



Dear all,

I hope you are all well and are looking forward to some time together with families and friends over the festive season. It seems incredible that Christmas eve is only five Friday's away and I'm sure that just like me, you are all hoping for some time to celebrate without the restrictions we were under not so long ago.

Before I get onto the meat of this week's newsletter, it's worth mentioning that covid rates have dropped over the last few weeks in Cheshire East including in the age group for secondary school students. Here at HCCS, rates have remained very very low since the start of the school year and we have had minimal numbers of children spending time at home. I believe that our community wide engagement with safe behaviours in school, (hands, face and space) as well as regular testing and vaccinations have all helped keep our community safe and our children in school and learning. After all that they and we have been through I think we should openly celebrate this as a community.

I'm also pleased to say that the vandalism in toilets that I reported a few weeks ago has greatly reduced and we have been able to identify and sanction the very small numbers of children who were involved. We have invested in extra security around the toilets as well as establishing a system of regular checks throughout the day so that we can identify the specific time period and location of any damage. Staff are also continuing to record any child who is late or not in a lesson so that we can establish the identity of anyone out of lessons and the timeframe that they were not there. Parent social media can really help our community to engage our children in demonstrating positive behaviours and encouraging families to talk to their children about what's going on. Social media is such a powerful tool when used objectively and in a way that opens up positive and constructive conversations. Thanks to all of you who use it as a vehicle for helping our community grow and to build trust.



The Winter Festival

I'm very excited about our upcoming Winter Festival. This will be a first for our school and a format that I can't wait to see unfold. More details will be published to you soon but in brief, this will be on the 8th December starting at 4:30 and ending at 6:30. This informal, celebration event will be held in the outside spaces under our newly built canopies and I'd like the feel of it to be community spirited and one where we can enjoy being involved in something which is bigger than the sum of its parts. Our children will be running stalls, a number of groups will be treating us to some informal performances, singing and playing and having some fun and there will be some food and drinks available for you to enjoy.

I am intending the festival to be a time when families can mingle with each other and with staff from the school, catch up with friends and enjoy being part of the occasion.

Our covered areas provide good cover from all but the worst weather but with the festival being outside, keep an eye on the weather and wrap up warm.



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The Children's stalls and anyone performing are all raising money for charity. We are staying local with regard to our chosen charities and will be donating 50:50 to two great causes that support people in need in our own community. The charities are Cheshire Without Abuse (<https://www.mycwa.org.uk/>) and Middlewich Food Bank (<https://middlewichdistrict.foodbank.org.uk/>). Please bring plenty of change with you as the stalls won't have a large float for notes.

There will be two entrances to the festival and by ticket only. Tickets will be free and available online soon. We will let you know when you can book them. In considering the space we have available and the health and wellbeing of everyone there, I hope you will all appreciate why there needs to be a limit on how many people will be able to attend and why it needs to be a ticketed event. Can I thank you in advance for your understanding in this. If you are coming to the Festival, can I respectfully encourage anyone who can to walk to the festival rather than drive. This helps keep our roads less busy especially for our neighbouring residents and helps with limiting parking on site. If you do drive, please park sensitively.

For the future, I also intend to host a Spring 2022 as well as a Summer 2022 Festival which will follow a similar format and create a sequence of great traditions for our school but also to tie in to the rich traditions our community already enjoys. As we grow these traditions, how great would it be to be able to invite more and more of the local community, businesses and groups to be part of the events we hold at our school.

Someone famous once said 'we do better when we're together'. Wise words. Thanks to all of you in the community and to all of our families who are making this an even greater reality so that our children are best served.

Warm regards

Nigel Bielby
Executive Headteacher



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The joy of giving!

294 packed, wrapped and labelled boxes are on their way to some of the world's poorest children this Christmas - thanks to **YOU!**

Our student house teams have shown incredible commitment to our shoebox appeal, demonstrating outstanding teamwork as they navigated the sorting, labelling and elastic-banding of hundreds of shoeboxes. Our Upper School Captains were exceptional in their coordination of this effort, with particular thanks to Gareth Jones who led operations

With an impressive **£636.66** raised in donations, the boxes have now begun their journey to the T4U sorting warehouse in Wrexham, North Wales. They will then fly to countries such as Belarus and Romania where they will be distributed to some of the poorest communities, helping to spread love and joy this Christmas time.

Thank you to all who have contributed to the success of this first charity drive, and especially to the team of wonderful staff and student volunteers who helped with the storing and removal of packed and wrapped boxes. We could not have done it without you!

The House Leaders - (Miss Royle, Miss Kelman, Mr Mitchell and Mr Sneddon)





Remembrance 2021

On 14th Nov 2021 Holmes Chapel took part in the HC remembrance day parade. We engaged in a parade, a service and the laying of wreaths.

