



11.09.2020

The Link

Charles Darwin School

Aspire—Endeavour—Achieve

HEADLINES

Welcome back

This week as all parents will be aware we welcomed back all students across Years 7-13. It was very good to see them all return after such a long time away from school. Although the special pandemic related measures resulted in a very different atmosphere than we are accustomed to it was nonetheless very heart-warming to witness the buzz of children going about their learning in school once again.

The week has gone well overall. As parents will be aware we have had to put in place many different arrangements, in line with government guidance, to protect all members of our school community and to ensure that the risks of virus transmission are kept as low as possible whilst at the same time facilitating a broad curriculum offer for our students. These arrangements have in many cases been complex and they have forced us to do things that we would normally rule out. This has included insisting that students eat their lunch outside. I am aware that one or two parents have been unhappy about this. We will make some adjustments to this where we can.

Students have had to become accustomed to the new routines and whilst some reminders have been needed on the whole our students have responded very well indeed to the demands of the new arrangements. Their support and maturity has been very much appreciated.

Going forwards there are a couple of issues that I would like parents/carers to help with:

Mask wearing

I wrote to parents last week about our expectation that pupils will need to wear a mask around school when they are not in the classroom. I would be grateful if all parents/carers could reinforce this message at home. All pupils need to come to school with a mask and they should wear one when they are not in the classroom but in the building.

We know that this virus impacts on adults more severely than children and we want all students to understand that the safety of our staff is risked considerably as they go from lesson to lesson often in congested corridors. The recommendation to wear a mask is to safeguard our members of staff and minimise the chances of children picking up something and taking it home to their loved ones.

We will be reinforcing this message in school more rigorously from next week.

Parent visit to schools

Just a reminder that should you need to communicate with a member of staff then ideally you should do this by email or phone. If you need to see a member of staff personally then this should be by appointment only. I am sure that parents will understand that in the present circumstances staff are fully stretched and that we need to exercise caution and take precautions so we will not be seeing parents without appointments.

Front of school

My thanks to all parents who have responded to my umpteen messages about the need to drop off and pick up children well away from the front of school. Your thoughtfulness has been very helpful and is very much noticed and appreciated.

Can I now make a repeat request to those few parents who are still dropping off and picking up outside our school gates, often using them to turn in, to please follow the example of others and use the top end of Jail Lane. It is so noticeable that when enough parents follow our advice the congestion on Jail Lane is so much more manageable and the stress levels of our staff on duty so reduced.

Please can families bear in mind that the bottom end of Jail Lane (between the school and Danaleigh Farm) will be closed from Monday 14th September for approximately four weeks for extensive works outside The Old Jail pub. Vehicles will still be able to access the school from the Main Road side. The contractors are hoping to make available a pedestrian walkway to allow students to walk past the works to and from school.

Sunil Chotai

Pupil absence line: 01959 574043, option 1:
Parents/carers must phone before 08:30 with a full reason on every day of their child's absence.

Homework Updates

This week all Year 7 and new students in other years have been given their login letters with their PIN to log in to Show My Homework. All students should aim to log in by Monday 14th September and then homework will start to be set by staff. Guidance has been e-mailed home to all Year 7 parents to help with this. Students should note their username (e-mail address) and password in their school planner on the password page.



Year 7 Homework club will begin on Monday 14th September in VQ4 at lunchtimes. Any student finding it hard to log on to Show My Homework should go to homework club for support. It would be helpful if they have downloaded the Satchel One APP on their phone in advance. Once homework begins for Year 7, this facility will be available for students who need help with their homework or who need to use the computer facilities.

All existing students will still have the same username and password as they had in the last school year. If they are unable to access their account, they should initially try to reset their password. If they cannot remember which e-mail address they used as their username, they should contact Ms Kelly.

Parents can have access to their child's homework as well. If you haven't done this previously and would like to, please e-mail Ms Kelly on lke@cdarwin.com and you will be sent a login code. This can be helpful if your child struggles to organise themselves or frequently misses deadlines.

