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# THE COOPERS' COMPANY AND COBORN SCHOOL

*Love as Brethren*

Headteacher: Ms Sue Hay, BA(Hons), PGDip, NPQH

St Mary's Lane, Upminster, Essex RM14 3HS

| Tel: 01708 250500 | Email: [info@cooperscoborn.org.uk](mailto:info@cooperscoborn.org.uk) | Website: [www.cooperscoborn.org.uk](http://www.cooperscoborn.org.uk) |

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Dear Parent(s) / Carer(s)

Most importantly, we hope you and your family are well. As ever, it will be a busy time for your son/daughter as they approach their final months with us at the school.

We are meeting the cohort for an assembly in the morning, when we will be sharing many of these key issues with your son/daughter.

I felt it would be useful to provide a reminder of upcoming dates/events; inevitably the letter is somewhat long!

#### **Student Finance Talk:**

If your son/daughter is looking to complete a UCAS application this year, then tomorrow morning they will benefit from an in-person session delivered by a student finance expert from the University of East Anglia. This bespoke session lasting 40 minutes provides students with everything they need to know about student finance. If your son/daughter is not applying to university this year, then they will have the option of a 1-2-1 session with Mrs King, Head of Careers instead. A reminder that we also have a parent presentation which can be accessed via YouTube – a letter was sent home about this last week.

#### **University applications:**

The national deadline for applications to most courses is January 26<sup>th</sup>. However, if any student still wishes to send off a UCAS form, then it is critical that they do so in the next 2-3 weeks. Time is of the essence, and unless there is clear rationale to send it off in mid-December, we would like as many forms sent off in the next 2 weeks. The school will be unable to process large numbers of applications in the final days of the term and so it is important that your son/daughter is proactive.

Please note that for UCAS applications, once students have received all their offers/rejections from the institutions they applied to, they need to ensure that they reply to offers by a certain date. This date varies for each student, based on when they received their final offer from an institution, but for most students this will be 9<sup>th</sup> June 2022. It is important that your son/daughter pays particular attention to their UCAS deadline and replies to all offers by this date. We would encourage students to wait until after their 2<sup>nd</sup> set of mock examination results in the Spring (March), before they confirm their decisions with UCAS, so as to make the most informed decision. However, we understand that some students are already certain of this decision and so may wish to do this as soon as possible. Universities will put pressure on offer holders with regards to accommodation choices, but I would not rush into this critical decision; my experience is that post-mock results will still leave sufficient time with regards to university accommodation choices.

In order to help your son/daughter make their final decisions, we will be promoting two important tools with them:



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- **'Virtual Open Days'** – Although universities are increasingly offering 'in-person' Open Days, there are also excellent virtual offers available. We would strongly recommend that your son/daughter engages with a number of open days (either in-person or virtual) before making their final decisions. For further details on virtual open days, please [click here](#)
- **Unibuddy:** Unibuddy is an innovative 'chat' solution which enables your son/daughter to 'chat' to existing undergraduates at the university of their choice. We have been promoting this resource for the past 12 months and students can access it via their UCAS Hub login. For more details on UniBuddy, please [click here](#)

Once students have received all their decisions from universities, they will have three options:

- Decide which offer they will make their first choice - known as 'firm acceptance'. They can only have one firm acceptance. If they accept an unconditional offer, as their firm acceptance they are agreeing that they will attend the course at that university or college. If they accept a conditional offer, they are agreeing that they will attend the course at that university or college if they meet the conditions of the offer. In this instance, they can accept another offer as an insurance choice.
- Decide which offer they will make as their backup choice - known as insurance acceptance. Their insurance choice can be conditional or unconditional (depending on what the terms of their unconditional offer are) and acts as a back-up, so if they don't meet the conditions for their firm choice but meet the conditions for their insurance, they will be committed to the insurance choice. They can only have one insurance choice. It is important that in the majority of cases this insurance offer is of lower grades than their first choice. Please note that each year students/parents disregard this advice and as a result end up in 'Clearing' in the summer. Around 20 students were in this position last summer. Please ensure that the 'insurance' choice is of lower grades than the 'firm' choice.
- Decline - Once they have decided which offer to accept firmly, and which (if any) to accept as an insurance, they must decline all other offers.

If a student is in an unfortunate position of not receiving any offers from institutions then they will then be eligible to use UCAS Extra or Clearing, depending on circumstances. UCAS Extra is a facility open from late February which enables students who have received no offers, to make one extra choice at this late stage. If your son/daughter wishes to use UCAS Extra then they should speak to one of the pastoral team at the school.

