



Dear all,

Since the last newsletter, we've had a solid couple of weeks at school. The weather this week has been warm and the sun shining, at least for most of the time. The fields have dried out so the children have had access to much more space and time to play some sport or sit and relax with their friends in the sun. School has been more normal than ever before since the beginning of the pandemic. Incidentally, it's now two years this week since we were first placed in a national lockdown and reflecting back on this I am always impressed and humbled by the way in which, even though we were more apart then ever before we came together as a community.

Throughout this period, we have stayed true to two principles: Keeping children and the community safe and keeping the children on track in their learning. These principles underpinned every decision we made since March 23rd 2020. The very early decision to wear face coverings in schools, our provision for the children of key workers, coming back to school post lockdown without reducing any child's timetable and making sure that our teaching was underpinned by meaningful assessment and data collection all contributed to what I feel has been a successful community approach to doing the very best in an unprecedented set of circumstances. We all hope that we never have two years like this again but it has made us look at things differently and make some changes for the better.

A common theme in my newsletter is around partnership and collaboration; working together to help establish a positive culture with high expectations and ambition of our children. As we and I have reached out to families and invited them in to talk about how we can work together, I've welcomed the openness, honesty and sense of mutual respect with which most parents and carers have expressed their views and concerns. The cultural shift towards positive, more collaborative conversations between parents, carers, staff and other adults means that we have been able to make inroads into helping our children make better decisions about behaviour. It's great to be able to report that in some of our key groups of children, we have started to see a fall in a low level disruption and defiance. We have also seen improvements in attendance, some improvements in punctuality, work ethic, engagement in learning and even better manners.

We continue to encourage family engagement in working with an increasingly small number of children who do not represent these very important essential behaviours. If we all stand firm with our children in terms of clear, non-negotiable behavioural expectations then our children learn to recognise boundaries, make better decisions and learn to be more positive, kinder and more respectful members of the community.

I'd like to briefly update you about the mobile phone policy change in school. There seems to be a broad consensus that our children are over reliant on their phones and that we need a different approach to helping children manage this. I have established a working group to make proposals for a new policy regarding mobile phones in school as well as to develop a clear set of rules, systems and processes to ensure that mobile phone misuse is managed properly. The group will look at practice in other schools, explore best practice and reach out for some views and opinions. The intention to launch a much more limiting set of principles, rules and expectations regarding children's access to phones as soon as is appropriate.

Spring festival

Wednesday 30th March
4:30pm – 7pm



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Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School & 6th Form College

Preparing Learners for a Changing World



The much talked about Spring Festival is happening next week on Wednesday 30th March 4:30pm until 7:00 pm. There will be lots of children involved in entertaining us with music and dance as well as running their own stalls and activities. As always I expect that these amazing children will be the stars of the show and it'll be great for us to feel proud and to see them shine. Two charities, Papyrus (prevention of young suicide) and Visyon (supporting emotional and mental health of young people) will also be at our festival. Keeping with the principle of supporting our local community, we have invited a group of local food businesses to take part too. They will have their produce available for you to buy to eat or take away so there will be plenty of food and drinks for you to taste and enjoy. Please come along with an empty belly and enjoy some tasty treats. I'm really excited to welcome you into school and it will be good for us all to be part of a community spirited event

As a mere taste of what else has been going on, some of our Duke of Edinburgh students are taking part in some training this weekend. We wish them good weather and a good experience and we thank the members of staff who are giving up a weekend to support our children. Earlier this week, some of our children attended the Singfest concert which, judging from the photos, was as amazing as usual. The staff who work with our children do an amazing job building their confidence so they can sing and perform with such confidence at these events. Our PE team have had children out at Chill Factor as part of the Girls Active initiative and we've had some sports events involving our primary schools. This week we have mixed fortunes on the football pitch but we've taken part and given our all which is what matters. World poetry day was celebrated last Monday and yesterday evening I spent a few minutes being instructed by participants of the ever popular Warhammer club. We have a rich and diverse extra curricular offer here which I encourage all children to get involved in.



