



Icknield Community College

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Newsletter – 23 October 2020

Date	Event
26-30 October	Half Term Holiday
2 November	Inset Day
3 November	School Resumes
3 November	Year 7 Tutor/Parent Calls

Important Coronavirus Update

Please click on [this link](#) to hear me talking about some important changes to our control systems which will take effect from Tuesday 3 November. This will include **all students and staff wearing face coverings in communal areas.**

Trial Tiered Lockdown Days

Thank you to all parents/carers who supported our trial lockdown days on Tuesday and Wednesday. On the whole, these were really successful; we learnt a lot from them too.

The days were very well attended and the vast majority of students were well prepared for the days and engaged well with their lessons. Well done, in particular, to those students who worked independently on research tasks which were set as part of some lessons. We were impressed with the significant number of students who used the “hands-up” facility on Microsoft Teams and to the many students who made contributions throughout the day. Thank you also to students for their positive evaluations about their experience.

Students learning virtually at home alone via streamed lessons is a very different learning experience to being in a classroom with other students. Could I please reinforce our earlier request that, where possible, students are “set up” at home in a quiet space on their own. We respectfully request that parents do not join the call with their students – I hope you understand that our staff have a lot to deal with whilst teaching students in their classroom in school whilst simultaneously working technology so that they can teach your children at home too. It can be a little off-putting for some staff if parents are in the background of calls too! We also learnt that dogs and cats liked to join some calls!! Again, this was not particularly helpful for maintaining students’ concentration (!) so if you could try to ensure that family pets are kept at a distance we would be very grateful!

We will be creating some further support videos for students who have not yet had much experience of using Microsoft Teams, based on our findings from this week. These will include further instruction on how to use the mute facility effectively, how to join calls (we will now go for a consistent approach across our staff of “calendar” calls rather than use a mixture of “calendar” and “calling” students as this caused some confusion this week and ended up in some “parallel” calls taking place of students in the same class) how to use the “chat” facility appropriately, and how to set up their profile so that their initials can be seen by the teacher. We will also be revising our Teams behaviour and engagement protocols so that students are clear about what constitutes appropriate online behaviour. It is important for us to emphasise that Teams calls are not the same as playing on the X-box or using social media. We will also be revisiting associated protocols around appropriate dress and profile pictures. Please do support us in upholding these messages (which we will share with you after the half term break).

On the whole, the technology worked well, despite some issues with sound at times. Again, we have identified a few issues which will be rectified in advance of any potential future lockdown – this was, of course, the purpose of the days. We will also be looking at an IT helpline system (thank you to the parent who suggested this) for students struggling with connecting to a call remotely.

INSET day Monday 2 November

As per the calendar above, please can I remind all parents/carers that we have an INSET day on Monday 2 November. Students return to school on Tuesday 3 November.

Attachments

There are a number of important attachments with this week's newsletter. Do please take the time to take a look at the attachments which are relevant to you and your child(ren).

Job Vacancy: Chief Operating Officer, Acer Trust

Please see attached to this week's newsletter an application pack for the post of Chief Operating Officer for the Acer Trust. Please also see the link below if you are interested in applying for this role.

<http://acertrust.org.uk/ac/contact/vacancies>

Acer Trust News

Please see a note below from Jill Cottee, Chair of Trustees, Acer Trust:

It is hard to believe that we are already at half term and I hope everyone has a lovely, if restricted, break over the next week. It was great to have everyone welcomed back to school after the long break and difficult summer term and we are aware of the enormous effort it has taken staff and families to make our Covid-19 safe schools work over the last few weeks.

We are very lucky to have such committed and dedicated staff who have adapted and changed their patterns of work and learning in order to be able to have everyone in school learning and keep everyone safe. As the Trust Board we are aware that many staff have spent much of both their Easter and Summer holidays planning and preparing to provide safe places to learn and re-work curriculum for all our young people.

Thank you to all staff who have been in classrooms, supporting education, keeping our sites safe, running our systems and generally managing our schools under very difficult circumstances. I am hoping you all have a good break next week before coming back on November 2nd.

