

Cheney Communications

22 April 2021

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff, Governors and Sixth Form Students

This week has been genuinely lovely in school: we have had sunshine, and we have had greater liberty in outside spaces (see below), as well as the resumption of some clubs. Things are feeling like they are returning to normal, and I am also delighted that our students have been looking smarter than I have ever seen them, with uniform which looks, in almost every case, almost exactly like what is being worn by the mannequins in reception. To be fair, the mannequins don't have feet, so it would be churlish to talk about shoe choices. Thank you to all parents and carers; we really do appreciate your support.

Mr Pavey

All Parents and Carers

School closure: marking and moderation day Thursday 13 May (Eid). We have decided, in consultation with other Oxfordshire schools, that we are going to insert an extra INSET day in May to enable us to do the marking and moderation of the A Level and GCSE assessments. A substantial number of other Oxfordshire schools are doing similar things. Losing a day of school is not something we do lightly, and we apologise for the inconvenience this will cause, but our view is that the risk of errors and inconsistency between teachers is very much greater if we don't do this. In a normal year, all of this marking and moderation is done by exam boards, over a period of two months; the English department alone, for example, will have over 3,000 separate pieces of evidence to consider in order to produce the grades.

We have chosen May 13, as it is the day which is most likely to be Eid, when our Muslim students will in any case be out of school to celebrate the festival. There will be no livestreamed lessons on that day, although work will be set on Google Classroom, and we will run a skeleton school for those that need it, like we did in lockdown. We will ask parents and carers to let us know which students will need to come to school on that day in the leadership email on May 6.

Assessments due on that day will either run as planned in school, or will be rescheduled. Departments will confirm separately what the case will be.

Ramadan: we are always keen to support our students during Ramadan; this year, we are providing a prayer space every lunchtime, and we are very happy that the marking and moderation day also falls on the most likely day for Eid. There is a

mention of how the PE department is approaching things below, but as always, if there is anything else we can do, please let us know.

Big Ask: launched this week by the new Children's Commissioner for England, The Big Ask is the largest ever consultation with children and young people aged 4–17 in England. The survey aims to find out children's concerns and aspirations about the future and is intended to help the Children's Commissioner identify the barriers preventing children from reaching their potential and put forward solutions. Parents, care leavers and those working with children are also invited to share their views:

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigask/>

Chromebooks: Chromebooks will start to go out this term by Year Group/Tutor Group. We were in contact with parents and carers last term to confirm who does/doesn't require one, and this will continue for the next few weeks.

Break and Lunchtimes: as mentioned in the pre-start of term reminder email, we have liberalised the outside areas, and opened the field for break and lunch. With more space, and fresh air, our students can have a better experience, while not increasing the transmission risk. This is of course reversible, if the situation gets worse once again.

PE clubs: we are beginning to get more extra-curricular sports clubs up and running. Our main focus is on Year 7 and 8 students who have had little or no exposure to extra-curricular activities at Cheney, but there are also opportunities for other year groups. See the [website](#) for more details.

Ramadan and PE: each year we encourage students that are practising Ramadan to still be involved in PE lessons in some capacity, where they feel able to be.

This may take the form of some officiating or supporting their teacher with setting up of equipment or assisting peers in skill refinement.

Therefore, please could students please continue to come in their PE kit on PE days.

Additionally, with the majority of summer term PE being on the field, students in PE kit enables teachers to easily differentiate our students from Brookes students on the public footpath and ensures that pupils are not isolated from their groups when they feel unable to take part.

Badminton and Rugby opportunities: [Oxford Harlequins](#) have been in touch to let us know that Female Rugby sessions are restarting: the Girls U13, U15 and U18 sessions are 17:00-18:00 every Tuesday evening at Oxford Harlequins RFC in Horspath. All players, new or experienced are welcome. [Community Badminton](#) are restarting their County and Community badminton programmes and encouraging



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juniors to get playing again. The Oxfordshire County badminton trials take place on Saturday 8 May at Radley College Sports Centre. See the attachment for more details.

Library: as of Monday 26 April, **library opening hours will be extended** to increase access at break times for Year 8, 9 and 10 students (see attachment).

Our new **Scholastic Book Club is also now up and running!** Go to <https://schools.scholastic.co.uk/cheney/digital-book-club> to browse the latest books and order online. For every £1 you spend on this month's Book Club, our school will earn 20p in Scholastic Rewards. The last book club earned over £60 in Scholastic Rewards, thanks to the wonderful support of Cheney parents and students. There are some brilliant new titles on offer so do take a look. Mrs Fenton will certainly be buying lots of these for the school library!