Finally, I would like to reach out to year groups 11 and 13 as well as their families. Your teachers will work hard to make sure you are well prepared for the coming exams starting in a few short weeks. However, it would be wrong to believe that all revision and practice will be delivered at school. Success means you put the work in now so you reap your rewards later. There isn't a magic bullet for this and now is the time to ramp up your commitment to yourself. Revision means getting your head down to a sustained, significant phase of application and personal investment from each of you. Often, students only revise their favourite topics or areas where they are strong. This is a mistake and it's critical to focus on your areas of weakness. If you don't know them, ask your teachers. All of you have the capacity for this and I'm proud of everyone and anyone who invests in themselves and their future by being diligent, motivated and focused.

Next week is the final week of the Spring term. The school will close to students on Friday 1st April as normal at 3:15 which is the end of period 5. Buses will leave as normal at, or just before, 3:30.

Thanks for reading and have a great weekend

Nigel Bielby
Executive Headteacher



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Parent Survey

Thank you for your responses to our recent parental survey. Some of the actions we are currently taking in response to this include:

- Creating more opportunities for parents to be part of school via events such as festivals, forums etc
- Delivering more specific guidance and information to incoming year 6 families regarding IT, Google, transition arrangements in the months prior to starting at HCCS
- Modifying interim year 7 reports to include subject progress comments
- Ensuring toilets are fully open (except in cases of essential maintenance) and a system of monitoring students using toilets during lessons is in place.
- Consulting the catering team to increase range of vegetarian options
- Ensure that learner feedback is consistently in line with whole school policy.
- Establishing a working group to create proposals for a new policy on mobile phone use ready for Autumn 2022



Upper School

As part of our aim to further engage parents and improve the experience that students get at HCCS, we are holding parent forums for each year group during the course of the academic year.

These forums are an opportunity for parents and carers to engage in discussions on key areas of school development, and most importantly to offer valuable feedback on their child's experience so far this year. The forthcoming Year 10 forum will also give parents and carers a relaxed and informal place to meet with our Upper School team to share their views on how things are going at the school and how we can improve.

Our Year 10 Parent Forum which will take place at the following time: **Thursday 31st March from 5:30pm to 6:30pm in our school library.**

If you are interested in joining the Parent Forum, please send an email to confirm that you are able to attend: upperschool@hccs.info

We hope to see many of you there.



Lower School

Thank you to those parents who completed the lower school surveys and those who attended the Year 7 forum earlier in the year. The biggest success from the feedback is the school newsletter showing how much families appreciate the regular updates and communication. An area for improvement is the interim reports as families felt that they were not focused enough on subject progress. Our next interim will do just that and we hope to hold the Year 8 forum following publication of those reports so we can gather further thoughts on our reporting process.



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Transition Day for Our Resource Provision

On Wednesday, we had our first successful transition day for our Social, Emotional and Mental Health Resource Provision. Three new students were introduced to HCCS who will be starting with us after the Easter holidays. We got to utilise our amazing kitchen space on the day which will look even better when our furniture arrives over the holidays.



The day was helped by our two fantastic, internal, resource provision students (one year ten) who made them feel welcome, answered questions and took them on a tour of the school. Sharing the school's values and ethos by showing care, consideration and co-operation even challenging them outside of their comfort zones. Many teachers also came in to say 'hello'.

Feedback from the students was positive and they are looking forward to being part of our school community. Looking ahead to the summer term we feel excited to officially open the Resource Provision and to support the students who will fall under this remit. Also to start renovations of our outdoor area. This space will provide a safe haven in a natural environment to allow the students time to re-regulate their emotions with the addition of learning invaluable social skills for the future.

6th Form News

Year 12 have begun the process of looking ahead at their post-18 options. It was kickstarted by the UCAS Convention in Manchester and followed up in tutor times with sessions about "Choosing Universities," "Choosing Apprenticeships," and "Gap Year Options". The next stage will be a live Parent's Meeting in the Theatre in April (the first in two years), email invitations and a confirmed date and time will come out next week. This meeting will outline the key stages and next steps for students and parents in the transition beyond the 6th form college. For anyone who cannot attend the meeting, we will put a link on the main school website in the 6th form section to the presentation and key information.



Year 13 parents will receive an email next week with links to the Y13 presentation about the final stages of the Post-18 process. We will be organising a meeting for this too in April to talk you through things like UCAS, student finances and apprenticeships.

