

Dear Parent / Carer,

We are approaching the end of another very busy term. This term is incredibly demanding, even in normal circumstances, but this year has been busier than most. Students have coped really well with the uncertainty that 2020 has offered and we are very happy that Sixth Form has managed to operate with only minor disruption. Many thanks to you and all Year 12 and 13 students for their maturity and focus during this time. I hope you enjoy reading this Newsletter and that you and your families have a well-earned break over the Christmas period.

Mrs McMillan

A LEVEL EXAM ANNOUNCEMENT

The Government recently announced some changes to A Levels in 2021. Mr Lowe wrote to parents last week and Mrs McMillan delivered an assembly to explain these to students. These changes have been made to support students and include:

- **More generous grading in line with 2020, so that this year's cohort are not disadvantaged.**
- **Students will get advance notice of some topic areas covered in the exam – in January 2021 - to assist their revision.**
- **Exam aids (such as formula sheets) will be issued in some subjects to cut down on the memorising required. Specific details will be released in January.**
- **Additional 'back up' exams will be held in July for students who missed the first sitting due to illness or self-isolation.**

We will share further information as soon as it is released, and keep you updated.



Mr Brownley and Mrs Kember (the school counsellor) delivered an important presentation on a Wednesday period 5 session last week, about keeping calm and managing anxiety and heavy workloads. Essential tips, plus resources from 'Young Minds' were also shared – and students really should heed this advice. Christmas will mean hard work and revision – especially for Year 13s - but we have emphasised the NEED for students to have a break too. This is so important.



Onto other news, 57 students have sent off their university applications and 24 students now have all their offers.

Many students are currently:

- Preparing and doing virtual interviews: **Immie (Theatre Studies); Emily and Ben (Veterinary Science) Annabel (Spanish and Linguistics); Jack, Taylor, Rohini (Medicine); Joe (History at Oxford);**
- Meeting professionals, a GP, as interview preparation over Teams: **Jack, Andy, India, Rohini, Taylor, Zoe, Nina**
- Gathering digital portfolios: **Immie (Architecture); Sam and Jack (Product Design); Issy (Fashion Photography & Film-making)**
- Producing written work and evidence: **Millie (Journalism) and Abi (Creative Writing).**
- Receiving reduced offers: **Well done to Abi (English Literature); Emma (English Language & Linguistics); Joe (History) who have all received substantially reduced offers from some of their chosen Russell Group universities.**
- Receiving unconditional offers: **Laura (English Literature); Chloe (Forensic Psychology); Alex (Forensic Science); Sam (Product Design – after a fabulous interview!)**

Mrs Helsby, Mr Deakin and I are providing practice interviews via TEAMS and supporting students in college with all these additional requirements. Students must let us know if they are called for interview to arrange this.

Another reminder that UCAS deadlines for final decisions are below. Hopefully as lockdown restrictions ease, you will be able to physically visit cities and get a real feel for your potential university destination:

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)

EXAMS, REPORTING AND ASSESSMENTS

- **ASSESSMENT POINT 1:** all students have received an interview with either their tutor or Mrs McMillan and Mrs Helsby about academic progress, future plans and wellbeing.
- **SIXTH FORM MOCK EXAMS FOR YEAR 13** will run between: **4th – 15th January**. Exam Timetables have been issued. Students need to be seated at 8.50 for a 9am start, or 12.50 for a 1pm start. **If students have to isolate, please let us know on Monday 4th January in order to put appropriate alternative plans in place.**
- **SIXTH FORM PARENTS’ EVENING FOR YEAR 12 & 13** will run virtually on: **4th February**
- **YEAR 12 EXAMS** will be in the final summer term of this year: **4th – 14th May**.



ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES - DEBATING MATTERS COMPETITION

Tarporley Sixth Form were drawn to compete in two heats in this formal debate competition – which ran virtually this year. Two teams of two year 12 students (**Rosie, Millie, David and Ellie**) argued against the following statements, with advance notice to prepare:

- **“In the digital age, we should not expect our online activities to remain private” (vs Burgate School, Hampshire)**
- **‘Unhealthy lifestyles are not the business of government’ (vs Barnard Castle, independent boarding school, Durham)**

One team won (well done to Rosie and Millie) and one team narrowly missed out (Ellie and David) after an incredibly articulate verbal debate with the team that won the whole competition overall – in our view they were robbed! Either way, this was a fantastic experience and all four students showed tremendous skill, tenacity and determination – with each individual singled out individually for commendation: Rosie for her opening statement, David for his broad, deep knowledge of the issue, Ellie for her calm, well-argued retorts and Millie for her confident delivery and teamwork. Many thanks also to Mr Brownley for organising the event. Millie had this to say:

“Thank you so much for getting us involved in Debating Matters. I’m so glad we got this opportunity, it ended up being so fun... and of course it was an absolute bonus that we won! So glad I managed to control the nerves in the end. Thank you again for helping us both prepare and just believing in us.”



