



27th April 2020

Dear Year 13 Parents/Carers

Continued academic, pastoral and careers support for Year 13 this term

We hope you and your families are keeping well. Although Year 13 are no longer at school, we wanted you to be aware about how we are continuing to support students as well as sending you some important information about post 18 applications.

Mental and physical well-being

In our weekly Sixth Form Monday e-Bulletins which we post on Show My Homework, we have a section which encourages students to think about their mental and physical well-being and directs them to useful online resources. We are mindful that students' secondary education finished abruptly and while we did our best to organise a farewell celebration on the last day, students did not have an opportunity for the normal sense of closure. This coupled with the uncertainty over their exam results will no doubt be having an impact. If your son/daughter is struggling at home, the following websites might be of use:

Young Minds: <https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/>

Anna Freud Self-Care: <https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/>

Kooth online counselling: <https://www.kooth.com/>

We have been in contact with a number of Year 13s by e-mail to answer their questions as best we can and have also spoken to a number of students over the phone to reassure them. If this would be beneficial to your son/daughter, please contact either of us via office@waddesdonschool.com

Information about calculated exam grades

Year 13 students have been incredibly patient and mature while Ofqual were finalising the process for the awarding of exam grades this summer and have been very respectful about not contacting teachers to ask for information, which we have been told we are not allowed to discuss. Any further updates from Ofqual or the exam boards have been communicated to students via Show My Homework so they are as well-informed as possible. If your son/daughter knows at this stage that they want to sit the proposed Autumn exams, please contact Ms McIver via the school office e-mail.

Summer term curriculum

For students who want to start revising now for the proposed Autumn exams, all taught contact has been completed by subject teachers, with final resources posted on Show My Homework last week. All subjects posted a final message to students with suggested revision resources and access to past paper exam questions. Your son/daughter will have access to these resources should they decide to sit the proposed Autumn exams or indeed next summer's exams, after they receive their results on 13th August.

For students not currently revising, we have e-mailed home and posted on Show My Homework a resource booklet filled with excellent online resources students can be accessing to prepare for their future steps, be those at university, on an apprenticeship, taking a Gap Year or entering employment. We would particularly recommend the prestigious **Eton College's 'Making an Impact' online course**, which runs over six weeks. It is normally very expensive to take, but we have secured access to it **free of charge** for Year 13 students. It aims to enable students to become more assertive, communicate more effectively, and influence the people around them. Please e-mail Ms McIver via the school office for a log on password for your son/daughter. Further information can be found here: <https://etonx.com/making-an-impact/>

Post 18 Applications

University: For students who have received all of their offers, the deadline to decide on their **Firm (first) and Insurance choice** universities has been extended to 19th May, but students should check their UCAS Track account carefully to confirm this. In making this decision, students should review the content of each degree course carefully, graduate employability, student reviews and the ethos of the university more widely. Although it is not possible to go on any final visits currently, many universities are hosting virtual visits and presentations to help with decision making. If your son/daughter is considering deferring their place, we are happy to offer guidance on this over the phone. The deadline to apply for **University Student Finance** is 25th May via: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-student-finance>. There are also bursaries and scholarship applications here: <https://www.thescholarshipclub.org.uk/> or <https://www.grantfairy.com/>. Plenty of resources have been posted on Show My Homework to support students with their decisions and finance applications.

Apprenticeships: Although these are a little more uncertain at the moment, we continue to advertise opportunities on Show My Homework and support students with their applications via e-mail. Opportunities can be found at: <https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch>. We have been contacted by a former student who works for Shaw Gibbs in Oxford. They are looking to take on **accountancy apprentices** again this year, although the opportunities have not yet been advertised. Our students have been invited to apply early, so if your son/daughter is interested, please contact Ms McIver via the school office e-mail. A Year 13 secured one of these prestigious apprenticeships last year and is doing brilliantly.

Gap Years: we have put resources on Show My Homework to enable students to research and start planning their Gap Years. We have strongly recommended they do not organise or book anything until there is more certainty about the current national lockdown.

Students still unsure about future options: there are a small number of students who we know are still unsure about their future options. We will be phoning these students in the coming weeks to offer advice and support. If your son/daughter would benefit from a careers telephone conversation, please contact Mrs Bridges via the school office in the meantime.

If we can be of any further support to your son/daughter, please do not hesitate to get in contact. Thank you for your ongoing support from home.

Yours sincerely

Annalies McIver
Head of Sixth Form

Tamsin McKenzie
Head of Year 13