



NEWSLETTER

Holmes Chapel Comprehensive
School & 6th Form College

Issue: 123

Date: 13th November 2020



Hello everyone,

As we come to the end of the second week back after the October half term break, I'd like to take a few moments of your time to talk about how it feels at our school and what I see happening here. Every day I spend some time taking the barometer of the school by visiting lessons and talking to some of the students and staff. One thing that strikes me each day as I do this is how much it feels like 'business as normal'. I'll expand on what I mean by that later but given where we are with regard to the pandemic and given the significant disruption we see around our local area, this strikes me as remarkable.

There are a number of really important factors which have contributed to this.

All that time ago in the summer, we invested a great deal of time and energy in planning on a full return to school for all children but with a robust set of modified and mandatory 'covid safe' behaviours and adjustments to our learning environment. These now well established protocols work as a package to help keep us all as safe as possible. Because of this and with the support and trust of the vast majority of our children and families, the diligence and commitment of all of our teaching and non teaching staff, we have been able to maintain a full day at school in a healthy and safe environment for almost every child so that they are able to engage in learning and to get back on track.

So thank you to everyone, staff, students and parents for working with us to keep our school running smoothly. It really does feel like a team effort.

We are now fully into the stride of the Autumn term and are just over a quarter of the way into the school year. Our children are really showing positive signs of being back on track and working hard in their lessons. As a school community we are all enjoying the hustle and bustle which a great day at school brings and it's a permanent source of inspiration to see and hear the students learning, laughing and doing what they do best.

Of course, the last two weeks have also been the first time that our examination classes in year 11 and 13 have had a taste of trial examinations in preparation for the finals expected in Summer 2021. Over the coming months, our students will be given plenty of opportunities to refine and develop their examination skills and to work through the important mental, emotional and academic preparation needed to be successful. Supporting our children through this time is critical so that they are mentally and physically healthy whilst maintaining a positive approach to learning and studying. I'm sure you will agree fully that when school and family work together the outcome for our children is always better.

We learned a lot from the trial exams regarding how to deliver a meaningful experience under restricted conditions. We will refine our processes in preparation for the next phase of trial examinations in February so that the students benefit from the experience as much as possible. During the examination week, I spent some time in the restaurant chatting to the students prior to the exams. It always takes a while for some of the students to adjust to the rules and regulations of the exam hall and to appreciate the gravity of these assessments. It's important that as we move forwards, families reflect on what went well in the exams and what they need to do to help their child improve. This includes everything from having a healthy breakfast before the exam, being on time, bringing the right equipment and knowing where and when the exams are happening. Starting a thorough revision programme now, ready for the February Trials is not too early!



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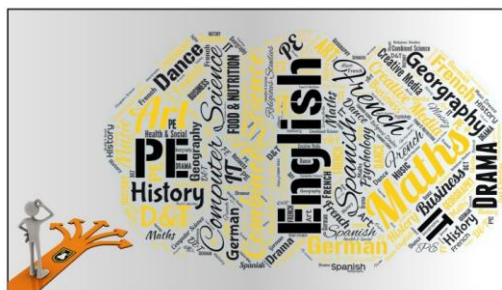
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Staff are now busy marking and moderating the assessments and we will formally report back to you as soon as this work is done.

The lower year groups are also working very well and there is everything to suggest that over the first half term, their readjustment to school was very successful. The year 7 students have completed some baseline assessment which will help us to make sure we are supporting our children appropriately and all have completed a reading age assessment. We all know that reading is a key tool in increasing the vocabulary and literacy skills of our children so one thing I'd like you to do is read with and to your child. Please try to have a book that you are reading as well because this encourages children to do the same. Meanwhile, here at school, we have continued to invest in a three year reading programme which will help develop your child's reading age as they head through the school.

On a personal note, I teach some classes in the lower school and I have to say that the quality of their work, their approach to learning and their overall demeanour in lessons is equally as good as any other year. Most staff would say exactly the same thing. Moreover, the vast majority of students continue to have excellent manners, are polite and chatty and most seem to care greatly about school, learning and being with their friends. Although there were a few settling in issues earlier in the term and some aspects of behaviour that were not in line with our positive and caring culture, we have largely seen these issues dealt with and resolved. With your ongoing support we will continue to work with our children to maintain the highest standards and work through any issues that might crop up along the way. In the next couple of weeks, families of children in the lower school will receive the first 'interim report' of the year giving a clear indication of how learning is progressing and helping us all to ensure that all children across every year group are getting back on track.



Year 9 Options

Finally, this is an exciting time for the year 9 students as they head towards their options for the years 10 and 11. Our options information will go live next week so please keep an eye out for this very important process. As a few words of advice to our students, make sure you choose your options wisely and for the right reasons. These choices are very important as they will carry you through the final two years at school before allowing you to enter our sixth form college or to whatever post 16 pathway you decide on.

