

Welcome Back!

Firstly, I cannot begin to tell you how delighted we are to welcome our Year 13s to college, very much aware that they have not been in school full-time since that fateful day in March. As teachers, we have genuinely missed the energy and vitality that our students bring and seeing our classrooms full again rather than single faces on a computer screen is fantastic. A school is just a building ... its lifeblood is the students and Sixth Form is just not the same without them.

As you know, College currently looks very different: sofas have been removed from the common room; year group bubbles and one way systems are in place; Sixth Formers have restricted, bespoke rooming; sanitiser stations are in every room and masks are being worn in communal areas, but we are quickly adapting to our 'new normal' and our students have been fantastic. Sixth Form is now a base and not a social space!



There is no doubt that we face challenges in the month ahead, but we have certainly learned to be both resilient and hopeful over the last few months. For now, we are looking ahead to getting our Year 13 students settled in and engrossed in their academic study; we also wish to encourage enrichment activities, even in a virtual context, and want our Year 13s to push themselves and be the best version of themselves. Mr Brownley has a new role as 'Student Development Lead' and his PPT (attached with this newsletter) details some of the super-curricular activities that Year 13s can still get involved with this year.



We also have a new twitter page which we would encourage all parents and students to follow; on that page we are posting Sixth Form News but also critically important notices, study tips, wellbeing advice, enrichment opportunities and news about post-18 pathways such as university or apprenticeships. I would encourage all students to download twitter if they have not already done so and use it as a work app. It will certainly be informative and invaluable in the months ahead. We are looking forward to working with this wonderful year group!

Mrs McMillan

Director of Tarporley Sixth Form

UCAS

After our successful 'Post-Sixth Form' days in school in the summer term, we launched the UCAS programme and also enlightened students on other pathways such as apprenticeships and gap years. Students left the sessions with a clear idea about how to fill in their UCAS application form and how to write that all-important personal statement. Although physical open days have not been running, universities have been quick to offer virtual open days, webinars and city guides on their websites. The final set of open days are on between September (now) to November so it is important to look at dates, sign up online and get organised. I have just tweeted a comprehensive open day search tool and date list on twitter as well as a video from Clare Merchant, the CEO of UCAS, who offers really useful advice about how to get the most out of open day visits. Do follow us and take a look.

Oxbridge / Vets / Medics / Dentists need to send their UCAS application off before October 15th.

All students need to send off their application by the end of November – by Christmas at the very latest.

ALL STUDENTS MUST HAVE THE FIRST DRAFT OF THEIR PERSONAL STATEMENT TO TUTORS BY MONDAY, 14TH SEPTEMBER. THIS WAS SET AS A HOMEWORK TASK OVER SUMMER AND STUDENTS ARE AWARE OF THIS DEADLINE.

Many students have already written first drafts of personal statements. These first go to tutors, then finished drafts go to Mrs Helsby and Mrs McMillan for a final polish. Tutors write references for students and then Mrs McMillan oversees the whole process and finalises predicted grades. Students will sit with Mrs Helsby to check every aspect of the UCAS form has been filled in correctly, then Mrs McMillan will upload the reference and send the application to UCAS. **There is an application fee of £26 that has to be paid to UCAS when the form is sent**, then students sit back and (hopefully) watch the offers come flooding in! There is no doubt that organisation is key and early applications (before admissions teams are inundated) can be met with offers within days ... even hours. This is so exciting!

To help guide and advise, there are also dates for the new series of UCAS virtual exhibitions in autumn, designed to help students focus their research within their chosen subject area:

- **Business, Law, and Finance – 29-30 September**
- **Biological and Physical Sciences (including Sport Sciences) – 16 October**
- **People Studies and Teaching (including Psychology, Sociology, Geography, Politics) – 23-24 October**
- **Maths, Engineering and Computing – 2-3 November**
- **Art, Media and Creative subjects – 13-14 November**

Students considering applying to any of these subject areas, should register their interest in their chosen event now at ucas.com/virtual-exhibitions. There are also many sources of help available on UCAS HUB and FACEBOOK LIVE - from personal statement tips and bespoke subject advice, to careers and apprenticeship guidance. Recordings of other live sessions are now available online for students to watch back and work their way through – do take a look as they really are informative.

New School Day

The structure of the day has been slightly amended and **lesson 1 now starts at 8.50** – students must be in college promptly and ready to learn. Punctuality is imperative and will be monitored closely. Sixth Formers are permitted to leave the site at break, lunchtime and during free lessons, but they must sign out and **laneyards must be worn at all times, on site, for safeguarding purposes.**

Opportunity for Year 13s to study at home

To allow more social distancing and space in Sixth Form, I am allowing Year 13s to study at home during free and study periods. **They must sign out before leaving the site and must all attend tutor time at 11.10 for important messages.** It is expected that students do work hard, with independence and focus, **but if this privilege results in a reduced work ethic, a lack of progress or falling lesson attendance then it will be removed.** We would like to think we can trust our students – but for those who prefer to work in college, there will still be provision for this.

Illness and Attendance

If students are unwell then parents need to ring and explain that absence, just like lower school. The message cannot be left by students themselves. Unexplained time off will mean an unauthorised absence and contact home will be made. Parents need to fill out a leave of absence form if students are going to be off school for a day or more, with a valid reason. Mrs McMillan will then grant permission – students must follow this formal process.

Car Parking and New Drivers

Students who have passed their test and have a car, must have a car pass that is displayed in their vehicle at all times. This is obtained from Mrs Henry, the Sixth form Admin Manager. The site is busy and the buses can take a while to unload students. Drivers should be on site by 8.15 to avoid the line of traffic and find a space. Again, this privilege will be reviewed if greater freedom results in lateness, unsafe driving on site or missed lessons.

We have been so impressed by the positivity, cooperation and enthusiasm of Year 13s so far, even in these unprecedented times. We are looking forward to seeing our students mature, develop and flourish, and we all have a very busy year ahead! Good luck with the university hunting / open day searching and decision making!