



Dear all,



I hope you are all well and had some quality time with loved ones over the spring break. I took a few days off to see my family and really enjoyed the space to recuperate and relax a bit. I also had a short break to Portugal, the first time out of the UK since before the pandemic. It was great to be somewhere new, to travel again and to feel that our lives are becoming more 'normal' again.



Anyone who regularly reads the newsletter will know that I have a recurring theme about the importance of community. Ours is a very special environment to live and grow and our school brings together children and families from across a wide and growing local area which is more diverse than first appears. We have so much to be proud of and when we step back and reflect, our community is one that increasingly allows our children the freedoms and space to grow and flourish.



The spirit of our community was very well reflected in our Spring Festival which took place on Wednesday evening this week. Local businesses came along, and provided us with some amazing food and drinks: Tatton Perk with a superb range of coffees, Cheddleton Oatcakes with a delicious taste of Staffordshire. Bidlea Dairy served up gallons of the best possible ice cream and Shandelle Barbeque cooked up awesome chicken kebabs and burgers. Great local produce from great local businesses. I'm very keen to grow the number of local businesses and groups who take part in future festivals and to explore ways for our children to help out so that they build their social skills and gain a better appreciation of how businesses run. We also welcomed two charities focused on mental health and suicide prevention: **Papyrus**, and **Visyon** are already part of our school and we continue to work with them through tutor time, assemblies and pastoral development sessions.



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The festival wasn't just about celebrating and promoting local businesses and our own staff created some amazing home grown treats which we were all able to indulge in. We sold a wealth of craft and upcycled products made here at school and there were games, activities, a tombola as well as some truly inspirational karaoke all run by our children. Musical performances entertained us throughout the evening as well as some dance. This was a proper celebration at a time when we all need it. It goes without saying that the children were the real stars of the show and I really enjoyed seeing them perform, sing, run their stalls and engage in the spirit of the evening. There is nothing like seeing our children thrive in situations like these and we should all feel immensely proud of them.

Another great thing about the Spring Festival was the sheer numbers of conversations I, as well as other staff, had with many parents, families and community members in an informal setting. Many thanks to everyone for taking the time to share. I'd also like to say a thank you to the staff who gave such a lot of time in addition to their normal day jobs. They worked hard behind the scenes to pull the festival together and I am sure we are all very grateful for this.



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These festival events are something which I want to continue to invest in so that from a whole community perspective we create ever stronger links and interrelationships. The reason for this is simple. The closer we are aligned to a set of shared values, beliefs, behaviours and expectations and the better we know and understand each other, the better environment we create for our children to grow in. I know it's an overused quote from Helen Keller but what she said has real resonance, especially when a whole community pulls together and works towards a common goal: *"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."*

I'm already looking forward to the next festival so if you couldn't come to this last one, please join in and come along to the next one. Watch this space for the date!

Thanks for reading and enjoy the weekend

Nigel Bielby
Executive Headteacher

Uniform Consultation



You will all be aware that during the course of this year, we have been getting the views of parents, students and other members of the school community with regards to our current uniform and the potential for changes moving forward.

This consultation has taken the form of student focus groups in school, staff discussion groups, and also a survey that went out to the wider school community earlier this year and has given us a wide range of views and opinions across the school community. More than 900 people contributed to the survey, which is a very positive reflection on the engagement of our parent body.

As part of this, we have tried to take into account the views and opinions of the school community, the recent, updated DFE guidance on school uniform, and also contextual discussions about our school and what we think will be best for Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School.

One of the key considerations from the survey was cost, value for money and giving families enough time to plan for any changes. This is especially pertinent given the current national and international context around cost of living rises,

As a result, we have decided to delay any possible changes until September 2023 at the earliest. In addition to this, any changes that we do decide upon for September 2023, will only apply to the new Year 7 cohort starting that year and we would look to build in a transition period for older year groups, to help families to plan for such changes.

