

November 16, 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Year 13 Parents' Newsletter

Back to a normal-ish life

Hello! I wrote this email initially prior to the announcement of "lockdown 2.0" so I guess normal-ish doesn't apply anymore. But being back to school has been great and it has been fabulous to see students back in and doing what they do best; working hard and developing as young adults.

Face coverings are being worn in school unless students are sat in a lesson (this includes private study) or eating/drinking whilst sat down. Year group bubbles are being adhered to, and the one-way system is operating. We have further spaced out the assemblies so students can be sat further apart from each other than they would do in a classroom. In class I wear a face shield when walking around the students and have my own space at the front. It has been great to see Year 13 leading the way and modelling these rules to younger students, but I would expect nothing less from my wonderful cohort.

Despite Wales scrapping Summer 2021 examinations, we are expecting exams to proceed in June/July (a little later than normal) so it has been great to see many students pushing further with their studies and using the time they have in school, and with their teachers, the best they can. Many subjects have provided the Library with extra materials, so there really is no excuse now not to make the most of the time left...

Opportunities

Since we have been back, our careers and industry liaison team have been working flat out to find the best opportunities for students. This is despite the large number of restrictions everyone is facing due to COVID-19. Students can see Mrs Settle or Miss Johnson in the Library to book an appointment with our independent careers advisor, Mrs Walton, either face-to-face on Tuesdays or virtually via Teams on Wednesdays.

The following physical or virtual events have run so far this term:

- Spotlight talks on careers, apprenticeships and excellence in partnership with BAE Systems
- Seminar on managing well-being and tackling current issues, including exam stress, COVID-19 and lockdown concerns
- Engineering talks from Dr Chng
- Cambridge Physics Lectures
- University of Hertfordshire – UCAS application support
- University and Apprenticeship search virtual fair (nearly 250 different universities, colleges, apprenticeship providers and careers advisors)
- Anglian Water interview advice
- Anglian Water virtual interviews for some students
- Morgan Sindall virtual work experience
- Jaguar Land Rover meet the apprentice networking
- Business Studies Corporate Social Responsibility from major UK retailer
- Regional Organised Crime Unit insight and careers advice for Cyber Students
- Vattenfall renewable energy project continues - representing the school and Vattenfall at the Norfolk restart festival
- Students supported our application for the Norfolk Business Awards
- Medical Mavericks workshop
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The following events are coming up. Please encourage your son/daughter to participate:

- CV and interview skills activities will take place for all Year 13 students on 25th and 27th November. This is mandatory for all students and details are in the Careers Team. Students will need a CV ready for these activities.
- Anglian Water virtual work experience is still open (30th November - 4th December). All the details are on the Careers Team and have been emailed to parents as well.
- RAF Careers Introductions 19th November: details on Careers Team.
- Coming up soon: HOW TO ABSOLUTELY SMASH YOUR APPRENTICESHIP OR UNIVERSITY INTERVIEW!

Next year

I have spent a lot of time recently encouraging students to think about next year and what they want to do. Our Careers Team have been doing the same and have been prioritising Year 13. I would ask you to keep this debate developing at home. There are millions of amazing opportunities out there - if you pursue them! The world has not ended because of COVID and there are apprenticeships, gap years, jobs and university places that need filling in 2021.

UCAS

Many students are looking to university as their main option or as their back-up. Either way, they must meet certain deadlines. Now, they need to register and link their account to the school one by November 18. They also need to be working on their personal statements. I have been running sessions every 2 weeks to help them and they have many staff at school who will happily read through or offer advice on them. Here is a useful PDF from UCAS, particularly pages 12 and 13. <https://www.ucas.com/file/325546/download?token=E7i9d-wu>

A quick note on personal statements: they are time consuming! Last year, most students wrote at least 5 drafts before their final one. If I could implore you to help them with this from home and we will do our bit at school.

The absolute final deadline (apart from clearing) for UCAS applications is 15th January, but this is for the school to send it off after checking, as well as cross referencing their grades and reading their personal statement and writing their school reference. So, I'd like to get it all sorted a week before that... with your help. So, 8th January, please!

Any questions feel free to email me and I shall do my best to find the answer.

James Everett
Year 13 Lead

Dates for your diary

Year 10 Virtual Parents Evening - November 25
Christmas Jumper Day - December 15
Christmas Lunch - December 15
Christmas holidays - December 21 - Jan 4

School reopens - Tuesday January 5, 2021
February Half Term - February 15 - February 19, 2021

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