

Dear Parent / Carer,

In this final week of term, after a very difficult year, we are hopefully going to enjoy a summer of fewer restrictions and a life with some degree of normality. I know students are tired and ready for the break. Head students have stepped up to their new roles brilliantly; they delivered speeches to KS3 Award winners and all spoke with tremendous fluency and self-confidence. Well done to all involved – a nerve-wracking experience which you managed excellently.

From September, we have plans in place for a newly painted common room, new cafe and hopefully the return of the sofas! A group of students sampled food made by the new food providers, Midshires, and were very excited about the freshness, quality and value for money that our new cafe 'SAGE' will offer. Students will be able to pre-order food on a digital ordering system and will be able to pay with fingerprint recognition or cash / card / Apple Pay. We will also say a sad goodbye to Sharon, our cafe manager, who is retiring this year - students will be marking her last day with flowers and presents later this week. She will be missed!

Fewer restrictions mean that many new opportunities will open up for our students in the main school, and we can raise the profile of our amazing Sixth Formers in lots of ways. We would like to wish you all a relaxing and safe summer and look forward to welcoming students back on September 3rd.

Mrs McMillan

Final week arrangements

The week will run as normal, but on Wednesday p5 we plan to play rounders outside and have ice creams to celebrate the end of term. (Hopefully in the sunshine!) An Assembly will follow on Thursday, with information and awards. Lessons will run as normal all week but we will finish an hour earlier on Friday at 2pm. Buses will run as normal.

Return to school

The Year 12s will be in college on Thursday September 2nd for their Induction Day. Due to Covid, all taster days had to be cancelled, so the new Year 7s and 12s will have this day to ease their transition. Many thanks to our Head Students who wrote a brilliant - and well-received Transition booklet - for the upcoming Year 12s. This consequently means that **Year 13s will have their first day in college on Friday 3rd September**. We normally have an extended tutor time in the morning to receive new timetables etc then week 1 lessons begin.

Sadly, Miss Genders is leaving us to join the Year 7 team and the new tutor will be Mr Gibbons, the new Sixth Form Student Development Lead. He will lead the enrichment activities in Sixth Form and we are very excited about this new position. The tutor group met him yesterday - he has told them he expects great things from today's rounders!

Year 12 Exams

All students have now received their report. There were many superb or promising results and the whole process was important in order to develop students' exam technique and resilience. Some students re-sat exams if they significantly underperformed and we hope an improved performance means they can start summer with more confidence and realistic ambitions for next year. A Levels are very challenging exams and require grit, hard work and determination. Exam resilience / timed practice, along with revision and exam preparation, are critically important elements that we plan to work hard on next year, as a college. It is important that students rest up during the summer break but also consolidate knowledge and organise notes / files for a flying start in September.

Post Sixth Form Pathways

After our two Post- Sixth Form days, we hope students have some ideas and plans for next steps. Many students intending to go to university have attended virtual open days or have visited cities to get 'a feel' for a place they are interested in. They need to keep researching over summer and should return to school in September with a first draft of their personal statement. All resources are with students and on the VLE.

Oxbridge and Medicine / Dentistry students need to meet the October 15th deadline, but all other students have until the end of November - Christmas at the very latest - to complete their university application. This is because mock exams will occur in January so the first term is unbelievably busy. Early completion is key!

For students not interested in university, they can use the many resources, templates and links in the 'World of Work' Booklet to make the best CV or letter of application that they can. This needs to be worked on over summer. University is not for everyone and in a tough economic climate following the pandemic, it is important for students to have competitive and impressive applications - whether that is for a job, an apprenticeship or degree apprenticeship. The final University / Apprenticeship Search Fair is on today which students may find useful:
<https://www.ukuniversitysearch.com/fair-signup>

There is also an 'Actual' not 'Virtual' Fair in Autumn, which may be of interest:
<https://www.ukuniversitysearch.com/fair-signup/birmingham-autumn-2021>

In addition, UCAS regularly post videos with excellent advice on the UCAS HUB site, which students are now signed up for. These are well worth a look, with guidance on many different areas. Just use the navigation bar at the top to select the video that is most relevant to you:
<https://www.ucas.com/connect/videos/hub-live-videos>

Alumni

We pride ourselves on the relationships we foster with our students, and even this year, students have heard from former THS Sixth Formers from a variety of Post-Sixth Form routes:

- They viewed short videos from university students (from a range of institutions and courses) and also heard from a Police and Draughtsman Apprentice during the Post-Sixth Form Days
- An Apprentice accountant from Ernst and Young discussed his application process and vocational experiences
- A current Cambridge student visited college to share application tips and insights into university life for prospective Oxbridge candidates
- A current Durham university student will deliver an assembly today on personal statement tips, after being specifically commended by her lecturer.

We hope these insights were both authentic and helpful. Hopefully the abundance of information has left Year 12s feeling fully informed and inspired.

Term Magazine and Mock Trial

The Shine National Media Awards took place earlier this term and the whole team watched the virtual ceremony in Sixth Form with balloons and Nosecco! We are so proud of the latest edition of Term and the leadership of Millie Appleby-Mason, Meg Morrison and Beth Slattery. The finished product marks a real team effort. We are so proud that Team Term received four awards - we won Best Photograph (Beth Slattery) and were highly commended for: Best Online (Emily Taylor), Best Website (Mabel Lee and Lucy Killilea), Best Business and Marketing Strategy (Maisie Craig) and Best Sustainability Strategy. Two or three students will accompany a member of staff to a winners' lunch in London in September. A truly outstanding achievement!

Our budding lawyers took part in their Mock Trial event on Wednesday 30th June. This was a culmination of effort over the year, which saw our prosecution and defence barristers pit themselves against each other, whilst the witnesses were grilled on their statements in the hope that the case could be won convincingly. This played out in the end as prosecution barrister Jemima Dodwell-Cooke managed to unearth a contradiction in the defendant's statement and answers to the defence examination in chief. All students completed the trial impeccably and the defence barristers (Emily Anderton and Ella Chang) did brilliantly but it was Jemima and Millie Billingham's dynamic response during the trial that mean that Mrs Helsby and Mr Brownley found the defendant guilty as charged. Well done to all those involved: including Thom Helsby, Rebekkah Rigby, Harriet Dyke, Saskia Stephen and Callum Morrison.

Have a lovely summer - we are looking forward to another busy and critically important year, from September.

The Sixth Form Team