

Year 8 Newsletter

Issue 1 - October 2020



Term 1; we've made it!



Believe it or not, we've completed the first half-term of the academic year! It's safe to say, it's been one of the strangest and probably most challenging terms in education but in my first term as your Head of Student Progress, I could not be prouder of each and every one of you. It's easy to forget that you only completed 6 months of your first year of secondary school actually in school last year and I have to keep reminding myself and others of that. However, the way you have returned since September, your general attitude towards school and your work ethic is exemplary; you've all got stuck into your classwork and homework without and fuss and without dwelling on the past and I couldn't ask for more.

In the first assembly of the year I explained my two basic, yet vitally important expectations for each of you this year: work hard and be kind. By meeting these two expectations, each and every day, truly amazing things will happen: you will become remarkable and well-respected people, you will make progress in each of your subjects and ultimately you will finish Year 8 as outstanding individuals and in good stead for Year 9. This led to the creation of this year's motto: **Work Hard, Be Kind and Amazing things will happen**. You will know from last year that I have extremely high expectations and I am pleased that you have all taken this motto on board; each and every day, you are demonstrating your kindness and your hard work and ultimately proving that amazing things can happen.

I have been popping in and out of lessons throughout this half-term and for the vast majority of the time, I have been really pleased with the learning which is taking place; we all know what a lively, opinionated bunch of students you are and it's great to hear some really in-depth discussions taking place within your lessons. I would particularly like to mention tutor time, which has been absolutely outstanding, every single day. Both myself and the Senior Leadership Team have been visiting tutor time at various points throughout the week and Year 8 has continually impressed everyone and been commended for displaying such a calm, positive and respectful atmosphere; the first and second floor of Lane building are silent, with everyone either reading or listening to your tutors deliver your tutor lesson... the only noise which can be heard is the floor boards creaking when I'm moving from room to room! Your tutors work extremely hard in supporting you, by making sure you are equipped and ready to learn every morning and ultimately setting you up for the day ahead. My goal, and your task, for Term 2 is to ensure that the calm, positive and respectful atmosphere which is present during tutor time follows into each of your lessons every day; if we can achieve this, then Year 8 are truly destined for great things!

It's been a very long seven weeks and everyone is in desperate need of a break, both staff and students. Please have a well-deserved and restful week off school, as we'll all need the energy for another seven weeks when we return.

Take care and stay safe

Mr Haines
Head of Student Progress Year 8



Staffing Updates

This term we have welcomed Mr Worrell to the Year 8 team as Pastoral Assistant. He has been a fantastic addition to the team and works tirelessly, often behind the scenes, in supporting me managing the day to day goings on of year group. Thank you to everyone who has made him feel so welcome so far!

We also have a few new tutors who joined the Year 8 team at the start of this year, including Mr Read, Mr Toner, Ms Bibbings and Mr Muddle. Welcome aboard and thank you for all your hard work thus far!

As a reminder, the Year 8 Team is as follows:

Head of Student Progress	Mr Haines	thn@cheney.oxon.sch.uk
Pastoral Assistant	Mr Worrell	mworrell@cheney.oxon.sch.uk
8A/Tu1	Ms Kremnizer & Mr Read	ake@cheney.oxon.sch.uk & jread@cheney.oxon.sch.uk
8B/Tu2	Ms Lebari	zle@cheney.oxon.sch.uk
8C/Tu3	Mr Toner & Mr Harley	otoner@cheney.oxon.sch.uk & ahr@cheney.oxon.sch.uk
8D/Tu4	Ms Bibbings	abibbings@cheney.oxon.sch.uk
8E/Tu5	Mr Muddle	rmuddle@cheney.oxon.sch.uk
8F/Tu6	Mr McLean	kmc@cheney.oxon.sch.uk
8G/Tu7	Ms Hilton	nhi@cheney.oxon.sch.uk
8H/Tu8	Mr Taberer	bta@cheney.oxon.sch.uk
8I/Tu9	Ms Falconer	afc@cheney.oxon.sch.uk
8J/Tu10	Ms Millard	smr@cheney.oxon.sch.uk

Please remember that your child's tutor should be your first point of call for all general queries.

Celebrate Good Times...Come On!

It will come as no surprise that there was much to celebrate this half-term and we held our first celebration assembly of the year, albeit virtually! There was a huge number of awards given out to showcase and celebrate everyone's amazing hard work this half-term. Well done to you all! Key awards were as follows:

Tutees of the Term	Subject Stars of the Term	Top Tutor Group
<p>Tu1 – Lara Tu2 – Ruth Tu3 – Aneesh Tu4 – Luca Tu5 – Deniz Tu6 – Collins Tu7 – George Tu8 – Kit Tu9 – Mohammad Tu10 – Jess</p> <p>Well done to all of you for being exemplary members of your tutor group!</p>	<p>English – Anna Maths – John Science – Scarlett Humanities – Mia French – Maxwell German – Timothy Spanish – Cherie MFL Nurture – Jennaya PE – Mason Art – Thea Music – Alexandra Drama – Salwa</p> <p>Excellent work from each and every one of you – well done!</p>	<p>Attendance Tu5 – 96.1%</p> <p>Conduct Points Tu10 – 1,471</p>
		Head of Year Awards
		<p>Most Helpful – Snezana Most Improved - Kyle Most Resilient - Abis</p>

We also had **120** students in the year group who had **100%** attendance this term. This is a fantastic achievement and you should all be very proud of yourselves! In addition to this, we had **110** students who have received **zero** negative points this half-term. A massive **well done** to each and every one of you for meeting our expectations each and every day and being role models to the rest of the year group and the school!