This means that all of our families, and our incoming Year 7 cohort, can make plans for September 2022 with no changes to the current HCCS school uniform.

I would like to thank you all for the contributions that you made to this consultation and we will further communicate in the Autumn term 2022 with confirmation of any planned changes for September 2023.



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6th Form News

This week, saw us host our first live in the theatre meetings with parents for 2 years.

Year 13 parents were invited to discuss the final stages of Year 13 and the UCAS process.

Year 12 parents were called to embark on the beginning of the Post-18 process.

[Click here](#) for the **Year 12** Presentation or [Click here](#) for the **Year 13** Presentation.

The key message for Year 13 are the key deadlines:

May 15th Student Finance - both students and parents have to register and apply

June 1st UCAS students must make their final decisions on their offers. Remember, they should normally choose an "insurance" / second choice offer that has a lower grade offer than their first "firm" choice.

As usual, please do not wait till the last minute to make these decisions as the Student Finances form can take a little longer to fill in and you need to have the relevant ID and finance details at hand. The links to these websites and advice are on the 6th form google classroom, the **HC6F website** and below.

The key messages for Year 12 students and parents:

1. Use the Summer Term to start thinking about the next stage of your life (Post-18). University, Apprenticeships, Gap Years?

Explore the range of opportunities available and use the summer term and holidays to finalise your ideas. Your tutors are an excellent first stop for advice, alongside Mrs Jackson (Careers Advisor) on Mondays.

2. Post-18 options timeline

Make sure you keep up to date with all the issues and deadlines coming up in the next 16 months. Look ahead and plan!

3. Don't bury your head in the sand!

It may only feel like you have started Year 12 but as you will have seen things will come up quicker than expected and it's time to be proactive.

If you are thinking about apprenticeships, make sure you have an application letter ready to go that markets your best attributes.

If it's university in 2023, what course, which location, what type of university?

4. Personal Statements & Application Letters

In the second half of summer term, tutors will begin showing you how to write Personal Statements for UCAS university entry and Application letters for Apprenticeships and jobs.

All the key information, web links and timelines are available on the 6th form google classroom, the HC6F website.



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Spring Festival 2022

Yesterday, HCCS hosted their very own spring festival! The theme was Around The World, with each continent being represented with their own area, and the festival was open to all HCCS students and their families. These included Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe. Some stalls included face paint, games, food and drink, trinkets and (proven extremely popular), the karaoke stall! 'We Don't Talk About Bruno' and 'Let It Go' proved to be karaoke hits, with students and teachers alike getting involved. Several local food venues provided refreshments, including delicious oatcakes!

Tabitha Alcock-Bailey
Holmes chapel High Council



Mike Forsyth – Learning Manager

Hello, my name is Mike Forsyth. I am the Learning Manager for Year 9. I am looking forward to leading the students through this transitional stage of their HCCS experience. I have spoken to them in assembly this week about getting 'GCSE Ready' and I was really impressed with how they engaged with this message in a mature and respectful manner. These next 11 weeks will be crucial in making sure that year 9 students are taking every opportunity in their lessons to ensure they have the skills and knowledge they need for year 10. I am looking forward to getting to know them all better and to work together with teachers, tutors and families as we all support these impressive young people to achieve their full potential.



Brian Gallagher – Learning Manager



Hello, my name is Brian Gallagher and I am the Learning Manager for Year 11. I wish to take the opportunity to inform you that I will now be leading Year 10 through the final year of their GCSE courses as your child's Learning Manager. I have been closely working with Mrs Gosset to ensure the transition from Year 10 to Year 11 is as smooth as possible. At this stage of Year 10, we are preparing your children for the increased responsibility of the final stage of their GCSE courses and their upcoming assessments in June.



MFL Speaking Tests

Congratulations to year 11 students who completed their MFL speaking tests this week. We are all really proud of how well prepared you were and how you coped with the stress of the exam so well. I hope you are all proud of yourselves and use the success of this week as a springboard for working hard towards all the rest of your exams this summer. Well done everyone!

