

PARENT + CARER UPDATE



Dear Parent/Carer,

As I write to you this April, our Year 13 students are coming to the end of their studies and will be taking their final assessments. In a few months' time, they will leave us and move on to universities, apprenticeships and the world of work. Our Year 12 students are now almost half way through their time with us and many will be making important decisions about their futures. The updates that follow are very important and I ask that you take the time to read the relevant sections carefully.

As always if you have a question or concern, the best person to contact is your child's tutor. Alternatively, you can email info@connell.ac.uk and we'll be able to direct your enquiry to the most appropriate person.

Exam Period Absence Arrangements

The Joint Council for Qualifications has updated its [guidance](#) on the special consideration process during the summer 2022 exam period. It includes advice for students displaying Covid-19 symptoms and for those with a positive test result. You will want to read Appendix 1 (page 17 onwards) so that you understand the procedure if your child is forced to be absent for an exam, or has something that affects their performance. Your role as parent/carer is vital during this process, as you will have to certify the absence of your child by signing [a declaration](#), even if they are over 18.

If a candidate cannot attend an exam for any of the acceptable reasons, parents/carers must ring reception (available from 8am on exam days), where you'll be asked to put this in writing via email to exams@connell.ac.uk. We must be told in advance of the exam starting that the student has an acceptable reason for the absence.

Parents/carers and students are reminded that:

- The awarding of a grade through the special consideration process can only be made where they are absent from an exam or non-exam assessment component for an acceptable reason.
- The guidance states that “a candidate who is staying at home and avoiding contact with others, in line with UKHSA guidance at the time of an exam, is considered to be absent from the exam for an acceptable reason.” This includes candidates who are displaying [the symptoms described in the UKHSA guidance](#) advising them to stay at home as well as those with a positive Covid-19 test result.
- There is no requirement for a candidate to complete a Covid-19 test to provide evidence of their absence from an exam.
- The exams have been spaced accordingly so that if a student is isolating due to Covid 19, then they will be able to sit the other exams in the subject once their isolation period has ended. Special consideration cannot be given to a student who misses all of their exams for a subject.
- In addition, if a school doubts the authenticity of the details provided by a candidate within the declaration they are advised to investigate the matter as suspected candidate malpractice using the usual procedures.

This [helpful Department of Education guide](#) has been shared with students.

Study Leave for Exams:

- Students with a morning (9am) exam are not required to attend their afternoon lessons the day before.
- Students with an afternoon (1pm) exam are not required to attend their morning lessons on the same day.
- Full time study leave for Year 13 students starts on Monday 6 June. Students are not required to attend lessons (unless directed to do so by their teacher/senior staff) but may study at college if they choose to.

Reminder: students must arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of their exams and are encouraged to plan their time between exams carefully.

Students Last Day at College

Year 13:

- A Level students finish on the day of their last exam.
- BTEC/other students finish when the lead internal verifier of their qualification confirms they have completed the required work.

- The earliest date a Year 13 student may stop attending college as normal is Friday 27 May.
- Lessons continue as normal until May half-term where students will be completing assignment work and attending revision/exam technique sessions. Please support us by ensuring your child attends every day.

Year 12:

- The final day of term for Year 12 students is Friday 8 July.

Managing Stress

As the exams approach, we are aware that students will feel stressed. Students' emotional health is a college priority. Throughout the year, we have provided students with various ways to manage and deal with stress. As a reminder this is what we offer:

- The Hive classroom, where students can access top tips around managing mental health.
- Bespoke workshops to help students tackle feelings of stress.
- Counselling resiliency sessions.
- The Beehive and The Hive drop in are places where students can go for confidential advice and support.
- Whole college activities around mental health support, such as “time to talk” days.

If you are worried about a student’s mental health or well being, please contact their tutor so we can support them.

Reframing Revision to Support your Child / Young Person

The word revision has many negative connotations, however if we look at the true meaning of the word: Re = ‘Again’ and Vision = ‘To look’.

