

# McMillan Messenger

## May 2020 Message from Mr Davies, Executive Principal

I would like to thank all our families for what they have done to support scholars since we had to close the school for the majority of students in March. I know home schooling is not easy, but the staff have worked hard to try to provide meaningful learning tasks for scholars to complete. As well as setting remote learning, the staff at DMA have been working hard on planning the curriculum for when scholars return, completing our usual termly tasks, contacting families and working with children whose parents are keyworkers. I would particularly like to mention our safeguarding team led by Mrs Sanderson who have supported numerous families and scholars during this difficult time.

There has been a lot of talk in the press about Year 10 scholars returning to school for some face-to-face contact with their teachers before the summer break. We are currently formulating plans and completing risk assessments to ensure that we make informed decisions both about the timing of this and what the sessions will be on, however, our first priority will be the safety of scholars and staff. We will be writing in more detail to the families of Y10 scholars.

I would also like to take the opportunity to congratulate formally Mrs Senior who officially takes up the role of Principal at Dixons McMillan Academy from the 1st June. Mrs Senior and I have worked closely at Dixons McMillan over the last four years and she has an exceptional understanding of the academy. Mrs Senior was instrumental in the academy securing an outstanding Ofsted judgement in 2017. I know she will continue to ensure that scholars leave Dixons McMillan fully ready to lead a happy and successful life. I will continue to work with Mrs Senior this term to ensure that we support everyone during the current situation but also to ensure that the leadership team is fully ready for the challenges and the opportunities that the academic year 2020 – 21 will bring. In addition to this, I will continue to work across the family of Dixons schools in my Executive Principal role, whilst Mrs Senior takes up the full day-to-day running and leadership of Dixons McMillan.

## Message from Mrs Senior, Principal

Dear Families,

I would like to echo Mr Davies' appreciation to families at this time for supporting scholars at home and to staff for working hard to support you and your child/ren. As well as looking at how best to support you now, and planning for Y10 to receive some face-to-face time with teachers before the summer break, I am working with the leadership team to look at longer-term plans for the next academic year. As always, we will update you to communicate these plans.

I wanted to use this Messenger to celebrate the scholars' hard work. During these unprecedented times, our DMA family has demonstrated our core value of positivity, in particular, – demonstrating that can-do attitude. I hope you find this update from staff as inspiring as I do; it shows the resilience, grit and determination our children are demonstrating. We are truly very proud of them. I cannot wait to welcome you, our families, and our scholars back when it is safe to do so. I hope you have a happy and healthy half term and for those of you celebrating Eid, Eid mubarak!

### Update from Vice Principal: 6<sup>th</sup> Form, Mrs Goodrum

Since we have started working from home, the Class of 2020 have really led the way with their academic mind-sets by completing tasks to an excellent standard and completing the most hours of online learning across our year groups at DMA. Not only have scholars demonstrated true excellence by completing all of the tasks that have been set, they have ensured they are highly employable through our remote employability week, completed a course through Eton College online and started to explore wider reading in preparation for further study.

Term 6 sadly brings the Sixth Form provision at Dixons McMillan Academy to an end. We would like to thank all of our sixth form scholars, staff and families for your continuous support over the past three years. Class of 2020 really have led the way this year with their dedication and hard work, marking their legacy as the final sixth form year group. We wish them all the best in their next destination, whether that be university or a real alternative.

### Appreciations from The Arts Faculty, Miss Edwards

Scholar	Subject and appreciation	Teacher
Abdul Y10	PE – demonstrating excellence by completing all the work to a high standard and requesting more work,	Mr Hellewell
Eleanor Y10	DT - Fantastic level of detail in all practice exam questions completed.	Mr Huddin
Amina Y9	DT - Excellent research carried out on designers and design companies. Also the tasks on SAM Learning around material properties were completed to a very high standard	Mr Huddin
Bethany Y7	PE - Bethany has gone above-and-beyond, completing all tasks to 100%, even completing additional work (components of fitness, warm-ups and cool-downs, and a range of sports). Bethany has demonstrated a real passion in PE by also taking part in lots of physical sports whilst showcasing on Twitter! Well done.	Mr Wilson
Faliha Y9	Drama - Her work has been outstanding, but this week she produced a poem reflecting on her lockdown experience and it really was moving.	Mrs Swain
Alyaan Y9	Drama – well done for creating an amazing Macbeth diorama showing amazing creativity.	Mrs Swain
Amina Y7	DT - Excellent effort in the lockdown design challenge. Amina designed an interactive jacked that alerted the user if they became within 2 meters of another person. Excellent creativity using e- textiles. Well done!	Miss Laws
Fiza Y7	DT - Excellent effort in the lockdown design challenge. Fiza designed a multi-function app to help people keep safe during the Coronavirus outbreak. A very complex design, Well done!	Miss Laws

### Update from Head of Y11 (Class of 2022), Mr Ashcroft

I would like to appreciate all Year 11 scholars who continue to work hard towards their future goals. I have been very impressed with their levels of self-motivation and resilience. At a time, when these qualities have been most difficult to find within ourselves, they have proved to be an extraordinary group of individuals suited for the extraordinary times in which we live.

