

Headlines



NORTHAMPTON
HIGH SCHOOL

Termly Parent Newsletter
September 2021

Welcome back!

I am thoroughly delighted to be welcoming pupils, parents and staff back to school this September and I trust you have had an enjoyable summer.

Following an extended period of restrictions and disruption I know we are all looking forward to returning to clubs, activities, trips and truly learning without limits. Whether your daughter is joining us for the first time, or you are seasoned Northampton High School parents, I am sure you will be inspired and excited by the year ahead.

We are launching our revamped Clubs and Activities Programme for all pupils, alongside our brand new Enrichment Programme for Years 10 to 13. Both programmes offer a wealth of opportunities for every pupil to find an activity to enjoy with friends, to make new friends and to challenge themselves to gain knowledge and skills.

For parents, I am happy to announce our series of Parent Talks and Forums for 2021/22.



I hope you will agree that there is something for everyone, and I sincerely hope you find the series useful, as well as a great opportunity to meet with other parents and staff face-to-face in school for informal conversations.

Mrs Adele O'Doherty
Acting Head

Contents

- 1 Welcome back!
- 2 EdTech and the Digacy programme at Northampton High
- 3 Junior School
- 3 Sixth Form - new Year 12 and Year 13 cohort
- 4 Farewell to the Class of 2021
- 5 Class of 2021 destinations
- 6 School Operations
- 7, 8 & 9 Staff News
- 9 Term Dates



Join us for our Open Morning
Saturday 2 October 2021

EdTech and the Digacy programme at Northampton High

Last year in Headlines, I wrote about the importance of digital technology in our school as a tool to encourage collaboration and communication between teachers and pupils, and in the wider school and GDST community. Given the move to a second period of online Guided Home Learning, and the success of our 1 to 1 device policy in ensuring excellent educational provision could continue, we have been really pleased with the impact of the overall Digacy programme so far.

The word Digacy, like literacy, numeracy and oracy, is effectively a catch-all. It aims to encompass everything that builds digital literacy, including online awareness, computational thinking and the creation of digital content, to support the future skills that our pupils will need. We have worked hard to build these elements into the curriculum in a range of ways, from coding challenges in Junior School to eportfolios in our Transferable Skills course in Key Stage 3, to the Computing programmes of study and Enrichment courses on offer in the Senior School.



From the pedagogical perspective, Digacy also supports what is known in the profession as EdTech. EdTech refers to the use of digital tools as a means to transform and individualise the way students approach studying, as well as inspiring curiosity and creating inquisitive learners. Using technology to support learning comes with ecological benefits, such as the reduction of paper use, as well as practical ones, such as enabling teachers to offer more personalised feedback and support via tools such as Mote and the Google Classroom platform. Last term, we had a day of dedicated training from Google educational experts; as part of the GDST we benefit from the services of innovation specialists who provide regular support for developing teachers' skills in this area.



In addition, this year we will be setting up an EdTech working party of teachers and students, who will delve deeper into the world of digital teaching and learning.

Pupil 1 to 1 devices from Year 5 to 13 are an essential part of the success of our digital programmes. We are grateful to parents and guardians for the support offered in the last year as we moved quickly to establish the policy. Over time, we will review this area to ensure we offer the best advice about buying and replacing devices, and, for now, we are confident that the approach we have taken is fit for purpose, allowing for the exciting development of EdTech in school.

Please do remember to ensure devices are fully charged each night and remind pupils that they should carry devices in a hard case to protect them from damage. If you would like to discuss this area further please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mr Henry Rickman

Deputy Head Academic & School Digital Leader

Junior School

It is so lovely to be back in school and to see our pupils keen to reconnect and get to know our new members of the school community!

Last academic year presented many challenges for staff and pupils in the Junior School through which we learnt so many new skills, from how to make online lessons engaging for young children to keeping vital friendships thriving through a computer screen.

Each member of the Junior School has grown and developed in sometimes unexpected ways through this time, and we are excited about taking our skills and understanding of ourselves into the new academic year full of energy and anticipation.

We are looking forward to class assemblies, day trips, residential as well as performing for parents in nativity plays and celebrations at the end of term. We are also so pleased to be welcoming parents and visitors back into Junior School starting with our Curriculum Information Evenings during the **second week of term**.



Working in year group 'bubbles' made it very difficult to have fun together as a community and we are excited to sing together again in our assemblies and look forward to Christmas parties - and maybe even a Halloween disco. Please do get in touch if you would be happy to help out with events such as this.

Mrs Jo Purvey-Tyrer
Assistant Head (Junior School)

Sixth Form - new Year 12 and Year 13 cohort

As Year 13 students take up their position at the top of the school, and Year 12 join the Sixth Form, I imagine some students may be feeling similar to me: a little nervous, but excited about the year ahead! New beginnings are full of potential and I cannot wait to see what our Sixth Form will make of all their opportunities this year. While Year 13 will be focusing their energies on universities, UCAS applications and plans for life after school, our Year 12 will be getting to grips with their new A Levels and the wide range of Electives and co-curricular activities on offer to them.