Thank you

Thank you to all parents and carers for your support in what has been a relatively challenging half term. That said, our students have achieved a huge amount collectively and I am very pleased that we haven't had to close at any point (so far!). I wish you all a very restful half term.

Mat Hunter Headteacher

Year 7 Information presentation

As a consequence of coronavirus, we had to make our annual Year 7 Information Evening an online presentation this year. Whilst it was shared with Year 7 families last week, I have added the link to the presentation [here](#) in case there are any other families that would like a reminder of some of our systems and approaches, or the channels of communication we use.

James Barringer

11 mock exam: revision focus document

The Year 11 mock exams are just over five weeks away, and you will have already seen that we are supporting our students by giving them personalised revision activities on a weekly basis. We have also created an overview document to give them some broad guidance in terms of the areas that they should be focusing their revision on in each of their subjects, and I attach this today. The purpose of this document is to ensure that students' revision is targeted and efficient ahead of the upcoming window.

Some of you may recognise this as being a slightly different approach to that which we would usually take, and this is indeed the case; we recognise that circumstances have led us to this point where we are looking to strike the right balance between asking students to revise for a large number of exams, and managing that work load taking into account their end to Year 10. In adopting our approach, we maintain the integrity of the exams while steering students towards targeted areas for their revision.

Matt Ford

Year 10 Exams: January 2021

We intend to run our regular Year 10 in-class exams at the start of term three, so I am writing to flag this up at a time when we can start to guide students towards some useful revision over the coming weeks. The exam window is designed to give a supportive introduction to GCSE assessment for our students, and are completed by students as part of their regular timetable, with their normal teachers. Questions will be based around an element of the content covered in the GCSE courses so far in each subject (which in Maths, Science and Languages extends back into Year 9) and will result in useful feedback for students on their progress so far.

Teachers have spoken to Year 10 students about this during the week, so it may be that they have taken their books home for the holiday, or will have links to follow that take them to relevant revision platforms. Please do encourage them to begin reflecting on their learning so far, ahead of that January window. We will publish further details about the Year 10 January exams during term two.

Matt Ford

Kudos Points

Kudos points are a way of recognising students who go above and beyond both in and out of lessons. Teachers may award points because they have worked incredibly hard in class or completed homework to an outstanding level. Points might be given to students who have contributed to the wider school community or who have shown kindness to others.

Next term (and every subsequent term), students will be able to trade in their points for a small reward at Swap Shop. Ordinarily, this is only open to students in Year 7, 8 and 9, however in recognition of the fact that the current Year 10 students were unable to trade in their points last year, next term will be an exception. Students from Year 7 to Year 10 will be able to trade in the points they accrued last year as well as any earned this year. Students points from last year will not show up on their online profile, however I have them recorded and will share with their tutors next term. The date for next terms Swap Shop will be announced after half term.

Charlotte Gibson

Lockdown Preparedness Days – What Went Well

On Thursday morning, we asked all our students to give us feedback on their experiences of the lockdown preparedness days earlier in the week. We've received many constructive and useful comments about ways that our processes could be developed in future should a further lockdown be imposed. For now, we would like to thank everyone who worked hard to make these days as successful as possible. Please see the attached 'What Went Well' sheet to sample just a few instances of the enthusiastic feedback that students offered. So thanks, everyone, for making this happen!

Robert Legg

The Great Big Dance Off

The deadline for the Great Big Dance Off's virtual solo dance competition is Friday 6th November. Please make sure you have sent the video of your solo to Miss Samuel-Beechey by then. The school will decide which entries to submit to the national competition, where judges will decide their favourites. Those that are selected by the judges will be invited to the nearest regional heat, once dates are confirmed. All genres are welcome. Please email Miss Samuel-Beechey if you are interested and would like to view the judging criteria – taylor.samuel-beechey@icknield.oxon.sch.uk

Taylor Samuel-Beechey

DofE

Congratulations to the following students who have been working hard and have completed their sections and uploaded their assessors' reports: Brandon C (Skill), Molly H (Volunteering), Mcauley M (physical), Reagan M (physical), Jules H (Skill), Ella M (Skill), Finlay R (Skill), Ellen W (Physical), Caitlin F (Skill), Felix L (Volunteering)

Huge congratulations to the following students who have now completed all three of their Volunteering, Physical and Skill sections and have earned their certificates of achievement! Well done to Molly H, Ellen W and Caitlin F!

