



*Dear all,*

The introduction to today's newsletter has been very difficult to write given the very sad days since we lost Imogen Tothill, one of our year 12 students who was a well loved member of the school and college community. I have vivid, very happy recollections of teaching Imogen geography when she was in the lower school and remember her beautiful smile as well as her naturally kind and caring nature. Over the last six years I have had the privilege of seeing her grow into what I can only describe as a lovely, caring and thoughtful young adult. Imogen made the world a better place simply by being in it. We are united in grief and miss her deeply.



Imogen's loss has been felt by all of us and our most heartfelt thoughts and prayers are with her family at this time. We are in regular contact with Imogen's parents and young brother and we will continue to offer whatever help and support they ask of us. There have been many floral tributes left at the front of school with some deeply moving and loving comments. I know that Imogen's mum and dad have visited the flowers on a number of occasions and were touched at the way Imogen is described by those who knew and loved her. Over the next couple of days, Imogen's friends here at college are creating wooden memory tiles which capture their thoughts and feelings through words or a piece of art. The memory tiles will be displayed in due course next to the flowers at the front of school for all to see. As the flowers people have laid become past their best, we will sensitively recycle them and keep all of the cards and messages safe. Please feel welcome to come along and contribute a message or card of your own to the memory wall if you wish or alternatively you might like to just come down to school to read the messages and reflect.



As we each try to work through our feelings about what has happened, we are very mindful of the need to take great care of our students and staff. We have put in place a network of support to offer help to anyone within our school community who feels they are struggling to come to terms with the news or need a safe place to grieve. I would like to encourage anyone who is concerned about a fellow student, a member of staff or a parent concerned about their child to step forward and let us know. It's very important that we talk and that we recognise when someone might be struggling. As well as having people in school, there is a section on our

website signposting a number of organisations that offer help and support in these situations. This can be accessed by following this link <https://www.hccs1978.co.uk/support-services>

As we move into the half term break, I know that we will all take some time to look back on the past week or so and also the last half term. Our school is a remarkable place within a community with our children at the heart of it. Our community is a very precious one which we all want to protect so that it is a place that is safe, inclusive and welcoming and where children and young people thrive and are happy.

Over the last half term at school we have focused our personal development programme for all years around issues such as peer on peer abuse, sexism, safe relationships and staying safe online. These are society wide problems that are seen in all schools including our own and which involve our children. We have learned that openly recognising these issues, acknowledging them, calling them out and talking about them is a vital step in building the culture we want to see. Please join me by engaging in a community wide, family led conversation with all of our children, no matter what their age, about these issues. Together we are stronger and only together we can make a difference.



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# NEWSLETTER

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive  
School & 6<sup>th</sup> Form College

## Preparing Learners for a Changing World



It feels strange to me to talk of even the near future when we are rightfully focused on the tragic events of the here and now but I would like to respectfully share just a few brief points about what is happening after half term.

Firstly, can I thank you for your patience, compliance and support across the last two years during the pandemic, especially the ongoing support for our protocols. You will have read in the latest covid update sent out earlier this week that our protocols will be different when we come back after the break. Please check your inbox so you can read the information in full. Our school has maintained a consistently lower number of infections compared to many local statistics and I believe that in sticking with our protocols right up to this point, we have kept the community safe and have kept the vast majority of our children in school and learning.

Secondly, with the relaxation of covid rules nationally and assuming we are not hit with a major wave of infections, we are pleased to announce that year 11 and 13 proms will go ahead this summer. These celebrations are very much a rite of passage that are important transition points for our students and part of our culture. It will be great to see the razzle-dazzle that marks the end of an important stage in our children's growth and the start of another. We are also planning a year 7 residential to Menai in the summer which will be a chance for the children to learn some valuable skills such as teamwork and supporting each other as well as the opportunity to have some fun outside in the fresh air. On the subject of events, please don't forget to put the 30th March in your diary. This is the date of our Spring Festival and will be an opportunity to come together and be part of a celebration. A number of local businesses are contributing and as we refine these events, I am looking forward to talking to groups in our community so that we can be even more involved with each other in future festivals



**Wearing a face  
covering will now be  
a personal choice.**



Thirdly, thank you to any parents who contributed to our parent forum group this half term. These forums are really powerful ways of keeping in touch so please look out for them in the future and come along. Having meaningful, constructive conversations is really valuable and helps us have a better understanding of each other. This week, you will have received links to some family surveys which we are sending out to capture your views. The more families who take part in this the better so please take a few minutes to have a look and contribute. Thanks in advance.