There may be some nervousness, I suspect, about the return to being in one physical space again. I am confident that we will all enjoy being in one another's company, able to take part in events that run across year groups. Mrs Carr, the tutor team and I will make sure that students feel comfortable being back in school.



I certainly know that our Year 13 students will make Year 12 feel very much welcome. We also look forward to seeing Year 12 parents at the Welcome Evening on **Wednesday 29 September**.

Mr Anton Viesel
Director of Sixth Form

Farewell to the Class of 2021



The atmosphere in school on A Level results day was truly wonderful, as students celebrated their results and confirmation of university places. It was a particularly happy occasion, as parents, students and staff were able to meet in the High School without social restrictions for the first time in many months.

We think of Sixth Form at the High School as part of a four-year journey: from the start of the GCSE years through to the completion of A Levels. But on results day we see that these four years are themselves, of course, merely part of an ongoing journey.

Our students performed remarkably well at A Level - with 40 percent of grades at A* - meaning that almost all students met the requirements for their first-choice university destination. The energy and enthusiasm on results day, as students looked firmly towards taking their next steps, was palpable.

It is such a pleasure to see the wide range of courses that our students are pursuing. I could pick out many discrete stories of success, but would like to highlight two that perhaps demonstrate how individuals can flourish at the High School.

Sophie Cox will read for a BA in Theology and Religion at Cambridge University, having been ably supported by Miss Robinson and Ms Eldridge. Lia Halpin, meanwhile, will be pursuing a sales degree apprenticeship at Mondelez, one of the world's leading multinationals.

Aside from a variety of written tests, both girls were interviewed several times. Their success in the face of truly global competition is testament, in my view, not only to their own skills, hard work and talents, but to the holistic way in which the High School facilitates the development of its Sixth Formers.

Finally, we wish all the Class of 2021 the very best as they continue on their journeys.

Mr Anton Viesel
Director of Sixth Form

Class of 2021 destinations

Subject University	
Accounting and Finance Bath	Marine Biology Newcastle
Accounting and Finance Manchester Metropolitan	Marketing Liverpool
Ancient History Durham	Marketing Manchester Metropolitan
Archaeology and Classical Civilizations York	Mathematics Edinburgh
Architecture Newcastle (2022)	Mathematics Warwick
Art Foundation University of the Arts London	Maths and Philosophy Birmingham
Art History and Visual Culture Exeter	Maths and Physics Bath
Biological Sciences UCL	Maths with year abroad Birmingham
Biology Durham	Mechanical Engineering Bath
Biology St Andrews	Medicine King's College London
Business and Management Sussex	Medicine Manchester
Business Management and Marketing Nottingham Trent	Medicine Queen Mary's
Chemistry York	Medicine St George's, University of London
Classics Durham	Mod Lang German and Russian St Andrews
Degree Apprenticeship Mondelez International	Natural Sciences Nottingham
Economics Manchester	Nursing (Adult) Birmingham
Economics Newcastle	Nursing (Adult) Nottingham Trent
Economics Nottingham	Psychology Keele
Education Manchester	Psychology Loughborough
Education and Sociology Birmingham	Psychology Sheffield
Education Studies Sussex	Psychology Sussex
English and Film Studies Royal Holloway	Psychology with Criminology UEA
Graphic Design University of the Arts London	Religion and Theology Durham
History Liverpool	Rural Enterprise Royal Agricultural University
History and European Language UCL	Sport and Exercise Science Bath
Human Resources Management Leeds	Sport and Exercise Science Essex
International Management and Spanish Exeter	Sports Exercise and Therapy Loughborough College
Law with Criminology Birmingham	Theology and Religion Cambridge
Management Nottingham	Veterinary Nursing Harper Adams
Management and Marketing Birmingham	Veterinary Science Nottingham

School Operations



Thank you for making me feel so welcome in my first few weeks at Northampton High. I have been busy over the summer getting an understanding of the school from a financial and operational perspective. If you have any questions or ideas on how we can improve in these areas, please do feel free to let me know, or come along to meet me in person at the Parent Talks 'Meet the DFO' event on **Monday 4 October, 6pm to 7pm.**

The Operations and Site Team have been busy over the summer break with work taking place to ensure we can maintain a safe operational site. For example, we have had kitchen deep cleans, electrical safety works, playground and sport equipment checks, fire system maintenance and, of course, lots of painting!

We are very pleased to confirm the Theatre's tiered seating has now been replaced - please do take a look when you are next in school.

