

School Newsletter

Issue 14, March 2020



Dear Parents

I wanted to send you my usual monthly newsletter to try and retain an element of normality during, what can only be described as, unprecedented times. Thankfully, the Upton community has come together and been very accommodating in offers of help and support.

I will try to keep you as up to date as possible on the situation with regard to school and continued learning for your daughter.

Update

Currently, school is open but only to those pupils who have been identified as vulnerable or for pupils whose parents' work is vital in the efforts to stop the Covid19 pandemic. We have a small number of staff who are in school each day on a rota basis.

The following provision has been made for pupils to enable them to study at home. These include:

- Setting up Google classrooms
- Making sure that pupils can access their school email accounts
- Discussion with pupils their access to the internet
- Adding work to the VLE
- Investigating the resources available on line that can be recommended to pupils
- Pulling together reading lists – please follow Upton Hall Library Twitter Feed @FcjUpton

Over the past 2 weeks, our staff pulled out all the stops to do something that no teachers have ever had to do. I have asked each of them to find a way of continuing to teach our pupils using none of their usual methods and to teach it in a totally different way. I am extremely proud of the way they have risen to this challenge. I, together with the Leadership Team, are in constant contact with all of our staff and we all know what is being done with all of the classes. You will get a good idea of the topics being covered from the curriculum booklets, which are on the website. You have

received a hard copy of these booklets at the Curriculum meetings held in the first term. If you have any questions, please send them to the appropriate year team email addresses, which are being monitored daily by the Heads of Year. They will forward the queries to the appropriate member of staff. If you have any safeguarding concerns, as I mentioned in my letter last week, we also have an email set up for this, safeguarding@uptonhall.org, which is monitored by Mrs Griffiths, our Designated Safeguarding Lead.

We have no idea how long these school closures will last and we would ask that you encourage your daughters to structure their day in order to complete the work. In this unprecedented situation, we will do our best to make sure that the detriment, which the school closure will have on your daughters' education, is minimised. Please be assured that all our staff are committed to providing your daughter with the best possible education during this extremely challenging time.

I would also like to thank you personally for the many messages of support and thanks, which parents sent into school last week. It was greatly appreciated. Never was there a time when we needed Marie Madeleine's words of 'courage and confidence' more than we do now.

Rise Theatre



As part of the Bicentennial celebrations, the FCJ Sisters commissioned an original theatre production on the life of Marie Madeleine and it has been touring all FCJ Schools in England, Ireland and Jersey. This play was performed free at Upton Hall by the Rise Theatre Company on Tuesday 11 February 2020. It was an exceptional performance and celebration of the life of our foundress and of the FCJ family. Refreshments were provided by the FCJ Sisters in our Dining Room.

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If you would like to find out more about the Bicentenary celebrations all around the world please visit <https://www.fcjsisters.org/our-story/bicentenary/>

Just a reminder from my previous email that the FCJ sisters are involved in work in the local area, beside their work in Upton Hall FCJ School. Find out more on <https://www.facebook.com/FCJCentreStHughs/> If you are interested in volunteering with the FCJ sisters in Liverpool, or would like to attend the events which they organise, or simply want to keep in touch, please contact Sr Els FCJ, Sr Lynne FCJ or Sr MaryAnne FCJ on fcjcentresthughs@gmail.com

Spanish trip



On 10 February, a group of Year 11 pupils, accompanied by Ms Cano and Miss Cochrane took part in the Spanish trip to Malaga. They enjoyed a rich variety of cultural and educational activities during their 5-day trip, which was to enhance their ability to speak Spanish in the run up to exams (which now unfortunately will not happen). The whole group were so positive and interested in everything. They made a real effort to communicate as much as possible in Spanish. It was lovely to hear about them getting on so well with their Spanish partners.

PTI Success

The Prince's Teaching Institute (PTI) has announced that the History Department at Upton Hall School FCJ has been commended in the inaugural Bernice

McCabe Award. [click to read more](#). Congratulations go to Mrs Davies and her talented team. The team work hard to ensure that our pupils have a love of History and year in year out, this is reflected in excellent History results at GCSE and A level.



Young Analysts – Winners!

Three Year 12 Chemistry students accompanied Mrs Bailey to the Young Analysts competition in Liverpool on 7 March. They won, earning them £200 for school equipment. They will now compete in the national final in London in June (if it takes place).