The picture that all of this paints is that ten weeks into the term, as a community, what we have all succeeded in is creating a safe return to a full curriculum where the children are happy, learning and are heading back on track with their learning. The shared desire to have an embedded culture of trust and collaboration across our community has never felt stronger. Thank you to everyone for what you have done individually and collectively.

Warm regards

Nigel Bielby
Headteacher



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Governor News

From Christina Burgess, Chair of Governors:

Congratulations to Claire Armstrong and Tracey Freeman! There were just two applications for the role of parent governor at Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School so an election was not needed. I'm delighted that Claire and Tracey will bring a range of skills and experience to our Governing Body.

Congratulations also to Phil Redford and Andrew Middleton who were recently elected as staff governors, and to Paul Knox who has been appointed as a community governor.

Our five new governors will be formally welcomed at the online governors' meeting on 7th December, and they will be guided during the next few months by Clerk, Pauline Challinor and Vice Chair, Tracey Goodwin.



So what does a school governor do? Governors are volunteers who work alongside school employees for a 4 year term to monitor teaching, learning, budgeting and strategy. They need to attend meetings as well as training sessions and they follow a code of conduct. The role involves thinking rather than doing - in other words, 'eyes and ears open, hands off'. Parent governors bring a parental perspective to the issues discussed but they do not speak 'on behalf' of the parent body. Similarly, community and staff governors bring insights from the local community and from school employees.

Everyone associated with HCCS wants the students to have an excellent education. It's important that all pupils make good progress and achieve their potential. In order to have high quality teaching and learning, teachers and support staff are essential but governors are also important, acting as critical friends to support and to challenge.

Current vacancies

We have one vacancy for a community governor at HCCS. If you are interested, or know someone who may be interested in applying please go to the governor pages of the website for an application form and further information.

These links will provide more detail about the role of school governors :



Link 1



Link 2



Link 3



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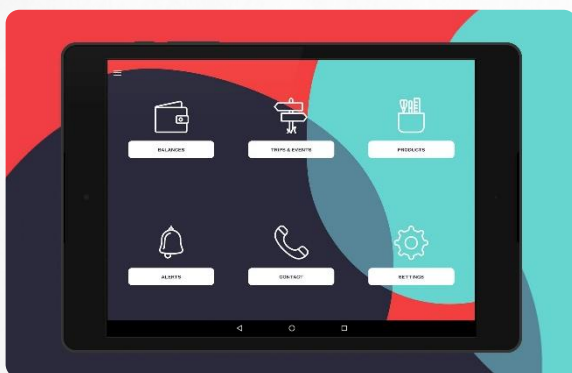
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Lunch Balances



Don't forget you can set an alert in Scopay to advise you when your son/daughters lunch balance falls below a certain amount and requires topping up.

This can be found by selecting the 'Your Info' tab and then 'Alert Configuration'. If you require any assistance please email financeteam@hccs.info



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Uniform suppliers during lockdown

Badged

Following the government instruction, Badged closed to the public on Thursday 5th November. Parents can still order uniforms and Badged will continue with online orders as well as this click and collect service. Parents can ring through to the shop on **01477 500504** and collect at an appropriate prearranged time from the foyer. Badged will also continue to deliver to school free of charge once a week.

Our website address is <https://www.badged.co.uk/page/school-uniform>



Sam Dale & Sons

Sam Dale & Son is fortunate to remain open throughout the lockdown period as per the last lockdown, due to us stocking many essential items. During this lockdown, the shop will be open 9-5 Monday to Friday, 9-4 on Saturdays - continuing to follow the latest covid secure guidelines. Our website www.samdaleandson.co.uk continues to offer free delivery within a 5 mile radius of the shop in Holmes Chapel. We offer a pick up service as well. If you're outside of our automatic free delivery area and have an urgent school uniform need, please do let us know and we are happy to help in any way we can.

You can contact us by telephone **01477 532280**, via our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Samdaleandson/> or via email dalescustomerhelp@gmail.com



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Is TikTok Safe?

