

Newsletter

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Dear Parents and Carers

Who would have thought that we would still be dealing with Covid and its ramifications almost two years on! We have been fortunate that Covid cases amongst staff and students have remained relatively low and that the spike we saw just before the half term, has not been replicated during term two.

The end of a busy two terms is almost upon us, our new Year 7 students are now well and truly settled in. Despite Covid being ever present, we have managed to cram lots of events into these last two terms, Year 9 Geography trips to Canterbury, reward trips for both Year 10 and Year 11, lots of sporting fixtures and the English Schools Swimming Association competition at the Stratford Olympic Pool.

The Year 11 mocks went well and the students are to be congratulated on the way they conducted themselves during exam fortnight. With it looking more hopeful that exams will take place in the summer this year, the mocks should have provided useful practice for students.

Year 13 Mocks commence on our return after the Christmas break!

Christmas Jumper Day took place on Friday 10th December and coincided with Christmas dinner, it was lovely to see so many festive jumpers on display.

School will close for the Christmas break on Friday 17th December and students in Years 7-11 will finish at 2pm and Years 12-13 at 1.30pm.

As you are aware we have been told that we must test all students at the start of the new term and therefore although the term is due to recommence on Tuesday 4th January, we are planning a staggered start in order to be able to do this. More information about the staggered start will be sent out separately.

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House Drama

From the outset this year, I really felt all the Houses had taken on board remarks I've made in the past. The standard was really high, and it made our job (I was joined this year by the accomplished local actor and director, Peter Such) much harder as well as very enjoyable! To have got to this point at all amidst covid was amazing... to have managed to stage all four (albeit 3 of them at a later date) as part of the competition was hardly less than a miracle! We were so sorry that those last three had no audience. All that work and one performance to virtually no-one... but we really REALLY appreciated it.

BEST PROGRAMME The raising of standards was clear from the programmes. Every House included all the necessary information & they were all attractive and/or stylish. For its witty aping of professional programmes with the individual resumés of the cast, this award goes to MS' To Be Frank.

BEST BACKSTAGE It was obviously very disappointing for three of the Houses to perform without lights, and we were impressed by KH's detailed lighting & sound plans. All Houses had mastered the need for swift scene changes, and we felt that the large KH Too Many Scientists backstage crew worked together particularly well as a team, so this award goes to them.

BEST SUPPORTING JUNIOR ACTOR It's always good to see large numbers from the lower school take part, and most included several Year 7s. Special mention to KH's Ryan Ganley and MS' Ethan Cobley. Slow down a little and speak up a bit more and you'll be vying with one another for an award next year! MS' Lewis Hodges gave us a fine Italian accent, but, for the sheer power of his whistling (and good acting too!), this award goes to MS' Jairus Kuriakose.

BEST SUPPORTING SENIOR ACTOR So many good performances, too numerous to mention, (although I did particularly enjoy TS's Aunts; Rowan and Freddie) but the one that stood out for us, in that she was subtly always there, but unobtrusively, was MS' Audrey Benjamin.

BEST JUNIOR ACTOR It's quite rare for junior actors to be given lead roles, let alone those in Year 7, but TS' Restaurant Belladonna had two junior leads, so they are sharing this award: Year 8's Matthew Gough, and Year 7's Ruben Lanciaprima. Assured, well characterised performances.

BEST SENIOR ACTOR There were some excellent performances in all the dramas, and special mention must go to Sophia Bembridge in TS; a really competent lead in a part in which it is hard to shine. Jed Silk had a major role in RP's and carried it off well, but the award this year goes to Maisie Chambers, KH, for a nicely nuanced character who clearly changed as the play went on.

BEST SCRIPT All the scripts made clever use of the phrase Too Many Cooks; TS using it literally with a cook-off, and MS, using a cook judging panel for their talent competition. KH had too many scientists, and RP too many directors. We had intriguing plots and clever twists, and a good deal of witty humour, particularly in TS and RP's. But we also needed a good plot arc; a beginning, significant middle, and a clear end. With a well constructed plot, their witty acknowledgment of the Mamma Mia musical and constant inclusions of lyrics into the script, plus references to James Acaster on Bake-Off, Ruby Lydford, TS wins the script trophy.

