

Cheney Communications

07 October 2021

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff, Governors and Year 12 and 13 Students

Financial update: parents and carers will be pleased to know that Cheney's financial situation is stable and healthy; long term forecasts allow us to invest in classroom infrastructure and the buildings. Joining RLT will make this more secure, as we will have greater access to automatic funding for maintenance and building improvements. We will never get all the money we would like (for example to replace existing buildings with new ones), but are far more confident that we will be able to maintain the current buildings, and improve the infrastructure of the school.

The headline figures for the coming year are below. Full accounts are available on the CSAT website (for the whole trust, including the 2 primaries, not just Cheney):

Important Documents – CSAT

- Forecast income (academic year 21-22): £10.4m
- Expenditure on staff: £8.3m
- Expenditure on educational supplies and services: £510k
- Expenditure on site and utilities: £400k
- Expenditure on non-classroom supplies and services: £525k
- Central trust costs: £365k
- Investment in hardware and buildings: £300k

You can see that the huge majority of the expenditure of the school is on staff, but at around 80% of income, this is sustainable, although we will have to keep a very close eye on hiring extra people (this is what led to the financial difficulty of 18 months ago). Being able to generate less than £300k on an overall budget of over £10m to invest in school improvements illustrates the fact that funding is tight: we get around £6,000 per student per year to do everything. Over the course of a few years, however, we will be able to refurbish our teaching blocks. In future years, our financial outlook is solid, largely because we have more students in the school than ever before (1,644 today); looking five or more years ahead, this is less certain, as there is a demographic bulge currently passing through the Oxfordshire school system, and numbers on roll may begin to drop. We can at least see this coming, and plan for it well in advance.

Year 11 destinations: as promised a few weeks ago, here is a summary of the destinations of our Year 11 leavers.

- 48% - Cheney 6th form
- 34% - College

- 9% - Other school 6th forms

The remaining 9% of students are divided between apprenticeships, employment and other further education providers. We are currently only unsure about the status of 2 of our former students, although we believe that they both have offers for places.

Together with the very pleasing destinations for our Year 13 cohort, we are delighted with how our students have done. Last year was tough and some knowledge was not transmitted, but I do not believe that our students' long term prospects have been damaged.

Exams in 2022: parents and carers of students in exam years will be wondering what exams will look like next summer. In essence, there will be a number of adaptations, and the grade boundaries will also make adjustment for the disruption. Broadly, the adaptations are similar to what was proposed last year, and seem in line with sensible expectations.

We will get more detailed information from exam boards in due course, including advanced information on which topics will not appear on the exams, although this will not come until February. The potential irritation of leaving it until then is clear, but I also understand the reason: to encourage the maximum coverage of the syllabus, and to avoid teaching to the test.

If exams are cancelled once again, we have a good backup plan, which will look a lot like what we did this summer. Departments are keeping a close track of progress throughout the year, and will have solid evidence on which to base a judgement, if it becomes necessary. We don't anticipate doing the grades again ourselves, but students would be very well advised to take the mock exams seriously this year. The large majority of students do, of course, but there are always some who take a relaxed attitude to mocks; this would not be sensible this year.

Below is an extract from a letter from the DfE with the main points:

...a choice of topics in some GCSE exams like English literature and history; advance information on the focus of exams to focus students' revision in subjects, where there is not a choice of topics; and support materials like formulae sheets in maths.

...with grade boundaries to be set by exam boards reflecting a midway point between 2021 and 2019 – so that more students get higher grades in 2022 than before the pandemic. This approach will provide a safety net for this year's students as well as a step back to normality, with results expected to return to the usual grade profile by 2023.

[Adaptations in 2022 summer exams to ensure fairness for students](#)

Covid Vaccination: Covid and Flu vaccinations take place on the following dates:

Y7 - Flu only, 13 October

Y8 and 9 - Flu and COVID, 13 October

Y10 and 11 - Flu and COVID, 19 October

Consents close two working days before each session. More details, FAQs and links to consent info: <http://ow.ly/wVnX50Gjf8M>.

We are attaching a set of FAQs produced by the Immunisation Team regarding the Covid 19 vaccination.

Covid vaccine monitor study: as we approach in-school vaccinations, the Covid vaccine monitor study organisers have asked us to share this opportunity for parents/carers to log any symptoms of the vaccination:

“Let us know your experiences following vaccination, and help us to understand how frequently side effects occur. Whether you have a reaction or not, your experience provides essential information. It is a simple online questionnaire-based study looking at side effects post Covid-19 vaccination:

<https://www.covidvaccinemonitor.co.uk/>

Interested parents/guardians can sign up to the survey online (within 2 days) on behalf of their child whether a side effect has been experienced or not.

The study is part of a wider EU study monitoring side effects in all ages following any Covid-19 vaccination and is EU funded.

The Drug Safety Research Unit (DSRU), an independent organisation in Hampshire is running the U.K arm of the study.”

See the attached poster for more information.

Quickways consultation: as a key part of the overall active travel programme, Oxfordshire County Council are proposing introducing quickways routes to some of the main highways in Oxford, with the intention of making cycling safer and smoother across the city.

The big changes for Cheney would be the removal of parking on Warneford Lane - to be replaced by proper wand-separated cycle tracks - and the creation of an uphill cycle lane on Morrell Avenue. These should make cycling to Cheney significantly safer and more accessible for quite a few students. Have your say:

<https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/quickway-cycle-route-oxford-2021>

Consultation ends 10 October.