Theodore castle:

The parade itself is a very thought-provoking one. As you walk along the winding path inexorably towards the church, you find yourself thinking about all of those who fought and died during the war. I, personally, found myself thinking about my great grandfathers, Norman, who was an American bomber pilot, flying missions over Europe for most of the war, dropping untold payloads of bombs across Germany, and Sam, who was a reconnaissance pilot for the entire war, flying Spitfires and Hurricanes, completely unarmed, across France, Africa and Italy, taking pictures for the other pilots to attack.

The service starts with the flag bearers walking up the aisle, whilst the new organ plays mournful music, striking the attendants into silence immediately. We sang hymns, spoke prayers, and listened to the vicar and speakers, with wreaths of poppies propped against our chairs. Then it came time to leave the church and go to the war memorial. As the vicar read the list of the fallen, what felt like the entire village fell into absolute silence, not a single noise for miles. In previous years attending, there is often some underlying hubbub of noise somewhere, often the low rumble of cars on the M6, yet this year, there was but one noise in the air; birdsong. The simple sound of birdsong is often mentioned in war, such as before the Somme offensive, yet this time, instead of being a harbinger of doom, it gave me a sense of hope, hope that one day, we may finally find the peace that all of those people died trying to gain for us.

Molly Freer:

I felt incredibly reflective taking part in the remembrance day parade, it allowed me time to be thankful for the sacrifices those before me made and to remember the thousands of young men lost to the war. The march of so many villagers and the overcrowded church showed a community that was grateful of sacrifice and a community that was mourning young men who did not get the chance to live and see the world as it changed from the war, men my age who hadn't been able to experience life to itself fullest.

In addition to this, the school raised £146 for the royal British legion by way of poppy sales in the run up to remembrance Sunday.

A poignant service, and something the school was honoured to be a part of.

Mr Roberts



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Media expert visit!

We were lucky enough this week to have one of our very own ex-students, Hollie Igoe, come in to speak to our media students about her own career in the media. A variety of students from years 10, 11, 12 and 13, came along to the LRC to hear Hollie speak about her journey from HCCS to Assistant TV producer. They were also able to ask lots of questions about the mysterious machinations of the television industry. There were lots of questions and lots of smiles all round!



Year 8 Parents' Online Consultation Evening Thursday 9th December 2021

You and your child/children are invited to take part in the Parents' Online Consultation Evening on Thursday 9th December to discuss your son/daughter's progress with his/her teachers. Appointments can be made between 4 p.m. and 6.30 p.m.

[Click here for more information](#)

STEM CLUB - RAF Glider Challenge

In October, Mr Pirie entered three teams into a competition run by RAF Museum in Cosford to design and build a glider.

Over the course of 6 weeks, students learnt about the theory of flight and used this information to design, test and build a glider to fly.

Keaton Ho, Ben Couch, Oliver Beharrell, Cally Wheable, Bran Davison and Chris Houghton worked in pairs to see who could build the best glider and fly the furthest.



Lots of prototypes were made and test flights performed, before the final flight on Monday 22nd November.

The winners of the school challenge were Cally Wheable and Oliver Beharrell of Anonymous Airways with a flight of 9.95 metres!

School Winter Fair 2021!!!

If you have any items suitable for the School Winter Fair they would be very gratefully received. Please leave any donations with the Main reception.

Thank you for your support



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Mathematical Olympiad for Girls



On the 7th October five students from Year 12 sat the Mathematical Olympiad for Girls which is a UKMT challenge aimed at girls and young women across the UK and consists of five challenging problems. Congratulations to Amy Smith, Isobel Green, Jenny Bennet, Claire Reel and Daisy Preece on receiving their certificates.

See how you get on with one of the problems

MATHEMATICAL OLYMPIAD FOR GIRLS Thursday 7 October 2021

1. (a) Find all whole numbers x such that

$$(x^2 - 7x + 11)^{(x^2 - 4x + 4)} = 1.$$

(7 marks)

(b) Find all whole numbers x such that

$$(x^2 - 7x + 11)^{(x^2 - 4x + 4)} = -1.$$

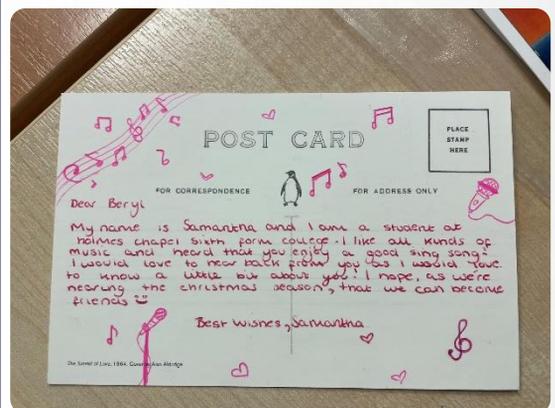
(3 marks)



