



12 March 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

Hopefully, for those of you home schooling this has been an easier week! A huge thank you for all you've done in supporting the students and the school in ensuring that work has been completed and progress has been made. I'm sure I heard the distant sound of corks popping all across South Oxfordshire and Caversham last weekend and rightly so!

Re-opening

We've definitely loved having the students back and I think this video summarises things nicely.

<https://vimeo.com/522253792>

There was definitely a frisson of excitement on Tuesday as the children got to see their friends again but it was just wonderful to see their smiles and happiness at the reunions. I did two loops on Wednesday and two on Thursday at different times and on each occasion, I witnessed lovely calm classrooms with focused, engaged students and teachers teaching. This was supported by Alison Walker and Sara Elliss who are the Trust leads on Standards and Safeguarding respectively, who witnessed a similar picture on Wednesday and Thursday.

Testing

I have been delighted at the way our LFD testing has gone this week. My team of tireless volunteers have performed over 700 tests this week. Thankfully all of these have been negative (the only test we ever want your children to fail!!). Test 3 takes place on Monday and Tuesday. With your support and by sticking to the lockdown guidelines I am hoping we can make it through all 3 tests with no positives.

Our Home Testing kits were delivered on Thursday and will be distributed next week.

Face Coverings

Can I say how proud I have been regarding our students and their attitude towards face coverings in lessons and round the school more generally. We've had to do very few reminders which is reassuring for our staff as we endeavour to keep the site safe and risks at a minimum.

Parents' Evening

Last night was Year 7 Parents' Evening which was very well attended. The online video system is very convenient and you avoid the need for babysitters, the draughty hall with poor acoustics and the inevitable queues for appointments. However, the face to face rapport that you can establish with a parent is very hard to achieve via a video meeting. I will be seeking our views later in the year on whether we carry on with this system and will be very interested in your views.

Science Week activities

Mrs Hardman has since been holding live science demonstrations during breaktimes. Despite the wet weather on Wednesday smoke machines and chemical reactions abounded in the hall



and on Thursday in very windy conditions giant bubbles were produced to float across the Quad. Mrs Hardman's enthusiasms for Science and STEM careers is boundless and I am sure there will have been many students who have been inspired by her passion and hands on demonstrations.

Parent Survey

Please can I remind you to complete the MET Trust survey regarding the school. This is a really useful tool as we start to consider the academic year 2021-2022 and our priorities for progress.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/YN3DGT7>

CESA

Can I also use this opportunity to remind of our Parent Teacher Association, CESA. As we re-open they will be looking to support the students with fundraising activities and anything you can do to support would be most welcome. They can be contacted through their Facebook page. I know that they will be organising a Bags2School event soon and like me I'm sure you've been clearing out clothes as part of your lockdown fun.

Woodland Trust trees and Eco Club

We will be planting 105 trees on our school field after Easter. These saplings have been granted to the school and we will be using students and volunteers to get them planted around the periphery of our field linking them to our existing hedgerows and trees on site. I have also been asked by another parent if they can sow wildflower seeds around these tree planting areas which is a wonderful idea. If any other parent would like to get involved, has ideas for our eco work Mr Yarwood will be starting an Eco Club after Easter.

Red Nose Day

A letter will be sent home at the beginning of next week with more information, but please be aware that in support of Red Nose Day we will be holding a non-uniform day on Friday 19th March. Students will be asked to donate £1 in support of this excellent cause.

My students of the week this week are everyone!! It has been a joy to walk around the school this week and see the school back in action with so many of our students showing us just how amazing they can be!

My Staff member of the week this week is Mr Reskalla for going over and above in support of some of his tutees with their options choices. A great piece of #teammece work

Please do not forget to use our [FAB](#) and [DRAB](#) links to leave any feedback you may have.

Have a great weekend.

Take care and stay safe

Andy Hartley
Headteacher