

PARENT BULLETIN - Friday 25th September 2020



Dear Parents/Carers,

As you know, very careful planning has gone into the re-opening of our school this September to ensure that we are able to provide a world-class education for our students whilst keeping them and our community safe. We are really proud of the way both staff and students have adjusted to the new routines.

Due to changing Covid-19 advice from the government and as we familiarise ourselves with our new routines and building, we are constantly reviewing the measures that we have put in place. **As part of this review, we have decided to make the difficult decision to cancel our extended day from Monday 5 October 2020 until the Christmas break. During this period the school will finish at 3.40pm every day. This change will bring the length of our school day in line with other schools (we currently teach for approximately 3 hours longer per week). Curriculum lessons will not be affected - only electives and supervised study will be removed.** We feel that this is the best way to ensure that children get the most out of their time in school in the current circumstances.

Please take the time to read the letter that is attached and [linked here](#) which explains in more detail the reasons for our decision. We understand that this change may cause childcare issues for some parents so we will also be running a supervised 'homework club' from 3.40 to 4.35pm on Monday-Thursday. Parents who wish to make use of this provision must complete [this form](#) by **Friday 2nd October** so that we can plan for numbers.

Ms Wood

Covid 19

Communicating about cases

Please read this [letter](#), which outlines the actions we will take as a school in the event of a suspected or confirmed case of Covid-19. I understand that this is a worrying time for parents, but please be assured that we will communicate with you in a timely way any information that you need to know.

What you can do as parents

To help keep our community safe, we ask you to:

- Speak to your child about the importance of maintaining good hygiene and social distancing measures.
- Keep your child home from school if they display any of the [symptoms of Covid-19](#). Please keep us informed if your child or a member of your household becomes ill.
- Ensure your child has a bottle of hand sanitiser with them if at all possible. Face masks are not mandatory, but your child is welcome to wear one in school if they would prefer to.
- Ensure your child has their own water bottle - these can be filled up from water fountains.

This [information](#) from our school nurse may also be helpful for parents trying to navigate this difficult time.

Annual Flu Vaccination - Year 7 only

The primary school flu vaccination programme is being extended for year 7s this year. Please find attached a [letter](#) regarding your child's flu vaccination. If you would like your child to receive a vaccination you will need to complete the Consent Form, via the link below, so your child can receive their Flu Vaccination. This link will cease to work 2 working days before the session.

- **Session Date - Wednesday 2nd December 2020**

To access the online consent form, please click on the following link

<https://www.oxfordhealthimms.co.uk/forms/flu>

Reporting Student Absence

A reminder that the school office needs to be informed each day of a child's absence from school as soon as possible in the morning.

Our preferred method of communicating student absence is email as it helps make sure we get all the accurate information and can easily get back in contact:

- Parents should email office@theswanschool.org.uk including ABSENCE in the title of the email.
- Email/message needs to state child's full name and tutor, and why the child is off, particularly if they have suspected Covid or another infectious disease
- If the child is off due to [Covid symptoms](#) then the parents need to arrange a Covid test and get a negative test result before the child comes back to school. The school will provide home learning resources and a chromebook while the student is off school.

Parents still have the option to telephone the school and leave a message if they have no access to email.

My Child At School (MCAS)

Bromcom have now resolved the issue with MCAS which was blocking the creation of some accounts. We have tried to resend log-in details to as many parents who were having difficulties as possible. Please email the school office if you have still not managed to register for MCAS.

ParentMail and MyChildAtSchool

Unfortunately, we are still experiencing some technical difficulties with our ParentMail - please do bear with us whilst we work through these issues. Can we please ask that you pay for lunches in advance (£13 per week). You should also make a payment to the [Dinner Top Up](#) account if you wish your child to purchase breakfast or break time snacks. Please do email office@theswanschool.org.uk if you have any queries.

Enrichment

Library News

It's been a wonderful first week in the Library, and students have borrowed more than 100 books since opening day! We have plenty of books for all tastes and stages, so even if your child is not yet a keen reader please do encourage her or him to come along to the Library and have a chat with Ms Bradburn or myself about what books s/he might like. Many thanks to all those who have returned books from last year; please keep returning them if you find them. Next Thursday (1st October) is NATIONAL POETRY DAY. Students are encouraged to visit the Library during their lunch break that day to read a poem, recite a poem, write a poem,

or write about a poem. The first ten participants in every lunch break will receive a National Poetry Day bookmark and sticker. Books of the Week (beginning 28th September): *Poems to Live Your Life By* - work by poets ranging from Imtiaz Dharker to William Shakespeare (and chosen by Chris Riddell) to go with all the highs and lows of life; and *Sun Time, Snow Time* - a collection of short, lyrical poems about Caribbean and British life by Grace Nichols.

Tessa Roynon, School Librarian

Family Learning

I am delighted to let parents know that we have been offered free spaces on a variety of English and Maths courses designed to boost parents' confidence in supporting their child's learning. These Family Learning courses will be delivered by Tony Payne, an experienced teacher at Abingdon and Witney College. Just some of the courses on offer are: Keeping up with the children in English (five 2-hour sessions), Keeping up with the children in maths (five 2-hour sessions), ESOL class (English for speakers of other languages) (up to ten 2-hour sessions). To sign up or for more information, please contact Tony Payne by email:

tony.payne@abingdon-witney.ac.uk.

Instrumental Lessons

As the new year begins, I would like to remind parents that we have several instrumental teachers in school that offer private lessons. We have a teacher for the following instruments: piano, drums, guitar, violin and brass. If you are interested in your child receiving instrumental lessons, please get in contact with me (katrina.playford@theswanschool.org.uk) and I will put you in contact with the relevant teacher.

Mrs Playford, Head of Performance

Speech & Drama at The Swan School

As well as private instrumental lessons, we also have a private Speech & Drama teacher at The Swan School.

Speech & Drama lessons are taught in small groups of 3-6, offering pupils a focused environment to develop acting skills to a high level and build confidence in speaking and presentation skills. Pupils learn and perform as a small ensemble, taking a Trinity drama exam at the end of the academic year, offering the best balance between individual responsibility and teamwork, encountering a broad range of dramatic literature along the way. Classes are held during the school day on a Tuesday, with pupils coming out of academic lessons for 30 minutes per week on a rotating timetable. Please note that capacity for these sessions is limited. £180 per term (10 sessions). Classes are taught by visiting theatre director Robin Colyer. Email for details and signup: robin@flintlocktheatre.com

Robin Colyer, Speech & Drama teacher

Reminders

School Uniform/PE Kit

Please remind your child to make sure that they have a pair of school shoes with them on days when they have PE. This is so that we can ensure that mud from the field does not come into the building. Students have been reminded of this and will be sanctioned if they do not have their school shoes.

Student belongings

Please make sure that all belongings are very clearly labelled with your child's name. We have a number of items handed into lost property and it is impossible to get these back to the right child if they are not labelled.

Free School Meals

A reminder for any new or existing parents who think they may qualify for Free School Meals, please submit a request via our [website](#). This will ensure that you do not have to pay for lunches, and also means that the school can receive additional funding.

Key Dates:

- Virtual Open Evening - Wednesday 7th October
- Progress Check Afternoon - Thursday 15th October
- Half Term - Thursday 22nd October - Friday 30th October
- Data and Planning Day - Friday 4th December
- Parent Day - Wednesday 9th December
- End of Term - Thursday 17th December