully equipped pencil case**. In order to limit the spread of infection we cannot distribute pens, pencils and other equipment
 - No congregating on and around site at the beginning and end of each day but going straight to and from school, as well as being considerate to our neighbours by behaving calmly as they travel
 - By generally being a positive role model and following staff instructions

Uniform

We would like to remind parents that Cheney School has a uniform policy and that the beginning of a new academic year is a great opportunity to start positively with the correct uniform. Please refer to the school web site for the precise details about our uniform expectations. [The website can be found here](#), and here is [the link to the specific examples for uniform](#).

Please pay particular attention to the requirements around trousers and shoes. Any trousers that are shaped like jeans with patch pockets, are faded or similar to chinos, are tight and stretchy, are jeggings or leggings are not acceptable. With regard to footwear it must be black and that any colour other than black is not acceptable. This means that any black footwear with coloured or white flashes or logos are not acceptable.

We do understand that many people's finances are tight at the moment and that being asked to replace uniform that does not meet the school's expectations can be distressing. Therefore I ask that you read the uniform regulations carefully to ensure that you buy the correct items.

Behaviour

Most students make really positive relationships with each other and with their teachers. But on occasions things do go wrong and we do have to impose sanctions and we are making some changes to how this works. We will write to you in September with further details on the changes we are making to our Respect for Learning Policy. However, please be aware of the key changes below:

- We are introducing a new warning system in lessons: C1 and C2 will be verbal warnings encouraging students to improve their behaviour, a C3 will result in a 30 minute detention and a further C4 will result in removal from the lesson, followed by a 60 minute detention.
- Detentions will take place on the same day for incidents happening up to period 4. Detentions issued after this will be sat on the following day.
- Parents and carers will be notified of a detention by SMS (text message) so please ensure that we have up to date contact details.

Attendance

The government has made it clear that it expects all students to attend school in September and that we expect everyone to have an attendance rate of 95% or better. We will be working hard with families to support every student to attend every day. The link between regular school attendance and excellent educational outcomes is well evidenced.

In September we will be changing our system for reporting absence. If you know your son or daughter is going to be absent please use one of the following methods to inform us:

- Complete the [Cheney School Student Absence](#) Google Form
- Call the attendance manager Mr Hawkswood on 01865 755237
- Email Mr Hawkswood rhw@cheney.oxon.sch.uk

If leaving a telephone or email message please include the following information:

- The name, form and year group of your child
- Your name and contact details
- Reason for absence
- Expected date of return
- Please inform us for each day of absence

Please note that we are **no longer asking you to contact year teams**. Please 'favourite' the Google form on your web browser or mobile phone and take a note of Mr Hawkswood's contact details. We think the Google Form will be the easiest way for parents to report absence.

Travelling to school

We strongly advise that parents encourage their children to walk or cycle independently to and from school. If you are certain that your child/ren needs to be escorted, please ensure that only one parent/carer brings them to school. We do not recommend that you drive your children to school as there is limited parking available around the school and we are keen to avoid creating congestion around the school area which might further make social distancing difficult. We also ask that you are considerate of the local residents as collecting and dropping off can cause them difficulties. If you have to drive we would recommend that you drop your child some distance from the school and allow them to walk for the last stretch.

Please also see [linked a communication](#) from the Local Authority regarding travel to/from school.

At the beginning and the end of the day we ask that parents do not congregate around the school entrances or on the school grounds. This is again to help us ensure that all staff,

students and parents are able to social distance. I know encouraging students to travel to school independently may be unsettling for parents of some younger students, especially the new Year 7s, but it is also an opportunity for them to become more independent.

Safeguarding

During lockdown we have worked hard to try to be in regular communication with you and your children. However, at points this has been challenging as contact details have not always been accurate. It is vitally important that we have your current contact details as we might need to contact you if there is an emergency. As part of our planning to keep students safe and with the increased risks posed by Covid-19 please ensure that you inform us immediately every time your contact details change. The simplest way to do this is via Parent Portal.

If you have any concerns over the break, our [Summer Safety leaflet](#) has useful contact information for services:

School Meals

Food will be available at breaktime and lunch from both counters in the dining hall as well as the sandwich pod in the playground .

We will be removing as much cash from the site as possible and this includes the 'paying in' machines in C block. Parents are expected to pay money onto student accounts online. If any families are struggling with this system then students can bring cash into the dining hall in the morning before school starts and it will be added to their account that morning. No money will be taken at the counter during service. Free school meals will not be affected.

The biometric thumb readers will be removed and all students will be provided a 'Mifare card' that can be used at all the catering counters and will also serve as a library card. This card will be provided free of charge but there will be a charge for replacements.

Free School Meals

Families eligible for free school meals will receive 3 vouchers per family over the summer. Each voucher will cover two weeks worth of funding. These vouchers will be sent by the government's central provider Edenred. Information about how you can access these vouchers is provided here https://www.edenred.co.uk/Documents/DfE/DfE_FSM-voucher-scheme_Parent-Carer-Userguide.pdf. If you have not been receiving your vouchers or think that you are eligible for free school meals vouchers please would you email the school on CHS-FSM@cheney.oxon.sch.uk . Additional support can be found following this link <https://www.gov.uk/find-coronavirus-support>

School Nurse and Mental Health Support

School nurse support is still available over the summer break. Caroline Smith can be contacted on 07717661485 or on carolinee.smith@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk. If Caroline is unavailable, school nurses can also be contacted on 07769 235149 or shn.oxfordshire@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk.

The Oxford Health NHS Trust have also set up a 24/7 Mental Health Helpline for Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire:

Adults: 0800 783 0119 or 01865 904 997

Children and young people: 0800 783 0121 or 01865 904 998

Or see the website for more details at: <https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/news/24-7-mental-health-helpline-for-buckinghamshire-oxfordshire/>

Young Minds also offer advice and support for parents and children. Including information on Covid 19 and mental health. See <https://youngminds.org.uk/>

The OXME.Info website is also a great place to get information on health and wellbeing for young people in Oxfordshire: <https://oxme.info/cms/>

The Mental Health RESPONSE team also operates all year round, offering interventions over the phone/video call, for young people presenting as struggling with their mental health. The RESPONSE referral form can be completed by parents, carers, students or staff: <https://secureforms.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/mhst/>

The Conclusion (well done for reading this far!)

Finally, the Cheney community is the sum of its staff, students, parents and carers. It is as a result of you all that this has been such an amazing place to work. With over 250 staff members, there are always leavers. I would like to say a massive thank you, and good luck, to all those who are leaving us this year and wish them every success with their next steps. The strength of our community is reflected by the high quality field of applicants we had for my replacement. Cheney is extremely fortunate to have appointed [Mr Pavey as Head Teacher](#). I wish him and the whole community the very best of luck. I will miss you all. Thank you for your support and kindness.

Over and out!

Kind regards

Rupert Moreton

Head Teacher