### **'The World of Work':**

If your son/daughter has not applied to university and/or is considering applying to the world of work it is important they work closely with Mrs King, Head of Careers in their final months at school. Mrs King runs an extensive rolling programme of employer sessions for your son/daughter to attend. Please promote the importance of attending them; they offer invaluable employability knowledge to the students. I am pleased to say that some of the 'job seekers' have already secured sponsored apprenticeship roles to start next September. It is important that your son/daughter is proactive in applying for roles; many have been open since the summer and even though the deadline may be in the future, recruitment is on a rolling basis and they will close the applications if the candidate field has been strong. If your son/daughter has been



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unsuccessful in securing a role before leaving school and has been seen to be proactive with their job searching working with Mrs King she will continue to support and guide them either on the telephone or by meeting them in school.

## **Mock Examinations: Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November to Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December**

Mrs Titley, Exams Officer has previously sent an extensive communication home about the mock examinations taking place next week and we will be discussing them in the assembly with your son/daughter in the morning. It is obviously a difficult balancing act for us explaining the importance of these examinations, whilst not creating undue stress and anxiety for your son/daughter. I wanted to reiterate five points:

- If your son/daughter is unable to attend any examination (for example, illness), then it is critical that you contact the school and inform the Exams Office, prior to the examination taking place
- With so much uncertainty still being caused by the pandemic, we continue to stress the importance of these examinations. For the past two academic years, these internal examinations were used to formulate the final A Level grades that students received. Should the government cancel the A Level examinations next summer, then these internal examinations take on added importance.
- Due to the point above, the examinations run in a very strict manner and your son/daughter is expected to adhere to all the regulations (for example, no mobile phones/electronic devices).
- Your son/daughter will be provided with feedback on their performance by their subject teachers as soon as possible in lessons (from early December) - they will also find out an 'overall grade' for each mock examination sat, through mid-December and early January.
- Please note that these grades will be communicated to you formally, in early January prior to the Year 13 Consultation Evening – please do not wait until this formal communication; have a conversation with your son/daughter before Christmas, as they will almost certainly know how they got on!

## **Year 13 Consultation Evening: Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

This will provide you with a critical update following the internal examinations which took place before Christmas. It will take place 'virtually' and we will write to you immediately after Christmas with further information.

## **Interview Preparation**

Many students will be taking part in university or job interviews in the coming months. In order to support them further information will be coming home in the next 24 hours regarding two excellent resources that we are promoting.

## **Early closures/INSET days:**

A reminder that we have a few closures to be aware of

- Next Monday (22<sup>nd</sup> November)– school is closed due to INSET training
- Last day of the Autumn Term – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December – we close early at around 12:15pm
- Start of Spring Term – the school is closed on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> January, with students returning on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January

## **Other important information:**



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- Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2022 – A Level Results' Day. Please make a note of this date in your diary – we strongly recommended that you/your son/daughter are in the UK and that the family do not book a holiday at this time. Full support will be available to students on this date and on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> August in terms of making important decisions. All too often, families book holidays on this date and are unable to access the specialised support. There will be no Sixth Form staff in school after this date, until the start of term.
- Uniform – as we approach the winter months, could I please ask you to ensure that your son/daughter continues to follow the school uniform code. In particular coats, scarves and gloves should be plain and dark coloured (either black or navy blue).
- Paid employment – over the past few months we have been having increasing conversations with students/parents regarding the impact that paid employment is having on study. As a guide your son/daughter should not be working in paid employment for more than 10 hours per week (at the very most!). We know that any more than this almost always has a detrimental impact on A Level outcomes.
- Vaping – it is important that I reiterate that this is strictly forbidden, both in-school as well as 'off-site', in the local area, in school uniform. Vaping accessories are also prohibited on the school site as a 'banned item'. Any student seen vaping/bringing vaping accessories into school is at risk of serious sanctions, including exclusion.
- Leaving the school site during the day – this is not permitted before 12:15pm and after this time, it is only allowed if you son/daughter 'signs out' in accordance with our Health & Safety obligations. Once again, any breaches of this policy will be strictly dealt with.
- Learning Zone – we have a silent study area in the school and we will be reminding all students that this is a silent study area from 8am to 5pm. R16/R17 are also timetabled as silent study facilities during the school day. If you could please reinforce this in conversations with your son/daughter at home.

I hope this letter is useful in dealing with all the issues we feel you need to be aware of. Year 13 are a wonderful cohort and we are proud of all they have achieved over the difficult past 18 months.

We look forward to supporting your son/daughter through their mocks and over their final 6 months. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact one of us at the school.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Bell  
Deputy Head

Mr J Teece  
Head of Year 13