



Newsletter

The White Hills Park Trust

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 whptrust.org

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Exams

A couple of weeks ago, I wrote about the decision to suspend all exams and external assessments this year, as a result of the level of disruption to schooling that had already taken place, and the potential for further interruptions. Since then, further details have emerged regarding the proposals for the awarding of qualifications to Year 11 and Year 13 students this year. I know that individual schools are contacting students and parents of these year groups, but it is a topic in which others may also be interested.

As expected, it is proposed to award grades on the basis of teacher assessment, whilst ensuring that this is founded on robust evidence from a range of sources. These could include assessment papers, described in the media as 'mini-exams', which will be administered by the school. Exam boards will carry out checks to make sure that schools are using appropriate methods and that grades are accurate, and we will carry out our own quality assurance, both internally and across schools. We have an important responsibility, both to our own students and to the system as a whole, to ensure that the grades we award are realistic and reflect the standard achieved, and as you would expect, we will do this with integrity.

The timing of results will also be very different, given that we do not have to send papers off to be marked. We will submit final grades by mid-June and results will be issued in early July. This will be helpful to ensure that we can help all students to find the right destination for next year.

At the moment, these are only proposals and are the subject of consultation. You are very welcome to contribute to the consultation, which runs for another week and can be found [here](#).

School Buildings

It's slightly ironic that I'm writing about school buildings at a time when so much learning is taking place at home, but looking after our sites is always a key priority. We have this week submitted Condition Improvement Fund bids for all of our schools to maintain and improve the quality and fabric of our buildings, including the ongoing renewal of roofs and elevations and the upgrading of our heating installations. We will receive the outcome of the bids later in the spring.

As many of you will know, over the last few years, we have been working to secure a new school building for Bramcote College, using the receipts from the sale of the land of former playing fields on Coventry Lane. Our solicitors are currently drawing up the final legal agreement with Nottinghamshire County Council for the transfer of the land to the Trust and we are applying for the necessary government permissions before putting the land on the market.

It has always been a central part of our vision that our new school will be at the heart of our community, as it is for all of the schools in the Trust. The best way to ensure that this happens is to keep people informed and involved in defining the vision of our new school. One way we will do this is to invite parents and other local people to a termly meeting as we bring our new building to life. The first meeting will be held online on Monday 1st February at 6pm. All are welcome. We will give a presentation to update you on the state of the project so far, and then lead a discussion on the aspirations for our new school. We will publish details on how to join the meeting in next week's Newsletter.

Dr. Paul Heery
Chief Executive Officer



Can you help?

Throughout the pandemic, we have worked tirelessly to develop our remote provision and are extremely proud to be in a position where teachers are delivering remote live lessons to students at home every day, maintaining consistency, progress and impacting well-being. As such, we are reaching out to our amazing local community on behalf of some of our families to see if there are any laptops or chrome books no longer needed that may be put to good use and donated to the school to help families in need.

We are passionate about ensuring that no student at Alderman White School is disadvantaged by not having the equipment or facility to learn at home effectively. Sadly, some students have no device to work on at home and some families are struggling with juggling work, sharing equipment and home-schooling. If anyone has an old laptop, not being used, then we would be hugely grateful for any donations.

If you are a local business or have contacts with someone who may also be able to support, please do spread the word of our appeal. We will securely ensure any data is removed before passing on to families in need.

The Department for Education has provided a small number of laptops for which we are very grateful, but we want all our students to be able to make the same progress and receive the same support. Not having a device impacts progress, and is a cause of additional anxiety in already adverse circumstances.

If you can help by donating a suitable working device, please email mandy.holling@whptrust.org and we will liaise with you as soon as possible. Alternatively, you can call the school office on 0115 9170424.

Thank you, as ever, for your ongoing support.

A community of opportunity for all!

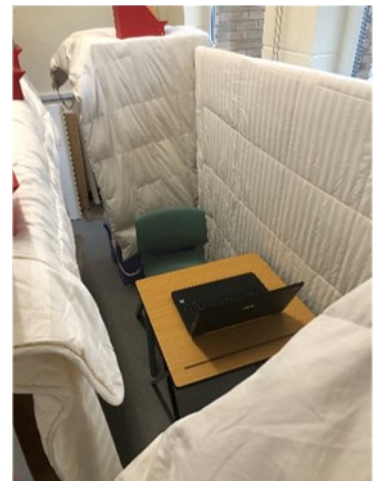
Mrs M Holling

Lockdown Library Services

Brilliant Book Award

We would like your support to encourage all students to continue to make time for reading during the current lockdown. Not only is reading an important skill that they will use throughout their lives, it also enables us to develop empathy, escape to another world and is good for our mental well-being.

For Key Stage 3 students (years 7 to 9 at Alderman White and years 7 and 8 at Bramcote College) we are promoting the Brilliant Book Award. This is a local book award organised by the Nottinghamshire Education Library Service and sponsored by The Bookcase in Lowdham. In 'normal' years we would get together a group of committed readers in Year 7 who would attempt to read all six short-listed books and most of them would have the opportunity to go on a trip to see one of the short-listed authors. This year we have had to re-think it. Fortunately, we have permission from five of the six publishers of the short-listed books to record ourselves reading the books so that they can be made available to the students. This is being coordinated through the English departments in the two schools. Many thanks to Usborne Books, Macmillan, Chicken House, Barrington Stoke and Nosy Crow.