Thank you very much to the Year 12 and 13 parents who completed the parent survey. We appreciate all comments and suggestions and the messages of support have been much appreciated by all the 6th form team. From the survey, we understand we need to improve our provision of students with SEND and mental health needs and within college we have increased our levels of professional support across this term and are putting together some longer term structural changes that we hope will give our students the guidance and support they need.



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Year 11 Exam Information

As the exam season fast approaches, we would like to ensure that all parents and students have received the 'JCQ Information for Candidates' document. This document briefly outlines the rules for candidates in exams. In our recent trial exam week there were several violations of these rules. It is vital that students adhere strictly to these rules.

On Monday morning, we have another opportunity to practise our exam etiquette as well as receive vital Maths feedback. For the vast majority of our students, behaviour in the hall during trial examinations in February was outstanding. However, a significant number of students broke exam room etiquette and were sanctioned accordingly. Had this been a real exam, those students would have been disqualified. Potentially, they would be disqualified from all exams from that particular exam board. For example, if they were sitting an exam from AQA, they would be disqualified from Science and Maths as well as a host of other options subjects.

The rules have been, and will continue to be, shared with your children. Any disruption during this exam session on Monday will be met with serious consequences.

Please have a conversation with your child about the JCQ information and particularly the following rules:

- Having mobile phones in the sports hall (must be kept in bag outside of sports hall)
- Wearing watches in the sports hall (must be kept in bag outside of sports hall)
- Talking or attempting to communicate with others (including: turning around, excessive eye contact, giggling, intentional yawning)
- Repeated requests to go to the toilet in a 1.5 hour exam (students with medical passes can freely go)

The above points must be adhered to from the moment they enter their exam room until they exit.

Equipment

During our February trial examination period there were several issues with equipment. Please make sure that your children have all the equipment listed below. There were roughly 40 requests for equipment during a maths assessment and an average of 15-20 in most assessments. Not only is this disruptive to our exam process, it suggests that there is little to no preparation for the assessment which will have a significant impact on their future plans. Your child will need all the normal school equipment. Exam equipment will need to be in a clear pencil case or sandwich bag.

- Black Pens
- Pencils
- Rulers
- Calculator
- Compass
- Protractor
- Highlighters (only allowed to highlight text)



Click to download 'JCQ Information to Candidates'



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We have a number of vacancies at HCCS. For more information and application forms [click here](#).

- Deputy Estates & Facilities Manager
- Education Support Officer
- Examination Invigilators
- Teacher of Mathematics



Medication in School

Please could I remind parents, carers and students that medications must NOT be kept in the student's possession unless prior agreement has been made with the Health Care Officer. Medicines should be handed in and stored in reception at all times.

The school will only accept a limited range of unprescribed medicines such as; Paracetamol, Ibuprofen, and Calpol. We will also accept antihistamines (non-drowsy) for hay fever and allergies such as Loratadine, Cetirizine, and Clarityn, including eye drops. Medicines will only be accepted in the original packaging and when the full dosage instructions are clearly legible.

Any other medication must be prescribed by the G.P and sent in the original packaging labelled with the prescribed dosage and students full name.

All medicine MUST be accompanied by a fully completed Request to Store Medicine Form. This can be downloaded on our website. Go to Parents: Medical information.

For all other medication needs please speak to the Health Care Officer before sending medicine into school.

In all cases, the school will not exceed the prescribed or recommended dosage.

Singfest Concert for Young Voices

On Tuesday, Young Voices enjoyed a trip to Congleton Town Hall to perform at the Singfest concert. It was great to be out and performing again after so long. The students were all brilliant but well done in particular to Jess, Emily, Abby and Hannah for their surfing choreography; Erin for doing her lovely solo; Jess, Jasmine, Beth and Jack for volunteering to do actions and moves, and Sophie and Emma for taking charge of the HCCS banner.



Our next event will be a huge Young Voices concert in Birmingham Arena in May.



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MFL NEWS

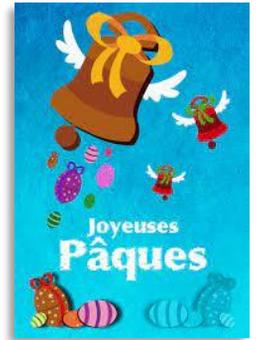
Easter celebrations in other countries

When we learn languages, it is not just about the words! As linguists, it is also important to understand and enjoy other cultures and traditions and Easter is a great time to do this.

