

Virtual View FROM THE TOP



Friday 22nd January 2021

The Principal's Update

As we reach the end of the second full week of the Spring Term, I continue to be hugely impressed by our students and staff and their tremendous response to our Guided Home Learning programme.

In this morning's *This is the Way* assembly I talked about the importance of being focussed during lessons. I highlighted the importance of switching on cameras, switching off mics and concentrating fully, which will help everyone with their online learning.

Over the past couple of weeks, Year 9 have been thinking about their GCSE options. Students have all had individual meetings with Mrs Thelwell to discuss their choices and received the [Options Booklet](#) last week. Yesterday evening, I hosted a virtual Options Evening on Zoom to talk about workload, course content, career aspirations and much more. I hope Year 9 felt that their questions have been fully answered and are now able to make informed choices about what they would like to study when they start Year 10 in September.



I was delighted to hear from Mr Baker that so many students and families have embraced the Kilometre Challenge, despite the very wintry weather that we have had over the past week. This weekend, it looks like we may have a couple of cold but bright days, and I will be getting outside and adding to the total. We are now up to over 1775km travelled as part of Kilometre Club. [Click here](#) for more information.

Online Learning At Its Best

Mrs Darnton has been reflecting on the incredible progress we have made with our online learning since last March. [Click here](#) to read her reflections.

Mindful Schools Sit Together

At midday on Wednesday 20th January, students and staff were delighted to participate in the national Mindfulness Schools Sit Together. [Click here](#) for more information.

Holiday Reading Challenge

Nature novels, happy news stories, song lyrics and wintry poems were the themes of the four reading tasks that Years 7 to 9 could complete for the Holiday Reading Challenge. [Click here](#) for more information.

Creative Crunch

As a continuation from 'Poetry Pitstop' which ran in the first lockdown, this term we are running 'Creative Crunch'. [Click here](#) for more information.

Introducing Mr Williams

We are pleased to introduce Mr Lewis Williams, our new Head of Product Design. [Click here](#) to find out more about him.

GDST Talks

The GDST Talks series continued last week with Professor Abi Gewirtz speaking on *How To Help Your Child When The World Feels Like A Scary Place*.

You may be interested in accessing a recording of the talk available [here](#). This will be available until 14th February. Professor Gewirtz's book is also available to buy [here](#).

The next GDST Talks event takes place on Monday 8th February. The speaker is digital rights activist and YouTuber Charlotte Robertson who can regularly be seen campaigning in the media, in parliament and in schools and organisations around the world to empower young people to survive and thrive online. To mark Safer Internet Day 2021, she will be giving a presentation on *How To Be A Tech Role Model For Your Child*.

GDST Talks with Charlotte Robertson: *How To Be A Tech Role Model For Your Child* will take place on Monday 8th February at 6pm via Zoom. This event is suitable for parents with children in Year 3 to Year 13.

To book your place, please click [here](#).

If you would like to find out more about upcoming GDST Talks events, there is information [here](#).

Life At Oxbridge

Howell's is leading the GDST Limitless Learning module, Oxbridge - Laying the Track, which starts next Tuesday, 26th January, and runs throughout the spring term.

Students in Years 10-12 who may be interested in studying at the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge in the future, or would like to find out more about what it is like to study at these prestigious universities can join the first session, including a Q&A with current Oxford and Cambridge students on 'What Oxbridge Life is really like' next Tuesday 26th January between 5pm – 6pm.

Throughout the rest of the term the programme will offer insights into the applications process, and interesting lectures to widen the super-curricular experience. Students may join as many or as few sessions as they like.

The programme complements the support available in Howell's for students considering applying to these universities and will lead in to the GDST 'Oxbridge On Track' programme for Year 12 students as they begin to prepare their applications in the Summer Term.

If you would like any further information, please contact Mrs Harrison-Hughes.

The joining details are as follows:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://gdst-net.zoom.us/j/85136149428?pwd=SnhzUDhIMW9UMFZFMGI6T0YwRURjdz09>

Meeting ID: 851 3614 9428

Passcode: 706017

BT Apprenticeships

To find out more about BT Apprenticeships [click here](#).

Marks & Spencer's Management Apprenticeship Programme

To find out more about more about Marks & Spencer's Apprenticeship Programme [click here](#).

LeadHerShip with Le-Chun Lindsay

Le-Chun Lindsay, the first woman to be Managing Director of GE Aviation Wales, will be presenting at the first LeadHerShip event of 2021. [Click here](#) for more information.

I hope you enjoy the weekend.

Sally Davis, Principal