Ms Kelly

Reminders

We do not allow "energy drinks" or high sugar/high caffeine fizzy drinks in school so please remind your son/daughter not to buy these on the way to school. All students need to bring a refillable bottle of water every day which will need to last all day as we do not currently have the facility to allow students to refill bottles due to the Covid precautions.

No student should be wearing any jewellery to school apart from a watch.

Ms Kelly

Attendance from 4th to 10th September 2020

	ATTENDANCE
Year 7	98.5%
Year 8	97.9%
Year 9	97.9%
Year 10	97.5%
Year 11	97.1%
Year 12	98.1%
Year 13	98.1%
TOTAL	97.8%

Special mention to the following tutor groups for getting 100% attendance:

7LDA and 7SFe
8GC, 8SAI and 8MEd
9NYe
10MHu
11SAr, 11GQu, 11FLf/LWr and 11ADo
12IMr and 12GSh/JBy
13TJo and 13ARu/MDi

Social Media Warning

As you may of already heard, there has been a highly inappropriate and distressing video that is currently circulating on social media. This is an extremely triggering and highly graphic video of a man live-streaming his suicide.

We cannot state enough that this video is distressing and we urge children, parents and carers to avoid the TikTok app whilst this video is in such high circulation. Children who have witnessed the video should seek appropriate support from either a parent/carer, teacher or from mental health support services.



Year 7 ParentPay Accounts

Please make sure you have activated your ParentPay account. If you have misplaced your activation letter or you are having trouble activating your account please contact the Finance Office.

Many thanks

Finance Office



WELCOME TO NEW STAFF

Mr Haberfield

A big hello to all students and their parents! I'm Mr Haberfield and I'm proud to say I will be joining Charles Darwin School as a Music teacher. I love playing the piano and the drums, and I'm excited to find out which instruments some of you play! Other than playing music, I also enjoy kayaking, cycling and gardening, and have grown lots of different vegetables over the summer. I'm looking forward to meeting you all this year.



Mrs Riddle

My name is Mrs Riddle and I am very excited to be joining the Art and Textiles department. I am fascinated by all types of art and enjoy visiting galleries wherever I can. When I am not teaching or making art I also enjoy gardening and walking in the countryside. I am so looking forward to teaching Art and Textiles at Charles Darwin School and look forward to seeing all the work produced by the students this year.



Miss Owen

I am really excited to be joining the PE department at Charles Darwin School and becoming part of the community here. Outside of school I play football to a high level, I enjoy taking my dog for long walks and spending time with my family and friends.



SAY HELLO TO 'TED', OUR NEW WELLBEING ASSISTANT

Hi, my name is Ted and I am the new Wellbeing Assistant at Charles Darwin School.

I am here to help students with anxiety or mental health problems and to make the school environment feel more welcome. Children can relate to me when they are hurt and anxious and sad in a way that they can't always with human beings.

I was born on Christmas day and I love playing with my toys and getting treats.

I can be found in Mrs King's office two days a week. I look forward to seeing you all in school.



Term Dates 2020-21

Autumn 2020

Tuesday 1st September - Friday 16th October
Half term: Monday 19th October – Friday 30th October
Monday 2nd November – Friday 18th December

Christmas Holiday: Monday 21st December 2020 -
Friday 1st January 2021

Spring 2021

Monday 4th January – Friday 12th February
Half term: Monday 15th February – Friday 19th February
Monday 22nd February – Thursday 1st April

Summer 2021

Monday 19th April – Friday 28th May
Half term: Monday 31st May – Friday 4th June
Monday 7th June – Friday 23rd July

Notes:

Good Friday – 2nd April 2021
Easter Monday – 5th April 2020

INSET Days - School closed to students

Monday 4th January 2021
Friday 29th January 2021
Thursday 22nd July 2021
Friday 23rd July 2021