



Monday 11 May 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

VE Day Celebrations

And so, how did Friday go in your home or street? The added poignancy of the lockdown clearly intensified the dignity with which the nation remembered those brave men and women who fought for our liberty.

There was a competition for the best dressed VE Day house where I live and I remain ridiculously proud that all of the painting, gluing and stapling was worth it as we won first prize and a rather wonderful VE Day mug and tea towel set. My youngest had speculated that the winner might get an iPhone...he's since made me tea in that mug and has washed, dried and put it away!



Feel Good Friday Feedback

Thank you to those parents and carers who took part in Mr Gent's weekend survey about Feel Good Fridays. The responses were overwhelmingly in favour (90%) and means that on Friday 15 and Friday 22 May, we shall be suspending the normal daily setting of work for all year groups. Instead, students will be invited to choose a feel good activity from a menu that is being devised and will be shared later this week. Students can also use that time to catch up on missed work and therefore everyone go into the half term being ready with the right frame of mind.

We have no plans to repeat this approach every Friday, but may return to it in late June or July if we sense that it is the right thing to do. Our daily provision of lessons will of course remain in place and therefore avoid undoing all of the good habits we know the vast majority of our students have cultivated.

Prime Minister's Address Last Night

The goal to resume school for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 children did not come as a surprise because there had of course been so much speculation about this in the media in recent days. Exactly how that will unfold in local and national primary schools, will take time for them to plan and communicate and so we shall wait patiently to hear more of the details. More broadly, Boris Johnson's address and the subsequent information enables me to write the following messages to specific year groups.

Continued...

New Year 6s Joining Us in September

I am personally relieved that all Year 6 children *may* have *some* time in their 'old school'. It might enable them to have some closure, say farewells and get them back in some of the routines that are lost whilst home learning. Mrs Faulkner (Head of Year 7) had already put together an altered transition programme and can now weave in the possibility that we may be able to offer some safe school visits, or indeed visit those schools if it is safe and sensible to do so. Mrs Faulkner will be writing to all the families who will be sending children to our school next year. I am delighted to say that we have a record number joining us in September, by the way.

Years 7 and 8

It is looking increasingly unlikely that you will be returning to CNS before the summer holiday. I know there will be mixed feelings about this and that the feeling of being apart from your friends is a tough one to bear. In the meantime, please keep on top of your daily tasks on Show My Homework and avoid looking back on these days as being wasted on Netflix, Prime, YouTube and Disney+. I repeat my urge to you to learn something new. Perhaps a musical instrument, water colours, DIY, gardening, a foreign language or an entire saga of books: Narnia, Dark Materials or Lord of the Rings? We are so impressed with how hard the vast majority of you are working and urge you to keep on track.

Year 9

You are now in the final fortnight before your GCSEs begin. Behind the scenes, Mr Trainer and Ms Coombes are putting the finishing touches to your options and creating brand new timetables that we hope to email out to you via *In Touch* and commence either week beginning 1 June or 8 June. Please bear with us, as we try and do this all remotely and face one or two hurdles that are tricky to overcome. Nevertheless, we are optimistic that your GCSEs can all begin after half term and this will provide you with a sense of a new beginning as well. More on this from Mr Trainer in the coming days.

Years 10 and 12

You will have heard what the Prime Minister said about trying to give you some time with your teachers before the summer holidays. I was delighted to hear him say this and whilst there is no guarantee this will happen and there are so many questions to be answered around how that would occur, the hope is that we can at least connect with you before the summer holidays begin.

I imagine that you and your parents will have lots of questions about what a return to school in late June or July might look like or mean. Please be patient whilst we explore this in the coming weeks and should this be a realistic plan, we will share details with you after half term. Until then, rest assured that we would never make anyone come into school if they felt worried or unsafe. For now, please leave this with me, the Leadership Team and the Governing Body to explore properly.

Year 11s

Every day we are having more and more conversations with the Heads of each GCSE and A Level department. Rest assured that the process that teachers are following to produce the centre assessed grades is extremely rigorous and evidence based. Your teachers are stepping up to do right by you under circumstances that we sincerely hope will never again be repeated in your lifetime.

Continued...

Also thank you for taking part in the survey:

- If you are leaving CNS to join a new college then we hope to share information on how they are planning to provide bridging courses for you in the weeks and months ahead. But you are welcome to engage in the CNS bridging work where it overlaps your own subject interests.
- Meanwhile, those staying in our Sixth Form will commence the first phase of their bridging work next Monday 18 May and the activities will reflect those 'immersive' ideas we asked you about in the survey. Phase 2 of your bridging work (to begin 8 June) will be more traditional and assessment based - something that was overwhelmingly approved by you in the survey.

We were really pleased to see that the vast majority of all year 11s are expecting to visit the school on 20 August to collect their results. Furthermore, the expected turnout for the Prom is also huge. More details on both of these events nearer the time and of course, both will be in keeping with public health advice.

Year 13s

Your teachers and the Heads of Department continue to take the unusual role of providing centre assessed grades extremely seriously and you would be pleased to see how meticulous they are and how much they understand how this matters to you. I know that you have received some great information from colleagues in recent weeks on how to prepare for the next stage of your life and that the lockdown has particularly tough restrictions for you on work experiences, part time employment and other plans you had for the Summer of 2020.

And finally...

Please do not hesitate to email me if you wish (head.4010@chipping-norton.oxon.sch.uk). Please look out for the normal updates on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. But do not wait if you have an urgent or nagging question or concern.

Yours sincerely,



Barry Doherty
Headteacher