BAR MOCK TRIAL

10 Year 12 students (**Millie, Holly, Harriet, Ella, Thomas, Rebekkah, Saskia, Callum, Jemima, Emily**) are currently analysing a case and are preparing to conduct a mock trial, each with a specific role to play. Again, this is a national competition and the team are liaising with Barristers and Legal professionals in order to gain genuine insights into the world of Law. We are also asking that Theatre Studies student, **Immie**, and Debate Club regular, **Sam** from Year 13, will assist students in their preparation. The heats for this will start in February. The task is to manipulate the evidence as well as possible so that we can be judged to have successfully undertaken the trial as a real Crown Court would have done.

The Bar Mock Trial Competition is kindly supported by The Bar Council of England and Wales, The Faculty of Advocates, The Bar of Northern Ireland, HMCTS, the Circuits and the Inns of Court.



TERM MAGAZINE

The team made good use of our new Photography Equipment and the Christmas Edition is underway. Students have recreated the Love Actually film poster as the cover. **Phoebe** has done a wonderful job photoshopping images in order to make this a brilliant parody! Once again, we have an amazing team of writers, photographers, artists and creatives working to make a mature publication and a genuinely brilliant read. This is **Millie's** last edition before Year 12s take over after Christmas. She has been a simply outstanding Editor and will leave a great legacy. Big shoes to fill!

The formal application process for the Year 12 Term Editorial Team begins in January and we are already entered for the SHINE NATIONAL MEDIA COMPETITION 2021, held in London. We are also actively involved in SHINE's 'Ask the Expert' initiative, which is a series of video interviews with members of the newspaper, design and digital industries. These will be carried out by Shine former winners – and **Millie** has been specifically selected to interview journalistic professionals from the national press. These films will form a series, taking us from 'How to set up a magazine or newspaper', through to 'Feature Writing', 'Editing' and finally 'How to get a career in journalism' - a video link will be on Shine's website. Well done Team Term!



COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING: Faye and Olivia (Year 12) have been actively involved with Mr Hutchinson, collecting food contributions for West Cheshire's foodbank. This is a project the school is involved with every year but is especially important in the current context. Sixth Formers and staff helped gather and box up provisions from the whole Tarporley community and we are proud to say that we broke the school record, with over 100 boxes of food collected, for local people in need. Superb efforts!



SABLE COTTAGE CARE HOME
 Our Sixth Form are coordinating a lovely, very touching project where they are designing and producing hand drawn Christmas cards, writing personal letters and filming video messages for residents at Sable Cottage Care Home, Kelsall. They will be appropriately quarantined before being shared so this will be totally covid-secure. Many thanks to **Meg** and **Mabel** who did our festive video and to our many artists and letter writers! (Artwork displayed on the final page here).
 Care Home Manager Mrs Roberts stated: "Our residents will really struggle this year because of the lack of family contact. Anything that will make their Christmas more special would be appreciated. We are so grateful to Tarporley Sixth Form students."

BBC YOUNG JOURNALIST COMPETITION

Well done to Faye and Emily who wrote an amazing piece of writing on 'Period Poverty' for this renowned young writer competition. Their joint piece has been shortlisted and the budding journalists have had an interview, via zoom, about their entry with BBC representatives. We await with bated breath!

UK YOUTH SENATE

Congratulations to **Issy, Emily and Sophie** who are hoping to get involved with the Youth Senate in Chester – they have already discussed issues that they regard as critically important and we await to see how their role will develop over the coming months.

TARPORLEY'S GINGERBREAD HOUSE

This beautiful and very festive edition was created by Magenta and her family and friends. This project took nearly 400 hours of work to design, build, paint and decorate. It is now located on the High Street in front of Latte' Da, opposite The Old Fire Station Chocolate Shop. This is where children can post letters to Santa and complete answers from the Festive Treasure Trail. We are so proud of all of our students and their community spirit and compassion at this very challenging time.



CHRISTMAS FUN

The Elf on the Shelf normally causes mischief around Sixth Form at this time, changing location numerous times a day, but as this is not a very covid-secure activity, he is currently in isolation, set to return in 2021. 😊

Despite this, we ended the term with lots of festive activities in an attempt to maintain some kind of normality and fun for our students who really do deserve both:

- **Christmas inter-tutor Quiz**
- **KS4 and KS5 Awards Ceremony held during Tutor Time**
- **Christmas Jumper Day**
- **The infamous Christmas Fancy Dress Day (#gobigorgohome)**
- **Christmas Party Games held during Tutor Time**

Kind regards and have a wonderful Christmas,
Mrs McMillan
Director of Tarporley Sixth Form

