



CONNELL

CO-OP COLLEGE

December 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Students

Thank you to all our students for their hard work this term. Adjusting to College life for Yr 12s and preparing for university and the big world beyond Connell for the Yr 13s, are challenges in themselves, never mind the uncertainty and confusion caused by Covid. Many students have also had mock exams, controlled assessments and also are preparing for public examinations in January - best of luck to those involved!

A dedicated group of students have supported us as ambassadors at College events and I would like to thank all the students who give their time to support the work of the College and contribute to our wider community through volunteering. It makes a big difference and we appreciate all that you do.

Parents

I would also like to thank Parents and Carers for all the support they give to our students in helping them succeed - this phase of education only works when we all work together. So on that note I would like to remind parents to make sure that you have accessed CEDAR and are able to regularly check on your child's progress. As always, if you have a question or concern (or need a reminder about how to access CEDAR!), please let us know, via email to info@connell.ac.uk or by telephone 0161 231 9200.

We will be offering a number of events next term to help you as parents support your children - with university finance applications, managing well being and supporting students with their studies. We will also be giving you the opportunity to come into College (hopefully) and meet with senior staff to find out more about how you can support your child during their Connell experience. A little bit of information on each of these key topics is also included in the links at the end of this email.

I would also like to take the opportunity to make [a plea to parents or other family members who would be able and willing to support us with our careers provision](#) - either by offering mock interviews, giving a talk about their career or university study or supporting us with a work experience placement with their employer. Please contact careers@connell.ac.uk if you are able to help.

End of Term Arrangements





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Student's last 'face to face' day in College will be Friday 17th of December. Online work will include wellbeing, staying safe over the break and a focus on employability skills from one of our partner employers. This will be set for the final two days of term (December 20th and 21st). This work needs to be completed by Monday 10th January.

In the spirit of the season of 'goodwill to all' we are collecting donations of canned food, toiletries and toys for Mustard Tree who support homeless families in our city. We also accepted donations for the charity *Save the Children* for Christmas Jumper Day on Friday 10th. Throughout the month of December our 'advent calendar' is giving students the opportunity to win lunch with a friend (£5 voucher to spend at the College refectory) or donate to a charity of their choice (£10 voucher). We hope to continue our work to support local charities in the new term and encourage students who are interested in contributing to this part of College life to contact their tutor.

COVID and our return in January

The government requires that all staff and students in post 16 education [complete a lateral flow test at home before their return on Wednesday 5th January](#). We will remind you to do this via text message. Testing kits can be collected from College before we close from the Hive or the refectory and are also available free from any pharmacy.

[Please support us by ensuring your child completes a test at home before they return to College](#) so that we can keep as many staff and students as possible free from the virus and in education where they belong.

Highlights from the term

The biggest highlight of the term for me has been the evaluation of our careers provision. We know that we have some excellent partnerships with many universities and top employers such as the Co-op (and its many partners), Deloitte, BT, Kelloggs and Manchester City Football Club. This makes our offer very unique and ensures that students who attend Connell get the very best work related opportunities. A formal evaluation for our provision has now been completed by Co-op Academies Trust and we will now be proceeding with an application for the nationally recognised Quality in Careers Award.

This term we have been delighted to be able to offer every student the opportunity to visit a university campus in person, a key part of their next steps decision making and something that many missed out on last year. Students have also been given access to a wide range of opportunities for careers talks and work experience placements - these are sent out on a weekly basis. Parents are welcome to receive these notifications too - please make your request to info@connell.ac.uk if you want to keep up to date with these opportunities. During





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the second part of the academic year every student will also be offered a mock interview with an employer commencing with U6 in January.

We were also pleased to be able to restart our usual [enrichment program](#) giving students a wide range of activities to participate in. An updated list of choices for the new term will be sent out to students in due course. These include sports and 'things for fun' as well as activities that closely relate to students' studies and career aspirations. All students have free access to the East Manchester Leisure centre for use of the Gym and swimming pool.

Arrangements for exams

Finally, a reminder about the arrangements for exams. There remains some uncertainty at a national level on exams in the summer and details of the latest government plans were sent out to all parents via email on the 2nd December 2021. If you have not seen this important communication please request an additional copy from info@connell.ac.uk

Those with exams in January have been sent detailed information about their exam series, including their exam timetable so they can familiarise themselves with their seat number and the timings of the exam. We have every expectation that these will go ahead as planned. Students need to be at college, with their ID card and equipment no later than 30 minutes before the exam is due to start. We thank parents and carers in advance for making arrangements for their children to make sure this happens. Reception will be open from 8am when an exam is taking place, so if your child needs advice or is feeling unwell, please ring reception and explain the circumstances.

Your feedback

As always we welcome your feedback. If you have any comments or suggestions about how we could improve the experience we provide to our students please let us know via email to info@connell.ac.uk

On behalf of all the staff at Connell I wish you the very best for the festive season,

With best wishes from,

Emma Soper
Head of College



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Links with further information

[Information on student loans and university finance for Y13 parents](#)

[Supporting your child's well-being](#)

[Supporting your child through exams](#)

[Draft Enrichment offer Jan 2021](#)