Anyone who is still working on your sections, well done for keeping going! Please do upload your assessor's report to your eDofE account. Please talk to Miss Scane if you have any questions

Katie Scane

Accelerated Reader Quizzing

I have been thrilled to see so many students in Years 7 and 8 reading widely and making the most of their Library lessons now that we are fully up and running again.

Next, we need students to make sure that they are quizzing regularly on books that they have read and I thought it would be useful to share with you a video explaining how students can complete an AR quiz away from school.

Please do visit this link if your child doesn't know how to complete a quiz.

<https://www.loom.com/share/91eb08cc5e06472cabfb58921fb05c9a>

As a reminder, students should:

- Aim to read for a minimum of 20 minutes every day
- Complete a quiz as close to finishing a book as possible
- Only quiz on books they have read within the last two weeks
- Aim to finish a book every two weeks

If there are any problems with this, please speak to your English or Library teacher and/or get in touch with the school librarian who will be more than happy to help.

Happy reading and good luck quizzing.

Chris McGinnity

Maths Problem of the Week

The Maths Problem of the Week and the solution to last week's problem are attached. Also attached are some further maths problems for you to try over the half term.

Nick Owen

Get ready for Tomorrow's Engineers Week

Tomorrow's Engineers Week will be running 2-6 November (#TEWeek20) with the key aim to highlight to young people that engineering is a creative, problem solving, exciting career that improves the world around us. The Tomorrows Engineers website has tool kits showing ways to get involved. These can be accessed via this link <https://tomorrowsengineers.org.uk/tomorrows-engineers-week-2020/toolkits/>

Furthermore, Tomorrow's Engineers are launching the Tomorrow's Engineers Week with their Big Quiz to help engage young people to consider a career in engineering. Winners of the quiz will win a prize fund for their school, to spend on STEM accessories/equipment to benefit them in turn. The 30 minute quiz is available for schools and young people to take part in from Tuesday 3 November until Thursday 12 November and can be accessed via this link

<https://tomorrowsengineers.org.uk/tomorrows-engineers-week-2020/tomorrow-s-engineers-week-big-quiz/>

Why not visit the website over half-term to get inspired!

Steph Sherwood

Well Done!

I just want to say a massive well done to all of year 8 and 9 students for coming back to school with such positive attitudes and for managing the bubble system incredibly well. You have been really good role models for those students who have joined the school below you this year. As we move into the winter months, now might be the time to add an umbrella to your school bag as well as ensuring you are wrapped up nice and warm. I am looking forward to your first Attitude to Learning collection to see how focused and determined you have been in lessons. Have a lovely, safe and restful half term.

Kayley McMillan

PE News

Please see our attached PE News document to read about the latest information, this week including:

- The results from **Y7, 8 and 11 Sports Day**
- A match report from our first **Inter-School fixture** of the year; this one involving the **Y10 Football team**

Matt Mures



Your Son/Daughter will have been given access to Unifrog this week during their lessons. Please take a moment to read through the attached letter which explains the award-winning online Careers Platform. This is a fantastic platform that brings into one place every undergraduate university course, apprenticeship and college course in the UK, as well as Sixth Form Schools and School Leaver Programmes. Please take a moment over half term, to log onto Unifrog with your son/daughter and explore that substantial array of information available. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Helen Richardson – Careers Coordinator

Letters to Parents/Carers

The following letters have been sent out this week via ParentMail:

Live Theatrical Performance Thu 26 Nov – Selected Year 11

These letters can also be accessed on the school website:

<http://www.icknield.oxon.sch.uk/news-and-events/letters-to-parent>

COMMUNITY NEWS

Virtual Maths Tuition

Great quality, well-structured zoom maths tuition for students at all levels. Small group weekly virtual sessions. Limited spaces left for: Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3 alongside GCSE foundation. GCSE higher tier is fully booked.

Please contact: mathstutorchinnor@googlemail.com for more information and to book your first session today.

This is a personal business and has no affiliation with Icknield Community College.

Adrian Thomas