

28th April 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

Parental Update 28

This week and next have the feel of inconsistency and disruption with the bank holidays and strike action, as our normal rhythm and routine is broken. We are working hard with the students in school to maintain a sense of normality and focus upon their learning and schooling throughout this time.

The disruption, however, hasn't stopped the wide range of activities and experiences for our students, many of which centred around Earth week: Mindfulness Monday, Walk to School Wednesday, Litter Picking and Flick It Off Friday. Elsewhere, our Year 7s took part in 'Guess My Job' careers event, our Year 11s came in yesterday for exam revision / preparation sessions and Year 9 have been taking part in a workshop led by the brilliant Anthony Walker Foundation.

Whole School Focus: Running GCSE Exams

In the whole school focus I try to cover a wide range of topics about school life to help parents get a deeper understanding of what goes on in school, and this week I wanted to lift the curtain on what goes in to managing GCSEs for 240 students.

Of course, our primary focus is on preparing our Year 11 students for those final few weeks before the GCSEs start. Every department has had detailed plans in place for what will be taught, to whom, by whom and when since before Christmas. As I say, however, I wanted to give you a bit of an insight into the actual process of running these important exams.

The main GCSE exam window opens on Monday 15th May. Running these exams is a mammoth task, led by our exams officer, Mrs Roughley and her team of invigilators. As well as the main large venue in the Sports Hall, we also need to operate a range of smaller venues for students with a range of additional needs including those who need extra time, require readers, require scribes or any other adaptations.

The level of planning and organisation required to not only make this happen, but for it to happen with the level of security and adherence to the very strict guidelines, is incredible. With every venue needing to be secure, have all the appropriate signage, seating arrangements and distances etc. It is also very demanding on staff time, requiring large numbers of exam invigilators. We are always on the lookout for new invigilators.

The exams will run most days from 15th May through to the end of June, with every day's completed exam papers needing to be sorted, bundled and dispatched to the appropriate marker or exam board venue. Then we look ahead to the summer results and keep our fingers crossed!

Anthony Walker Foundation

We have worked very hard last year and this year on addressing wider key issues such as harmful and discriminatory language and behaviour, whether this is racism, homophobia, transphobia, sexism or similar behaviour. As part of this work, we have been supported by the Anthony Walker Foundation to pilot their school accreditation award for inclusion.

This work has been really important to us, as a school, not as some 'woke' or 'lefty' nonsense as some of the worst of the national press would have you believe but because it sits at the heart of two of our Lasallian Values: respect for all persons and inclusive community. More importantly than that, it also means a lot to our students and their experiences in school – they want to feel safe, supported, accepted and an inclusive environment achieves that for them.

What's My Job?

When standing in the rain waiting for a late 752 bus I have often asked this question, but it is also the theme of a recent careers session our Year 7 students took part in. This involved several volunteers from a wide range of occupations coming in to school. They arrived in their 'civvies' and students were able to question each of them to try to establish their occupations. The point being to remove any unintended bias or prejudice that might exist in who the students think might fulfil these roles.

Amongst our volunteers were a care provider, police officer, council worker, surveyor and digital marketing manager. The students really enjoyed the event and the challenging of working out who did what. One student made a lovely comment saying to the care provider "I think you in the care uniform have the best job of all because you really do care for people."

Year 11 Study Leave

We have had several parents ask about Year 11 study leave. The idea of wholesale 'study leave' ended a few years ago but our current practice is for students to attend fully until half term, after which revision sessions will be arranged to link in with upcoming exams taking place in the spaces where completed exam subjects took place. The Year 11 team are currently planning these and information will be sent out soon.

Strike Days

A reminder that next week we have Bank Holiday on Monday 1st May and a teacher strike on Tuesday 2nd May, with school only open to Year 11 (invited in 8.30 – 1.10pm) and vulnerable students.

Rewards

This week's Lasallian Star awards are attached.

Additional Rewards:

- Top Star point Winner: Filip Rajmanowski
- £10 voucher winner: Arthur Crosby

Attendance Data

All of our collective hard work and focus upon attendance is paying off and we continue to see a steady rise in our attendance rates overall and we are pulling ahead of the national average.

