



# CHENEEY SCHOOL

Think for yourself, act for others

Headteacher: Mr Rob Pavey

Cheney School  
Cheney Lane  
Headington  
OX3 7QH

Tel: 01865 765 726

Email: office@cheney.oxon.sch.uk

## Mr R Pavey – Headteacher

18 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

### Parent Communication

Dear parents and carers,

Many thanks for your support and feedback over the past two weeks. We acknowledge that circumstances are not ideal, but we think that the return to school has been a great success despite all the challenges. With very few exceptions, our students have been brilliant and have settled back into school very well. We very much appreciate the supportive comments that we have had, and I have passed them on to the staff, who have done a fantastic job in adapting to new ways of working, and are working harder than ever to offer a full education to all our students. There is more on the recent parent survey at the end of this letter.

### Preparation for future lockdowns / Covid-related absence

We want to get to a state where we can continue to deliver the full curriculum, no matter what happens. In all scenarios, we are aiming to teach as many lessons as possible live, sticking as closely as possible to the existing timetable. Here are the possible scenarios:

- Full lockdown: unlikely, I think. All lessons are online, as many as possible live with regular class teachers following the normal timetable. Key worker school runs in person, including any student who has connection difficulties at home.
- 'Tier 2' partial lockdown: this comes into effect when local restrictions are put in place. Year groups move onto a 2-week-in, 2-week-out rota. Staff will be in school teaching the rest of their timetable, so lessons will happen live via Google Meet according to the normal timetable. Students with connection difficulties will come into school. Year 11 and 13 come into school full time.
- Test and Trace partial closure: a year group may be sent home to self-isolate for two weeks if there is an outbreak within a bubble. Lessons move online, as for the Tier 2 lockdown, except that students with connection difficulties will not be able to come to school. In this case, we will bring devices out to parents over the first couple of days of the self-isolation. We don't have a large reserve of laptops, so this will prove difficult.
- Individuals or small groups of students are absent: this is already happening. The pattern is not consistent or predictable, so many classes may well have two or three students missing. The aim is to live-stream these classes, so students can join from home. We have trialled this on a small scale, and it works well, but it is a major job to expand it to all staff and every lesson. Students who have connectivity problems will struggle to access lessons in this scenario. We



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will aim to deliver loan laptops via a home visit. This is also a major challenge, particularly given that we do not have enough machines.

- Teachers self-isolating, or waiting for test results: again, this is already happening. In this scenario, when teachers are otherwise well, we will use 'remote teaching', so the teacher joins the class via Google Meet, and the classroom is managed by a cover teacher. This is not as good as having the teacher in the room, but it is better than a normal cover lesson. We have also trialled this on a small scale, with success.

## Laptop provision

In the medium term, we want every student to have a laptop, as other local schools have already done. Many students will already have their own device, but we will enable all parents to buy a new machine at cost through the school. To be clear, this will be a basic Chromebook for working on, and won't be good for playing Fortnite. For children who qualify for Free School Meals, school will provide the laptops at a heavily subsidised rate, payable in instalments. We are starting to move on this right now, as lack of individual access to laptops is one of our major barriers. This applies to submitting normal homework, as well as to preparing for future lockdowns.

If you are interested in buying a new machine at cost, please fill in this very simple form to allow us to gauge interest: <https://forms.gle/aFrdEffod9nAYcQ5A>

The machine we are looking at currently is the Lenovo 100E, for around £140. Here is a review: <https://www.digitweek.com/lenovo-100e-review/>

To allow all our students to have full access, we need to be able to get one for all of our students on Free School Meals (currently just over 300). We have a few in stock, and we may be able to get some from the government (released after lockdown restrictions come in), but we need approximately £40,000 to provide the necessary classroom equipment for live-streaming and to guarantee access for all our students.

We are therefore starting an appeal to raise the money. It will be possible to make donations via ParentPay and there will be further information from the Communications Team next week.

## Trial lockdown day

To test our ability to continue teaching through a new lockdown, we want to run two trial lockdown days. For Years 9 and 12, this will be on **Tuesday 29 September**; for Years 7, 8 and 10, this will be on **Friday 2 October**. Years 11 and 13 will not be disrupted.

Under a Tier 2 lockdown, children of key workers and students who have difficulty accessing online lessons for whatever reason will come into school, and will be taught in-person lessons. This will mean



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we will have to reallocate students to different classes, depending on whether they are in school, or at home. If the trial lockdown day will be difficult for you, either because of connectivity, or because of childcare issues, or for any other reason, please let us know on this form:

<https://forms.gle/Kc7AGgavyQ1Z1ZcR7>

We are expecting every student to join all of their lessons on these trial lockdown days, whether through Google Classroom or in person in school. This is not a day off, and registers will be taken as normal for every lesson, with unexplained absence treated as truancy.

We will be concentrating heavily on ensuring every student knows what to do over the next week in tutor time, and students will also be bringing home a contact details form to ensure we have the correct contact details for you. Please do check these forms carefully, make any necessary corrections, and ensure that the forms come back to school the next day.

## Covid flowchart

There has been understandable anxiety around Covid symptoms, and uncertainty about whether a student should come to school or not. Please do remember that the vast majority of the time, it is not Covid-related, and that children will pick up normal bugs in school, especially having been away from school for six months.