Finally, I'm pleased to let you all know that our resource provision is now built, decorated and ready for us to move in. I have talked to you about this before but as a reminder, this new faculty in our school has been built in collaboration with the local authority to support children from across Cheshire East with social, emotional and mental health challenges. We will provide a high quality, inclusive education for up to fourteen additional children. These children will be part of our school in every sense and we are excited to welcome them into our school. Today, I met one of our new students and her Mum who were on their first transition visit. The new student said that the thing she was looking forward to the most was finally having a place where she felt she belonged. The last week or so has touched many of us and a sense of belonging is something that all of us value and something that we would want for all of our children.

Thank you for supporting me and all of our staff here at school over this half term.

Warm regards

**Nigel Bielby**  
Executive Headteacher



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## Mobile Phones in School

In my January 14th newsletter, I talked about the intention to review our mobile phone policy. During the last few weeks, teaching staff have been told that mobile phones should no longer be used in any lesson or tutor time session in order to access learning. There are, of course, many benefits to mobile phones and as adults, we live in a society where almost unrestricted access to a mobile phone is normal.

A number of parents have emailed in to support the review of mobile phones in school with a few emails commenting that we needed to do more and move faster on this. In school, we share the concerns you have expressed about our children's over-reliance on phones and the impact of peer on peer abuse via social media. Another shared concern is the number of hours that children spend each day on a mobile and the potential impact on socialisation, child mental health and wellbeing. These issues are high on the national agenda and placing appropriate limits on the use of mobile phones and social media are thought to be significant in trying to manage these issues.

We are keenly aware that enforced time spent at home during the last two years has increased the use of mobile technology in order to access learning and has also allowed children to stay in touch with each other during lockdown. Now that we are moving out of the restrictions imposed on us during the pandemic we are encountering inevitable conflicts in trying to re-establish a 'no phones' policy and there is a significant increase in defiance regarding this. In short, children are finding it hard to re-adjust to not having free access to their phone.

Our view is that establishing a culture where children do not use their phones at all during the school day will lead to significant benefits in their social development, mental health and wellbeing as well as contribute to a happy and safe school environment at HCCS. Over the next few weeks, we will be working on a strategy to ensure that a comprehensive 'no phones' policy can work effectively and be successfully enforced at HCCS. This will take a little time to think through and to communicate clearly to families, the children and staff so I would like to ask for your patience and support as we do this work. In the meantime, I would be grateful if you could remind your child that their phone should not be used or visible at any time during the school day. I know that some of you are keen for a rapid change in regard to mobile phones but I would rather do this well and do it once rather than do this quickly and risk failing to bring everyone along. **Mr Bielby (Headteacher)**



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## Bronze DofE Launch 2<sup>nd</sup> March

Are you in year 10, and potentially interested in starting on the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme?

We have an introductory meeting arranged for you to find out more, on Wednesday 2nd March, starting at 5pm in our Theatre. The meeting is aimed at parents as well as students, and will be led by Steve Wilson from the Cheshire East D of E team. It will be a chance to hear what is involved, what the commitment is, as well as ask questions.

We want to enrol as many students as possible in March, starting the Volunteering, Skills, and Physical Challenge sections of the award, with a view to completing the expeditions in the summer term. We are offering the Bronze Award initially to year 10, and the Silver award within our enrichment programme in year 12.

We look forward to seeing you on the 2nd March, getting you enrolled and starting you on this fantastic scheme.







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## Feedback from our Year 7 Parent Forum

Thank you to those parents and families who attended our Year 7 Parent Forum last month. We were pleased to be able to showcase our new Learning Resource Centre at this event. Staff who led the event - Deputy Headteacher, Matt Lowe; Lower School Learning Manager, Heather Hughes and Lower School Welfare Manager, Caroline Morgan - enjoyed the chance to talk face to face with parents and to facilitate meaningful discussions around our provision to date for our Year 7 students. Thank you, also, to those parents who were unable to attend the event but who provided feedback to us via email. The feedback we received from the evening and via email is summarised below.



### What went well:

- ☐ Transition days
- ☐ Achievement points including my child at school to monitor daily report
- ☐ Praise postcards
- ☐ Google classroom
- ☐ Curriculum information on the website
- ☐ Lower School hub support and communication
- ☐ Newsletters and emails

### Even better if:

- ☐ More opportunities for face to face meetings between parents and staff
- ☐ More information about Google classroom prior to arrival and more IT support for students
- ☐ Better/ more clear information about extra curricular activities
- ☐ More detail about progress and individual subject comments on reports
- ☐ Toilets weren't locked and no graffiti in toilets
- ☐ More vegetarian options at lunch time
- ☐ A more consistent approach was followed for no tolerance of mobile phones in school and low level disruption in lessons