5th September 2022 – 21st April 2023:

- School attendance **91.2 % (same)**
- National Secondary Attendance is: **90.8% (down 0.1%)**
- Gap: **+ 0.4% (up 0.1%)**

Forthcoming Events (dates in **bold** indicate a change to normal finish times)

Mon 1st May: Bank Holiday

Tue 2nd: Strike Day only Year 11 and vulnerable students to attend

Tues 2nd – Fri 5th: Year 11 Spanish Speaking GCSEs

Wed 3rd: Governors Quality of Education Committee Meeting (5pm)

Thu 4th – Fri 25th: Year 11 Graphics GCSE exam

Thu 4th: lesson 3: Carmel College presentation to Year 10

Mon 8th: Bank Holiday

Mon 8th – Thu 11th: Year 9 Retreat (14 students)

Tue 9th – Fri 19th: Year 9 Assessment Window
Thu 11th: Year 7 Parents Eve (please note this will follow the new arrangements)
Mon 15th: GCSE Exams start
Wed 17th: Governors Personnel Committee 5pm
Thu 18th: Year 10 Parents Evening (please note this will follow the new arrangements)
Fri 19th: Inter-school formation Sessions
W/B Mon 22nd: Year 9 Discovering Careers Event all week
Wed 24th: West Park House Mass
Half Term (Mon 29th May – Fri 2nd Jun)
Mon 5th Jun – Fri 16th Jun: year 7 Assessment window
W/B 5th Jun: Year 10 Mocks begin (running through until Fri 16th Jun)
Thu 8th: Year 8 Parents' Evening (please note this will follow the new arrangements)
W/B 12th: Discovering Careers Employer Visits (Yr 9)
Wed 14th: Governors Behaviour Attitudes and Personal Development Committee

And finally...

My family regularly wonder how anyone would put me in charge of anything, a view I have a lot of sympathy for, and this week provided more evidence to ask the question. During our weekly SLT meeting, we start with a reflection and light our Lasallian candle. The meeting went well and we all departed.

About 8pm whilst popping to see my mum and dad, it suddenly dawned on me that I hadn't blown the candle out as there had been a change of my room layout and the candle was the far end I and simply hadn't thought about it. This left me with a dilemma. Do I just ignore it? It was a big candle, easily 20+hours' worth of burning, there was nothing flammable on the table it was on etc.

Sadly, I couldn't ignore it, but maybe one of the SLT had blown it out? Several WhatsApp messages later and it appeared nobody had blown it out. I was contemplating the hour-long round trip in to school to blow out the candle when Mr Fairweather, the site manager, who lives very near the school, replied to say he would pop in at half time of the footy, to check. What felt like an age passed, then his text to confirm he had been in, but it wasn't lit. That was a real mystery.

The next day the mystery was solved by one of the SLT whose phone was being repaired and hadn't seen the message, said they had blown it out as they left. So, in the end, apart from confirmation of my ability to be trusted with lit objects, no harm was done. Though it did cost me a thank you bottle of wine for Mr Fairweather and some time looking on Amazon for battery operated candles.

Have a good extended weekend,

Andrew Rannard
Headteacher

Form Class	Year 11	Year 10	Year 9	Year 8	Year 7
J	Not available at time of writing	Thomas Fairclough	Eve Doodson	Alex Joy	Arabella Evans
O		Osman Dualeh	Jacob Hyde	Lola Hitchen	Jules Barroso
H		Bobby Hand (Engagement Centre)	Ruby Russell	Oliver Busby	Alex Carter
N		Louisa Martindale	Jessica Smith	Tyler Purcell	Daisy Curphey
B		Max Critchley	Eloise Emmett	Ben Du Plessis	Lola Ballesteros
D		Imogen Millen	Hollie Wright	Layla Lamb	Sophia meaney
L		Conor Pollit	Bryn Edwards	Arthur Crosby	Rosie Edwards
S		Jess Marsh	Ella Butterworth	Archie Mather	Molly Frodsham

CAREERS NEWSLETTER



This newsletter is a collation of all the opportunities we have heard about from employers and universities. Please use the links included to read more information and apply to anything you are interested in. Links are underlined.

