



Icknield Community College

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Newsletter – 5 February 2021

Date	Event
wc 8 February 2021	'A' week
11 February 2021	Year 10 Parents' Evening (online)

A positive end to the half term!

It seems extraordinary that we are five weeks into this half term of remote learning with only one week to go! It has certainly been hard work, I am sure, for yourselves, your children and our staff alike, but we have got there!

It is so frustrating and draining to hear so much negativity in the media about: schools being closed, when in actual fact we have been open for key worker children throughout the pandemic; lost learning, when in reality, we have been providing on-line learning pretty much 5 hours a day everyday; and the constant catastrophising with regarding students needing to “catch-up”. Many of our students are, day in day out, producing fantastic work, working independently and are developing new skills and greater resilience – they are not, in fact, falling behind. When they return to school, some students may simply need “reorientating” again, as was the case in September.

We recognise that there are clear challenges and barriers for some; we are doing all we can to support the removal of the latter in whatever way we are able to. If you need help with anything, please do not hesitate to contact us. But we really must focus on the positive too, and celebrate all that our students, staff and you, as parents and carers, have accomplished.

As we move out of the depths of winter, will be welcomed by spring with the much needed light it always brings. We will continue to work with you over the coming weeks and months to provide your children with the positivity they need to keep them buoyant. Thank you in advance for supporting us with this.

Mat Hunter
Headteacher

Assessments and reports during the lockdown

As you will be aware, we have a planned programme for assessing students in all year groups and reporting on both their academic performance and their attitude to learning. The lockdown, and the changes that we have need to make to both what we are teaching and how we are teaching it has meant that we have had to change the way that we are assessing students. In many cases, formal tests and assessments have been replaced with lower stakes quizzes and teacher questions. These provide teachers with valuable information to inform their planning but, without the normal assessments, it is harder to make our normal moderated judgements of the progress that students are making.

Similarly, it also harder for teacher to make judgements about students' Attitude to Learning. We observe that engagement with online lessons can vary between students, from our perspective, but we also recognise that other perspectives exist and that there can be a multitude of reasons why students might find it easier or harder to engage in lessons, turn on their cameras, ask teachers questions or be able to submit work. We recognise that the Attitude to Learning scores we provide are important to students and parents but feel, for the reasons above, that providing these during lockdown could be damaging to some students and families. Therefore, we will not provide these until all students return to school.

Overall, we are hugely impressed with the way that our students are coping with the challenges and pressures of lockdown, demonstrating great resilience to persevere with their online learning when it can be more difficult than normal to find the motivation to do so. As parents, where we have big concerns over your child's engagement with education, we will contact you. Otherwise, please do pass on our appreciation to your children; they are doing a brilliant job.

James Barringer

Year 9 Guided Choices

A reminder for parents of Year 9 students that there is one more week for you to contact subject leaders with any curriculum based queries about their courses. The *final* deadline for the submission of all students' Guided Choices is at the end of the first week of next term, **Friday 26 February**; all of the relevant documentation can be found here: <https://www.icknield.oxon.sch.uk/student-information/guided-choices> and includes:

- The link to our video explaining the Guided Choices process
- The *Guided Choices Booklet*
- The application form

Matt Ford

Citizenship and RE rotations

Next week, Key Stage 3 students will rotate between RE and Citizenship. For some groups, this will mean moving on to a new subject with the same teacher, while other groups will change teachers as well as subjects. Students should look out for their new timetables, which will be emailed to them.

We have a wide variety of topics planned for them over the next rotation. In Citizenship, Year 7s will be learning about puberty and healthy lifestyles, before demonstrating their entrepreneurial skills by designing their own businesses. Meanwhile, Year 8s will be looking at managing money, before finding out about the risks associated with drugs and alcohol, and Year 9s will be evaluating debates around sustainability and medical ethics.

In RE, Year 7s will be exploring Sikhism, and Year 8s investigating Rites of Passage, while Year 9s will be studying Hinduism.