TEMPEST PHOTOGRAPHY

Year 9 Tempest Photographs



Year 9 will be having individual photographs taken on Thursday 12th May in the afternoon. Please could you make sure that your child comes in full school uniform and has their school jumper with them.



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Cheshire Hike: Amazing student achievements

In the Easter holidays, a plucky group of HCCS students took on the challenge of the Cheshire Hike through the scouts and guides with 500 other participants. Over 60km, some sore feet, an overnight camp and the odd blister and the teams crossed the finishing line at Winsford Academy. What an incredible achievement and a big congratulations to all those involved.



The boys team of Marcus, ..., Tom and Peter also won the District Prize for the Alderley Area.

The girls team consisted of Livvy, ..., Scarlett, Emily, Rosie.

Some of them were at it again the next weekend doing another 40km for the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Expedition! Amazing!

Singing Day and Concert

It was a joy to spend time with some of our singers and Choir on Thursday 24th March as we took part in the Love Music Trust's Singing Day and Celebration Concert at Congleton Town Hall.

The day was led by professional singers and musicians Impromptu Opera - we learnt about voice types and operatic styles, as well as devising our own scenes, and learning some operatic choruses. There was also a masterclass - a great opportunity for our students to receive some amazing feedback from the professionals.

In the evening, we performed in a concert alongside various other Cheshire secondary school choirs. As I said to the audience, our students were superb ambassadors for HCCS, and I was really proud of their commitment to perform - despite having the odds stacked against us with work experience and illness!

Miss Simpson

[Watch Video](#)



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EASTER FUN for Girls Active

Lots of Easter fun was had by the Girls Active Leaders and Y8 girls. They participated in an Easter egg hunt during a tutor session over the last 2 weeks of the term.

The leaders planned and delivered an Easter themed hunt around the school which encouraged more girls to be more active! It was fantastic to see the girls working together and enjoying time with their friends.

We look forward to continuing this initiative in the Summer term.



Chess Tournament

The Chess Club has recently concluded our Spring tournament. Twenty-five students competed in a double-elimination tournament. In the semi-final, Year 7 student Joe Hignett avenged a previous loss to Y9 Harriet Hall to reach the final. Standing in Joe's way was Y9 Oliver Furgala who has been undefeated in tournament and match play throughout the year.

In the final, Joe, playing white, used an Italian opening which was countered by Ollie's Sicilian defense. Ollie was able to continue to pressure Joe and ultimately won the match and finished the tournament undefeated. Congratulations to Harriet, Joe and our champion Ollie for your achievements in the Chess tournament.



Ollie Furgala, Joe Hignett, Harriet Hall



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A level PE Anatomy and Physiology dissections

To bring Anatomy and Physiology to life, A level PE students have been involved in dissecting a heart and lungs to gain further understanding of these organs for the Cardio-vascular Respiratory unit. The dissections enabled students to see the structures and functions up close, and gain a much more in depth understanding of how the heart and lungs work.

"It was a fantastic opportunity to cut open a heart and see how it works"
Billy Wilson (A level PE student).