Covid-19: We know that there have been many changes to the government guidance over the summer period since restrictions have been lifted. We will continue to follow the latest guidance, and will update you if we have to implement any additional measures. Please do get in touch if you have any questions or concerns.

Our school site is now open once again to external groups in the evenings, at weekends and during the school holidays. Some of these include: Badminton, Football, Karate, Gymnastics, Netball, Football, Swimming, Dancing, Tennis, Hockey, Northampton Music and Performing Arts Trust (Ensembles), and Pauline Quirke Performing Arts Academy.

If you would like further details of when these group operate and how to get in touch with the relevant organisations running this activities please contact: lettings@nhs.gdst.net.

School Transport: Vectare now fully-manages our School Transport service. Bookings can be made online at <https://northamptonhigh.vectare.co.uk/> for regular or ad-hoc journeys. The online system will allow parents to see that their daughter has



boarded the bus safely, track the location of the bus, and also allows the driver to log the bus as delayed should there be any traffic issues which will send an email to any parent who has a pupil booked on that journey.

Vectare will also operate our Late Bus Service, which operates Monday-Thursday and needs to be booked 6 hours in advance via the online system. Our minibus drivers will amend the route each day depending on demand, but if you would like to make use of this service even on an ad-hoc basis we ask that you request a Late Bus stop to be made available by contacting Vectare directly via the details below.

Additionally, if you have any feedback or questions around bus stops and routes please contact them in the first instance at: contact@vectare.co.uk or **0115 777 3035**.

Catering: Breakfast club is available daily 08:00-08:30 in our dining room - parents are welcome to join us too. Tuck shop and break time food will also be available daily during the morning break. Payment for both of these services is made by swipe card, which needs to be pre-loaded with credit via Parent Pay. Swipe cards are available on request by contacting nhsaccounts@nhs.gdst.net.

Mr Alex Hume
Director of Finance

Welcome to new Staff September 2021

A warm welcome to the following staff who join us for the new term:

James Campling	Music Assistant
Nicky Gill	Science Teacher
Lucy John	Junior School Classroom Assistant
Debbie Lam	Cleaner
Nicola Lines	Subject Leader Biology
Lucy Marlow	Catering Assistant
Laura Marriott	Subject Leader Drama
Romain Pietropaoli	French Teacher & PSHEE Coordinator
Luke Smith	Customer Experience Manager (starts 22 September)
Natalie Smith	Year 4 Teacher
Sasi Sivakumaran	Catering Assistant, as maternity leave cover for Louise Gable
Emily Wall	PE Teacher

Governor News

During 2020/2021, we said farewell to two School Governors - Mrs Karen Holland and Mrs Annewen Rowe. Their contribution and input into a wide variety of school matters during their respective terms in office was extremely valuable.

Northampton High School was most fortunate to have benefitted from their unwavering support and commitment.

We were delighted to welcome a parent governor, Mrs Sharn Nandhra, in the spring term.

Staffing Changes

As you are aware, Mrs Petryszak is not returning to Northampton High School and we wish her every success for the future. Whilst we recruit for a permanent Head and a Head of Junior School there have been some necessary changes to ensure continuity across the school.

I shall remain as Acting Head of the whole school from Nursery to Sixth Form. In this I will be supported fully by the Extended Leadership Team. Mrs Jo Purvey-Tyrer has stepped into a temporary role of Assistant Head (Junior School). This brings her onto the Extended Leadership Team as the Junior School expert. Please note that due to her teaching commitments, Mrs Purvey-Tyrer is not Acting Head of Junior School. Additionally, Miss Rebecca Kneen has stepped into the role of Assistant Head (Pastoral). Miss Kneen is a highly experienced pastoral leader, who was most recently Head of Years 10 and 11 and Deputy Director of Sixth Form. She will now coordinate and lead on pastoral matters across the school.

I am sincerely grateful to Mr Rickman, Academic Deputy Head, who has taken on some additional responsibilities this term to support me as Acting Head, along with the remainder of the Senior Leadership Team: Mrs Wilmot (Director of Marketing and Admissions), Mr Viesel (Director of Sixth Form) and Mr Hume (Director of Finance and Operations). We are looking forward to a productive and positive year ahead.

Mrs Nandhra was able to join her first face to face Governors' meeting in June and enjoyed the operations-focused Governors' Workshop which included a 'behind the scenes' site tour and presentations from some members of the operations team on their individual specialisms.

I would like to thank the School Governing Body for their ongoing support and dedication.

Mrs Adèle O'Doherty
Acting Head

Leavers summer 2021

We said goodbye to a number of colleagues at the end of the academic year and, as they left, we asked them to share with us their abiding memories of working at the school.

Julia Cantwell had been at the school for 11 years, to begin with as a teacher of Physics, then Head of Science and most recently as Director of Sixth form. She says that the opportunity to work with and hopefully inspire and support an ambitious community of young women has been her overriding memory. She has particularly valued being part of the GDST community and the unique opportunities for collaboration and networking this affords.