Jen Hicks and Kayley McMillan

Y9 Geography: Chilterns National Park

In recent weeks, we've been studying National Parks with a focus on the issues surrounding their management and how to reduce conflicts between different groups. We have discussed how our area would be affected if the Chilterns were designated a National Park. One of the tasks was to design a Chilterns Park logo, here are some efforts from Natalie Furmston, Sacha Lewin-Bindoff, Ewan Grehan, Kaiya Hawkins, Phoebe Stratford and Millie Elwin.

Dan Moden



Year 8 Science

Some of the year 8s have been learning about air pressure this week. Please see the pictures below showing cardboard defying gravity and the weight of water purely with the power of air pressure! We promise no sticky tape or magic was used in the making of these photos...

Oliver Craven-Todd



Maths Problem of the Week

The Maths Problem of the Week and the solution to last week's problem are attached.

Nick Owen

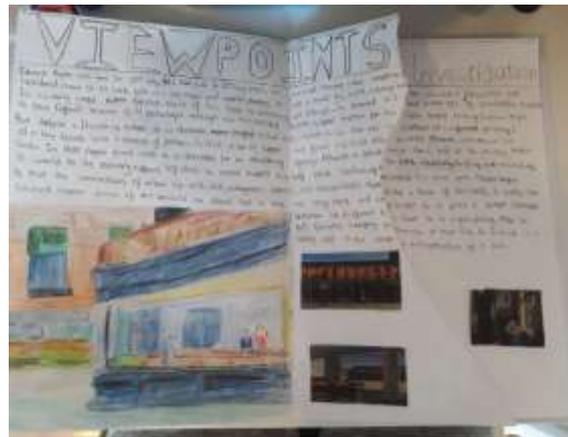
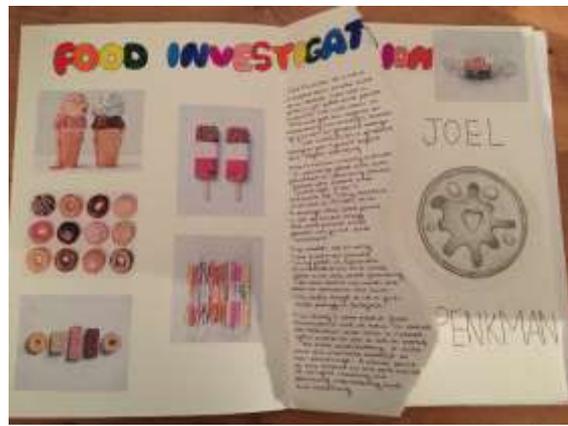
Art Department: Independent Investigations and strange materials by Year 7, 8 and 9

This term, students have been creating detailed investigations on their themes with Year 7 looking at Self Portraits, Year 8 at Food and, in Year 9, the theme is Viewpoints. Students have created really exciting and detailed visual presentations in their books including drawing from observation and critical analysis of their chosen artists' practice. Students are now developing their own art works using their investigations as inspiration.

Not all students have access at home to the unusual art materials which they would expect to use in school and so we have begun exploring creating art works with 'home resources' such as collage, painting with tea and coffee and drawing with biro and hand sanitiser. Challenging times always equate to exciting experiments for artists! I am really looking forward to seeing where these fabulous investigations together with student's ingenuity will take them in their own art works.

Jess Parker





Oxford University Languages Experience Update

Just wanted to update our Y9 linguists on this... Having had some fantastic applications for this experience, offered by the Languages Department at Oxford, we were saddened to hear that the session, due to take place on 4 March, has been postponed. We will, however, keep students informed of when the event will take place and hope to involve as many of our enthusiastic linguists as we can – in the not too distant future, we hope!

Alex Hunter

Boosting your language learning!