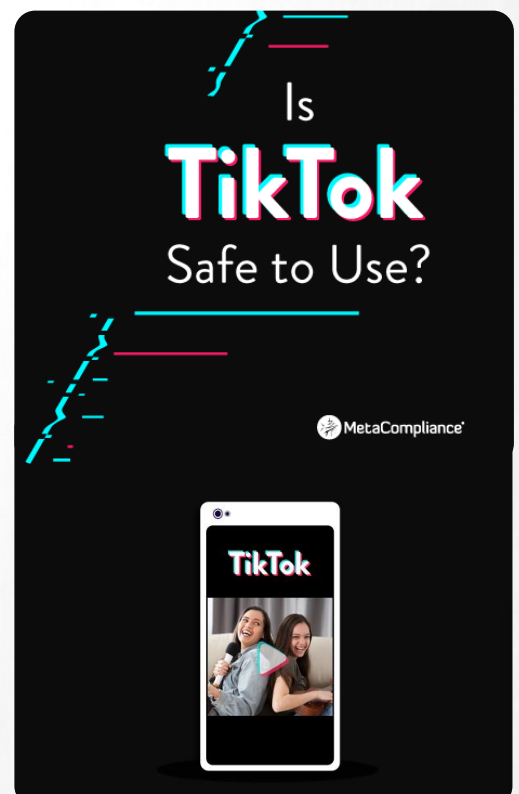
BBC Panorama aired a documentary that explored themes of body shaming and online predators.

One particularly disturbing revelation was that TikTok failed to block a user who was reported for sending a sexual message to a child.

At INEQE Safeguarding Group, we have studied TikTok extensively and conducted our own research on the platform to promote safer usage.

View the two videos and resources below where you can learn more about:

- The basics of the platform
- Associated risks
- How to block, mute and report users and inappropriate content
- TikTok's digital wellbeing tools





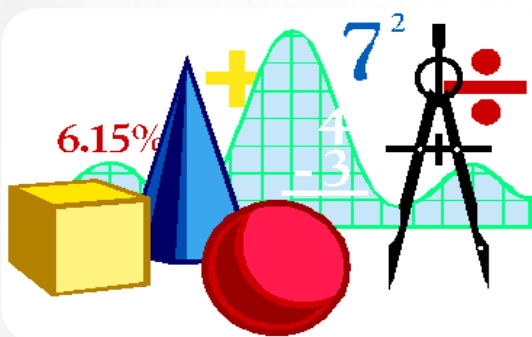
NEWSLETTER

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Preparing Learners for a Changing World

STEM Crew

Congratulations to Finley Hettrick, Tabitha Alcock-Bailey, Milly Edwards and Maddie Lusby on receiving their STEM Crew certificates from Sir Ben Ainslie, along with their Team INEOS UK prizes. The Year 8 Group scooped top prize in this year's STEM Crew Competition, a national event run to promote learning in Science. Their entry focused on Team INEOS UK's use of renewable energy sources via a highly innovative video demonstration with avatars voiced by the group. The STEM judges said their entry was the standout piece of work they received.



National MOG Olympiad Maths Success

Four of our year 13 mathematicians took part in the extremely challenging 2 hour MOG Olympiad competition in October. Congratulations to Isaac Badger, who came in the top 25% of the 2327 candidates that took part nationally. Great enthusiasm was shown by all four who took part, well-done! - Mrs James



The Careers Programme at



The school delivers an extensive careers programme from Year 7 upwards.

Parents and students can find out more about careers provision by accessing the school website curriculum/careers/programme.

[Click here](#) for more information



Keeping Active During Lockdown

[Click here](#) for information, Tips, advice and guidance on how to keep or get active in and around your home. Join the Movement and share how you're getting active during this time.



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Inter Tutor Competitions

Over the last 4 weeks we have held our year 7 inter tutor netball competition. Normally this would take place on one evening, however we amended the format this year to allow the pupils to participate in more games over a longer period of time.

We had a fantastic turnout from year 7, and there were some really close matches over the 4 weeks. Last week we held the play off matches which saw CH play against AC for 1st and 2nd position. It was a close game and both teams were ahead at different points throughout the game, however at the end of the 15 minutes it was CH that finished on top and took the trophy. A huge well done to all the pupils who attended the inter tutor competition and represented their forms, and well done to CH for taking the year 7 inter tutor netball trophy!



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Visyon Parent/Carer Webinars

Our parent/carers webinars have proved very popular and we have now planned a new timetable of webinars, which are intended to offer information and ideas to help you in supporting your child with understanding and managing their emotions and wellbeing. These are open to parents/carers or other interested family members.

The webinars are delivered as a presentation on Zoom. As a participant you are not connected via video or audio but may interact or ask questions using the typed chat function. You may only want to attend the session which is most relevant to you or you might find all useful, although there will be some overlap between the sessions.

The forthcoming webinars are:

Tuesday 17th November 10-11am **Building Resilience and Self Esteem** – [Click here](#)

Thursday 19th November 11-12noon **Managing Big Emotions (Secondary age)** – [Click here](#)

Thursday 26th November 11-12noon **Managing Big Emotions (Primary age)** – [Click here](#)

Thursday 10th December 11-12noon **Supporting your Child's Wellbeing** – [Click here](#)

Thursday 17th December 11-12noon **Understanding the Teenage Brain** – [Click here](#)

Please [click here](#) for the full document

Thank you, from all of us at HCCS & HC6F