



Friday 19 March, 2021

Dear parents and carers,

Following on from the Student Voice feedback I wrote to you about last week, years 12 and 13 have had a CPD session around staying positive, being in the present and preparing for the future.

Each year group has different needs at this stage in their education and so the sessions delivered the same message but with a slightly different focus for each. I will summarise the activities that have been going on in form time and CPD this week for each year group so that you can see the themes we have been exploring.

Year 12

Virtual Work Experience Launch - at this time of year, historically, we have started to support the search for work experience placements. This year, this will be online and is referred to as VWEX. Students have been trained on how to use the Special Opportunities tool on Unifrog to search for VWEX. They have until 19 April to complete this and have a journal to record their experience as they discover their new skills and develop existing ones. Despite not being able to experience a workplace first hand, they will still broaden their knowledge of workplaces, organisations and learn about employability skills. Placements do not have to be directly related to the job they are interested in and the point is, employers expect applicants to be able to demonstrate transferrable skills.



We will continue to look at this as we head towards Easter and then revisit it when we come to look at key competencies and recording the skills they have developed. This is going to be super important for writing CVs for job applications and personal statements for university later on.

Presentations - Year 12 made my day today! As you'll know, they were tasked with interviewing a family member about their job and then were asked to present it to the class. Everybody who did theirs today did a great job - presenting is a really valuable employability skill! It has been so interesting to hear about careers - the highs and the lows, the pathways people have taken and the skills they have. This has been a worthwhile exercise so, thank you for your support on this and we will continue to hear from more students next week.



Post 18 Pathways - our pathway exploration will gather pace after Easter when we start our decision-making guidance around applying to university (UCAS). This isn't because we value universities over apprenticeships. It is because the UCAS process is deadline driven and so we have certain tasks to complete. I will be in touch with you to give you lots of guidance around the process, student finance and how students prepare for university as well as how you can support them as we go along.

Year 13

University Decisions - many students have now received all of their decisions and are making their firm and insurance choices. They have had support as to how to do this and guidance around decision making. Students can come and speak to me at any time if they need more help. What I would recommend is to visit the city they are going to be living in - as soon as it is possible to do so. It is understandable that people feel they cannot make a decision yet as they haven't been able to visit the university and so UCAS have extended the reply deadline to June. However, students should check their individual reply deadline as some universities differ.

UCAS

Those students who are considering taking a gap year or deferring entry for another reason have been shown how to access the Know How library on Unifrog where they will find videos on gap years and the pros and cons of deferring.

Apprenticeships/dual pathways - in response to student concerns around the availability of apprenticeships and the process of applying, Mrs Pasfield, Careers Adviser, will be giving a CPD session on Tuesday. This will focus on practical ways to approach the job search and will offer reassurance that careers support will be available to all students who need it, even after they have left the Sixth Form. Please ask your child to show you their job searches and their interaction with Amazing Apprenticeships.

Mental Health and Well Being - Year 13 have received information and guidance on how to stay mentally healthy and where to access support for mental health concerns through form time this week. There has been a focus on stress management and encouragement to engage in activities such as mindfulness, meditation, reading and relaxation.



Through CPD, students have been challenged to do six things: [Read, Watch, Listen, Follow, Do and Talk](#). The purpose of this is to remind them of their interests outside of their academic study and to indulge in these. We want them to think about what they expose themselves to and whether this drives them forwards or pulls them back. Having varied interests and "following" people or topics that are positive will all help to keep a healthy mindset.

For more information on mental health and the work we do to promote positivity, ask your child to show you Read, Watch, Listen on Unifrog or visit the Know How library and check out the mental health activities on there.

Very best wishes,



Mrs Pearson
Pastoral Leader for Post 16