

Student/ Parent Update 9.7.21

Dear all,

We are rapidly approaching the end of term and we hope that the weather starts looking more like summer when we get there! Due to the loss of face to face time during lock down we will be continuing with lessons during the last week of term until the end of the day on Wednesday. This will allow departments to ensure students are up to date with coursework, practicals and also essential fieldwork to take place in some areas. On the final two days of term, Thursday 22nd and Friday 23rd July, we will be focussing on supporting students with destinations or getting students working on their Extended Projects.

The Extended Project is a fantastic qualification for students to take as an additional qualification. It is equivalent to half an A Level and students can complete an extended project in any area they choose. It could be linked to something they are already studying, something they have an interest in or alternatively show their enthusiasm and interest in a particular career path they are unable to study in school. We have had students complete a project in topics as wide ranging as robotic surgery through to whether the insanity plea is an adequate defence in Law. This qualification has high outcomes with over 70% of students regularly achieving an A or A* grades and in addition to this it can also get students a lower offer from universities. It is also something that can help on results days if a student misses an offer, but has achieved a good grade in their project. It is also useful for those considering apprenticeships as it demonstrates their ability to work independently and also their interest in their chosen vocation. If students have not yet signed up for this but wish to do so they should speak to either Ms Oxley-Hughes or Ms Taggart.

Destinations planning

Students are all working on planning next steps and destinations after Sixth Form. Students on the Writhlington site should be completing a draft of their personal statement, which will be used for either University or Apprenticeship applications. Students on the MSN Sixth Site should be attending sessions with Ms Oxley-Hughes for support with this and should contact her directly if they are not aware when their session is taking place.

Covid- 19 testing

It is very important that we don't become relaxed about Covid, despite the welcome reduction in numbers of people infected, hospitalisations and deaths. The decision to close whole bubble/s or not is so difficult and will always be met with mixed views, regardless of the decision made. With this in mind, can I please urge you **not to send students** in if they are displaying any of the classic Covid symptoms e.g. high temperature, new and persistent cough or a change/loss of sense of taste/smell.

Currently Public Health England recommend that students with non-Covid-specific symptoms of acute respiratory infection don't go into school if they are unwell as a general rule, and get tested if they (of their families) progress to Covid 19 symptoms whilst unwell.

We believe this is because some people who have caught the Delta variant of the virus recently, have reported feeling 'as if they had a summer cold, with headache, sore throat, runny nose, sneezing' for the first few days. Only a few days later have the 'typical' Covid symptoms become apparent.

Can I also ask that you do not send students in if anyone else in the household has symptoms or has tested positive on any test (whether it be PCR or LFT). All students should have picked up a Covid testing kit from their tutor and should be completing a test every Sunday and Wednesday. There are spare test kits available from the Sixth Form Office.

End of year exams/ Progress Reports

Students progress reports will be out next week and we will let you know when they are available on the portal / Insight. These will review the work students have completed during the last term of school since we returned from lockdown and give students some specific targets to focus on in each subject.

Some students have been retaking exams where they were significantly below their targets. I'm delighted that following some intervention from their teachers the overwhelming majority of these are seeing a significant improvement in their outcome. This should mean that students are in a good position to start their Year 13 studies in September. Students will have in class assessments in the first week of the September term and this will help to consolidate their understanding and also to help to inform predictions we will use for university and apprenticeship applications.

I'd like to thank the students for their exceptional resilience and patience during this academic year and I'm sure they are all looking forward to the break in a few weeks time.

If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Kind Regards



Mrs K Ward
Director of Sixth Form
Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership