

Dear Parent / Carer,

After a tumultuous week, to say the least, Year 13s have settled in excellently into the pattern of online lessons. We are following the usual timetable and students can access lessons via Teams in the usual way. Tutors are setting up a session a week for students to get any important notices and also just share their feelings and experiences during this challenging time. It's a less formal forum for students to communicate, and this will also be set up on their Teams calendar.

In terms of exam grades, we know that students will receive these through teacher assessment and not via an algorithm like last summer, which is a relief. The Government assure us that 'Training and Support' will be provided to schools to guide us in the process of making teacher assessments, but we have not received that yet. We will share any new information as soon as we are able, but we concur with the message from OFQUAL this week:

“ We know that this is a difficult time for students, their parents and carers, teachers and trainers. Our message to students is this: please continue to engage as fully as you can in your education. That will be online for the majority of students, or face-to-face for those students still going in to their school, college or training provider. This will put you in the best position, whatever arrangements are made for your qualifications. It's important that teachers and students can focus on the knowledge and skills needed to equip students to progress to the next stage, whatever form that might take – whether to college, an apprenticeship, university or employment.



Whilst most unsettling, the message is most definitely keep going and this is not over yet!

Mr Brownley's New Role in Sixth Form

Following the departure of Miss Cheshire, Mr Brownley has been appointed as Deputy Director of Sixth Form. His role will be to lead year 12 and to assist Mrs McMillan, in a more formal way, with day to day management of the Sixth Form. Having spent the first term as student development lead, Mr Brownley has set up a number of opportunities for students to enrich their learning and to stand out from the crowd. These will continue to be a focus within the role of Deputy Director. We are delighted that Mr Brownley has this role and he has lots of new ideas!

Enrichment



Debate club and Enlighten Me (Philosophy Society) are regular lunchtime clubs which will continue to take place in a virtual way. Students will be invited and should accept if they are planning on attending. The Bar mock trial plans continue to take place and Mr Brownley will be meeting with students next week to go over statements that have been analysed over the last month.

We are delighted to announce that **Issy Barker** has been appointed to the Cheshire Youth Senate and is attending regular meetings about how young people can affect change in our local community. She is currently working on a recruitment drive, so anyone else that is interested should contact her or Mr Brownley for more details. Well done!

Thanks to the efforts of the Sixth Form Women's Liberation Society, the school has ordered and received delivery of 6 large boxes of free sanitary products. This has been granted as part of a government scheme and fits nicely with the discussion the girls of the Women's Lib. have had around period poverty and raising awareness around this. **Faye Wood and Emily Taylor** have reached the final of the BBC young person's reporter competition with an emotive piece about this. We hope the products can be distributed to all year groups if and when we open. Great work!

Year 13 and UCAS

We have completed all of our university applications, but UCAS have pushed back the application deadline by two weeks:

Students applying to start university or college in 2021 now have until 18:00 on Friday 29 January to complete their application, following announcements in the UK to close schools and colleges. We strongly advise students not to leave their application to the last minute and if they are ready to submit to go ahead and do this now.

If any students who have not applied to university, have a change of heart and wish to do so, then get into contact and we will support them with their application. Anyone thinking about deferring, should either contact their university admission teams direct now, or make their choices and then defer on results day; the decision will then lie with individual universities.

There has been no notification of any further date changes, but it seems logical that dates for final decisions may also be pushed back. Currently they are as below, so there is still plenty of time. **Students should chat through choices with you, and let us know, before making this important decision.** The five choices are reduced to two: the FIRM choice is the most desired destination and the INSURANCE choice is the second choice university (ideally with lower entry requirements):

If all 5 offers have been received by 31 st March	Students need to make their choices on UCAS TRACK by 5th May
If all 5 offers have been received by 6 th May	Students need to make their choices on UCAS TRACK by 3rd June
If all 5 offers have been received by 3 rd June	Students need to make their choices on UCAS TRACK by 10th June (CHANGED DATE BY UCAS)

Year 13 Offers and University Interviews

I am sure that universities will also have been very busy putting strategies in place following the Government's announcement, however students could well receive interviews over the coming weeks. We are still available to do mock, virtual interviews and students should contact us to put these arrangements in place. It is really important to have a practice run before the real thing, to build confidence and also check technology. Similarly, if a university offer comes in with wording that you are unsure about, or a requirement that you don't understand, please get in touch with either Mrs Helsby or myself.

Careers and Apprenticeship Opportunities

We will send these to students directly as we hear of any opportunities or related online experiences / workshops. Students need to keep checking for deadlines and open days too. Here are some useful links and opportunities:

HSBC Work Experience:

HSBC Work Experience is now live - opportunities across the whole of the UK, in financial services, investment banking, marketing, digital, compliance and HR. The Work Experience opportunities will be available through June to August 2021 and will be 1-week long. Open to all secondary school or college students in Y10 / S3 to Y13 / S6 & Y14), applications close on 21st February. **Application Link:** <https://bit.ly/3rjRiT2>

Marks & Spencer's Webinar:

M&S are recruiting Retail Management and Fashion apprentices across the UK, giving you the ultimate fast track to managing your own department and looking after multi million pound budgets, all while being coached and mentored by their retail management experts. If you'd like to consider applying for a M&S apprenticeship program and are interested in Business, Retail, Management or Fashion then you can find your unique sign up application link below to this webinar!

Key Details:

- Thursday 28th January, 5pm - 6pm
- Insight to M&S (one of the UK's most iconic brands)
- Open to all Y12 / S5, Y13 / S6 and Y14 students
- Great opportunity for students looking to get into business, management, retail or fashion
- **Webinar Application Link:** <https://www.research.net/r/Marks-Spencer-Webinar>

NHS Live Virtual Work Experience Programme

This is available to support aspiring healthcare students with work experience opportunities during the pandemic. Students now have access to their own specific work experience programme that will be highly relevant to the following healthcare careers:

- Nursing
- Midwifery
- Paramedics
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Radiographers
- Art, drama and music therapists
- Dietitians
- Operating Department Practitioners
- Radiographers
- Podiatrists
- Osteopaths
- Orthoptists
- Prosthetists and orthotics
- Speech and language therapists



Students can learn more and register for the programme here: <https://alliedhealthmentor.org/nhs-healthcare-careers-virtual-work-experience/>

Virtual Work Experience: BT Nestle Airbus

Another website that brings excellent links is <https://www.springpod.co.uk/> which has a tab focussed on work experience and insight days at a number of highly regarded companies (including BT, Nestle and Airbus).

Young Storyhouse Opportunity

<https://www.storyhouse.com/young-storyhouse>

Storyhouse is offering regular sessions (currently online) to provide young people with real-life industry experience in the arts and libraries, as well as supporting them in gaining new skills, building friendships and achieving qualifications. Young Storyhouse has a focus on creativity – it may be worth taking a look if of interest to you.

On a personal note, working at home certainly has its challenges, particular for students who love the company, interaction and fun that a college environment allows. We are always accessible if students or yourselves wish to contact us - about any matter. Please stay safe and we would like to wish your families well over the coming weeks,

- Mrs McMillan
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- Mrs Helsby
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- Mr Brownley
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Please also follow us on twitter which we use for regular notices and information: [@tarporleysixth](https://twitter.com/tarporleysixth)