Our homemade recording booth





We have set up a separate BBA group on Teams for those students who would like an opportunity to share their thoughts about the books with a wider group. If they would like to do this they can email library@whptrust.org and ask me to add them to the Team. I can then do that and send them more information such as how to submit reviews for the Brilliant Book Award website. The books are on Accelerated Reader so students in Years 7 and 8 can quiz on them when they have finished listening.

The intention is that this year's author events will be virtual. They are likely to be recorded presentations or interviews through Zoom which can then be shared with the English classes. Whilst not being as exciting as going to see an author in person, this will at least give more students an opportunity to 'see and hear' from an author.

We normally round off the Brilliant Book Award experience with an inter-school quiz. We lost this event last year as it was due to happen just at COVID was ramping up in mid-March and we weren't all as adept with technology as we are now. Of course, the circumstances have changed again and it may just be a step too far in terms of logistics. We will keep our fingers crossed!

Accelerated Reader

If you have a son or daughter in Year 7 or 8 please encourage them to complete Accelerated Reader quizzes as they finish a book. If they have forgotten their username or password they can contact their English teacher or email library@whptrust.org. However, the most common issue when students say their username and password doesn't work is that they are 'Googling' AR rather than following a link. The link can be found on the school websites. For Alderman White students the route is Students→Resources→Accelerated Reader and for Bramcote College students the route is Resources→Accelerated Reader. Students can also find the URL in their planners. Nine times out of ten this will sort out the problem as it ensures students are logging in to our AR site, not trying to log in to another school's! We are continuing to award INSIRE points for successful quizzing and are storing up 'virtual scratch cards' for those scoring 90% or higher on a book that is within their ZPD (Reading range).

Online Resources

At these unusual times it can be very good for our mental well-being to escape to another world for a while. Please encourage your son or daughter to take a look at the reading opportunities below:

Our public libraries don't just have physical resources, they also have an online offer. If you are a member of Nottinghamshire libraries (now part of INSPIRE) and can find your library card [you may want to explore this link](#) - the main page for their digital offer (ebooks, audiobooks, emagazines and newspapers).



Oak National Academy, in conjunction with the National Literacy trust have just started their [Virtual School Library](#). Each week they will feature an author talking about their books and they will provide access to an online version of one of that author's books for a week. The first author, Jacqueline Wilson, launched on January 17th with her book The Story of Tracey Beaker. Look out for other authors in the coming weeks.



Obooko is a platform for authors to self-publish. [Here is the link for the Teens and Young Adult fiction page](#), but they have lots of other categories, as well as non-fiction.



Thanks to Amazon who have made a selection of [audio books for children free to listen](#) to whilst the schools are closed. It's from their American site so there is a US bias, meaning many of the titles are unfamiliar to us, but maybe this is a time to try something new.



If you have an Amazon Prime account [you can download a limited selection of books for free](#). I believe they change regularly. Even without a Kindle you can download the app to read them.





Technology (Engineering) Careers chat – Year 9 GCSE Options

Clearly our priority is doing what we can to support the AW community at the moment, but if I am allowed to look ahead, STEM (Science Technology Engineering Maths) in the UK is still a leader in the world for innovation, and as parents and students consider their GCSE choices there is good reason to be optimistic about STEM and Engineering careers in the UK.

- There is still a huge skills shortage in UK Engineering and STEM
- IT and Technology related to industry jobs are still seeing strong growth.
- Engineering students are second only to medics in securing full-time jobs

The Gender Gap

- According to a British Gas survey, almost half (48%) of young women do not even consider careers in STEM sectors, citing a lack of STEM knowledge (30%), a perception that the industries are sexist (13%), and a belief that STEM careers are better suited to the opposite sex (9%).
- However, In a survey of 300 female engineers, 84% said they were either happy or extremely happy with their career choice.

Occasionally 'Engineers' are still perceived as blue collar factory workers or car mechanics, and these are still roles in Engineering. However the reality is only a small percentage of Engineering and Technology is based upon traditional blue collar 'metal bashing' in 2021, and most is high technology, professional, and world class in the UK.



Our GCSE is a 'design' based course that is open to, and will suit everyone. It is gender neutral.

OCR Engineering Design is a foundation style course which helps the student understand the globally required skills of 'problem solving' and 'presenting solutions.' It includes opportunities to engage in 21Century CAD and 3D printing manufacturing, as well as building project management and practical skills. From there many jobs including, Project Design/Management, Graphics, Architecture, Robotics and life sciences are all realistic possibilities, as well as more traditional trades.

Please feel free to get in touch if you would like to discuss this further.

Mr D Simkins

Research highlights STEM gender gap, *The Engineer*, 10 August 2015, theengineer.co.uk/research-highlightsstem-gender-gap
What jobs are available post-lockdown? bbc.co.uk/news/business-53414413

Coming soon to Instagram for BC6F

From us to you; video clips recorded especially for you, by current some of our current Year 12 and Year 13 BC6F students, explaining with they chose BC6F and what it's been like studying with us and how we're helping them achieve their future goals.

Remember: No one will love you as much as we do ♥

[@bramcotecollegesixthform](https://www.instagram.com/bramcotecollegesixthform)