Revising is simply looking again at something that has been learned – it has nothing to do with exams or grades!

A lot of research has been done recently on the most effective study strategies. The main four are listed and briefly explained below:

1. Retrieval Practice: This is retrieving knowledge from memory, without any cues. A brain dump / brain drain / knowledge splat is a very simple revision strategy involving ‘dumping’, ‘draining’ or ‘splatting’ everything your child knows

about a topic onto a blank piece of paper.

2. Spacing: This is leaving a gap between learning information and revisiting it. Research the 'Forgetting Curve', it suggests that if your child re-visits knowledge revised 2 / 3 days ago, they are more likely to accurately remember it in the long term.

3. Elaboration: This is using 'how' and 'why' questions to explain our learning. How does X work? Why does X happen? Why does it make sense that ____? Why is this true? Why is X true and not Y? When did X happen? What caused X? What is the result of X?

4. Dual-coding: This is using images to help remember our learning. Studies show that when children create their own image to represent a vocabulary word, they are more likely to remember it. Children who are studying could include simple images on flashcards and use these to test themselves on key vocabulary words or quotes.

There is also research showing that teaching and self-explaining are very effective study strategies. Therefore, you can support your child by allowing them to 'teach' you key content!

The last tip would be to be mindful of the language that your child is exposed to in relation to revision. Switch "You must revise, or else you will fail!" to "Do you need 20 minutes of distraction free-time?".

Careers Update - Year 12

This week, all Year 12 students took part in traditional work experience and career insight events. These experiences are hugely beneficial for students' university/apprenticeship applications and for developing transferable skills, building confidence and to finding out more about what their chosen career choice entails. We would like to thank our partner employers who supported with this: Deloitte, Slater Heelis (Manchester based Law firm), the Manchester Institute of Health and Performance (MHIP - our next door neighbours, part of Nuffield Health) and PIE (who support students to work on social action projects).

Later this term, Year 12 students will start making important decisions about their futures and begin looking at what pathway they may follow after Connell.

Career Update - Year 13

Year 13 students who have applied to university should receive their offers by Thursday 19 May. Students will then need to choose a firm (first choice university) and insurance (second choice university) from these offers. Once a student has chosen their firm and insurance choices, they can then apply for accommodation and start the student finance process.

Year 13 students who have not applied to university have all met with the careers advisor and received bespoke advice on their next steps.

If a student needs further advice on how to manage their offers they should contact their tutor or a member of the careers team.

Qualification Results

A Level and L3 BTEC results day is Thursday 18 August. Students will be sent their results via their college email at 8am on this day. There will be support available on this day in college, so please look out for further updates.

GCSE results day is on Thursday 25 August, any students resitting GCSE English or Maths will have their results emailed to them at 8am.

Results cannot be sent to another email address or given to another person.

Oftsed Review of Sexual Violence and Sexual Harmful Behaviour in ALL Schools

In response to the recently published Ofsted review of sexual violence and sexual harmful behaviour, all education institutions are asked to revisit their policies and working practices. Education institutions must create a culture where sexual abuse and online sexual abuse are not tolerated. We must identify issues and intervene early to protect young people. To support us in reviewing our work in this area, a small number of students will be invited to take part in a focus group in the coming weeks for an open discussion of topics of this nature. If you have questions or concern please email info@connell.ac.uk.

Holidays During Term Time

Student absences for holidays are not permitted during term time. It has a detrimental effect on students if they miss lessons as important college work will be missed. It will also create added pressure and workload for your child as they will need to catch up on class notes and any assessments/assignments

missed during this time. These two years are a critical part of a young person's educational journey and we ask that you support them in this by ensuring that holidays are not booked during term time.

Covid Guidance

We have attached some [Covid guidance from Manchester City Council](#) for your reference.

Best wishes,

Emma

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Head of College

Connell Co-op College

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