



Dear Parent/Carer

Spring is finally arriving, after the dreadful disruption caused by the snow. The school is an amazing place to see in such heavy snow conditions, but also very treacherous. I want to apologise for all of the inconvenience this caused and I hope the snow has finished for the year.

Memorial Events – Thursday 29th March

This Thursday will be the first anniversary of the passing of Michael Crayford. We will be remembering Michael this Thursday in a number of ways. Firstly we will be holding an own clothes ‘tag day’ with a £1 contribution towards our chosen charity of the day. The charity Brain Tumour Research has a national Wear a Hat day on that day too, and we are asking that students and staff also wear a hat, as part of their tag day clothing.

During this week, students will be able to buy a card or a balloon to write a personal message to Michael and his family. The card and balloons will be pinned onto two bicycle mural boards. At 1.00pm we will release a single balloon as a tribute to Michael. Any student that wishes to purchase either a balloon or card can do so for 50p. Student will be then be released from form groups at 1.20 for an early finish to end the Spring term.

DfE Inspection visit

Last week, an Education Advisor from the Department for Education visited the school. While the outcome of visit has to remain confidential to the School and the Governors, and I am not allowed to quote anything from the report, I am pleased to confirm that the visit was very positive and in line with where we feel we are as a school. In summary, we believe the school has:

- Strong and effective leadership
- An improving picture of progress across all years.
 - Year 7 and Year 8 are showing exceptional progress.
 - Year 11 are on course to double last years combined English and Maths results.
 - Progress for SEN students and disadvantaged students is in line with others in lower year groups and the gap is closing in all other year groups
- A rapidly improving picture of behaviour, with significant drop in exclusions
- We have an effective system in place across the school to raise the quality of teaching and learning and we now need to accelerate this in certain pockets of the school.
- The students are a credit to the school.

While all of this is positive, we are working tirelessly to improve the school further and it important that you continue to support your son/daughter into getting into the right habits of learning.

Attendance

The attendance this year has continued to improve but there are still specific areas to focus on. Year 10 remain well below other year groups and are having a negative impact on whole school attendance, undermining the work of other high performing year groups. Year 7 has been higher than 94% all year, which is brilliant. As a school, we continue to show the highest level of challenge to poor attendance. The school currently accounts for 50% of all Medway court referrals, and I would encourage you to ensure that your child’s attendance remains high. Things to note:

- Holidays are not authorised and will almost always result in a penalty notice.
- Attendance lower than 92% can result in medical evidence being a requirement for all absences.
- Small things like dentist visits affect attendance – please try to avoid school times. (Dr Ashley Lupin & Associates Dentist practice in Chatham have started Saturday morning sessions and are encouraging attendance from students).

Knowledge Booklets

We are now into our fourth term of using knowledge booklets. Out of all the feedback we have had this year, the knowledge booklets have received the most praise. Each student has been given a knowledge booklet for each term, with Term 5 booklets ready for next term. Copies of all past booklets are on the website in the ‘Parents’ tab and then under homework. Any parent and student can access them electronically, together with a copy of the homework timetable, in case students have lost their hard copy. We will be building up to summer exams and students should now start to focus on knowledge booklet 5 and refresh over booklets 1-4 to ensure they still retain that information.

Parental Feedback

I have been really pleased with the positive praise that many parents have provided to the school about our current educational provision:

My child makes good progress at this school.	97%
My child is well looked after at this school.	97%
My child is taught well at this school.	98%

You also confirm that we are providing appropriate homework to your child; in Year 7-11, this is in excess of 95%, which is a massive improvement on recent years. We were particularly pleased with Year 8 feedback, which showed 100% satisfaction.

The latest Year 9 feedback suggests that we still need to do more in regard to responding to your concerns fully, and we also need to deal more effectively with bullying. Can I please encourage you to contact your child’s House team if there are any concerns which need to be dealt with. On this point, I would also like to request that you also ensure that your child is acting responsibly on social media. Our regular Safeguarding assemblies do address responsible social media use but around 80% of all investigations of bullying start on social media outside of school time. We will always deal with issues that arise in school, but our powers are limited when trying to control what may have started, and then continues, outside of the school environment.

As school we will be reviewing our processes over the next few months to try to improve our communication with parents. With reduced staffing across the school, I know at points our communication is sometimes slower than we would like. We will always do whatever we can to rectify any problem, so please contact your House team or reception, who will pass your concerns on to the relevant school leaders.

School communication

I hope many of you have noticed that our Facebook page is one of the primary ways that we update parents on news stories and on things that are going on in school. Please ‘like’ and follow the page to be updated on your own Facebook feed. Please see the example below. A massive well done to Jessica on winning Gold at the British Schools Judo Championships – roll on the Olympics!

If your son or daughter is in Year 11, please check the very busy revision timetable attached and encourage them to attend everything they can.

Finally, I would like to wish all students and yourselves a very enjoyable and restful Easter break. I look forward to welcoming students back on the Monday 16th April.

Yours faithfully

Andrew Minchin
Headteacher

2017-8 Term Dates:

Spring Holiday	30/03/2018	13/04/2018
Good Friday	30/03/2018	
Easter Monday	02/04/2018	
TERM 5 Begins	16/04/2018	
End of TERM 5	25/05/2018	
May Bank Holiday	07/05/2018	
May Holiday	28/05/2018	01/06/2018
TERM 6 Begins	04/06/2018	
End of TERM 6	20/07/2018	

Year 11 Easter Revision Timetable 2018

Option	Date	Subject	Time	Teacher	Location
	3 rd April	Maths	09.30 – 12.00	Maths Dept.	Maths Dept.
	4 th April	English Language (Y11 only)	10.00 – 12.00	English Dept.	Caxton Building
	4 th April	English Language (Y10 & 11)	12.30 – 14.30	English Dept.	Caxton Building
	5 th April	English Literature	10.00 – 13.30	English Dept.	Caxton Building
	6 th April	Biology	10.00 – 12.30	Miss Warren	#S5
	9 th April	Chemistry	10.00 – 12.30	Mrs Brooks	#S4
Option A	10 th April	Geography	10.00 – 12.00	Mrs Thorne	#55
Option A	10 th April	History	09.00 – 12.00	Mr McVeigh	#51
Option B	11 th April	Geography	10.00 – 12.00	Mrs Thorne	#55
Option B	11 th April	Textiles	09.00 – 15.00	Miss Wessen	#45
Option B	11 th April	PE	09.00 – 13.00	Mr Backshell	#P1
Option B	11 th April	Art	09.00 – 14.00	Mrs Evans	#31
Option C	12 th April	Geography	10.00 – 12.00	Mrs Thorne	#55
Option C	12 th April	History	09.00 – 12.00	Mr McVeigh	#51
Option C	12 th April	Citizenship	09.00 – 12.00	Mrs Dunnett	#66
Option C	12 th April	Art	09.00 – 14.00	Mrs Evans	#31
	13 th April	TLM Users	09.00 – 12.00	Mr Smith	#93