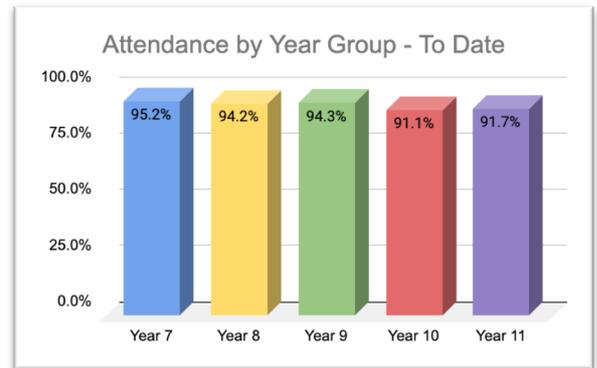
On this note, I'd like to share with you the incredible number of achievement points Year 8 as a whole have earned this half term...a whopping **11,879**! Clearly this is a fantastic achievement and I couldn't be prouder; this demonstrates just how amazing you all are. We do have 1,115 negative points and there's always room for improvement but in comparison to all the achievement points, I can't complain! A huge **well done** to you all! 😊



Attendance

As always, attendance continues to be high on my personal agenda, as well as being one of the school's key focuses. Year 8 finish this term in third place, on 94.2%. This is a good start, considering the ongoing pandemic, however our school target is 95% and therefore we've still got a bit of work to do!

Next term we'll be having a big focus on attendance during tutor time and I am keen for students to take ownership of their own attendance, realising that even just a few days off per term can have a big effect on their overall attendance figures. We will also continue with the weekly attendance competition whereby the winning tutor group each week wins sweets!



Basic Expectations

I'm pleased to say that 98% of you get it right, every single day but there is a small minority (and I'd like to stress, a small minority) who continue to try and flout the rules and expectations and don't always get it right. In order for clarity, the following forms part of my **basic expectations** which I expect each and every Year 8 student to meet, notably being punctual, wearing the correct uniform, being fully equipped and ready to learn each day and being respectful at all times. I don't think this is much to ask and I'd like to thank those of you who always get in right.

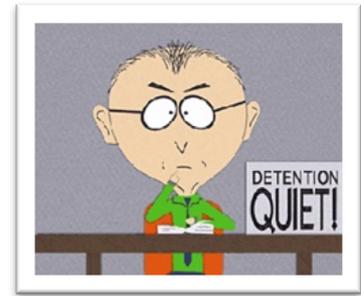


- **Punctuality** – the first bell goes at 8.25am and students are expected to be in their tutor room by the second bell at 8.30am. If you are not, you are late and this will result in a 30-minute detention. Considering that all Year 8 lessons are in the same building, mostly in the same classroom, there is also no excuse for anyone to be late to their lessons throughout the school day.
- **Uniform** – you are required to wear your blazers at all times, even on PE days. Hoodies are not allowed and never have been; if you are seen with a hoodie, it will be confiscated and you can collect it from me at the end of the day.
- **Phones** – mobile phones are not allowed in school. We understand you may need them for your journey to and from school but when you get into school, they should be switched off and put in your bag. If it is seen or heard, it will be confiscated and you can collect it from me at the end of the day.
- **Equipment** – as we cannot lend any equipment this year due to the Covid restrictions, it's vital that students come to school every day fully equipped. Part of the essential equipment includes a reading book; students are expected to read, in silence, in-between lessons whilst they are waiting for their next teacher to arrive and set up the classroom/lesson.
- **Respect** – I expect each and every one of you to be respectful, at all times, to every person you come across, whether that be another student, a member of staff, a visitor or a member of the public on your way to and from school; you should treat others how you wish to be treated. This doesn't mean you have to like everyone, far from it, but it costs nothing to be polite and respectful.
- This also includes the school site; unfortunately, a lack of respect has resulted in the damage of school property, including students ripping down displays in classrooms, leaving mess/food on the floor and tables, throwing litter on the floor and generally not treating the school site, classrooms and staff offices with the level of respect we expect and deserve.



Detentions

As you're aware, for those of you that don't get it right, there are consequences. If a student is set a detention up until the end of lunchtime, they are expected to sit it the same day. If it's set Period 5, it will be set for the following day. Students are expected to attend their detentions and failure to do so will result in escalation, as detailed in our RfL policy; failure to attend 30-minute detention will result in a 60-minute detention and failure to attend a 60-minute detention will result in a day's internal isolation, including a 60-minute after school. Unfortunately, a number of students aren't attending their detentions on the day they are set. It's a student's responsibility to take themselves to detention but staff will also remind them, whenever possible.



Additionally, detention is not an extension of social time – sadly, at times, the behaviour of Year 8 students in detention has been extremely poor. Students are expected to enter the room calmly, sit down in silence and get on with some work or reading. There have been occasions where students are intentionally getting themselves a detention so they can stay behind after school with their friends and use it as an opportunity for a chat. A detention is a serious consequence and should be treated as such, so this is not acceptable.

Reports

On the last day of term, students were given their autumn snapshot report, which they should've brought home to show you. Overall, I was extremely pleased to see that so many students achieved a 3 or above in the majority of their subjects, for each of the learner characteristics. You can also access their report electronically through the Parent Portal – details on how to access this are in this [letter](#) which was sent by Miss Hussain last week.



There were a small number of 1s and 2s and I will be working with your child, their teachers and the relevant Heads of Faculty next half-term, to identify any barriers to their learning and ensuring they make progress by the time they receive their next report, in December.

Reporting Absence

Year Teams are not able to record your child's absence. In order to report your child as absent you must contact Attendance as early as possible using the online form at: [Cheney School Student Absence](#), by emailing at: RHW@cheney.oxon.sch.uk or by calling and leaving a message at: 01865 765726 - Option 1

If your child is unwell please use our flow-chart for guidance about whether to send them into school.