Russell Attwood came to the school as Head of Biology 17 years ago and with him came his joy of teaching and, of course, his pumpkins and memorable assemblies every autumn with his own particular style and an original song. He says, "It is a special school to teach in because of the girls' genuine interest in learning and their response to teaching. The facilities are excellent as are the grounds; for example lovely lichens on the tennis courts and great grassland diversity in the Derngate courtyard. The school has also helped me develop my interest in pedagogy, evidence-based teaching and the neuroscience of teaching".

Elizabeth Pearson is retiring after 14 years as a Biology teacher. Her overriding memory is that the High School is a very special place to teach as it's not too big and class sizes are much smaller than at her previous schools. She says, "You can really spend more time with the students which is very rewarding. You can give more of yourself to each individual girl. The girls really want to learn and it's the best teaching environment for both students and teachers. Also, the Biology and Science department has always been special. We are a very close set of colleagues who I have valued as friends for many years. It's a happy place to work and learn".

Alison Scanlan is retiring after 5 years at the school as a Geography teacher. She says, "I have loved teaching in the Geography department and Humanities Faculty; the staff are brilliant and so caring and supportive. It has been refreshing being able to teach and the girls have been welcoming and want to learn. I shall really miss you all".

Charlotte Hurst-Ramsay has left the school to pursue the role of Head of PSHEE at a school in Brackley, after 17 years at the school as a teacher of PE and Head of PSHEE. She says, "The school and pupils are amazing and always go above and beyond to help you out. There hasn't been a day when someone hasn't made me laugh and I shall really miss that. The school has inspired my love of all things pastoral, and from my first promotion in 2006 to Head of Year and then Head of Lower School, I have enjoyed coming to school. The school has also inspired my love of travelling, with school sports tours and ski trips".

Clare Care leaves us as Head of Drama after 16 years and remembers her interview at the school, as she had just graduated from stage school. She says, "I have really enjoyed my time at the school and the freedom to choose the many plays, musicals and shows that I have directed over the years. This has supported my creative flair and enabled me to grow as a practitioner and experiment with the ever changing face of theatre".

Nicola O'Mahony joined us 2 years ago as a teacher of Year 1. "I was eager to work at Northampton High School for several reasons. I had attended an independent girls' school myself and was very aware of the amazing opportunities that a school such as this can present for its pupils. I had also heard of the excellent reputation of Northampton High School and was keen to make a positive contribution. Being a part of the GDST has many values and having connections to the network of schools is a fantastic opportunity to develop professionally and share ideas and best practise with other schools. Northampton High School is a special place to work. The children have made my time incredibly memorable, and they have made each day different and delightful in its own way".

Staff News

We also say goodbye and a huge thank you to Katie Abu and Carlota Larossa who have covered staff who have been absent this year in the Modern Foreign Languages faculty.

From the support staff we say farewell to Bonnie Sampson whose association with the school goes back some time as her daughter attended the school. She says, "I've really enjoyed my time at the High School and will miss not coming into work each day. It has made me keep feeling young and I will miss all the good friends I have made over the years."



Term Dates

Academic year 2021-2022	
Thursday 2 September 2021	INSET Day (staff)
Friday 3 September 2021	INSET Day (staff)
Monday 6 September 2021	Autumn term starts
Monday 18 October 2021 to Friday 29 October 2021	October half term
Friday 17 December 2021	Autumn term ends
Tuesday 4 January 2022	INSET Day (staff)
Wednesday 5 January 2022	Spring term starts
Monday 14 February to Friday 18 February 2022	February half term
Friday 1 April 2022	Spring term ends
Monday 4 April 2022 to Monday 25 April 2022	Easter break
Monday 25 April 2022	INSET Day (staff)
Tuesday 26 April 2022	Summer term starts
Monday 30 May 2022 to Friday 3 June 2022	May half term
Friday 15 July 2022	Summer term ends

Academic year 2022-2023	
Thursday 1 September 2022	INSET Day (staff)
Friday 2 September 2022	INSET Day (staff)
Monday 5 September 2022	Autumn term starts
Monday 24 October 2022 to Friday 4 November 2022	October half term
Friday 16 December 2022	Autumn term ends
Friday 6 January 2023	INSET Day (staff)
Monday 9 January 2023	Spring term starts
Monday 13 February to Friday 17 February 2023	February half term
Friday 31 March 2023	Spring term ends
Monday 3 April 2023 to Wednesday 19 April 2023	Easter break
Wednesday 19 April 2023	INSET Day (staff)
Thursday 20 April 2023	Summer term starts
Monday 29 May 2023 to Friday 2 June 2023	May half term
Friday 14 July 2023	Summer term ends