



CHENEY SCHOOL
Think for yourself, act for others

Headteacher: Mr Rob Pavey

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Mr Pavey, Headteacher

1 April 2021

Dear parents and carers,

Headteacher's end of term letter: Easter 2021

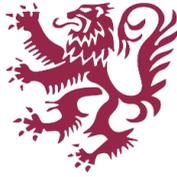
I want to start this letter with some brief and inadequate words of thanks to the whole Cheney community. Our students have responded amazingly well to online learning and to the return to school; this is not to say that everything is perfect, of course, but the huge majority of our students have been wonderful the huge majority of the time. None of this is possible without support from families, of course. I want to thank everyone at home for their support, and for their patience and understanding when there have been hitches. Finally, I would like to express my very sincere gratitude to all of our staff. They have been models of calmness, kindness and professionalism throughout, and have been open to dialogue and suggestions for improvement to a remarkable extent. It is now time for a break, which has been richly deserved by everyone, and we are looking forward to welcoming everyone back refreshed in two weeks' time.

Given what has been in the news in recent weeks, I feel it is impossible to avoid a mention of the revelations about sexual harassment in schools through the Everyone's Invited website. Both as a parent and as a teacher, I find the stories of what our young women have endured deeply troubling and upsetting. To the best of my knowledge, Cheney has not been mentioned, but it would be naive and complacent to think we are immune. I need to make it clear that Cheney does not condone, and will certainly not cover up, any such behaviour, and I hope that any of our students feel able to talk to a member of staff. There are also other routes that students can take to talk about these issues, and we will be doing some work in school on this in the summer term. I hope you have seen the information from Dr Bown on sex and relationships education in recent weeks; this is one aspect of what we already have in place, along with the rest of our PSHE curriculum. We will also be involving students in our response, getting both boys and girls into the conversation. Along with our work on diversity, on anti-racism, on making the curriculum more inclusive and on environmental responsibility, we view this issue as essential in educating our young people and creating a better future. There will be more on all of these topics coming next term, and we will of course welcome the views of parents, carers and the wider community.

In the new term, we are also very much looking forward to further steps towards normality. Assuming the public health situation continues to improve, I anticipate seeing a lot of our normal clubs and after school activities resume in April, including sport, music, Duke of Edinburgh and drama. The House Competition will continue to

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go from strength to strength. The response to competitions even over lockdown has been fantastic, and we are seeing two or three times the participation rate, compared to the Christmas term. As well as the competition from DT to make a tile for the lockdown quilt, coming up are a haiku competition from English, a Strava competition from PE and Sports Day. I also hope to be able to reduce restrictions on which areas students can use at break and lunch. The split lunch and break times, and the separate entrances will remain (we might keep them permanently), but we are likely to allow students to go where they like in our outside spaces, including the field. It has been great to see the return of ball games in the last month; it will be even better to see them away from windows.

This return to normality will also accompany a tightening of some of our normal expectations. In particular, uniform needs to improve and punctuality to lessons needs to improve. There will be significantly more contact with home on these issues, and the parents or carers of certain students may get several calls a day about this. I don't anticipate it taking long for students to get the message, particularly with support from home.

Looking further ahead, I am very much looking forward to sharing plans for the future development of the school with you. Once we have discussed with the governing body and firmed up some of our plans, I hope to be able to announce a broadening of the Key Stage 4 curriculum to include some genuinely vocational options, enhanced SEND provision, perhaps Mandarin on the timetable and a partnership with Magdalen College School cadet force. Once we have the budget finalised, I hope to be able to share an outline of the financial position with you as well; parents and carers will remember the situation last year, and may well be concerned. I am very pleased to say that our Finance department have been working very hard to ensure future stability, and I am likely to be able to reassure the whole community about the long term budget, and therefore the ability to invest in better facilities and education for our students.

In all, I am very optimistic about the future and about the opportunities that will be available to us as a school, and to our young people. In the meantime, I am very grateful to be working in this community, and I wish everybody an excellent and restful Easter break.

Kind regards

Rob Pavey

Headteacher

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