



05 November 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

I hope all our MECE families had a great half-term, and everyone was able to spend some good quality family time together.

For all our Hindu families may I wish you a Happy Diwali and hope you are able to have a great celebration with your loved ones.

Term dates 2022-2023

I was glad to be back in the hot seat from Tuesday and to make sure everything had been running smoothly in my Covid absence. The slightly extended half-term was well received by staff, and we are considering doing something similar next year to break up the very long Autumn term. Our term dates for the next academic year will be published in the next few weeks so please watch this space.

Marking and Homework Club

I have had several communications with parents recently about homework and marking. I just want to clarify that the Trust marking policy is that core subjects (Maths, English and Science) will mark two pieces of work each half-term which will lead to a DIRT activity. This will involve students improving their work following guidance from the teacher. In foundation subjects (History, Geography etc) this exercise takes place once a half term. Where there is homework, it can be marked through a variety of methods including individual feedback, whole class feedback (where the teacher feeds back on common strengths of the work and common misconceptions), verbal feedback to an individual or just an acknowledgement in the book when the book is marked.

Can I also remind you that Homework Club is running Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday in the Library for an hour after school? Homework is set to consolidate knowledge and skills and to keep missing it and not completing it really puts students at a significant academic disadvantage (as well as then losing numerous lunchtimes in departmental detentions!).

Assembly

I have been delivering assemblies and have focused on the topic of self-improvement and used the Olympics and the success and frustration of athletes involved in the Games. I also referred to Stephen Covey's habits of successful people book and gave the students a simplified version of the author's ideas. Lastly, I used these ideas to put into a school context how to be successful at school.

COVID

Currently, we only have one student and no members of staff with Covid (huge touching of wood needed as I write this!). Given these low infection rates in school we feel it is appropriate to continue with our current risk mitigations.

Extra-curricular

There has been lots going on this week in terms of our extra offer. Our Eco Club met and hung bird feeders across the school to promote biodiversity. Alongside this the first meeting of the Gifted and Talented Scientists club happened on Friday - over 50 students attended! They will be working on several different projects including fingerprint locks, putting turbines inside guttering and biodegradable fake nails which all sound great! The Science department are also putting on extra lunch lessons for those Year 7s who it is felt have lost learning because of the lockdowns which is brilliant to see.

Events

Today, we are hosting a Duathlon in the Sports Hall with secondary schools from South Oxfordshire attending in this combined rowing and running competition. In addition, tomorrow we are hosting the South Oxfordshire Primary Schools cross country competition and my thanks go to Mr Hunter for all his work on these matters.

Next week our Higher Ability students are visiting Trinity College, Oxford to get a flavour of what this type of university offers and how they can become a part of it. If any Higher Ability students haven't signed up for their 'Higher Project' but would like to do so Mrs Hills would like to remind you to do so as soon as possible.

Also, next week all of Year 11 will be visiting Henley College for the day to attend taster lessons in preparation for and to support their subject choices for next year.

CESA Quiz

Please do not forget to sign up to our upcoming CESA quiz which takes place next Friday evening. Full details and how to sign up can be found on CESA's Facebook page and on today's Student and Parent Bulletin.

Stars

My star students for this week are:

Jack who won an Amazon voucher in a draw I made in Year 7 assembly today. He was one of a big group of Year 7s selected for their positive attitude to school since the start of term.

Delehn – for consistent effort put into her lessons


Callum - for positive attitude to revision and exams.

Tom and Luca for their insightful input into this week's PSHE discussions on war and conflict.

My star staff member goes to **Mr Hunter** for all his work in ensuring the school sits at the heart of the community it serves with our hosting of several sporting events for local schools.

Please click on the fab and drab links if you would like to leave us any feedback.

Take care and stay safe.



Andy Hartley
Headteacher