We have put together a Covid symptoms flowchart to help you:<https://www.cheney.oxon.sch.uk/attendance-and-punctuality/>

Here is the advice, taken directly from the NHS website. Please note that a headache, a runny nose or feeling a bit sick are not Covid symptoms (although they may in themselves be reason to stay home).

### Main symptoms

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least 1 of these symptoms.

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More information can be found here: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

### Open Evening

Our open evening was scheduled to be on Thursday 24 September. We are cancelling this, and will have a virtual introduction to Cheney instead, which will be ready in October, and will then remain open on the website. The immediate effect of this is that there will be no half day on Thursday 24, and no late start on Friday 25; both days will be normal school days.

### Parents' evenings

It is very important to us that parents and carers have a good view of students' progress, so we want parents' evenings to go ahead, hopefully on the published dates. They will be online events, rather than face-to-face, and we are looking at the best way to manage this at the minute. The first event is the Year 7 'meet the tutor' evening on Thursday 1 October. Details on how this will work will be sent out by the year team in advance of the evening, and we will refine our plans for other year groups based on our experience of this event.

### Specialist rooms

One of the most serious disadvantages of the current arrangements is that we cannot use the right rooms for specialist teaching. We are starting to look at getting these back in use, but it is a complicated jigsaw. We need to ensure cleaning can take place, and that year groups do not mix; this will be relatively straightforward for some rooms, but very difficult in other circumstances. We hope to be able to trial this with a small number of rooms from next week.

### Results of the parent survey

Many thanks to those who filled in the survey, and I am very pleased to see that the huge majority of those who replied are supportive of what the school is doing. A few elements of the survey are below, and the full results can be seen on the [website](#), along with answers to many of the questions posed, which have been collated into an [FAQ page](#).

Here are a few of the answers to the main questions, and I would like to reiterate my thanks to all of our parents and carers for their support at this time.



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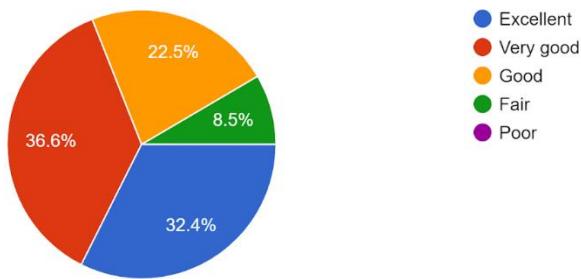
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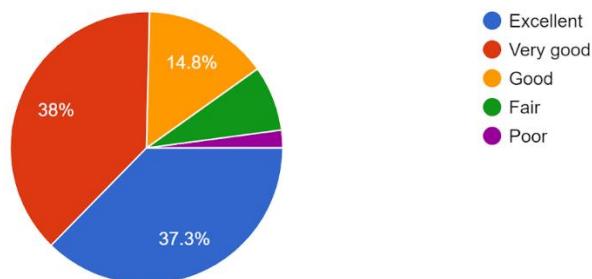
How would you rate the preparations Cheney has made for re-opening?

142 responses



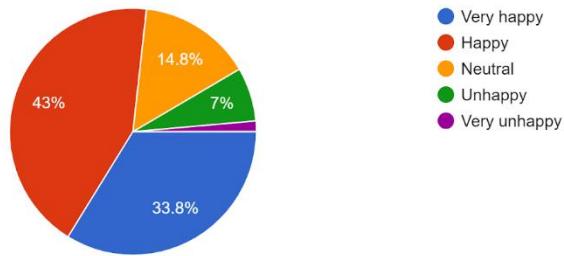
How effective has the communication from school been?

142 responses



How happy is your child to be back in school?

142 responses



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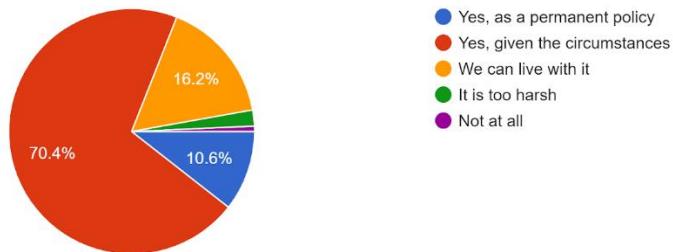
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Do you support the school's 'no physical contact' policy?

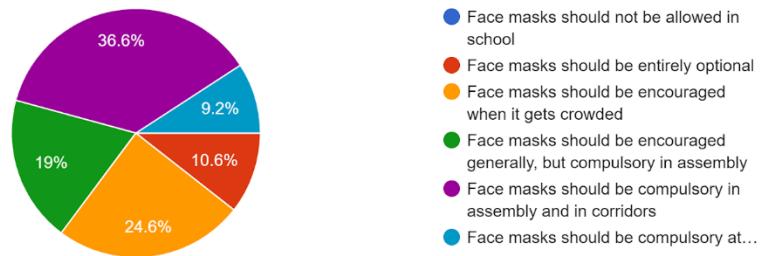
142 responses



- Yes, as a permanent policy
- Yes, given the circumstances
- We can live with it
- It is too harsh
- Not at all

Please express your view on wearing face masks.

142 responses



- Face masks should not be allowed in school
- Face masks should be entirely optional
- Face masks should be encouraged when it gets crowded
- Face masks should be encouraged generally, but compulsory in assembly
- Face masks should be compulsory in assembly and in corridors
- Face masks should be compulsory at...

Kind regards,

**Rob Pavey**  
Headteacher  
Cheney School

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