



Dear all,

Welcome back to the new year and I hope you all enjoyed some time with your nearest and dearest over the festive season. After a long autumn term, all of our children and all of our colleagues who serve them needed a rest and a break from school.

So to this term. I want us all to broaden the conversation at school and home about values as well as the behaviours and actions that go with them. Gandhi said *"Your beliefs become your thoughts, your thoughts become your words, your words become your actions, your actions become your habits, your habits become your values, your values become your destiny."*

Here at Holmes Chapel, we have four values: We learn together, we belong to our community, we are proud of ourselves and each other, we have consistently high expectations. Underneath these values are the behaviours and actions that everyone must practise so that the culture of our school is defined by characteristics such as being safe, inclusive, caring, non-threatening, warm, welcoming, supportive etc etc. If we achieve this, our children learn better, are happier in school and achieve the best possible outcomes. Here's the crucial point though, we have to create the culture we want by modelling the behaviours we want to see in our children. By 'we' I mean all of us. That is, all of the people who work here to serve our families as well as all of the adults in those families. Values and the associated behaviours will be picked up in tutor time, assemblies and in PSHE lessons. Please support us by talking to your child about our four values and about how to act in a way which demonstrates them.

In the coming weeks, we will begin the first phase of modifying our toilets to make them a place that is easier to manage, reduces the opportunity for vaping, vandalism, graffiti and unsafe behaviour. Importantly, the modifications that we are going to invest in will make toilets a safer place for when our children need the loo and will provide a better quality environment.

Our toilet facilities will undergo some significant refurbishment with specific toilets for Lower School and Upper School children. The plan includes some building work, further security measures and redecorating. We will continue to staff toilets with additional duties as well as sanction those who do not treat these spaces with respect. Further phases for improving toilet capacity will be implemented as our wider building programme gets underway in a few weeks time.



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Following a significant amount of work, including seeking the views of staff, children and families, there was overwhelming support (from adults) for a mobile phone ban. It's fair to say that this wasn't the view of our children! As adults, we are all aware of the power of a mobile phone and social media to distract any of us. This is especially so in our children and the almost addictive nature of social media, the sometimes negative content that children are exposed to, the constant fear of missing out and the way in which phones can sometimes isolate and intimidate our children is very worrying. We are now entering the planning phase of how we implement a ban on mobile phone use in school. The current outline of this plan is that between the start of the school day and the end of the school day, children (except for those few with a specific medical exemption such as diabetes) will not be allowed access to their phone. At present, I am exploring the best and most straightforward way of implementing this. However, it will fail on day 1

without the support of all families. I am sure you will have lots of questions about this new policy but please allow me the space to develop a process that I will share with you before we introduce this. There is a fair amount of work involved behind the scenes on this as well as potential investment for safe storage of mobile phones but I hope to be in a position to implement this policy sometime after the Spring break.

Safe behaviours are very important. We all deserve to be treated with kindness and respect and to be in a place where we are physically, emotionally and socially safe. Dealing with behaviours that put this at risk is a huge part of parenting and a huge part of education and school. This last week, I have dealt with an incident that we believe spilled over from issues that happened out of school but which resulted in very unsafe behaviour in school and which has been appropriately sanctioned. I have spent a considerable amount of time each day with the children involved and have talked at length about 'Bystander Syndrome', building trust, taking responsibility, doing the 'right thing', showing kindness and acting as good role models. I have used the phrase 'Kind thoughts, kind words, kind deeds' in these conversations. I firmly believe that all children, when properly supported and when there are clear, high expectations, have the ability to behave well and to grow to be the best version of themselves. I also believe that this happens best when all adults model the behaviours we expect and when there are clear boundaries in place and when families work with us when our children cross those boundaries.

We have a very busy but very exciting term ahead and as we approach the middle of the school year three weeks from now, I would like to thank all of you who take the time to support us and help us, who talk to us calmly and respectfully and who treat the staff here with kindness and gratitude. After all, aren't we all on the same page where together we strive to build a culture and community where each of our children and all of us are healthy, happy and fulfilled?