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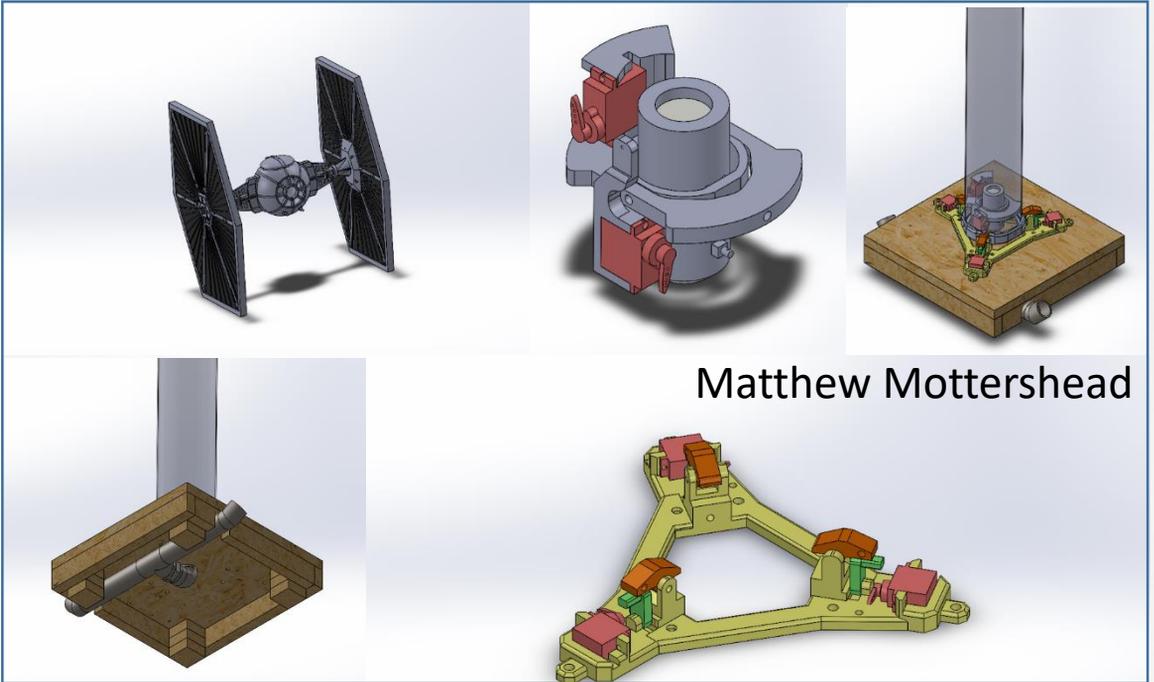
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Design & Technology – Solidworks



These images all drawn by Year 12 students in D&T using a software called Solidworks.



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PE NEWS

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Hockey

Matilda Harrison and Megan Croxton have just been crowned bronze medalists in the whole of England for under 14 girls hockey, beating Clifton Robinson 1-0 in the playoffs.

Both girls play for Bowdon Hockey club. Congratulations girls!



Year 11 Football Team

Huge Congratulations to the Year 11 football team. Not only the players who played in a tense final against Shavington High School last night but for other players who helped the team reach the final and were not available for the final. Some excellent play by Owen Oiler down the right wing to beat the full back and cross for Ethan Swain to open the scoring. HCCS then went 2:0 up when Ethan scored his second goal. Poor defending at a corner enabled Shavington to pull it back to 2:1 at half time. No more goals in the second half meant Holmes Chapel Year finished their year on a high winning the South Cheshire Cup.

CHAMPIONS



Congratulations Year 8 Football Team

We played a really tough match against Alsager school on Monday night in the South Cheshire Cup Semi-Final, winning 3.0. A new formation of 4-5-1 enabled Billy Naylor and Zlatan Etuhu the freedom to roam and both replied by getting on the score sheet. Alsager were tough opposition, and everyone worked incredibly hard out of possession to close down spaces and deny any goal scoring opportunities. This was a monumental effort to overcome a very strong side.

The following night we were in the Final at Sandbach Utd against a confident Shavington School. At HT the score was 1-0 to HCCS. The game was scrappy and no team really took control. In the second half we showed our dominance and took a 3-1 lead. Goals coming from Ford, Naylor and Etuhu once again. Unfortunately, our susceptibility at set pieces became our undoing. A free header, penalty and a free kick made the score 3-3 and penalties beckoned. The students were naturally nervous, but showed great character to step up and take one in front of a capacity crowd. A brilliant save by their keeper resulted in Shavington winning the cup, however, and more importantly, a brilliant moment of sportsmanship from Archie Jacobs congratulating the keeper, speaks volumes about the character of our players! It hurts now, but we know we will have the better of them next year. Well done Gents on a great Cup run.