As someone who is always looking for ways to encourage others to enhance their language learning, I feel it is my duty to inform you of the benefits of Netflix! Why not take your favourite show and change the audio? You'll be familiar with the characters, plot lines and themes so, just altering the language will put a different spin on it for you whilst, undoubtedly, will support your listening skills and broaden your vocab knowledge – win, win! Feeling super keen? Why not add the subtitles in the same language as the audio so you're listening and reading at the same time - double whammy! Please let us know what you're watching and how you feel it is benefitting your linguistic skills! Bonne chance!;/Buena suerte!

Alex Hunter

Well done Year 7s

I have been so impressed with the Year 7 students. They have shown great resilience during this lockdown and they have continued to engage with their online lessons. I recognise that it can be hard to maintain motivation when you don't get to physically meet with your peers and your teachers. Parents and carers, please do say a big well done on my behalf.

Marian Carter

Year 11 Speaking and Listening Assessments

You are probably aware that Year 11 students are working towards completing their English Speaking and Listening assessments which are due to take place next week. As in previous years, students can achieve a Pass, Merit or Distinction for this work and, pending the outcomes of the OfQUAL consultation, we expect it to be the same this year.

Your child's English teacher will be scheduling a one-to-one call during English lessons next week and I would encourage students to spend some time this weekend practising their speeches ready for Monday. Should you have any questions about this, please do not hesitate to get in touch with a member of the English team.

We look forward to hearing their ideas from Monday.

Chris McGinnity

Careers – Next week is.....National Apprenticeship Week



There is a whole host of information available to support National Apprenticeship Week. The following links show Nationally what opportunities are available to our school leavers and those post Y13. Even if your son/daughter is not considering an Apprenticeship until after their A Levels, it's a great chance to look at what's available and understand what qualifications are required. Start by exploring on company websites, for example Unilever, IBM, Nestle, BBC, SkySports, Audi, are just a few examples of companies that have just launched their Apprenticeship programmes. Look locally too, some local examples are listed below. If you or your son/daughter is interested in applying for an Apprenticeship and need support please let me know: helen.richardson@icknield.oxon.sch.uk

Who	What's on Offer
Young Professionals UK	<p>Webinar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monday 8th February, 3pm - 5pm 12 Different Apprentice highlight journeys Open to all year groups in Y10, Y11, Y12 & Y13 Opportunity to ask questions and find out about other young people's career journeys Learn about different types of apprenticeships, some myth busting and a few prizes along the way! Free event for all students, teachers and parents <p>Registration link: https://www.research.net/r/NAW2021</p>
Career Map	<p>Key organisers of events throughout National Apprenticeship Week. Click on the link to discover Apprenticeship opportunities across the UK</p> <p>https://www.nationalapprenticeshipweek.co.uk/</p>
Apprenticeships.gov.uk	<p>All you need to know about what the benefits of an Apprenticeship are, applying for an Apprenticeship, the interview process and much more:</p> <p>https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/apprentices</p>
Oxfordshire Apprenticeships	<p>Looking more locally, log onto Oxfordshire Apprenticeships to find out more about Apprenticeships within our County</p> <p>https://www.oxfordshireapprenticeships.co.uk/</p>
The Apprenticeship Guide	<p>Search by Industry, listen to current Apprentice's and their success stories</p> <p>http://www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk/</p>
BMW	<p>Attached to this weeks Newsletter is an update on Apprenticeships that are currently available at the BMW/Mini plant and details on how to apply. See attached</p>
UKAEA	<p>Are hosting an Apprenticeship evening on Tuesday 9th Feb. Register here by 8th Feb to discover the vast array of Apprenticeship opportunities available with them:</p> <p>Apprenticeship Open Evening Registration</p>

And.....don't forget, our National Services are looking for Apprentices as well as our NHS.

The Army – <https://apply.army.mod.uk/what-we-offer/regular-soldier/apprenticeships-and-skills>

The Navy – <https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/careers/levels-of-entry/apprenticeships/find-your-apprenticeship>

The RAF – <https://www.raf.mod.uk/recruitment/apprenticeship-roles>

The NHS - <https://www.stepintohenhs.nhs.uk/apprenticeships>

Helen Richardson