BEST DIRECTOR All four were well directed! Very little masking and good use of whole stage. Well done MS for using the side rostra too. RP did incorporate dance and ensemble work to a good degree, so by the narrowest of margins, this award goes to RP's Bradley Bissett.

OVERALL To win overall, all the elements need to come together; a good script acted out with conviction by all cast-members, directed by a sympathetic but disciplined director who has the right vision. The cast needs to work as a team, and be fully committed. We saw that in ALL the plays this year, and considering all they had to go through to get these performed, you should all be incredibly proud of them. We are forced, not only to give the award, but to place all the plays. This seems particularly unfair this year as we really did enjoy them all; and I think that this is shown in how the other awards have been distributed. So, 4th is 4th but not last...

1. TS- "Restaurant Belladonna"
2. RP- "RP's House Drama"
3. MS- "To be Frank"
4. KH- "Too Many Scientists"



Bake Off

On the 8th December we were able to hold the annual Christmas Bake off after a year of absence and the students did not disappoint. The theme this year was Christmas songs. There were many delicious entries this year but sadly only 9 could be in the final. In my opinion they were all exceptional, so I am very pleased I did not have to judge them.



From the delights of Figgy pudding and with an outstanding port sauce to Frosty the meringue Snowman. It was always going to be a tough decision, after both judges had a plate full of cake and a belly now full of goodness they had to decide.

The winner was the Holly and the Ivy Orange flavour Bundt cake.

Music Notices

Christmas Concert 2021

Our Christmas concert will be recorded live but streamed via the internet this year, on Saturday 18th December. Tickets can be bought via the School Gateway (minimum donation £5 please) and it's important that you add your email in the comments box so that we can send the streaming link to you on the Saturday. You are very welcome to buy tickets for anyone anywhere in the world, we'd love it to be as global as possible! We are delighted that so many students have got involved this year despite the tricky circumstances.

Music Department Advent Calendar

If you haven't yet seen the Music Advent Calendar on Twitter or the School website you can access it here:

<https://calendar.myadvent.net/?id=0b9183b325f32260237cc5457462523f>

or via the school website.

Behind each door is a video from various school performances in recent years, some long, some short, but all are very entertaining!

Grease the Musical

Rehearsals for this year's school production are well under way and the production runs from 2nd-5th February. Tickets are on sale already but are limited as we have restricted the numbers due to Covid - please get yours asap from reception.

Music Clubs

All music clubs will restart in the second week of Term 3 and your son/daughter is welcome to come along even if they have not yet been. The timetable is below:

Regrettably Strings and Things and Rock Choir will not run until Term 4 due to staff being involved with the school production but Rock Club will be starting in January.

Music Clubs, Bands and Choirs at CCGS

	Lunchtime 1.45-2.10pm	After School 3.15-4.00pm
Monday	Brass Ensemble – MU1 <i>(run by an external provider, small fee involved)</i>	Choir (Year7-13) <i>In Chatham House Assembly Hall – lower school site. Usually over 100 members!</i> *Advanced Vocal Ensemble* (4-4.30pm) <i>For advanced singers who are having voice lessons (MHo)</i>
Tuesday	Rock Choir – MU5 Strings and Things - Studio	Music GCSE extra sessions MU1 And MU2
Wednesday	Intermediate Wind Band (woodwind or brass grades 1-3) (MHo) Music Studio	Percussion School at 4pm in music studio <i>(run by an external provider, small fee involved). All level welcome. Students waiting for the session are welcome to do homework in the music department beforehand.</i>
Thursday		*Senior Wind Band* (wind/brass/percussion Grade 3 and above) (Music Studio)
Friday	Rock Club (guitars and bass) <i>(Music studio - run by an external provider, small fee involved)</i>	*Jazz Band* (AG/OG) Music Studio (wind/brass Grade 3 and above)

*Entrance by invitation/application – see Ms. Hollman or Mrs. Gibbons.
All ensembles take place in the music department at Chatham House unless otherwise specified. If you would like to join an ensemble please speak to a teacher in the music department for details, come along or email mhollman@ccgrammarschool.co.uk

School Challenge

The School Challenge competition was back at the start of this school year.

A small but keen group of Year 10 to Year 13 quizzers met every Tuesday to put their general knowledge to the test.

They regularly amazed me with the depth and breadth of their scientific, literary, cultural, geographical, historical and all-round formidable expertise!

They fought it out against Harvey Grammar School and the King's School Canterbury on Monday 6th December.

Sadly, victory was not on the cards this year but they did themselves proud and defended the school colours admirably.

We congratulate King's Canterbury for making it to the next stage and wish them good luck for the rest of the competition.

Mrs Thelliez

I-H Quiz 2021

It was lovely to be able to hold this competition again this year after some COVID disruptions previously. Selected students from every form group represented their House in a five-round school-based quiz. The rounds this year included General House Knowledge, Do you 'notice' boards?, Your school in pictures, School Dingbats and House Knowledge.

The overall standard of competition was extremely high and ultimately the use of joker rounds (where teams could gain double points) became crucial in the final standings.

After round 1, KH held a 2pt advantage over the other three teams. However, round 3 (School Dingbats) saw MS use their jokers to take the lead on 80pts with RP/TS on 70pts and KH on 56pts. KH had decided to use both of their jokers on the picture round and this proved to be a shrewd move when they retook the lead moving in to the final round.

Despite close competition, KH finished the winners of the competition on 124pts, MS dramatically snatched second place after a strong round 5 with 113pts and RP and TS shared third place on 112pts

Congratulations to all involved!

Mr Goodwin

Christmas Jumper Day

Friday 10th December was Christmas Jumper Day and again this year, we decided as a school, that we would ask for donations to our local food bank rather than a monetary donation.

We were absolutely overwhelmed at how our school community came together as the amount of donations far exceeded our expectations.

The staff at Newington Community Centre were amazed at the amount we had collected and have asked us to pass on their thanks and appreciation to all staff, students and families for their contributions.

There are also some photos of some of our staff and students in their Christmas Jumpers!

Thank you everyone! Your support once again has been fantastic.



KH Charity Week

KH House charity week was a huge success. Thanks to all staff and students that were involved in making it such a great success. We raised a total of £804.01 for 'Take Off' and had great fun doing so. Thanks must also go to the parents that donated the fantastic raffle prizes.



Sophia's Award

Young Ocean Optimist of the Year Award - Sophia Lee, Year 9

It truly was a big surprise and a special honour for Sophia to be recognised for all her hard work in this way.

Sophia won the award from the Marine Conservation Society due to the projects she has shared with her peers relating to the sea. She has taken part in numerous planned and unplanned beach cleans, helped younger children understand and experience rock pooling and earned a diploma in Marine Biology. All this was achieved in the last year!

Well done Sophia. We are incredibly proud of you!



A Big Thank You to the 'The Old Ruymians Club' (ORs) For Donation of £2000

A massive thank you to the members of the OR for their generous donation which has been split between a contribution to the new sound system in the Chatham Site Assembly Hall and other items.

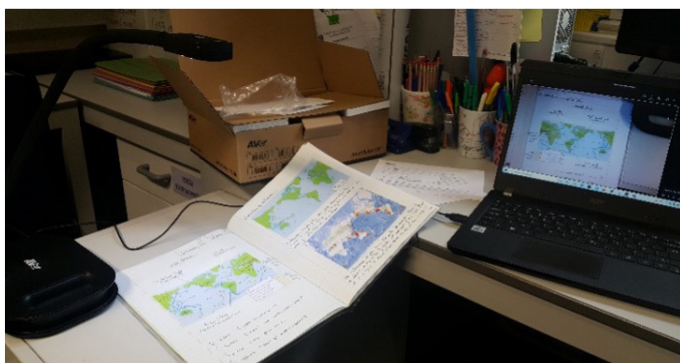
The new sound system will save the money of the hire of one for our school productions, as well as enhancing presentations at our Open Events, assemblies, lessons and House activities. The new system will also augment the performances at our amazing concerts which we all hope will be enjoyed in person again soon.

Other items include the purchase of the newly introduced Sports Day Shields – awarded to the winning House in each Year group over the combination of all the events. All the engraved shields will be placed on display at Reception and are shown in the photograph of Sue Hurrell, on behalf of the School, receiving the cheque from Mike Tyrell, OR Chair, shown.