PE successes

Sporting achievements have been vast with the following achievements:

- Years 7 to 10 winning or coming second in the Merseyside Cross Country League and some individual winners in each year group. There was also success in the English Schools Cross Country with our girls reaching the regional finals.
- A number of girls have been selected for Merseyside Cross Country team, the Merseyside Schools Championship and the Fisec Games (GB Catholic Schools in Germany) in July 2020 as well as the Intern County and English Schools Cup.
- Year 7 & 8 reached the regional finals in the Wirral Schools Indoor Athletics competition.
- In Gymnastics, the U14 team were champions in the North West Regional competition and qualified for the National Finals.
- In Netball, Years 7, 8 and 9 finished fourth in the Wirral Schools Competition.
- Football saw the Year 7 & 8 teams qualify for the Nationals in the Sisters in Sport Cup and they were also Liverpool Academy Winners.

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- In Badminton KS3 and KS4 were winners in the Wirral Schools competition and KS4 were third in the Merseyside County competition.
- Our Relay U13 North West Champion swimmers finished ninth in the London National Schools gala.
- There were a number of individual successes with pupils achieving selection for Liverpool, Everton and Merseyside Football teams. There has also been national selection for four pupils in gymnastics and two pupils for swimming.

Building works

On 17 March 2020, the steel frame of the new Sixth Form Building was in place. This week the brickwork has commenced, however, it is possible that the completion date may be delayed as result of Covid-19. Nonetheless, we are looking forward to having a state of the art Sixth Form facility in the coming months.



Sixth Form applications

We had many applications for places in the Sixth Form including a number from external students. We are delighted to be introducing two new courses, A level Sociology and BTEC Health and Social Care. We listened to what pupils wanted and many of them did not want to leave Upton and all that it offers to

go elsewhere. So, as well as investing in the buildings, we have also invested in the curriculum. I am excited that our Upton girls will remain for another 2 years.

School Council request

I met with School Council earlier this month. They challenge us on many issues but, this time, they had a specific request. They have asked if it would be possible for pupils, from now on, to bring roll-on deodorant to school instead of aerosol based deodorants. They believe that the changing rooms would be better without aerosol based deodorants in the air. I completely agree with this viewpoint and would ask you to ensure that your daughter brings only roll on deodorants into school.

New Head Girl's Team

In the past few weeks, we have appointed a new Head Girl's Team to replace Emily and her fabulous team of Deputy Head girls. At Upton, we take this process very seriously and, in many ways, it is much tougher than an actual job interview. All of the students who are interested must initially apply by letter. This year, the applications were outstanding. A shortlist was made from this group and the 13 students chosen gave a talk to all Year 11 and 12 students about what they would hope to achieve in this role. This was a very tough task and I know that many adults would find this extremely stressful. All of the candidates were brilliant and I was very proud of them all. From this group, eight were chosen to move to the interview stage. I can honestly say that choosing six from the eight and ultimately choosing which one was to be Head Girl was one of the toughest things that I have had to do this year (and it has been quite a year!).

Finally, the decision was made and the Head Girl's Team for 2020/2021 is:

Molly - Head Girl
Hannah - Deputy Head Girl
Louisa - Deputy Head Girl
Amelia - Deputy Head Girl
Jennifer - Deputy Head Girl
Pal - Deputy Head Girl

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School Reports

Owing to the end of term coming far earlier than we would have anticipated, the Year 9 and 12 reports will not go out as planned in the next week. We were also unable to hold a number of parents' evenings. I have spoken to staff and we all agree that we have enough information to provide parents with a written report on how your daughters have progressed so far this year. It is my intention that we will get these reports out to parents next term although I will let you know exactly when this will be in my next newsletter.

Uniform availability

Following my last newsletter, when I announced changes both to supply of school uniform and the uniform itself from September 2020, I wanted to remind parents that plans are still in the process of purchasing of these items.

Work is currently underway to set up the online shop. Full details will follow regarding the purchase of items and we are hoping that final arrangements will be in place in May 2020.



As I mentioned in my last newsletter, the plan is that this is to be phased in. So, for example, should your daughter have the current blazer, she will be able to continue wearing this until such time that she requires a new one. This will be the case for all items of uniform, apart from **the skirt** which will be compulsory from September.

I have shown the new uniform to many pupils and the majority of them seem to like it, which was really important to me. I like it so much that I decided to wear it last week to bring some much needed cheer and help to raise some money for Caritas, as part of our Lenten Fundraising effort. Joining me in this effort were many of the Languages Department who wore the existing uniform, and Mr Jones who was an amazing sport and looked fabulous in a pleated skirt!!



Finally, in these very testing times please make sure you do everything possible to protect you and your loved ones. Be strong and stay safe.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

Mrs Andrea Gaunt
HEADMISTRESS