Here are some Easter traditions that you might like to explore further for yourselves:

Easter bells in France

France is traditionally a Catholic country and bells sounding from church towers is a part of regular worship. On Maundy Thursday (the day when Christians remember the last supper Jesus had with His disciples before his capture and crucifixion) the bells fall silent. The legend says that the bells fly out of the bell towers and fly to Rome carrying the grief of all those who mourn the death of Jesus. At the Vatican, they are blessed by the Pope and then return to France. On their way back, they scatter chocolate and eggs in the gardens of well-behaved children for them to find on Easter Sunday morning, and the bells ring out again to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus.



Painted eggs decorate trees in Germany

In Germany, decorating eggs is a long-standing tradition (make sure you remove the inside first - there's plenty of info on line to help you with this!). Once decorated, the eggs are hung on branches in the home or even outside on trees to celebrate Easter and the coming of Spring. They make a beautiful display and there is no end to the design possibilities. Maybe you could try this craft activity for yourself? Please share any photos on your MFL Google classroom if you do!

Semana Santa

This festival name translates as Holy Week and is celebrated by Christians from Palm Sunday (the Sunday before Easter Sunday) through to Easter Saturday. It is celebrated in Spain and many other Spanish speaking countries (in Central and South America for example). People parade in the streets and sometimes carry wooden sculptures of scenes from the Passion of Christ. Christians celebrate Semana Santa as it helps to remind them of the events surrounding the death and resurrection of Jesus, the most important aspect of their faith.



Why not carry out your own research? Let us know what you find out!

Happy Easter
Joyeuses Pâques
Frohe Ostern
¡Feliz Semana Santa!



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World Poetry Day

It was World Poetry Day on Monday 21st March. Pupils completed some poetry tasks at tutor time and each teacher shared a different poem in their lessons. This one seemed to resonate with many...

Don't Quit

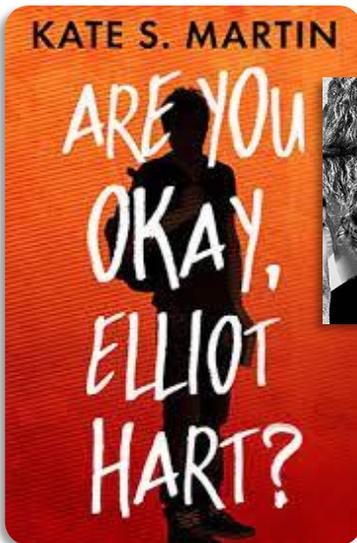
When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all uphill,
When the funds are low and the debts are high,
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
When all is pressing you down a bit,
Rest if you must, but don't you quit,
Success is failure turned inside out,
The silver tint in the clouds of doubt,
And you can never can tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems far;
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit,
It's when things go wrong that you must not quit.

~John Greenleaf Whittier

New book release- Mrs Martin's debut novel!

Congratulations to our very own English teacher, Mrs Martin! Her debut YA novel was released this week. It tells the story of two 15 year old lads, Elliot and Josh, and explores challenging themes such as bullying, mental health and domestic violence. The book hopes to encourage important discussions and empathy for the tough experiences those around us often face.

Websites that provide support can be found at the end of the book.



Available at **amazon**
Click here



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Maths Star of the Month - November

The maths department has been nominating students for the November Star of the Month awards, for diligence, perseverance and a positive attitude to maths.

Nominees and winners for this term were as follows:



Year 7:
James Asher
Joe Hignett
Hannah Beaumont
Alice Mendham
Keisha Richardson
Kal Ivanov
Harry Knipe
Lucas Grey
Immy Ranfield
Izzy Fyffe

Winner:
Joe Hignett

Year 8:
Oliver Carter
Tom Jeffries
Maja Gorska
Ben Lusby
Jack Moss
Ciara Breen
Megan Jones
Isabelle Moreton

Winner:
Ben Lusby

Year 9:
Ruby Cheetham-Graham
Daisy Eaton
William Salem
Elizabeth Smith
Millie Allen
Harriet Graham
Sydney Williams

Winner:
William Salem

Year 10:
Connor Colborne
Tom Sandywell
Eleanor Townsend
Charlotte Ridley
Anwen Brierley
Holly Brown
Maisie Frith

Winner:
Tom Sandywell

Year 11:
Lola Eaton
Eva Gratton
Ellie Lowe
Isaac Fallows
Max White
Issy Khan
Poppy Kyneston-Perez

Winner:
Poppy Kyneston-Perez

Huge congratulations to all the nominees and the lucky winners. **Happy Easter!**





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Girls Active Chill Factor Experience



Wow!

