



25 May 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian

As the final week of this slightly disrupted half-term comes to a close, there are many positive things to reflect upon and yet staff and students alike will also be grateful for the break.

Staff absence

Since I became headteacher in January 2020 I have been most fortunate in avoiding too many long-term staff absences, however, like buses, they have all come at once in the last half-term. Undoubtedly, longer periods of cover and some of the variability in cover staff has provided both us and the students with some challenges. However, fingers crossed, we are on the path to recovery and hopefully the situation will be more stable after half-term.

Duke of Edinburgh

The Year 10 Duke of Edinburgh group spent Friday evening wandering the lush green wilds of South Oxfordshire after a day of practice orienteering, putting up tents and cooking on Trangia stoves. The evening went off very successfully and we now look forward to the final expedition in June. A huge thanks goes to Mrs Chopra and the Duke of Edinburgh team who were involved in the day and gave up their Friday evening.



Year 11 exams

We've been delighted with how our Year 11 examinations have gone this year. So far, in the first two weeks of the examinations, there has been 100% turnout and additionally no issues regarding equipment and rule compliance. This isn't the same picture at every school and says a lot about the strong grounding our students have been given over the previous two years. Fingers crossed the final two weeks proceed as successfully.

Head Student interviews

We held our Head Student interviews on Thursday. There will be more news on this to follow after the break, but I know it will be a really tough decision if the quality of the hustings speeches are anything to go by from Tuesday's assembly.

Maths Challenge

We had some fantastic news regarding our Junior Maths Challenge entrants this week. Three years ago, when we first entered students into this event, we had two bronze awards. As you can see below the 'medal haul' is rather different now and reflective of the higher levels of challenge in the curriculum. To put it in context, to gain a gold award would put a student within the top 2% of mathematicians in their age group which is a fantastic achievement indeed!

Gold

Dylan C (Year 7)

Imogen C. (Year 8)

Silver

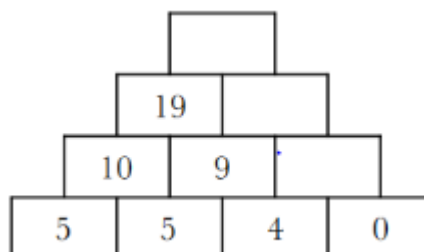
Ines L (Year 7)

Misa B (Year 7)

Shantae F (Year 8)

Samuel S (Year 8)

Michael L (Year 8)



Bronze

24 Bronze Awards (17 from Y7 and 7 from Y8)

Year 5 WOW day

We had a great day with students from three local primaries, Sonning Common, Kidmore End and Caversham Park, on Monday. The students worked on their science, food, design, drama and orienteering skills as they sampled our facilities, lessons and atmosphere. It was lovely to feel their enthusiasm and zest for life. A huge thank you to Miss Cheeseman who organised the day and to the staff involved in the delivery of the lessons.

As you can see from the photo from their finale, they really seemed to have enjoyed the day too!



Stars of the week

My student star of the week for this week is **Libby S** in Year 7 for winning the Homework Challenge set by Ms Cheeseman recently. Great work Libby!

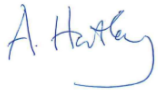
My staff stars of the week goes to **Mrs Chopra** for her work in ensuring the Duke of Edinburgh students were able to get their practice expedition done and **Miss Cheeseman** for her work on the WOW day.

Lastly, to all my staff who have tirelessly worked together over the last 6 weeks to achieve so many great things for our school. **#teammece**

Please leave any feedback you may have using the links below.

I hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable half-term and our MECE families get to enjoy the sunny weather together.

Yours sincerely



Andy Hartley
Headteacher