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Context

According to the NHS Digital 'Mental Health of Children and Young People in England' research (September 2021) 1 in 6 young people were identified as having a probable mental health problem (a huge increase from 1 in 9 in the same survey in 2017). That is approximately 5 young people in every classroom. 83% of young people felt the Covid pandemic has had a detrimental impact on their mental health. Just over two thirds of young people surveyed said they would like to access support without visiting their GP but over half did not know how to access support themselves for their mental health.

How Visyon can help

At Visyon we have a range of different mental health and wellbeing services for young people and their families all of which are accessed via self referral from the young person or their parent/carer and are all free of charge. Some services are even accessible without going through a referral process at all.

We have produced a short 3 minute video explaining who Visyon are which you may like to use in assembly or PSHE time to help us spread the word that there is lots of support out there - (30) What exactly is Visyon? - YouTube

Here is an overview of what we offer which we would be really pleased for you to share with your staff and wider school community.

Practical Strategies Webinars - We run webinars for young people aged 11+ on Zoom. These are designed to offer sound information to help young people understand and navigate their emotions and lots of practical tools to help them cope. The webinars are run as live sessions on Zoom weekly on Thursdays at 7pm – sign up via the website www.visyon.org.uk Some of the topics are also available as recorded sessions which young people can register to view from the website. Current topics include: Understanding and Managing Anxiety, Why do I get so Angry? How can I cope with Angry Feelings?, School Stress, Understanding the Teenage Brain, Improving Sleep, Self Esteem and Introduction to Mental Health First Aid.

Wellbeing Groups – We run small group sessions for young people aged 11+. These are small and supportive groups often on a creative theme where young people get to meet others who might be experiencing similar feelings whilst doing something fun and which is good for wellbeing. Please find attached the latest timetable of groups for this term. Some groups are online and others take place in our Crewe or Congleton bases.

Open Access Sessions – We can offer a one off Open Access session for young people or their parent/carer. These are designed as a place for them to be heard and to decide together whether referral into Visyon's therapeutic support would be beneficial. They are often useful to offer early support and signposting and, where needed, advice to keep young people safe. Our aim is to offer an appointment within 2 weeks of first phonecall.

1:1 Therapeutic Support – We can also offer 1:1 counselling or mentoring to young people aged 11+. This is short term intervention and is only possible when other therapeutic support is not already being accessed. Referrals have now re-opened for therapeutic support after a period of very high demand and long waiting lists meant a temporary pause on new referrals being taken.



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Parent / Family Support – We have a range of services for parent/carers to access including Parent Webinars on a range of common topics. Parents can access a library of webinar recordings on our website www.vision.org.uk and there is also information there on the latest live webinars. We also run regular parent small group workshops on anxiety and sleep as well as one off workshops on other topics such as self harm and transitions.



Please also find attached a flyer on the 'Managing Exam Stress' Workshops that we are running for students in years 10-13 starting next week – places still available.

If you wish to discuss any of these services, if you have ideas of other things we could be offering or if I can be of any help please do not hesitate to get in touch,

Sonic 2 – Youth Theatre

The Youth Council have arranged to show Sonic 2 at the Community Centre – May 14th at 2pm.

Link to our website news article: [Sonic 2 Comes to Holmes Chapel! \(holmeschapelparishcouncil.gov.uk\)](http://holmeschapelparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Link to buy tickets: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/Holmes-Chapel-Parish-Council/t-Inkeejj>



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HOLMES CHAPEL YOUTH CINEMA

SONIC 2 THE HEDGEHOG

Coming to Holmes Chapel

May 14th at 2pm

Holmes Chapel Community Centre
 Tickets - £5 each
 Buy online at
www.holmeschapelparishcouncil.gov.uk

Thank you, from all of us at HCCS & HC6F