

Year 13 Spring Newsletter

The Spring break begins **Monday, 3rd April** and students return **Monday 17th April**.

Turnstiles - We always prioritise safeguarding of our students, staff, and environment. To increase the level of security, turnstiles are being installed and will be in place on your return, 17th April. **Please remember your lanyards.** Students are well and truly in countdown mode to the examinations which start in May and students with coursework are working hard to ensure all assignments are completed and submitted at the highest level possible. Whatever their course, we hope that you feel your young person is being well supported by us. We are grateful for everything you do to provide practical support and encouragement. We particularly appreciated the high turnout at the year 13 parent consultation evenings.

Please continue to access your young person's progress on the CEDAR platform. This provides details of their 'On Course to Achieve' OCTA grade for each subject and attendance. Updated OCTA grades will be available after the Easter break. The exam season begins for students in mid-May. However, many students will have completed coursework assignments and practical exams before this. To achieve success in the summer, students not only have to know and understand their subject material but also need to have mastered the necessary exam techniques. We believe it is vital that all students are spending at least 5 hours per week per subject outside of lessons in preparation for their summer examinations.

The final few weeks of courses with exams are dedicated to intensive revision programmes and to improving exam techniques. High levels of attendance and continuing commitment are vital in the next few months. Some students, whose attendance is below 90%, will have received letters from us in February warning of possibility of exam entry withdrawal. We will be monitoring their attendance very closely in the final weeks of college and are hoping that excellent attendance in the final few weeks will mean that we do not have to do this.

Please do not hesitate to contact your young person's Personal Tutor if you have any concerns regarding their progress or if there is anything you feel we need to know that might be affecting their performance.

Examination Preparation

All subjects will have revision materials hosted in an online virtual learning environment e.g. SharePoint. This will include syllabus specifications, model exam answers and other resources to help and support students.

Students have had advice about the best ways to revise and one of the most important things to do is to work through past exam questions which are also available on the Exam Boards' websites. Applying what they know in this way and checking their answers against mark schemes is much more productive for students than just trying to learn lists of facts.

Students should also make effective use of the continuing subject support sessions to iron out any difficulties in terms of understanding work and for honing exam techniques.

All students should make good use of their non-contact time within college. The Library and Information Centre, the Study Zone and the study room (B3.7) provide students with private study areas in which to work. Students are welcome to drop in and use these facilities. The Study Zone opens at 7.30am daily and closes at 6pm Monday to Thursday.

Revision app <https://getadapt.co.uk/>

[Adapt - free Revision Timetable App for A-level & GCSE](https://getadapt.co.uk/)

Adapt is a free revision timetable app for your A-level & GCSE revision that plans for you. The study planner is available on the App Store & Google Play Store

It's free and breaks down your specific exam board subject into topics to revise. You can set your number of sessions per day and what days you are going to do work...

BTEC Extended Diploma and BTEC Certificate Courses

Students who are coming to the end of their BTEC studies continue to have a high workload of assignments. As usual, they will have tight deadlines to meet, and they need to manage their time carefully. It can be tempting for students on a mixed programme of A levels and BTECs to focus exclusively on the immediate A level exams and jeopardise their BTEC qualification.

We are supporting students where we can, but all assignments must be handed in on time. Students who do not submit work on time will not be allowed to re-submit their work and this will limit their final grade. These rules are set by the awarding body and we have to stick to them.

For students on BTEC qualifications, BTEC exams start 2nd May. Students will need to be available until the end of the w/c 13th June, as this is the external exam board deadline, for completing any necessary re-submission work. Failure to complete any assignments will unfortunately result in a student not being awarded their qualification.

Lessons and Study Leave

For students on A level programmes the last formal day of teaching is **Friday 26th May**.

The first A level exam is Monday 15th May.

We have found over the years that students revise most effectively by attending lessons for as long as possible and, if we start study leave too early, they lose that vital contact with their teachers who can help structure their revision and answer the questions that they have. However, we do recognise that immediately before an exam students might benefit from an exclusive focus on the exam which is about to take place. From Monday 15th May, we will authorise morning absences where a student has an afternoon exam as well as the afternoon before a morning exam the next day if they wish to use that flexibility. They will also miss some lessons as they will be in exams.

