

BT/nal

5th October 2016

Dear Parents & Carers,

STUDENT WELLBEING UPDATE

Welcome to the latest student wellbeing update which is intended to let you know about the work we have been doing in school to support your sons and daughters as well as to share some observations and concerns we have so that you can support them at home. We take every child's wellbeing very seriously and lots of work is underway right across the school to support all students to thrive and learn effectively.

Personal Safety

In light of the incident of Wednesday 28th September we have taken every opportunity to talk to students about personal safety. It is crucial that as they gain independence they know how to keep themselves safe and we have tried to give sensible, practical advice without being alarmist. There is a slideshow in the safeguarding section of our website endorsed by the NHS and the Suzy Lamplugh Trust that students have seen and that you might find helpful. On advice from Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board and our Police Liaison Officer we have decided against issuing everyone with a personal alarm as this is a matter of choice for each family .

The 'Creepy Clown' craze has also caused some anxiety for us all. Although we are assured by the Police that no clowns have been seen in Oxford or near any schools and there have been no reported incident of clowns in the UK physically hurting anyone, rumours have been rife on social media. The Police have been present at key times of the school day because of the abduction, and this has been reassuring. We are confident that our safeguarding procedures are strong enough to keep everyone safe in and around the school.

We are hoping to do some assertiveness training and are looking at best approaches to bring this into the curriculum alongside further advice and guidance in assemblies and tutor time.

Road Safety and The School Run

We are proud that so many of our students cycle to school, but this can lead to problems at peak times. There is a line down the middle of the cycle path between Cherwell and Marston and we keep reminding students to stay on the left of this line and cycle no more than two abreast. If you could reinforce this message at home as well as promoting the use of helmets, lights and high viz clothing now that the dark mornings and afternoons are nearly upon us we would be grateful.

The Cherwell Travel Action Group (CTAG) meets once or twice every term to discuss how to make travel to and from school safer and environmentally sustainable. They aim in particular to promote

cycling, walking and bus transport; reduce the risk of accidents; encourage cyclists to consider the needs of non-cyclists and enable students and teachers to park their bicycles safely and securely. All members of the school community are welcome to attend and they would love some new people in the group. If you are interested in being involved the next meeting of CTAG is on Tuesday 1st November 2016, 6pm. Location: meeting room next to training room, North Site library (entrance next to North Site reception). For more information, please email Marion Couldrey (marion.couldrey@dsl.pipex.com) or Tony Gray, staff member (tgray@cherwell.oxon.sch.uk).

We understand that circumstances have been different recently but ask that if you bring your child to and from school by car, please use the Rugby Club or Marston Ferry car park and take great care driving across the cycle path. We have appointed Cycle Marshalls who are on the cycle path before and after school every day. They are there to improve safety – please encourage your daughters and sons to follow any instructions they are given by these staff members and please follow their directions yourself if you see them on the school run.

Attendance

Good attendance is inextricably linked to success at school. The minimum expected/accepted attendance is 95% and we are finding that some students are falling below this due to taking odd days off for minor ailments or fatigue. There will be times when your child is too unwell to attend, but having a minor ailment like a cold or headache should not prevent them from coming. With this in mind, please also avoid making routine dental or doctors visits during the school day and if this is not possible, please return them to school as soon as you can. We all find it hard to get up in the mornings especially when it's cold and dark but grit and determination are really important attributes and so please do help them develop these by insisting that they attend school.

We are working with students on developing resilience as part of our Skills for Life programme and if you would like any support in getting your child to school please do contact Ms Kim Young our Inclusion and Attendance Officer in the first instance.

kyoung@cherwell.oxon.sch.uk

PTA event for parents and carers

Research has shown that 50% of 11-17 year olds have been exposed to pornography online. The PTA are organising an evening workshop for parents and carers facilitated by an organisation called 'The Naked Truth' giving practical advice about how to respond and talk to your children about pornography and other internet safety issues. We hope that this will take place before Christmas - more details to follow.

Student Wellbeing: Plans for 2016/2017

This year we have increased the number of Social Wellbeing lessons for Y7. They now get an hour a week set aside to learn about these important issues. This term students have been learning about how to identify risks in order to reduce them and protect themselves from harm. Year 8 are focussing on the physiological changes that occur in the developing teenage brain, the effect this might have on our points of view and how to manage the different viewpoints of those older and younger than us.

Year 11 are focussing on money matters and drugs issues and Year 12 have a 'what if I told you....?' approach encouraging them to explore the themes of embracing transition; character and virtues; who do you want to be?

Year 9 will have their drugs awareness and sex and relationships education in term 6 and we will also run workshops for Year 9, 10 and 11 on these important themes in conjunction with our school health nurse and other external providers.

As part of our continuing safeguarding work, this year we will deliver assemblies and tutorials to our students giving direct and explicit advice on how to keep themselves safe. We will cover a range of important issues including Child Sexual Exploitation, Radicalisation, and Online safety.

Additional Support Services

As well as our curriculum approaches there will be some students who need access to more specialist services:

We are lucky to have **Jo Bowd** as our School Health Nurse who is on site every day. She is available to support students with range of issues including:

- General Health and Wellbeing
- Smoking cessation
- Sexual Health

Students can refer themselves to this service or be referred by a member of staff.

Matt Barnard is our Lead Counsellor and is working hard to expand the Counselling Service. We have 4 counsellors on placement who work with students across the age range. Students can ask to see a counsellor or referrals may be made by Year Leaders or their Deputies.

Peer Support Team – Some of our Y13 students have undertaken a day of approved training in order to be able to confidently support Y7 students over a range of issues. They are co-ordinated by Mr Roberts and have close contact with Matt Barnard.

Attendance and Inclusion Officer – Ms Kim Young offers practical support for parents and carers as well as students with a range of issues including bereavement, parenting, attendance issues, integration programmes.

Please do contact me if you would like to discuss any of the issues raised in this letter further.

Best wishes

Barb Timms
DEPUTY HEADTEACHER