Most of all, I have been impressed by their optimism for the future. They have given a great deal of time, thought and energy to their plans for next year and we all hope that they come to pass. It is my unshakable conviction that they will receive everything, which is rightfully owed: a leavers' day; leavers' books and leavers' hoodies; and a prom. But for now we continue to work hard on our Bridging Work so that we are effectively prepared for next year and we look forward to the summer and the results day to come.

### **Y10 Book club, Miss Jones**

Well done to our Y10 Book Shadowing group for your continued hard work and commitment to reading! A special well done to Hiba and Eleanor for representing our school in a virtual conference with The Book Seller Magazine.

Scholars were given a selection of books to read which were shortlisted for the YA Book Prize 2020, and had to select the author they felt was most deserving of the award.

### **Update from Head of Year 10 (class of 2023), Mr Dolby**

Firstly I'd like to say a huge congratulations and well done to everyone in the year group who has been working hard, showing grit and determination through this difficult time. I know it hasn't been easy and there have been many ups and downs along the way during lockdown but I have had so many positive messages from staff members over the past few weeks in relation to your work completed and attitude towards learning. I wish I could fit all of them into one message! Here are just a couple of 'well done' messages in particular from our Year 10 team:

Well done to Komal, Raj, Hiba and Easa for winning the PDS competition that was launched a number of weeks ago. You will now have your work displayed around DMA when we are back and you should be very proud of that!

Finally, well done to all of the scholars who got back to me in relation to helping in the decision making process and planning stage of our Year 11 journey next year. Your feedback will be vital in ensuring that next year is the best year we have ever had at DMA.

It's going to be our year, our time! Wishing you all the best of health and a happy half term.

### **Appreciations from the maths team, Mr Huttly**

The maths team are very impressed with the quality and amount of work you are all completing – so a massive thank you! We would like to appreciate the following scholars in particular:

Suleman (Y10) for completing the most Hegarty Maths tasks of any scholar at any school in the Dixons Trust

Yusef (Y8) for spending the most time on Hegarty Maths since school closed

Keyaan (Y7) for answering the most questions on Hegarty Maths since school was closed - KS3

Mulaykah (Y9) for answering the most questions on Hegarty Maths since school was closed - KS4

### **Update from Head of Year 9 (Class of 2024), Mr Conlon**

I would like to appreciate the whole of the Class of 2024 for the outstanding work that they have been doing whilst they have been working from home. Unfortunately, Year 9 have been away from the academy the longest, but that has not deterred them and they have been consistently producing work to a high standard. As a former advisor with them since the days of the Y6 Transition Visit to the University of Leeds, and now their Head of Year, I could not be prouder.

I would also like to appreciate the families of the scholars of the Class of 2024. They have equally been working hard to help their children to continue making progress up their mountain. In normal times, we're always grateful for your help and support, but in the current situation we are all so appreciative of you supporting Year 9 in their education in a more direct way.

### **Update from Head of Year 8 (Class of 2025), Mr Mahmood**

The class of 2025, Year 8, have been working incredibly hard just like they would be doing in the academy. Myself and the advisors have been impressed with the amount of the work completed by scholars and it has been nice speaking to scholars at home; I do admit I could sense the scholars feeling ever so shy over the phone initially but it's definitely a sense of enjoyment every time I call now! I have certainly learnt we have some keen football players practising skills in their garden; some scholars have been tidying up their cooking skills and even had some parents impressed with chapattis being made at home by their children! Furthermore, I have been impressed with the quality of work produced through PDS and the regular updates from Heads of School just shows how much scholars are continuing to value this time by completing independent work. This not only shows how committed the class of 2025 are to their learning this year but how much preparation they are completing for their GCSE's! As you will have been aware we picked our options preference, this was our first time picking them via an online based platform and from the responses received it showed how well scholars had prepared for their choice and how much thought they had put into them. We look forward to reviewing these.

Lastly, I would like to say thank you to parents and carers at home; you are doing an amazing job with your children supporting them at home from those I have spoken to. I look forward to speaking to more of you shortly. I hope you have a lovely spring bank and for those of you celebrating Eid, Eid mubarak!

### **#My Skills, promoting employability at DMA, Mrs Jenkins**

As part of the National Skills Days 2020 and in line with our driver of Employability, the staff at Dixons McMillan Academy demonstrated their diversity and positivity through producing a video compilation of their own skills that have been developed during this period. I hope that you enjoy watching and it would be great to see some scholars demonstrating the abundance of diverse skills I know they all have ready for the next National Skills Day in October. Please use the link here and it is on our website too.

