

## PARENT BULLETIN - Friday 9th October 2020



Dear Parents/Carers,

It is that time of year again when parents of year 6 are making the difficult decision about which secondary school to send their child to. As you can imagine, there are significant challenges around this this year as families are, mostly, unable to visit the schools themselves. We have therefore spent a lot of effort bringing our school to them. As well as our virtual open evening and socially distant 'meet and greet' events (we have to do everything in triple so that we continue to observe the rule of 6!), we have also filmed a lot of videos to introduce our staff, students, and facilities.

I am very mindful that most of you as parents will have not yet had a chance to meet many of our staff or tour our new buildings so I would also like to share these videos with you now. All our videos are available on our [YouTube channel](#) but I would particularly like to draw your attention to our [Virtual Tour](#) and [Sample Lesson videos](#) (please excuse the very low budget production value!). We look forward to welcoming you in properly soon!

Ms Wood

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### **Information**

#### **Progress Check Afternoon (Thursday 15th October)**

A reminder that next Thursday, school will finish at the **end of period 3 (12.20pm)**. Staff will be using the afternoon to check on students' progress in their learning and to plan any changes to curriculum in response. Packed lunches will be provided for children who receive free school meals.

#### **Parent Engagement**

We welcome any opportunity to work closely with parents to support your child's learning and want to make it as easy as possible for you to get in contact with us. We encourage any parents who have concerns or want to know more about what we do to get in touch with us directly so we can work together to resolve any issues.

- **Contact Your Child's Form Tutor:**
  - Your child's form tutor is your first port of call for any questions about your child's education. Get in contact via the school office and your query will be passed onto the tutor and co-tutor.
- **SLT Surgery – Thursdays 9.30-10am (restarting after half term):**
  - Parents/Carers can drop in to speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team with any questions or concerns they have on Thursdays between 9.30am and 10am. No prior-arranged appointment normally is required.
  - Due to Covid restrictions, we have to limit the number of visitors on-site. Parents are asked to complete [this form](#) to arrange a phone call or socially distant meeting during this time.
- **Parent Forum:**
  - Each term we hold a parent forum so that parents and carers can have their say on a particular aspect of school life. Each forum will have a focus and an expert member of staff will also tell parents a bit more about our approach and rationale. The headteacher will be available for a Q&A session.
  - **Our Parent Forum for cycle 1 will be held on 10th November (5-6.30pm) and will focus on our approach to behaviour.**

### **Student Survey**

Each year we aim to gather your child's voice on their school experience through our student survey. They have been emailed this to be completed at home, via their GMAIL account. Please prompt and encourage them to complete it - the deadline for the survey is Friday 16th October.

### **Homework**

- Homework Club - it has been great to see so many students staying behind to work on their homework. We have had a number of children who registered not attend. If you no longer wish your child to attend homework club, please let us know so we can update our registers.
- Keeping Up To Date - students are expected to work on their homework at home. This is largely self-quizzing. Please remind your child of the importance of keeping up to date. Quiz booklets will be checked during Supervised Study and Tutor Time weekly and students will be sanctioned if they have not completed all the quizzes up to the previous week.
- How to Self-Quiz - [Here is a video about how to self-quiz](#) - this will be a good reminder for students as well as helpful for parents wanting to support their children with their study.

### **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>

### **ParentMail and MyChildAtSchool**

We are pleased to inform you that the technical issues with parentmail have now been resolved and we shall be organising for Year 7 children to have access to the till system next week. 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](mailto:office@theswanschool.org.uk) if you have any queries.

### **6th Form Opening 2021-22**

Exciting news! We are planning to start a 6th form cohort of Year 12s from September 2021. This is an opportunity for any Year 11s who want to pursue a rigorous academic curriculum, in our fantastic new building. There will be open events, and a shiny prospectus, coming out soon. But please do let anyone know who may be interested in a place for next year and beyond!

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## **Reminders**

### **Water Bottles**

Please can you make sure that your child has their own labelled water bottle with them. **This is vital as children are not permitted (due to Covid) to use water fountains in the normal way.** So far we have been handing out plastic bottles of mineral water to children but this is both expensive for the school and bad for the environment. If this continues, we may be forced to have to charge for these, which of course we do not want to do.

### **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 - can we also ask that plastic bags are sent in with your child for them to place dirty shoes into. Students have been reminded of this and will be sanctioned if they do not have their school shoes. We have had a lot of PE uniforms borrowed, could we ask you to check if you have any at home. It is clearly be labelled PE and a number. We have a limited supply of uniform which we can lend out so would appreciate this back as soon as possible.

### **Lost Property**

We have quite a collection of lost property in reception (mainly water bottles!). Could we ask you to please remind children that if they may have misplaced an item, come to reception and check the lost property box.

### **Cycle Helmets and High Visibility Items**

It is great to see so many of our students cycling to school - we have nearly 50% of them doing so! Please can you remind your children that they do need to wear a cycle helmet and high visibility items to keep them safe - this is especially important as it starts to get dark earlier in the evening. Students are welcome to wear a high vis/reflective coat as an alternative to their plain, dark one if they are cycling to school.

### **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.

### **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](mailto: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.