Laptops for schools: we are very grateful to receive some donations of refurbished laptops: there is still a need to ensure that all of our children can get access to their work, and we have seen that the pandemic is still with us. The story from the Council is below:

[City Council calls for businesses and residents to join in initiative to provide laptops to local schoolchildren](#)

Black History Month: thank you to our Diversity Working Group for coordinating our celebrations for Black History Month, and to so many individual staff members who have contributed with enthusiasm. Posters of icons have been going up around the school and in every classroom; and in the library, Mrs Fenton has prepared reading recommendations for all age groups. We also have an assembly exploring the Great British Scandal, looking at how Afro-Caribbean students were wrongly diagnosed as being educationally subnormal in the 70s and how this affected them. The Rumble Museum has engaged in a host of activities around the museum's African Artefacts collection, including updating the museum display in reception and the recent workshop with Natty Mark Samuels. Natty Mark has also dropped in on our after school Creative Writing club where students are working on a newspaper.

Libraries Week: this week is National Libraries week, in which we celebrate the wonderful ways in which libraries in all their different guises are an essential part of life. Last night Mrs Fenton spotted this **[brilliant article](#)** by South African children's author Beverley Naidoo written for the Great School Libraries campaign as part of Libraries Week. Access and guidance to the right books is an essential part of every child's education - please do speak to your child about what they're reading and encourage them to come to the library at school to find something new.

The GSL is an initiative that campaigns for a library in every school - primary and secondary - you can find more information **[here](#)**.

World Mental Health Day, 10 October: over the course of their education, children spend **over 7,800 hours at school**. With such a huge amount of time spent in the classroom, schools provide an ideal environment for promoting good emotional wellbeing and identifying early behaviour changes and signs of mental distress. The social and emotional skills, knowledge and behaviours that children learn inside of the classroom can help them to build resilience and set the pattern for how they will manage their mental health throughout their lives.

As a school we will be celebrating Mental Health Day next week, with a week full of tutor sessions and drop in clinics within BR31 at break and lunchtimes to support our



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students as well as creating awareness. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mr Bampton - lba@cheney.oxon.sch.uk or Ms Marsh - jma@cheney.oxon.sch.uk.

Year 10 Parents' Evening Thursday 14 October: Year 10 families can book appointments using SchoolCloud until 3:30pm on 14 October.

Book with your child's details: <http://ow.ly/bvF150GliVW>

Support: <http://ow.ly/p7vC50GliVV>

Year 10 SchoolCloud survey: <http://ow.ly/U3HP50GIj3t>

Late start Friday 15 October: following Year 10 Parents' Evening, there will be a slightly later start to lessons on Friday 15 October. Lessons start at 9.00 am but the school gates and canteen will be open from 8.00 am.

INSET 1 November: school will be closed to students on 1 November for INSET.

Lingua Cuisine House Competition: we've had some incredible (and delicious) entries for our MFL Lingua Cuisine House competition so far. If your child hasn't submitted a dish, there's still plenty of time to get cooking over the weekend - deadline 15 October. See attachment for details.

Iris Classics Centre Banner Competition: the Iris Classics Centre at Cheney is holding a school wide competition to design a new banner for the Classics Centre. We are very fortunate that classicist **Professor Mary Beard** will be judging the entries!

The design would need to fit onto a banner with a **width of 8 feet, and a height of 3 feet**. We would like it to incorporate a rainbow in some way (the symbol of the ancient Greek messenger goddess Iris), and it will need to have the name "Iris Classics Centre" clearly visible as part of the design. Other than that, it is up to you!

Please submit your design to [this google form](#) (or as a paper copy by finding me (Dr Robinson) in the Classics Centre) by **Friday 22 October**.

All year groups are welcome to take part. The winning design will feature as our new banner, and prizes will be awarded to the winner and two -runner-up designs. All designs will be put on display on our website and around school. House points will be awarded to all students who enter.

[Rumble Museum Newsletter #17](#): in this week's Rumble Museum newsletter, catch up on the museum's activities for Black History Month and enjoy a tour of the Ashmolean Museum with Year 9 Museum Project students.



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Exam Invigilators/Casual Lesson Supervisors: Cheney School is looking for people to join our bank of Exam Invigilators and Casual Lesson Supervisors. Pay is at Grade 5 (SCP 7) is the sum of £11.67 per hour. Full training and support is provided.

If this is of interest to you, please contact the relevant person below. Alternatively, if you think one or other of these roles may be of interest to someone you know, please pass this message on to them.

Exam Invigilators – please contact Marie-Anne Fischer on (01865) 755270 or email: MF@cheney.oxon.sch.uk

Casual Lesson Supervisors –please contact Marie-Eve Whitehall or Tina Conway on (01865) 755299 or email MWH@cheney.oxon.sch.uk or TC@cheney.oxon.sch.uk.

Community

Helen & Douglas House Little Cook's Bake Sale: would your child like to support Helen & Douglas House and get a slice of the action by whisking up some tasty treats and holding a bake sale to raise some dough to help local terminally ill children? From 11-17 October 2021. Find out more and register to take part here: [Helen & Douglas House](#)

Anyone who raises more than £75 for Helen & Douglas House will be entered into a prize draw to win a £500 voucher for Drayton Manor Theme Park.

IF Oxford: the Science and Ideas Festival starts this weekend. Combining science, technology, engineering and mathematics with arts, humanities and culture, it's going to be great. All events are listed at www.if-oxford.com (poster attached).

The Oxford & Cambridge Singing School: the Oxford & Cambridge Singing School Christmas course runs 20 & 21 December (Monday & Tuesday) for those aged 7-13, at Worcester College. Booking at www.oxbridgesingingschool.com. Bursaries are available. Poster attached.

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

Kind regards

Cheney Communications