

From the Head Teacher

On Monday, Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education informed all that exams will go ahead next summer, as he commented that they are the fairest and most accurate way to measure a students' attainment. However, the summer exam series will begin **three weeks** later than usual for GCSEs and A Levels, starting on **7 June** and end on **2 July** for almost all AS/A levels and GCSEs, to ensure that students have more time to prepare for their exams.

Additionally, the government has promised to widely engage with the education sector over the next 6 weeks to identify any risks to the exams and consider measures needed to address any potential disruption. We also await any adaptations to the current exam content for all subjects, expecting a response by 23 October, but noting in most recent advice that this could be reduced and adapted further, depending on the situation over the winter period.

It is clear that it is a fluid situation and so we are focusing on what we know and continue to teach the content prescribed and ensure that our young people are confident that we know the challenges that are being faced, without causing them additional anxiety or concern.

As I am sure that you are aware from national media coverage, all schools must provide access to remote learning by 22 October, but given that this has been in place since the summer term, we are confident that we have identified and supported families to ensure that there is no loss of learning in the current situation.

As we conclude the penultimate week of this half term, warmest congratulations to our new Student Leadership Team. The Senior Students appointed were successful following a presentation to their peers and teachers and a formal interview - and I am delighted to confirm that Darcey and Kachina have been appointed as Head Students and Libby, Lois and Mahjabeen have been appointed as Deputy Head Students. We meet every fortnight to share student views and ensure that Student Parliament issues are raised and supported.

Additionally, congratulations to all Student Leaders appointed - we will share names and their social action charities in the new term.

BBC Young Reporter Competition

We participate in the 'BBC Young Reporter' initiatives on an annual basis. This event usually takes place in March each year; our students have engaged with 'News Days' and more recently the 'Young Reporter Festival'.

In addition to the BBC News Day events, the BBC promotes regular competitions to encourage our young people to actively engage with issues and stories that impact them. You might recall the details of the 'isolation stories' opportunity shared with students during lockdown. At the moment as we look towards the Young Reporter Festival scheduled to take place in March, the BBC are looking for submissions for their 'Young Reporter Competition'.

Friday 16 October 2020

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

16 October - 30 November

Monday 26 October - Friday 30 October

- Half Term

Wednesday 4 November

- Post 16 Open Evening (online)

Friday 6 November

- STAGS Virtual Chamber Concert

Wednesday 11 November

- Year 8 HPV1 Immunisation

Wednesday 25 November

- Year 11 Maths Parents' Workshop (online)

Thursday 26 November

- Post 16 External Open Morning

Monday 30 November

- Occasional Day

Look out on our social media pages for up to the minute news



From the Head Teacher

As with our News Days, this is an opportunity for all year groups. All of our students have 'a story to tell' or 'an issue to report' and I would encourage you to discuss this with your daughter given the range of topics that are available:

Me and my world: A true story about your life, or the world you live in. The story could be about your own identity, or about an issue or experience that impacts on you or your community.

Uplifting: An uplifting story which is inspiring and upbeat. Have you or someone you know brought a positive change to another person's life? Is there something uplifting happening in your local community you think should be reported on?

Coronavirus: How has the Coronavirus pandemic made a difference to your life? We are looking for a mix of positive, celebratory stories, as well as looking at the challenging and negative impact it has had, particularly on young people's lives.

The deadline for submissions using [this form](#) is **Saturday 31st October**. The winner will be given the opportunity to work directly with the BBC, to have their story produced and screened as part of a specialist broadcast, as part of the forthcoming festival in March.

It would be wonderful if one of our students chose to celebrate our Centenary celebrations, as it is definitely an example of an uplifting event taking place in our school and local community!

Parking in the local area

We were supported by police and local parking enforcers in response to local complaints about parents parking their cars in the area around the school to wait for their daughters. Interestingly, as we comment each year, by 3.40pm all the cars had gone, the buses had left by 3.30pm and it was easy to drive into the school grounds. A reminder that families who come early can park on the school site if arriving prior to 2.45pm. Local residents spoke to the parking patrol and it was somewhat disappointing to learn that this had come to a head as some parents had been so rude and sworn at them directly.

Your support in this matter is greatly appreciated; and if anyone has any ideas on solving the issue of parking in our local area without disrupting learning at the end of the day, then I would be delighted to hear from you.

Please remind students, as we have echoed in assemblies and form tutor briefings this week of the importance of road safety and road awareness, not least as we have darker mornings and evenings.

Online Safety Video

This video was put together with our Social Media Gurus, one of the many student leadership roles here at STAGS. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will be happy to help.

May we take this opportunity to remind you all, that we do not support large chat groups of students who solely attend STAGS. There should be no more than 5 students in a chat group, as experience tells us of the issues that can arise from such groups.

Finally, congratulations to Mr Bowyer and his wife who welcome their baby daughter and Mrs Watson who safely delivered a baby boy - all are doing well!

With all good wishes, *Margaret Chapman*

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