

## PARENT BULLETIN - Friday 5th June 2020



Dear Parents/Carer,

Welcome back! I hope that you all had a restful half term and are ready for another successful term, now that we are all becoming experts at 'distance learning'. We know that our students will continue to work hard with your support and we are looking forward to seeing how much our students have learned during '**quiz week**', **starting on Tuesday 7th July**. Please do continue to encourage your children to work hard; we want them to be proud of what they have achieved in these difficult circumstances!

We also recognise that our role as a school is much more than just as teachers of academic subjects - we have an important role to play at the heart of our community. With this in mind, we know that many of you will have seen the news about the murder of George Floyd in America and the civil unrest that has followed. We know that many of you will have been moved by this news and these scenes, and we also know that some of you will feel that this is very distant from your own life and reality. We feel a huge sense of responsibility to our community and to the children we love and care for, alongside you, every day.

In this situation we would normally talk to the children, and each-other, about what has happened, the issues at stake, and what our role is in starting to make things better. As we are limited in our ability to do this virtually, we have put together some resources to help our students explore these issues with you at home. [These can be found here](#) and will also be shared directly with the students via Google Classroom. The presentation includes some information about what has happened and some conversation starters. Please do engage your child in this conversation as dialogue is the best starting point in challenging oppression. Please get in contact with Ms Walton if you have any questions.

Ms Wood

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### **Parent Voice**

#### **Annual Parent Survey - Feedback**

Thank you to all those of you who were able to complete our annual parent survey to share your views. It was really pleasing to hear how positive you were about so many aspects of the school, including how safe your children feel, strong relationships with teachers, and the amount of progress they are making in lessons.

In terms of areas for development, a key theme ran through the feedback and that was to continue to improve our proactive communication with parents. With this in mind, we will be looking to make the following improvements for next year:

- Ensuring that more information about our curriculum and school systems is available to parents online
- More structure around homework self-quizzing so that parents can support their children with out of class learning.
- Advertising events such as Parent Forum and SLT surgery more widely to parents.
- Seeking to run some more informal events for parents and our whole community.

#### **Mandarin Teacher Needed!**

We are seeking someone to teach a taster Mandarin elective for our year 7 students on a Monday afternoon next year for one hour per week. Students will study Mandarin for 10 weeks to get an introduction to the language. **If you, or anyone you know, might be interested, please do let us know.** A teaching qualification is not required.

## **Curriculum**

### **Seneca**

We have been using the online learning platform Seneca Learning in school and they have just released a free parent monitoring platform. This lets you see how long your child has spent on their different subjects, their average score & number of questions answered. Here are some [instructions](#) for getting started:

1. [Click here to create a parent account](#) (if you arrive at a login page, make sure to click on the 'Sign up' option)
2. Click 'invite child'
3. Share your code with your child(ren) and ask them to click on the link
4. Login to review their progress.

### **Quiz Week (week starting 6th July)**

When we return to school, it is vital that our teachers know how much students have learned so that we can fill any learning gaps and address any misconceptions. This will be an important part of their reintegration back to school. We will therefore be setting quizzes the week starting 6th July (the second to last week of term) to help us find out more about our students' progress. These quizzes will be completed online and will be instead of (not in addition to) lessons on particular days. The quizzes will be based on the content that has been covered this cycle. They will not require any additional preparation, apart from continuing to work hard on the distance learning tasks set over the next few weeks. Students will receive a score for each quiz and we will use this information to plan our teaching for September. Students will not be ranked or judged on their scores and we will not be producing a report.

### **Mandarin Elective for 2020/21 - RESPONSE NEEDED!**

Next year, we will be offering year 8 students the chance to study Mandarin for a whole year as part of their Wednesday elective. Students will be taught by Mr Webster (who has delivered the 'taster' elective this year) and will study towards a formal qualification called the Youth Chinese Test (YCT) Level 1, the content of which forms the base of the Scheme of Learning.

Spaces for the Mandarin course will be limited. If your child is interested in taking part, please email their name to [headteacher@theswanschool.org.uk](mailto:headteacher@theswanschool.org.uk). Please note that students will only have one choice of Wednesday elective if they choose to study Mandarin, although they will still have three choices for their academic elective.

## **Enrichment**

### **Mandarin - Online Course**

Mr Webster, our Mandarin teacher, has set up an online Mandarin course that is available for all of our students free of charge. You can see more by visiting: [www.ipandarin.com](http://www.ipandarin.com). If you would like to register for an account please email [headteacher@theswanschool.org.uk](mailto:headteacher@theswanschool.org.uk).

### **The Swan (Audio)Book Club**

A reminder that our current book is *The Near Witch* by V E Schwab, chosen by Catriona Porter (7Y). Please find the book freely available at [this](#) link. We will aim to discuss this book via a virtual Google Hangout meeting on Wednesday 10th June at 4pm. Please make sure your child emails me to request an invitation to the Hangout if they have not already joined Book Club. Mrs Hinze.

### **Poetry Competition - theme is 'Lockdown'**

Thank you for encouraging your children to enter the 'Lockdown' poetry competition. The deadline for entries has now passed and the winners will be announced next week. Watch this space! Mrs Hinze.

## **Music**

This term in Music, we have been learning about the instruments of the orchestra. If your child has taken an interest in this, or in any particular instrument, why don't you think about instrumental lessons for Year 8?

If you are interested in this, you can register your interest with the Oxfordshire Music Service [here](#), and they will then send an instrumental teacher into school in September. You can also apply for instrument hire, and they have a discount rate for "endangered instruments"!

Do feel free to contact me via email ([katrina.playford@theswanschool.org.uk](mailto:katrina.playford@theswanschool.org.uk)) if you have any questions about this.

Mrs Playford

## **Other**

### **Swan YouTube Channel**

We have created a YouTube channel to collate videos created by the school. You can find all the assemblies there as well as some new short clips about the school that we are making for our new year 7 parents. You can access the channel [here](#).

### **Ski Trip Postponed until Easter 2022**

Due to the current situation we are postponing the planned Ski trip for Easter 2021 and moving it back until Easter 2022. The Year groups targeted for this trip will be Year 8 and 9 (in 2022) so no children will miss out on the opportunity. Further communication will follow next academic year.

### **School Uniform**

A reminder that [Price & Buckland](#), our uniform provider will require all uniform orders to be placed by **9th August**, in order to guarantee delivery for September. All uniforms must be ordered to home delivery - we are unable to accept orders to school. If you think you may be eligible for financial support in purchasing uniform, please submit a request using the [Apply for Bursary Support button](#) on our [website](#).

### **School Nurse**

Even though your children may not be coming into school, you still have access to the School Nursing service and everything that it offers. If your child would like a confidential appointment via phone, video chat or a walk and talk, please email or text me at [caroline.smith@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk](mailto:caroline.smith@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk) 07717661485.

### **Key Dates:**

- [Quiz Week](#) - 6th to 10th July.
- [Staff Inset Days](#) - please be aware that Monday 6th July and Friday 10th July are currently planned as staff inset days.