Thanks for taking the time to read our newsletter and have a good weekend

Warm regards

Nigel Bielby
Executive Headteacher

WE LEARN
Together

WE BELONG TO OUR
Community

WE ARE PROUD OF
Ourselves & each other

WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY
High expectations



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Sexist and Misogynistic Language

Hopefully you will all be aware that as a school, we have been focusing for some time on educating our young people on sexism, sexual harassment and misogynistic language. This has reflected a national focus on eradicating sexism and misogyny from society and ensuring that all children are brought up to believe that fairness, equality and parity across gender, race and sexual orientation underpin the values we all live by. During the Christmas holidays, you may also be aware of the arrest of the well known social media personality, Andrew Tate, who is known for his controversial views and advocacy of misogyny and sexual violence. This has brought the sexism in school agenda further into sharp focus and presents a good opportunity for us to work with our students on expectations around this.

During the course of this term, we will be spending time in 'My Curriculum' and during our assemblies, further exploring the importance of gender equality. In 2021, the Government produced a guidance document called 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges'. This has since been included into the Government's annual update on 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

Within this guidance are some concerning statistics. One survey referred to the alarming statistic that '67% of girls and young women aged 13-18 have experienced sexual harassment at school from another student, and that 29% first experienced sexual harassment when they were just 11-13 years old.'



At HCCS we will not tolerate sexual harassment, or sexist / misogynistic language being used in school. We have stressed the importance of challenging this to all staff and have instructed all staff to clearly log such incidents on the behaviour records of children who have used such language. We will obviously reinforce this in our PSHCE / My Curriculum sessions, but we need you as parents to reinforce this at home, by speaking to both boys and girls about use of language and reporting issues where they arise. We have a clear route to allow students to report issues, through form tutor and the relevant year group hubs. We are also working on a way of making it easier for students to report concerns without the need to do so face to face, if this is an easier route for them to take.

Many thanks for taking the time to talk about this issue with your children and reinforcing the expectations of HCCS and the wider society in general.

Punctuality to school

A reminder that school starts at 8.40am. Students are expected to be in school by 8.40am and in their form rooms by 8.45am. We have become increasingly concerned about the number of students who are not in school by this time. In some cases, for legitimate reason, but in many cases we have the same students late to school every day.



From Monday 16th January, we will have two members of staff on the gate after 8.45am to greet students who are late. If your child is late to school without good reason, they will be expected to attend a punctuality detention at break the same day. Students will be given a card by the member of staff on duty and will be expected to return that card on arrival to the break detention. Many thanks in advance for reiterating the importance of punctuality to school.



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Trial exams and mid year assessments dates

We have a number of trial examinations and mid year assessments coming up. This is an important time to see what progress students are making, and identify gaps in order to help students focus on areas for development. Teachers will discuss with students what they need to revise, and will post materials on the Google Classroom such as topic lists and revision resources. The results of these exams and assessments will be published to you when completed and marked. We will let you know nearer the time when this will be.



Year 10 and 12 have a formal assessment week starting on the 16th January. This will help us see how they have started their option courses, as well as the core curriculum in year 10.

Year 11 and 13 will soon be taking their second set of trial examinations, between the 9th and 17th February. This is set up as a real exam series, and will give students a really good idea of what to expect in the summer.

Finally years 7,8 and 9 will have formal mid year tests in the core curriculum between 27th February and the 3rd March. Alongside the assessments done in subjects as part of the course, and regular reading age tests, we track the progress of students using formal assessments in English, Maths and Science. These occur in the middle and the end of each year, and will give students, parents and teachers valuable feedback.



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Sixth Form Update

We are delighted to return to College after the Christmas break, to see our students back with focus and enthusiasm. We have now completed the UCAS process and are delighted to see over 70% of our Year 13 students have made an application to University. Many of our students have already started to receive some fantastic and competitive offers from outstanding and highly aspirational Universities. Many of our other students are actively seeking some amazing apprenticeship opportunities and embracing the support available to them. This is certainly an exciting and productive time in our Sixth Form.



