

Cheney Communications

16 September 2021

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

Crime, punishment and respect for learning: very significant improvements

As I mentioned at the start of term, we have been working hard on a new slant to our Respect for Learning policy. This does not mean that detentions or other sanctions have gone away, but we are hoping to be able to avoid needing them in the first place. It seems to me that this is self-evident from our motto 'think for yourself; act for others', and the values that I shared with you last week. You may remember that we have simplified our school rules (and expressed them positively, rather than as a list of prohibitions). They are now:

- Be respectful
- Be ready
- Be your best

I am very pleased to be able to share the first evidence of the effectiveness of the new approach. Below is a brief comparison of this year against the same period last year. Last year was also an improvement on the year before, although comparisons with 2019-20 are problematic because we are not comparing like-for-like.

2020-21		2021-22	
<i>Incident Name</i>		<i>Incident Name</i>	
Grand Total	665	Grand Total	399
defiance	194	defiance	42
disruption to learning	144	disruption to learning	71
lateness	5	lateness	125
truancy	22	truancy	49
missed 30 minute detention	27	missed detention	30
poor corridor behaviour	3		
poor playground behaviour	10	poor behaviour outside the classroom	27
removal from lesson	18	removal from lesson	9
rudeness/inappropriate language	45	rudeness/inappropriate language	30
rude or threatening behaviour	3		
fighting	2	Violence or threatening behaviour	2
physical contact (non-violent contact)	153		

Fixed term exclusions (suspensions)

- 2021-22: 3 students and 3.5 days lost
- 2020-21: 5 students and 7.5 days lost

Removing the physical contact detentions, (a response to the Covid situation), we have still had 113 fewer incidents this year. Of those 399, 174 are for lateness or truancy (ridiculous lateness to lessons). This is something we have been pushing this term, and were not following up anything like so systematically last year. Therefore, genuinely comparing like-for-like behaviour, the rate is something like **512 incidents last year, compared to 225 this year**, or about half last year's figures, which is also borne out by the exclusion statistics as well.

This goes a long way to explaining how nice the atmosphere in school has been this term: we now need to keep it up for the rest of the year, even when there are difficult days. I do need to add one negative thing, however.

I need to make it clear that swearing at staff will not be tolerated, and the starting point for this is a fixed term exclusion. In all of the exclusions we have had this year, swearing at staff has been a feature. This is of course (and always was) a rare occurrence by a tiny minority of students; it happened too often last year, however, and needs to change.

Covid-19 update

You will have heard that the government has approved a vaccination programme for 12 -16 year olds. At the minute, we have no further details, except that we expect it to happen in school in a similar way to the other vaccinations, such as HPV. As with all medical procedures and vaccinations, it is not compulsory, and consent will be sought from parents before it happens. If you are worried about it, or if you disagree with it, please do not take part.

Changes to daily routine: we have now had a handful of cases confirmed by PCR, and as publicised in our contingency plan, we will now stop in-person assemblies and put the PE changing rooms out of use. **As of Monday, students will no longer be using the PE changing rooms.**

On their PE days they need to come to school in their PE kit and school blazer. Please note that students are only allowed to wear black tracksuit bottoms, shorts or sports leggings, plain red t-shirt, plain black jumper or Cheney jumper. Blazers must be worn on top of PE kit. If you need to refer back to our specific uniform guidance see the [website](#) or attachment.



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So far this term, uniform has been very much better than last year, and we want it to continue under this new arrangement. The sanction for not being in the right uniform is a 30 minute detention.

Lateral Flow Tests: please continue to use lateral flow tests at home. We are awaiting a delivery of test kits, and we will distribute them as soon as we have them, possibly as soon as tomorrow.

Google calendar and homework: as you know, we are not using Show my Homework this year, but setting all homework via Google Classroom. The problem with this is that it is hard for parents to see what their children need to do. Unfortunately, there is currently no easy solution, except to ask to see your child's account. When students log in, they can see a calendar with all work due on it, in different colours. If Google develop the parent functionality, we will let everyone know.

Road safety: unfortunately, a small number of parents are still parking dangerously outside school. Please don't. Members of the senior team will be asking parents politely to move over the coming weeks: please do not take this the wrong way, but cars parked like the one below cause great inconvenience for others, and are a risk for our children.





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Open Evening 23 September and Open Morning 22 September: we have enjoyed welcoming families to our Open Mornings this week. We have a further Open Morning on Wednesday 22 September, 8.30am-10.00 am, and our Our Open Evening is on Thursday 23 September, 5.30pm-8.00pm. If you have younger children, please come along. There is no need to book, but we are inviting prospective families to submit questions in advance using [our online form](#).

School will close early on Thursday 23 September at 1.30 to allow us to prepare. The canteen will be closed to students on this day at lunchtime, so children with free school meals should eat at morning break.

Curriculum PE: Hockey and Rugby feature in the PE curriculum map for the next two terms. If your son or daughter is participating in these sports, we recommend that they bring shin pads and a gum-shield.

PSHE for Years 7-11: as a part of your child's education at Cheney, we promote personal wellbeing and development through a comprehensive Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education programme. Please find attached a letter from Dr Bown, and Mr Narajos regarding the Relationships and Sex Education Programme topics for this term.

Climate Strike 24 September: if parents are happy for their children to take part in the Climate Strike, please make arrangements with the year team to collect them from reception at 12.30 on Friday. We approve of protecting the climate, but we don't approve of disrupting lessons, so any demonstrations need to happen off site, under parental responsibility.

Climate Bill: as a school, we are proud to be supporting The Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill, calling for stronger action on the climate and ecological crisis. Find out why and join us: <https://www.ceebill.uk/>

Staff contacts: our staff contact listing has been updated and is on the [website](#).

CCF update: the first CCF parade will take place Tuesday 21 at 4.00pm at Cheney. Subsequence parades will happen at MCS assuming that all of the paperwork has been processed. A letter with more details is coming to families concerned.

Natty Mark Samuels Community Poetry Reading, 24 September: we are delighted that Natty Mark Samuels, founder of the African School in Blackbird Leys, will be giving [a reading of his poetry](#) inspired by artefacts in our African collection on Friday 24 September between 4 and 5pm.



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Visitors will be able to listen to some of his beautiful poems. as well as view the artefacts in our collection and enjoy refreshments. All ages are welcome to attend. To book, please email lro@cheney.oxon.sch.uk - the whole event is free.

Gardening club: thank you for the donations we have received. We still need your unwanted gardening hand tools in good condition (particularly hand forks, trowels, grass clippers, large watering cans and secateurs), and new gardening gloves. We would also love to hear from you if you have any excess plants you would consider donating - they need to be toughies and good for pollinators! Please contact Jen Henderson - jhn@cheney.oxon.sch.uk to discuss.

Quiet board games wanted: Mrs Fenton is on the look-out for "quiet" board games (chess, draughts etc) that can be used by students in the library during break times. If you have any spare sets or pieces, then please contact her at jfe@cheney.oxon.sch.uk.

IF Oxford: the Science and Ideas Festival returns in October with 100 in-person and digital events for all ages. With a wide range of topics, ranging from the chemistry of cooking or coding your own lantern, to careers in medical research, there is something for everyone. All events are listed at www.if-oxford.com.

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

Kind regards

Cheney Communications