Cheney Friends meeting: Cheney Friends (the PTA) will be holding an online meeting at 7.30pm on Wednesday 28 April. All Cheney staff and families are very welcome to attend. The meeting will be held via Zoom, with two codes, as each has a limited meeting time attached to it.

Join Zoom Meeting (Part 1)

7:30pm, 28th April 2021 (meeting time limited to 40 minutes)

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82816184618?pwd=OFdOZzV6dU5oVVloTEh1S2NHUWFFdz09>

Meeting ID: 828 1618 4618

Passcode: hht1H6

Zoom meeting (Part 2)

8:15pm, 28th April (meeting time limited to 40 minutes)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/81420487008?pwd=RnhuNm5zblpkUnhrcGUwdE5PTzFNQT09>

Meeting ID: 814 2048 7008

Passcode: 68aqmb

Call for Uniform Donations: Cheney Friends always welcomes donations of good quality, clean, uniform items for its second-hand uniform sales. Please drop off any uniform donations to the main School Reception during opening hours. Many thanks in advance!

Student Newsletter: if you've been enjoying the fortnightly student newsletter, please encourage your children to get involved. The newsletter aims to showcase students' work and creativity and is edited by the fabulous Sixth Form Student Enrichment Committee. We've emailed all students today letting them know how they can share their work or simply find out more.



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Summer Show: there will be a virtual meeting this afternoon at 4pm for any students that want to be involved (see attachment for details). The meeting will be recorded and if your child cannot attend but still wants to be involved, Mr Barquilla will be happy to hear from them.

Exam certificates: for families of students who have left Cheney, exam certificates are available for collection from school. See the [website](#) for full details.

Sustainability: we are gradually making the site more inviting for nature, identifying and valuing our precious resources, improving biodiversity through planting, protection and management and creating a range of habitats. See the video on our [sustainability page](#) for an update.

[Rumble Museum Newsletter #8](#): this week's newsletter features the fascinating new additions to the Natural History Collection in the Brighthouse building, plus an invitation to explore Cheney 2050 online.

Parents and Carers of Years 9

Y9 immunisation reminder: Tdp/Men ACWY immunisations for Y9 students will take place on 18 May. If you have not already consented, you can find full details and the link to the consent form in [last term's letter](#).

Duke of Edinburgh's Award: please check your inboxes for yesterday's letter from Mr Lea and Mr Taberer about the Bronze Practice expedition this weekend. Please also note that the virtual conference intended for this week will no longer go ahead. Students have had an assembly on the practice expedition and the letter sent yesterday covers key points. If you have any questions, please contact DofE@cheney.oxon.sch.uk

Parents and Carers of Years 10-13

Teacher Assessments reminder: the assessments are well underway; we have tried very hard to space them out as much as possible, but the overall grid of assessments is fiendishly complicated (especially for Year 11). Students have spent part of tutor time making sure they have their own timetable, but we are very aware of the potential for confusion. Please can I encourage parents and carers to check that their children know what is coming up, and what they should revise? If in doubt, please email tutors or individual subject teachers for clarification.

The central email address for special consideration, corrections or appeals is CHS-exams2021@cheney.oxon.sch.uk. Staff are also using this to log difficulties with assessments to ensure that nothing is missed. If there is anything which has affected



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a student's performance in an assessment, please email this address, so we will be able to disregard a poor result, or adjust the weight given to it in deciding a final grade.

Students and parents should be aware that some useful material has been posted on the exam board websites. In many cases, these exam board materials are simply past papers which have been re-issued, but in some cases, there are some new papers and mark schemes.

Finally, with apologies for stating the obvious, but we need evidence to be able to give a grade. It will always be better to sit an assessment than not; if there are mitigating circumstances, and we know about them through the email above, we will be able to make adjustments. If we have no evidence, we are stuck.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award: please note that the virtual conference intended for this week will no longer go ahead. Students have had an assembly on the practice expedition and letters covering key points are going out this week and next. If you have any questions, please contact DofE@cheney.oxon.sch.uk.

Year 11 and Year 13 last day of school: the last day of compulsory school for Year 11 and Year 13 is at the start of half term. There is no study leave before that date.

Further details of what will happen, and plans for celebrations and final lessons will be coming from the Sixth Form and Year 11 teams in due course.

For the two weeks after half term, we will run final catch-up assessments for students with significant gaps in their evidence: this will be in small numbers and by invitation, and we will be in touch individually with students who need to do this. In the last two weeks of June, we will be doing transition activities. We expect full engagement in our 'ready for Sixth Form' course from students who are staying with us into Year 12, and we will facilitate other transition activities for those who are moving on to College, although the details of this depend on the Colleges.

You will find all our letters and notices on the [website](#) and/or on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Kind regards

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