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## Enrichment

### Library News

Library News: This week we have been busy celebrating National Libraries Week. Several students have become new members of the Oxfordshire Libraries, and many have also enjoyed being a 'Lunchtime Librarian' - helping Dr Roynon prepare new books for the shelves by sticking in issue slips and deciding on a book's genre. Our showcase subject for the month of October is **History**, and our current display highlights the strengths in our History collection, such as illustrated histories of the First World War, biographies for young people of Mary Seacole, Katherine Johnson, and Stephen Lawrence, primary texts by abolitionists Harriet Jacobs and Frederick Douglass, and Simon Schama's two-volume *History of Britain*. Books of the week (beginning 12th October) are two novels inspired by history: *Apache*, by Tanya Landman, and *Now or Never: A Dunkirk Story*, by Bali Rai.

Dr Tessa Roynon, School

Librarian

### Calling young theatre makers!

Applications are now open for OX2 COLLECTIVE supported by The North Wall Arts Centre and St Edward's School. We are hoping to work with students from The Swan School and St Edward's School to form OX2 COLLECTIVE; a young theatre company. OX2 COLLECTIVE will be part of The National Theatre Connections Festivals, which The North Wall hosts every year.

This is a fantastic opportunity for young people to perform in a professional venue, be cast in a play written by a leading playwright in the UK, and be part of an inspiring festival with thousands of their peers across the country.

This is an open access project; **all places are free**. We plan to run workshops in November and December to explore the play text, build skills and bond the ensemble. Rehearsals start in January 2021 and **all members must be aged 13 by Jan 4th to take part**. All workshops and rehearsals will take place at The North Wall Arts Centre, South Parade, OX2 7NN. All workshops and rehearsals will be compliant with government guidelines, appropriately risk assessed and Covid-19 Safe.

Important Dates:

Applications for OX2 COLLECTIVE Close: November 9th 2020

Workshop Dates(2020): 27th Nov 6pm – 8pm, 4th Dec 6pm – 8pm, 11th Dec 6pm – 8pm

Rehearsals(2021): Jan 8th – Feb 12th (Fridays 6-7pm) Feb 26th – March 31st (Fridays 6 – 8pm)

Home Performance: TBC

The National Connections Festival: May 7th – 9th 2021

**To apply, please email Abie at [waltona@thenorthwall.com](mailto:waltona@thenorthwall.com)**

### Useful websites / apps for learning French

Duolingo and Quizlet are free apps that will help a lot with learning French and retaining vocabulary.

- **Duolingo** - Please encourage your child to join our Swan classes on Duolingo. Instructions are below:
  - *From a computer:*
    - Year 7 students <http://duolingo.com/o/smdbuj>
    - Year 8 students <http://duolingo.com/o/yqxkkv>
  - *From a phone or tablet:*
    1. Download the Duolingo app and open it up.
    2. Press Get Started. Then select French.
    3. Set your Daily Goal and continue (you can change this later).
    4. Create a Profile: On Android, press the menu icon at the top right corner and press Create a Profile. On iOS, press Profile in the top left corner and press Create a Profile.
    5. Type in your Name, Email and Password, then press Create.
    6. Go to your Profile and press Progress Sharing.
    7. Type in your Classroom Code; for Year 7: SMDBUJ ; for Year 8: YQXKKV
    8. Press Join Class.
  
- **Quizlet**
  - Year 8 students are already using Quizlet. Please ask your child to talk to Ms McCoy if they are not part of the Quizlet class yet.
  - For Year 7 students, invitations to join our Quizlet French classes have been sent on Google Classroom.

### 5K Club

After the success of students running in lockdown, starting on the 5th October a fun-run 5k club will start after school each Monday with Mr MacNaughton. All abilities welcome. We will meet at 3.50 at the entrance to the sports block, and the session will last between 30-45 mins. No need to register, just come along if you're keen! Sports kit required (doesn't need to be Swan PE Kit), but students must wear their uniform as usual during the day and get changed

### Fantasy football

For the 2020/21 Fantasy Premier League why don't you join our mini-league "TheSwanSchool"? Joining the league couldn't be easier. Simply use the link below and you'll be added automatically after you've entered the game. <https://fantasy.premierleague.com/leagues/auto-join/de1vx0>

- **League Code: de1vx0**

Looking forward to playing against you this season!

Mr MacNaughton, Deputy Headteacher

### **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](mailto:tony.payne@abingdon-witney.ac.uk).

### **Instrumental Lessons**

We are looking to see if any parents would be interested in their child learning the flute in school. We are on the waiting list for a flute teacher from the Oxford Music Service, but we are looking for a couple more students to sign up. If your child would like to try learning the flute, register your interest with the Oxford Music Service [here](#). Instruments can also be hired from the Oxford Music Service.

A reminder that we currently offer the following instruments in school: piano, guitar, drums, violin and brass. If you would be interested in your child learning any of these instruments, please contact me directly at [katrina.playford@theswanschool.org.uk](mailto:katrina.playford@theswanschool.org.uk).

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 sign up: [robin@flintlocktheatre.com](mailto:robin@flintlocktheatre.com)

Robin Colyer, Speech & Drama teacher

### **SwanComm**

#### **FREE Fundraising Tool for the SwanComm**

Easyfundraising is a **free** website that helps us to raise funds for our school while doing our usual online shopping. It's free, safe and with no extra cost at our normal shopping. SwanComm has so far raised about £110.00 via Easyfundraising. Both parents and staff are able to sign up and help raise money for The Swan! Please see the link below to find out more and get registered.

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/theswancomm1/?invite=209M68&referral-campaign=c2s>

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**Key Dates:**

- 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