BTEC Level 3 HEALTH and SOCIAL CARE NEWS

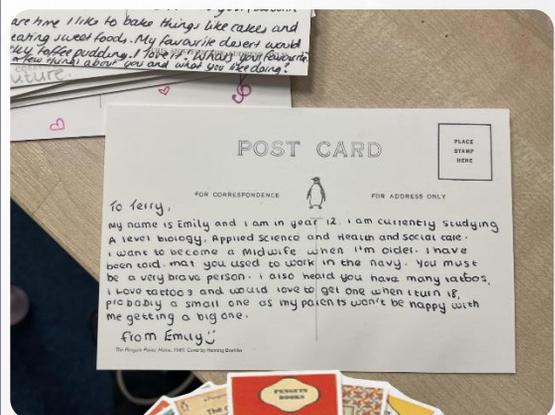


Here at Holmes Chapel we have the opportunity to study Health and Social Care (BTEC L2 and BTEC L3). This course allows our students to explore all elements of health and social care in an open and honest way; facilitating conversations about life events that affect us all. We cover topics such as human growth and development to working in a health and social care profession.



Last week our Year 12 & Year 13 students wrote postcards to one of the local care homes. Below are examples from some of our students. We are really hopeful that we might receive some replies next week!. In the future we plan to visit the home with Christmas cards for the residents.

It is lovely for our students to feel that they can reach out to the older generation and offer some friendship to members of our extended community.



Stick Man Theatre Trip



Learning Support staff took a trip to Crewe Lyceum theatre along with three of our lovely students to see Stick Man. The play was an adaptation from Julia Donaldson's book and a favourite with our three students. We are now busy writing reviews, analysing production techniques, staging and use of dance and music to enhance the performance. Our students and staff all have given the performance 5 stars.



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MFL News

As we approach the season of Advent, some of our European neighbours have their own celebrations to look forward to in the next couple of weeks.

In German-speaking countries, children will be celebrating Nikolaustag on 6th December. They will leave shoes by the door or window on the evening of 5th December and 'der Heilige Nikolaus' (Saint Nicholas) will bring sweets and small gifts for the children. Watch out, though! Saint Nicholas is accompanied by Krampus (who has different names in different regions) who is there to remind children to be good if they want to get treats!



Saint Nicholas will also be celebrated in Alsace and Lorraine (the Eastern areas of France) in the same way, causing much excitement for the children.



Saint Nicholas isn't celebrated in Spain, but 6th December just happens to be Día de la Constitución! This is celebrating the day in 1978 when Spanish people voted in a referendum to agree to their new constitution. This was seen as an important step to Spain becoming a constitutional monarchy and democracy. This historical event is celebrated every year with a Bank Holiday.



This monument in Madrid celebrates the Spanish Constitution of 1978.

Maybe you might like to carry out your own research. Many countries in Eastern Europe celebrate St Nicholas Day. Can you find out how they celebrate?

You might even like to have your own celebrations!

Alles Gute zum Nikolaustag!



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Cheshire Cup Result

HCCS v Fallibroome 1st round of the Cheshire Cup

HCCS started the match with Grace Butler in net, Ciara Breen, Amelie Jones and Lucie Butler in defence, Kizzy Swain and Layla Ravenscroft in centre midfield, Macey Brookes and Macie P-S on the wings, Holly Thompson up front and Lilly Wood on the bench. Within the first five minutes both the teams were putting the opposition under pressure and were all very well matched. After 10 minutes Kizzy took the ball past the halfway line, crossing the ball to Macie who scored. It almost broke the net!! By half time we were 2-0 up.

We switched Grace and Lilly in net and began the second half. Fallibroome began pressuring and pushing harder and managed to get a number of shots on target, fortunately for us, they were all saved by Lilly. We also managed to get a few shots at goal, one of which went in, thanks to a good run from Holly.

The game finished incredibly close but we ran out 4-3 victors.

Report written By Macie P-S



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PE Life Skills

All students in year 9 have been invited to complete the Life Skills Award created by the Youth Sports. This award encourages students to discuss essential values in life and recognise their importance. This award will take a year to complete. It builds on the work we started in lockdown on character education and is a brilliant way to recognize the skills and values that many of our students possess. Can I ask parents to encourage their child to complete the evidence required to pass the award by supporting them in their responses. Thanks **Mr Thomas**

Laura Wilson's School of Dance - Upper School Show - Reflections:

Congratulations to all of the dancers who took part in the 'Laura Wilson's School of Dance Upper School Show - Reflections' on Saturday 20th November. It was wonderful to see you showcasing your talents on stage and fantastic to see the smiles on your faces. Well done to everyone involved, we are very proud of you all!