OPPORTUNITIES

Saturday 22nd April was Earth Day. Be a part of the solution. Build a brighter, greener, and more equitable future for generations to come. The time is NOW to Invest in Our Planet! There are a range of events you can watch, including topics like "GAMING FOR GOOD: A CATALYST FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE" and "WHY BLOCKCHAIN? ACCELERATING & FUNDING CLIMATE SOLUTIONS AT SCALE". [Read more and watch the events here.](#)

Join Apprenticeship Nation to develop your skills, learn about apprenticeships and find career advice. Get trained with videos and events in the Skills Hub to shape your future, earn credits and unlock rewards! They have live webinars and skills hub sessions that are hosted by people like Stefflon Don, Headie One, Berwyn and Jaz Karis. [Register here.](#)

Interested in going to a Russell Group University? Make sure you don't miss the upcoming Meet the Russell Group webinars. Hear directly from representatives and experts from all 24 Russell Group Universities including Cambridge, Oxford, King's College London, LSE, and Manchester to get answers to all of your questions about applications, student life, personal statements, and much more. [Register here.](#)

Plant science research is vital to solving some of the biggest problems facing our planet, from feeding a growing population to protecting biodiversity. Plant Science Futures is here to inspire the next generation of biologists by highlighting the many exciting and important careers possible in the world of plant science. If you're interested in a career in biology or plant science, [check out this website](#) full of advice and guidance on planning your career.

JOB OF THE WEEK



Botanists study all forms of plant life. The annual salary is £22,000 to £55,000 and you can expect to work 38 to 40 hours a week. There will be 3.3% more Botanist jobs in 2027.

[Click here to read more.](#)

LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION FACT

Sixty per cent of young people say they hope go on to higher education after leaving school, while 16 per cent said they'd like to do an apprenticeship, 11 per cent said they'd prefer to go straight into work, with six per cent wanting to start their own business.

[Read more here](#)

If you have any questions or need support, please contact smedleyk@delasalleschool.org.uk

CAREERS NEWSLETTER



OPPORTUNITIES



Goodwork's Early Careers Programme offers you the opportunity to kickstart your career and access the training, support and community you need to be successful. It's a six month long internship programme based in London, full-time and paid at the London Living Wage. It's a big commitment, but a rewarding one that will help you grow your skills and confidence - and get your career started. You have to be 18 so this is an opportunity for Year 13 (and older!). [Read more and register here.](#)



Join Niya for an online session to gain a greater understanding of Generative AI and hear from our incredible guest speaker, Ghita El Haitmy, the CEO and Founder of TechBible. The topic is "Is Generative AI after your job?" and will help you to plan a future proof career. [Register here.](#)

If you're in Year 12, remember that a lot of universities will be running open days in June and July. Sign up to the ones you're interested in and remember to:

- Book the time off with your Head of Sixth Form so that it is authorised absence.
- Plan your journey to get there and see if anyone else in your year is going so you can share lifts/travel together.
- [Read this guide](#) on how to make the most of university open days.

You can find dates and registration information directly on their website, the [UCAS website](#) or [UniTasterDays](#). If you can't make the June/July dates, most universities will have another open day in September/October.



UCAS Hub run live events to help students researching their next steps. They're all recorded so you can watch them here. You will need to log in to your UCAS Hub account to watch them. [Check out all the topics and watch the ones you're interested in here.](#)



Do you read this newsletter every week and wonder "when will I work out what career is for me"? Give yourself a head start by completing the "[I can be a](#)" quiz to see where your interests and skills could take your career. Once you have a list of potential careers, you can then search them on [career pilot](#) to learn about the salary, responsibilities and routes into this industry.

EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

London is one of the most exciting and diverse cities in the world – and policing it is no easy task. It takes a huge number of people from all sorts of different backgrounds with a wide range of skills and experience. Do you have what it takes to be one of them? Find out if a career with the Met is what you're looking for. You can read more about their careers [here](#).

UNI SPOTLIGHT

"We are passionate about seeing our students flourish. As a Winchester student you will have access to a rigorous education in a supportive and creative environment. You will be nurtured and challenged to grow as a confident and successful individual committed to a life of meaning and purpose, determined to challenge the status quo."

You can read more about University of Winchester courses [here](#).

If you have any questions or need support, please contact smedleyk@delasalleschool.org.uk