UCAS

Year 11 next steps

Year 11 students have now completed their Post 16 intentions interviews with a member of the senior leadership team. We, as a team, have thoroughly enjoyed meeting the Year 11 students and discussing their next steps with them. We will be following this up again, later in the year. If any Year 11 students do have any questions, in the meantime, then we would be really happy to chat with them. Our careers adviser, Mrs Jackson, is also available to discuss student's intentions with them. Please email us on sixthform@hccs.info if you have any questions at all. We are busy planning a range of further opportunities and activities to ensure that our Year 11 students have an opportunity to familiarise themselves further with all that is on offer in our Sixth Form College, including a range of transition events.

Year 11 Achievement Breakfast

We were very happy to welcome a number of Year 11 students into the Sixth Form social area and cafe on Friday 6th January. Students enjoyed a continental breakfast and hot chocolate, along with our student leadership team. It was lovely to share this time with some of our students.





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Young Voices

This Tuesday, HCCS Young Voices performed at the massive Young Voices concert in Birmingham Resorts World Arena. We were part of a choir of 6448 children! We had a fantastic time, singing and dancing to a variety of medleys and songs including 'Rockstar' and 'Sing from your Heart'. We also enjoyed performances from The Beatbox Collective and Urban Strides, recorded a charity single and sang a rousing rendition of 'Proud' with Heather Small herself!

Thank you to the students - who were all fantastic ambassadors for HCCS, the staff who made the trip happen, and the parents who came along to support.

Young Voices rehearses on a Monday lunchtime in Music 1. New members welcome, we'll be rehearsing for our Singfest concert in March.



11AC and 8AC Reading buddies

11AC (Mrs Blackburn) and 8AC (Miss Hawkins) have recently started a reading buddy scheme. We meet once a fortnight in the LRC and enjoy reading together. Each Year 8 has a Year 11 mentor - great for reading together and recommending books, and also a familiar and friendly face around school.



'Careers Corner'

Latest News

Coming soon!!

Apprenticeship Fair for Year 11-13,

Wednesday 2 February in the Theatre,
4pm-6pm

Parents and students welcome!!!



Job of the Week: Acoustician



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Year 8 Parent Forum on Thursday 9th February - 5:00- 6:00 pm.

We are holding a focus group for parents who wish to contribute to a parent discussion about various topics relating to our school. Parents will have the opportunity to voice their opinions on topics such as: Teaching and Learning; Behaviour and Welfare; Communication and Transition. The forum is on Thursday 9th February in the Sixth Form College. If you would like to attend this session please email office@hccs.info by Friday 3rd February.

Concert for Ukraine

On 17th December, one of our Ukrainian students in Year 10, Arina, performed at the concert for Ukraine at Clonter Opera Theatre in Congleton.

Performing a traditional Ukrainian song on guitar, Arina wowed the audience with her skills and bravery in front of 500 people.



When Arina was 3 years old she played on a toy piano, the melody which she had heard recently. At the age of 7 she tried to play the flute and enjoyed it. Both her grandfathers played the guitar when they were young. A year and half ago Arina found her grandfather's old guitar. It was love from the first chord.

Since joining HCCS, Arina has also started playing violin, which she is enjoying, despite it being much harder than playing guitar!

Everyone at HCCS is proud of Arina and we look forward to the next performance!



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

Teacher of Business, Teacher of PE
General Teaching Assistants
Receptionist & Administration Officer



Online Mental Health and Wellbeing Support for young people

Over the next few weeks your child may mention they have been made aware of a professional of a service called Kooth during an assembly. Kooth provides a safe, secure means of accessing online emotional health support from a professional team of qualified counsellors and emotional wellbeing practitioners for ages 11-18.

[Click here](#) for more information



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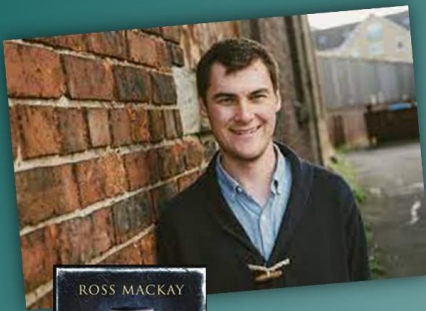
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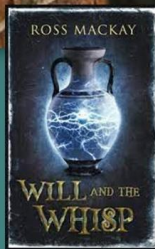
HOLMES CHAPEL COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL'S **LITERATURE FESTIVAL**

MONDAY 27TH FEBRUARY TO FRIDAY 3RD MARCH 2023

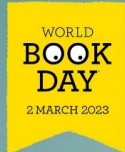
LOTS GOING ON! ASK YOUR TUTOR FOR MORE INFORMATION.