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Primary Dance Event

Well done to our wonderful dance leaders who assisted with the primary dance event on Monday evening. The evening was based on the stimulus 'New Beginnings' and the dance pieces created were linked to ideas leading from discussions surrounding the transition from primary to secondary school. We used the poem 'New Beginnings' by Tony Walsh as our inspiration:

Well done to Holmes Chapel and Brereton primary schools for taking part. We look forward to our next event on Monday 29th November.



The Nutcracker Trip:



We look forward to seeing you on Thursday 2nd December - departing school at 4.45pm and returning at approximately 10.30pm.

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School Netball Match Report

On **Saturday 20th November** HCCS Year 9 netball team played in the National Netball Cheshire Tournament against some strong opposition. The girls had been very nervous leading up to the games but they had nothing to be worried about.

The day started with tough opposition in Kings Chester who went onto getting through to the next stage. The game was tough but the girls showed their resilience fighting back and the score did not reflect the game. The day was very tough but the girls never gave up. We had close games against Christleton and Upton but it was not to be our day.

All of the year 9's did themselves proud, such a fantastic group of friends with an array of talent. Our Girls played with commitment and dedication to win and challenge in every game. It was a great day of netball, the girls were outstanding ambassadors for Holmes Chapel. A special thank you to all of our parents who came along to support the girls.

Well done everyone, one very proud teacher.
Mrs Mee



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Kids travelling to school daily?



Northern Trains operates an 11-16 Educational Season ticket which gives up to 50% discount on a child season ticket.

[Click here to read more.](#)



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FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY TEAM

PARENT WORKSHOPS

Suicide and Self Harm Awareness (90 minutes)

Visyon's Family and Community Wellbeing Team are pleased to offer a 90 minute Parent Workshop, which will provide information, advice and strategies to empower parents to effectively support their children with their wellbeing. The Programme is available for Families in Cheshire East and will be held at Visyon in Congleton. If you would like to book a place on the Parent Workshop, please contact lyne.fitton@visyon.org.uk, who will contact you with further details. Places will be allocated on a first come basis.

**Parent Workshops – Suicide and self harm awareness
Wednesday 8th December 2021 at 1 pm until 2.30 pm.**



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Online safety tips for parents of teenagers 14+ Year Olds

internet matters.org

As they get older 8 out of 10 teens spend most of their time online chatting to friends on social media or in games*

*Source: <https://www.internetmatters.org/parents-keeping-children-safe-online-2020/>



Checklist:

Keep talking

Stay interested in what they do online and discuss what they might have seen or done. Don't be afraid to tackle difficult subjects like cyberbullying, and sexting and pornography. Help them to understand things they see online and protect equality and stability of their lives. Ask for advice and support if you don't consider you have enough skills to help them. Look for support over the next year so you can talk together about how to manage some of these challenges and why it's important.

Manage their online reputation

Just when you think they are safe, they are not. Remind them that they should only post things online that they wouldn't mind you, their teacher or future employer seeing. It's important to discuss the importance of online reputation and how to manage it. Remind them that what they post online can be seen by anyone and can be used against them in the future. See our [parental controls](https://www.internetmatters.org/parents-keeping-children-safe-online-2020/) page for more tips on supporting young people online.

Adjust controls

Adjust the parental controls on your broadband and internet-enabled devices. Consider if you need to set up age restrictions on your devices. Find out how to set up safe search on Google by going to the [Google Safety Centre](https://www.google.com/safesearch/). Remember that as they get older, it's important to have a conversation about parental controls and how to use them. Find out more about [parental controls](https://www.internetmatters.org/parents-keeping-children-safe-online-2020/) on our website.



[Click here to download this document](#)

Balancing screen time

internet matters.org

Top tips to support children 14+ (Key stage 4)

Smartphones are central to teens' daily routine, if not integral to it. Whether it's sending something on Snapchat to keep a streak going as soon as they wake up, getting up to speed on news on Twitter or live streaming thoughts about their day on social media, it can be hard to keep teens away from screens.

To support teens, it's more about equipping them with the tools to self-regulate their own screen time and be critical about how it is impacting their well-being. Find tips and advice to help them do just that.



How are children using screens?

93%

have a social media profile

99%

spend time on screens 20.5 hours a week

81%

use a smartphone to go online by the age of 15

79%

watch on-demand or streamed content

Source: <https://www.internetmatters.org/parents-keeping-children-safe-online-2020/>

What do parents say about screen time?

Less screen time limits

27% of parents of almost 9 in 10 parents take measures to limit their child's use of devices. Parents of teens are most likely to restrict screen time. As they get older, the proportion of parents who have more freedom and less restrictions on their child's device use, the skill to manage it and their own.

Increased use of social media

Half of parents of 14-16s are concerned that their child's use of social media will be intrusive on their overall mental wellbeing.

Source: <https://www.internetmatters.org/parents-keeping-children-safe-online-2020/>

[Click here to download this document](#)