### Some of the actions we are taking in response include:

- ☐ Create more opportunity for parent parent movement around school during the Spring Festival
- ☐ More specific guidance and information in the summer term prior to starting at HCCS
- ☐ Explore the use of homework diaries from September 2022
- ☐ Interim report 2 will include subject progress comments
- ☐ All toilets are fully open and a system of monitoring students using toilets in lessons is in place.
- ☐ Ongoing work with catering team to increase range of vegetarian options in the restaurant at lunchtime
- ☐ Greater clarity on mobile phone use

For any further feedback and/ or to provide feedback if you were unable to attend this event, please use the links to the year group surveys on **page 8**



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## School Uniform Consultation Survey

Earlier this year, we wrote to you to inform you that we would be conducting a review of our school uniform. As part of this review we have consulted with our school's student representative body, the High Council, on what they believe the strengths and weaknesses of our school uniform are.

Following from this, as a valued member of our school community, we would like to ask you for your views via the survey attached to this letter. This survey is very simple, focusing on some images of our current uniform, including PE uniform, and also some possible changes and additions to the current uniform.

Earlier this academic year, the government published some guidance for schools on all aspects of school uniform supply and provision. One of the key recommendations was a cost effective uniform and the engagement with parents over changes to it. As a school, we are committed to trying to ensure that our uniform is smart, appropriate, comfortable and affordable, whilst also positively contributing to a strong sense of culture and uniform. By completing this short survey, you will be giving us valuable feedback on the kind of things that parents and students like and don't like, as we consider the possibilities moving forward.

### Completing the survey.

The survey is completely image based. All you have to do to complete it is to record your feelings towards each image / item of uniform with options ranging from 'really like' to 'really dislike'.

Following this survey and further consultation in school, we intend to publish any planned changes to the HCCS school uniform well in advance of the summer, so that families have enough time to plan for the new school year. Thank you in advance for your views and for contributing to this consultation.

[Click here to complete the survey](#)



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## Upper School

The Cheshire Youth Commission on Police and Crime are currently recruiting for young people to join the Youth Commission.

The Youth Commission enables young people to support, challenge and influence decisions about policing and crime in Cheshire. It allows young people to get involved and have their say about policing and crime where they live. The Youth Commission will explore urgent issues affecting young people in Cheshire, such as reducing offending and re-offending, improving the relationship with the police, and anti-social behaviour.

Aimed at young people aged 14-25 years who want to make a difference to their community.

This is a brilliant opportunity to gain new knowledge, skills and experiences. Members of the Youth Commission will play an important role in helping to run consultation events and gather the opinions of other young people about policing, crime and reducing offending and re-offending.

The application form can also be accessed via [this link](#)

**Application deadline is: Monday 21st February 2022.**







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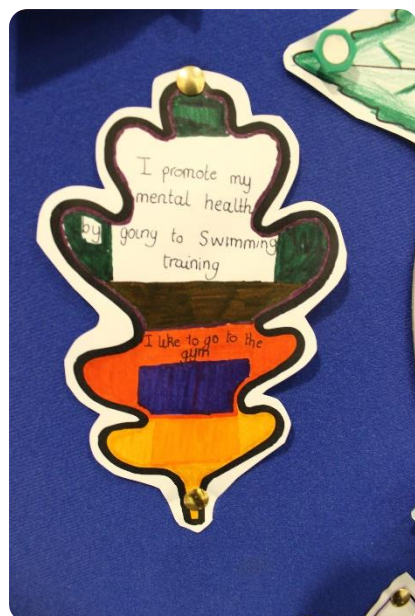


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## Mental Health Week

To support Children's Mental Health Week (7th - 13th February), we invited students to think about what they do to boost their mood and maintain good mental health, including strategies they may have used during the recent periods of lockdown.

Students then wrote down their ideas on leaves, and decorated them. The result is this wonderfully colourful display, which has pride of place in the new LRC.







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## Apprenticeships

National Apprenticeship Week 2022

To coincide with National Apprenticeships Week 2022, Alex Burghart, Minister for Skills, is writing to students and parents about the opportunities and benefits apprenticeships can bring to young people.

Please read the letters below which are aimed to encourage students and parents to consider apprenticeships when they are thinking about career choices.

Open letter to students – [Click here](#)

Open letter to parents, carers, and guardians – [Click here](#)

### INTERESTED IN BECOMING A PARENT GOVERNOR?



We are looking for anyone with parental responsibility for a child at this school to join our governing body.

Your input on areas such as finance, behaviour & wellbeing, teaching & learning and site development will help to influence and improve school performance.