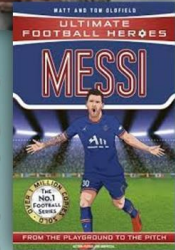
AUTHOR VISITS



ROSS MCKAY
AUTHOR OF
WILL AND THE WHISP



MATT OLDFIELD
AUTHOR OF
FOOTBALL HEROES



ALSO FEATURING:

**TREASURE HUNTS, TEACHER & 6TH FORM FANCY DRESS,
TUTOR QUIZZES, ESCAPE ROOM, BIG BOOK BLOCKET,
WORLD BOOK DAY, CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOPS
AND LOTS MORE!**



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Personal Development Curriculum - Year 13 Wellbeing morning

This week the Year 13 students were given the opportunity to take part in a personal development morning dedicated to improving wellbeing. The students took part in mindfulness activities and participated in a variety of sports sessions - badminton, football and volleyball. It was great to see so many of them having fun and being active.



Year 3&4 Primary Dance Festival

On Monday 9th January we hosted another successful primary dance festival. Over 100 primary students attended the event which was based on the very popular hit musical 'Matilda'. Thank you to all of the primary teachers, parents, our student leaders and the dance teaching team who supported the event and a huge well done to all of the Year 3&4 students who were amazing!



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PE Kit

We have recently experienced an increasing amount of students not wearing an outdoor top for their PE lessons. Please can we ask that for the comfort of the students in the cold weather, that they all have an outdoor top as part of their PE uniform. They can also wear navy leggings or the school branded tracksuit pants. Thank you for your support with this.



Visyon's Families and Communities Team Offer (Jan/Feb 2023)

After the successful launch of our Parent Health and Wellbeing Workshops, earlier in the year, the Families and Communities Team have been working incredibly hard to expand our offer to local families (with children aged 0-11) and are thrilled to now communicate our offer for this first session (see below). Please see our attached brochure for dates and how to book a place.

FAMILY OPEN ACCESS APPOINTMENTS
 Monday 3.00-5.00pm, Tuesday 3.00-5.00pm

The 45-minute appointment can be either face-to-face, online or by telephone, with a family wellbeing adviser and is an opportunity for a parent(s) to talk, reflect (get advice on), guidance, receive strategies and discuss pathways of support. For an appointment contact the Initial Contact Team on 01208 090 090.

PARENT WORKSHOP PROGRAMME
 Helping Support Your Child Through Their Worries and Anxieties (7 x 90-minute weekly workshops)

This Programme is evidence based and explores various parenting techniques which can be used to help an anxious child. This learning is cumulative, each week requires commitment to all lesson sessions. This Programme is extremely popular so may have a waiting list.

PARENT WORKSHOP PROGRAMME
 Sleepy (1 x 90-minute Workshop & tailored Family Session)

This Programme is evidence based and will support you in understanding why your child may be struggling to sleep. We will explore the science of sleep and practical strategies to support sleep. Available to families of children in reception and above.

Please click here for the latest workshops and timetable provided by Visyon

Upcoming Parent Workshops at Visyon this Half Term

(Workshops held at Visyon, Fellowship House, Congleton, CW12 4DP)

Date	Workshop	Time	Location
10th Jan	Family Open Access	3.00pm - 5.00pm	Fellowship House, Congleton, CW12 4DP
17th Jan	Family Open Access	3.00pm - 5.00pm	Fellowship House, Congleton, CW12 4DP
24th Jan	Family Open Access	3.00pm - 5.00pm	Fellowship House, Congleton, CW12 4DP
31st Jan	Family Open Access	3.00pm - 5.00pm	Fellowship House, Congleton, CW12 4DP
7th Feb	Family Open Access	3.00pm - 5.00pm	Fellowship House, Congleton, CW12 4DP
14th Feb	Family Open Access	3.00pm - 5.00pm	Fellowship House, Congleton, CW12 4DP