So much fun was had at the Chill Factor on Wednesday 24th March.

The Girls Active leaders helped to organise a trip to the Chill Factor for those students who have engaged in Girls Active tutor sessions and clubs so far this year!

It was a great evening where the students took part in Snow Park activities that included;

- Riding down the slope on donut rings,
- Tackling the twists and turns of the ice slide
- Sleighing the competition on the sledge 'n' slide track!

Afterwards there was some social time, ending the trip with a yummy ice cream!

We look forward to organising more trips to get more girls, more active and give girls more opportunity to enjoy being active!



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Isla Dixon - British Youth Fencing Championships

On Saturday the 12th March, Isla competed and won a place to represent North West England at the British Youth Fencing Championships in Sheffield. She will be competing in the Girls Under 14 Epee category. What a fantastic achievement, well done Isla, a huge congratulations we wish her all the best of luck in her next competition representing the North West. One very proud Teacher, Good Luck





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Football News

Year 8

First round of the South Cheshire Cup versus Brine Lees High School was played in awful weather conditions. Wind, cold and rain all afternoon meant difficult playing conditions but the Holmes Chapel team captained by Archie Jacobs still knocked the ball around like they were on the 3G. Holmes Chapel went 1:0 up after twenty minutes and if it wasn't for heroics from the opposition goalkeeper, it could have been 5 or 6. In the end, Holmes Chapel held on for the win and keep the cup run going!

Other results:

Year 7 lost 2:1 & year 9 lost 3:1.



We are now at the stage to promote our FREE school-holiday events for youths between 9-15 years old.

We have 2 dates for the Easter holidays – **Tuesday 5th April at Crewe Alex Soccer Centre in Shavington and Wednesday 6th April in Sandbach High School**

These will run between 10:00-15:00. Ham and Cheese sandwiches will be provided as well as coaching on all sports and 'games' played throughout including Football, Rugby and Hockey.

There'll also be workshops on TikTok, Virtual Reality amongst other things.

Is it possible the poster attached can be sent out to parents via a newsletter or a direct. This also involves application form if that can also go out, to be returned to Salt.Wars@Cheshire.Police.uk

We were running under the name Salt Wars but have evolved into 'County Cross Games' now to push the events as far as possible.

The events have been very well attended and we will be making the events bigger and better.

 [Click here to download the Application and Medical Form](#)



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Spring Fest

You are invited to join us for our Spring Festival on **30th March 4:30pm – 7pm**

Raffle/tombola

Please send in to reception any items for our tombola (chocolates, unwanted gifts) and any raffle prizes you can donate for the Spring Festival by Friday 18th March 2022

Many thanks in advance





FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY TEAM



PARENT WORKSHOPS

Helping children manage worries and anxiety.

Visyon's Family and Community Wellbeing Team are pleased to offer an **8-week Parent Workshop Programme** which will provide information, advice and strategies to empower parents to effectively support their children, with their worries and anxieties.

The Programme is available for Families of **primary school age** children, in **Cheshire East** and will be held at Visyon in Congleton for **face-to-face** delivery. If you would like to book a place on the Programme, please contact

lynne.fitton@visyon.org.uk, who will contact you with further details.

Places are limited and will be allocated on a first come basis.



Parent Workshops – Helping children manage anxiety.

- 27/04/2022 - Parenting problems and difficult behaviors.
- 04/05/2022 - Securing the parent/child bond.
- 11/05/2022 - Understanding your child's anxiety.
- 18/05/2022 - Using praise and rewards to build confidence.
- 25/05/2022 - Setting limits on anxious children's behavior.
- 01/06/2022 - NO SESSION DUE TO HALF TERM
- 08/06/2022 - Managing children's worry.
- 15/06/2022 - Managing difficult behavior.
- 22/06/2022 - Review and celebration.

All 8 sessions need to be attended consecutively to complete the course and benefit from the learning techniques.

Each session will start at 11:00 am and finish at 12:15 pm.



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Thank you, from all of us at HCCS & HC6F