No previous experience is needed as free training is available to develop skills and provide support.

**Interested?** Please [click here](#) or check out the Governor pages on our website.

Please contact **Pauline Challinor**, Clerk to the Board of Governors on **01477 410500** for further information.

**Deadline for nominations is Friday 4th March 2022 at 12 noon.**



We currently have various vacancies at HCCS.

These are:-

Teacher of Religious Studies

Head of Mathematics

Teacher of English

Deputy Estates & Facilities  
Manager

Estates & Facilities Officer

Middy Supervisors

Learning Resource Co-Ordinator

General Teaching Assistants

To learn more about these vacancies and details on how to apply [click here](#)



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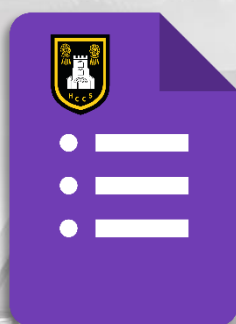
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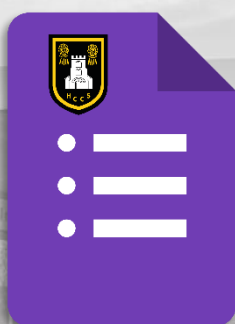
## Family Surveys

We are always grateful for feedback from families and thank those families who have already been in touch through either telephone, email, or face to face this year. We look forward to future feedback events and forums like our year 7 one in January that enable us to work together to move forwards. To allow as many families as possible to contribute to our programme of evaluation and review in moving forwards in the right direction, we would appreciate you taking the time to complete one of the surveys below. If you do have feedback for us (positive or negative) that this survey does not allow you to express or if you require a more personalised response, please email your appropriate hub - email addresses listed at the bottom of this article.

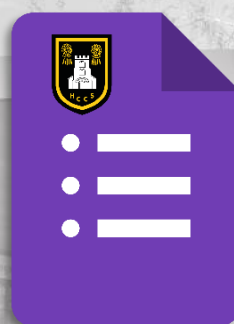
## Survey Links



Year 7



Year 8



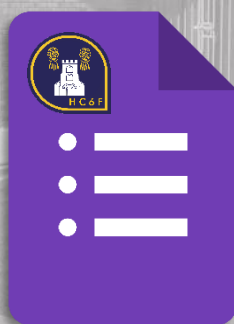
Year 9



Year 10



Year 11



Year 12



Year 13

Following the completion and collation of these surveys, we look forward to inviting parents from our other year groups to join in parent forum events.

Please complete the survey by **Monday 28th February** to enable us to collate and respond quickly. Thank you in advance.

[lowerschool@hccs.info](mailto:lowerschool@hccs.info)  
[upperschool@hccs.info](mailto:upperschool@hccs.info)  
[sixthform@hccs.info](mailto:sixthform@hccs.info)



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## An Afternoon With

# Tommy Fleetwood



On Wednesday 9th February we had the pleasure and excitement to be involved in a fantastic opportunity to be part of a seminar led by the professional golfer Tommy Fleetwood. Tommy turned professional in 2010 and since then has gone on to win 9 tour titles and also represent Europe in the Ryder Cup.

We were very excited to have this opportunity to listen to Tommy talk about his career and the chance to ask him questions.

It was an inspirational talk involving our school sports leaders and budding elite pathway athletes in our school. They got to ask him many questions ranging from his commitments to golf, his idols, his passion and love for sport, to how he copes with the pressure and fame that comes with being a professional sportsman. The students were in awe of Tommy, taking all of his advice onboard. The students were a credit to our school and Tommy commented on how fantastic their questions were and a pleasure to meet.

It was an aspirational afternoon and we cannot thank Tommy enough for giving up his time to come and talk to our students.

Mrs Mee and Mr Capewell



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## PE News

Congratulations to Max Harrison who represented Cheshire U16 Rugby Team v Lancashire recently beating them by a narrow 2 point margin.



Please click on the various links below for webinars and other information from Visyon

- [Parent Webinar Recordings](#)
- [Practical Strategies Webinars](#)
- [Parent/Carer Webinar timetables](#)
- [Wellbeing Groups](#)



## Community Tree Planting Day



**10:00 - 16:00 Sunday 13 March 2022 at Hollins Farm, Twemlow Lane.**  
All welcome to come and help improve our local wildlife sites and join in with the Queens Green Canopy project.  
Search Holmes Chapel at [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk) for further details and to register to let us know that you can come.



# PLANT A TREE FOR THE JUBILEE



<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-queens-green-canopy-event-at-hermitage-thornes-tickets-244332865177>



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Thank you, from all of us at HCCS & HC6F