The purchase of a number of visualisers for Science and Geography. Visualisers are like a 21st century OHP but

lighter allowing the flexibility to use easily in any room. Students, you may need to look up what an OHP (over head projector) looks like on the internet to fully understand how much easier they are to use!

For Science this means they can be used to demonstrate an experiment onto the whiteboard for all students to see clearly and safely.



OR Donation continued

For Geography they show maps, or examples of work up on the big screen. It means that teachers can demonstrate or model how to do something. For our GCSE Geographers they can be used to assist in the write up of fieldwork eg it is so helpful to show the whole class how to do the complex graphs, required to obtain the highest possible marks, on a visualiser, whilst enlarging what the teacher is demonstrating to the whole room on the whiteboard.

A contribution to more Honour Boards, recording the outstanding performance in examinations which line our Dining and Assembly Hall walls, as well as smaller items such as a number of CCGS Staff Room Mugs for use by staff and visitors.

The OR is a valued and integral part of the Chatham & Clarendon Grammar School supporting the school and is composed of past students of Chatham House Grammar School, Clarendon House Grammar School and Chatham & Clarendon Grammar School. The Club make regular donations to the School and organise events including golf days and the annual Dinner held at the Chatham Site, Covid permitting. The Club's website can be found at: www.oldruymians.co.uk which welcomes members to the online edition of RUYM. The website includes details of events that are being organised and articles on past students, what's happening in Thanet, obituaries, sports reports, etc.

New members are always welcome and if anyone has any questions please contact either Mike or John, contact details below:

Mike Tyrrell – Hon. Chairman Home – 01843600169

John Copeland – Hon. Secretary Home - 01843603142

Messages from the Headteacher

Uniform

Could I please remind you to adhere to our uniform policy when replacing items of uniform, this can be found in the student planner. Shoes must be traditional and formal in style and not of a trainer type. Ear Piercings – students should only wear one stud in each earlobe, earrings are not permitted in any other part of the ear and students will be told to remove them. The school kilt should not be rolled, nor should it be shortened. Students who have their skirt shortened will be asked to either purchase a new one, or wear trousers instead. Some girls are wearing their skirts so short that decency is compromised, so much so that we receive complaints from members of the public about the way they look. Students in the 6th Form who wear skirts are reminded that the dress code says Business dress and therefore the length of the skirt should reflect what would be acceptable in an office environment.

Staff Workload

Can I remind you of school policy with regard to emails to staff, which I written to you about in previous newsletters: It has become commonplace for parents to email staff directly and expect a response by return, this is neither sustainable nor practicable. All teachers have a significant teaching and marking workload, therefore in line with some other workplaces I do not expect them to check their emails after 5.30pm or before 8.30am in the morning, nor do I expect staff to respond to emails at the weekend. Please be mindful that staff who only work part time may take longer to respond to emails. We will prioritise all electronic communication in the same way as incoming letters or telephone calls. Rest assured that we will respond as soon as is practicable, but please be aware that more urgent matters may take priority and your patience is therefore appreciated.

Messages from the Headteacher continued

Could I also take this opportunity to remind you that if you wish to see a member of staff in person, it is always better to ring first and make an appointment. Form tutors and Heads of House all have a significant teaching commitment and therefore we cannot guarantee that they will be available to see you without prior appointment.

Financial Support

I would like to thank all those parents who make a one off or regular donation to the school, your support is much appreciated. These are still testing times financially for schools, Covid has meant many of our fundraising events to contribute towards the cost of things like the school production, purchasing new musical instruments and sheet music or the running of the school minibuses, have been affected by Covid restrictions over the past two academic years. If you would like to make a regular donation to the school, no matter how small, it will be gratefully received.

Staff leaving

Our site manager at the Clarendon site, Tony Barber, is retiring after 15 years at the school, we wish him a long and happy retirement.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you all a very restful Christmas break and a Happy New Year.

SEND Newsletter

The December issue of the Parent KCC SEND Newsletter is online now. It contains lots of information for parents and carers and can be found at:

<https://mailchi.mp/kent.gov.uk/send-newsletter-december21>



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