Students on mixed programmes (studying both A levels and BTECs) may need to attend BTEC lessons or one-to-one sessions after the last formal day of teaching if assignment work is not completed. Students will be made aware of what work

is outstanding and must stay connected by email to ensure that they complete the qualification successfully.

Planning for the future

Helping students to plan the next step after college is a vital part of the College programme. Since the start of Year 12 we have been working to ensure that students have an accurate and balanced understanding of the pros and cons of going to university and we are encouraged that so many continue to opt for this route. This year we have processed almost 689 applications via UCAS. Although the January deadline has passed, students can still submit late applications if they have a change of heart. We are just as pleased that every year many of our students progress directly into high quality jobs or high-level apprenticeships with top employers.

University Choices

All students who have applied to university must complete their UCAS choices forms by the date given to them by UCAS. We are encouraging them to make a sensible choice for their insurance offer, to ensure that this is a lower offer than their firm choice while hoping that they do well enough to obtain a place at their first choice! Those students who have had no offers or who have declined all their offers will be given an opportunity to enter UCAS Extra. The UCAS website has lots of useful information, and, of course, careers staff here in college will be happy to advise students as to the most appropriate choices for them. If students do decide to submit late applications, we strongly recommend that students use our digital platform service, Unifrog, to help them research their options.

More students each year are given unconditional offers. Whilst these may take the stress off students, it is important that they consider whether it is really the course and university that they want to go to, and not just be swayed by the tempting offer. It is vital that they still work hard to do the best they can this year with their A level/BTEC courses, as their results will impact on employment prospects and the extent to which they continue to make good progress in their chosen subjects will affect how soon they adapt to university-level study.

Apprenticeships

We encourage all students to keep their options open and apply for both university and apprenticeships. Students should now be accessing Unifrog on a regular basis to explore their options. Unifrog can be used to shortlist apprenticeship options and has live apprenticeship vacancies which are updated every 24 hours. For students who would prefer an apprenticeship, we must stress the importance of looking at apprenticeships as a whole; there are amazing opportunities out there and students (wherever possible), should not limit themselves to just

Nottingham. Regarding applications, students should be checking and applying for vacancies consistently. They may also like to search on gov.co.uk/apprenticeships.

Student Finance England applications

Applications are now open for student finance through www.gov.uk/studentfinance Once your young person has applied for student finance, they can manage the account online and if you need any assistance or advice you can contact the Student Finance England Helpline on 0300 100 0607. A great source of information is also their twitter account! Follow them on: @SFEngland and also have a look at their section on The Student Room for lots of useful help and advice: <https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/student-finance/>

College buses during the exam period

The College bus company knows that exams are taking place. They will do all they can to make sure your young person is at college on time. If for any reason the College bus is delayed, we advise students not to panic, to notify us of the delay (it is useful for students to have the College number in their mobile phone) and go to their exam as normal. Students will still have the full amount of time if the College buses are late, although this ruling does not apply to other forms of public transport.

During the exam period the buses will be leaving College in the evening at their usual times. Students whose exams finish after the normal departure time will need to arrange an alternative way of getting home.

Leavers' forms

All students need to complete a Leavers' Form, students have been asked to complete the form during tutorial W/C 27/03/23, and an electronic link has been shared with them on teams. Students must make sure that on the day of their last A level exam or last day of attendance for their BTEC course they bring in all their outstanding resources. All resources from the LIC need to be returned and their LIC account will be cleared. If there are no outstanding resources/debts, the College will refund the £60 deposit paid at enrolment. Please be patient; it does take some time to process, and it might be August before you receive your refund.

Exam Results Day (A level and BTEC)

Results day is Thursday 17th August. Students and parents/carers will be invited into college to collect results. College staff will be available to help and advise any student needing support. In addition, results will be released via email for those who do not come into college. Details to follow

End of Year Celebrations

Leavers' Day celebrations will include an End of Year College photograph and other activities.

And finally

6**BILBOROUGH**

SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

We look forward to continuing to work with you to give your young person the absolute best chance of success over the remaining months, to celebrate their achievements in the summer and to guide them as they move on to the next stage in their career. We are really grateful for all the support you have given the College over the past 2 years.