[https://twitter.com/dixonsMA\\_MissJ/status/1262999283340644352/video/1](https://twitter.com/dixonsMA_MissJ/status/1262999283340644352/video/1)

### **Update from Head of Y7 (Class of 2026), Mr Evans**

Year 7 have been completing some exceptional work during their time working from home; there isn't a day that goes by where there isn't praise from a department for the excellent work ethic that is being displayed by the class of 2026. We are gaining appreciations and recognition as being a very hard working year group that gives 100% and we at the academy could not be more proud. The class of 2026 have been set a variety of different tasks ranging from their core subjects to PDS and Careers whereby there has been a very successful introduction to Unifrog, a platform that allows scholars to look into future careers and what experience is required to get into those careers. This supports our drive of employability and our academy sentence to ensure that every scholar has the opportunity to lead happy and successful lives. Last week was Mental Health Awareness week, and scholars went above and beyond to ensure that they were being kind to members of their household, the community and themselves so that we can contribute plenty of positivity to society in both the present and the future. Overall, the Class of 2026 have been a true credit to the academy and to families for their incredibly professional handling of the situation we find ourselves in, and we could not be more proud.

### **Geography updates from Mr Conboy and Mrs Ahern**

Year 7 Geographers have worked hard in completing quiz questions set through Microsoft Forms. We have also been practicing our PEE structure (Point, Explain, Evaluate) when thinking about the causes of deforestation. Using a PEE structure means scholars can achieve level 3 in 9 mark questions. Year 7 have also had the pleasure of their feedback given through a short video using our Highly Tailored On A Page

document. Mr Conboy was pleased to have shared this video online through DMA OneDrive this week. Mr Conboy would like to appreciate the following scholars for consistently working hard during our time away from school. *These scholars are - Adam, Alesha, Aleeza, Amraaj, Anaam, Arshia, Ayesha S, Hibbah, Isaac, Muhammad A, Maliha A, Rayyan, Reuben, Jabin, Sariyah, Yousaf*

Year 8 Geographers have spent the last few weeks looking at the topic of Glaciation. They have worked really hard to understand glacial processes and the landscapes which they have created. Furthermore, they have completed a variety of assessed pieces of work including adaptation in cold environments and avalanche research. Mrs Ahern has really enjoyed reading about the highly creative plant and animal designs too! In addition, Mrs Ahern would like to say a huge well done to the following Geography Superstars who have demonstrated both hard work and excellence in this unit of work – *Tasneem, Hannah, Keirat B, Sofia Chbaiki, Harry, Eshaan, Janisha, Saleena and Jayden.*

Year 9 Geographers have also worked hard completing their online quizzing through Microsoft Forms. Year 9 are working through their development topic called Economic World. They have recognised ways to reduce the development gap through things like Fair Trade and the role of Transnational Corporations. Mr Conboy would like to say a well done to the following scholars for their continued hard work on quiz questions and PEE (Point, Explain, Evaluate) responses – *Aishah, Aleena, Amina, Ana, Azheem, Daniyal A, Iesa, Laiba A, Maryam, Mu’Aaz, Olivia, Sumaira, Zohad*

Year 10 Geographers have been focussing on Cold Environments over the last few weeks. They have worked conscientiously to identify the location of polar environments, acknowledge plant and animal adaptation and understand the opportunities and challenges encountered by Alaska. Scholars have performed very well in assessed pieces of work and have demonstrated a good understanding of exam technique in their answers. Mrs Ahern has been particularly impressed with the increasing number of scholars who are attempting the stretch activities. Furthermore, Mrs Ahern would like to say a huge well done to the following Geography Superstars who have demonstrated both diligence and excellence in this unit of work – *Eleanor, Ruqayya, Daiyan, Nimrah, Ubaydah, Hassan, Teyan, Aasim, Khansa, Mohammed-Bilal, Raj, Komal and Fola.*

Year 11 – We would like to wish our Geographers and all of year 11 a successful transition into their college and sixth forms studies next year. It has been a real pleasure to have taught the class of 2022. All scholars worked hard throughout their GCSEs in Geography. Taking the class of 2022 on the never ending trip to the Holderness Coast was one of Mr Conboy’s highlights from year 10! Mrs Ahern also has very fond memories of all the fieldtrips (despite the variable weather conditions!) and has thoroughly enjoyed teaching both her classes.

#### **Useful websites for children and adults**

- Headspace: <https://www.headspace.com/work/covid-19>
- Kooth: Free online counselling and emotional wellbeing support: <https://kooth.com/>  
<https://vimeo.com/318731977>
- Young Minds: <https://youngminds.org.uk/>
- Anxiety: <https://adaa.org/finding-help/telemental-health>

#### **Urgent help in a crisis**

- Shout: 24hr text services for anyone in a crisis and for people struggling to cope. Text SHOUT to 85258
- Samaritans – 24hr confidential support. Call 116 123
- Childline – Confidential helpline. Call 0800 111 111 or talk to some online:  
<https://www.childline.org.uk/>