

A collection of

WISDOM

THE LAKES SCHOOL



FOREWORD

The year 2020 saw the arrival of coronavirus in the United Kingdom and its impact was keenly felt by everyone. National lockdown arrived in March 2020, examinations were cancelled for GCSE and A-Level students and we were all introduced to the concept of remote learning.

Throughout this time, students at The Lakes School found new levels of resilience and positivity as they faced challenge after challenge. They developed a level of independence and resourcefulness that was ultimately to shape their future.

The students who lived through this time have been on a journey like no other and have learned many lessons along the way. During January 2021, we approached the current Year 12 and Year 13 students, along with some of our ex Sixth Form students to ask for their words of wisdom - empowering messages of positivity that they would like to pass on to younger students.

In this book, you will find a collection of their responses which make powerful reading for children and adults alike. This timeless collection of wisdom from young people will be as relevant in the future as it is today.

Andy Cunningham
Headteacher

DAN HARDY

Separate working and relaxing, so working doesn't take loads more time than necessary, and relaxing is actually relaxing (without any stress about work at back of mind)! Use mistakes/failures as lessons to do better next time and give you determination to succeed - don't let them get you down. Work hard to make sure you do the best you can possibly do.

And always try to be optimistic and happy, even if you don't feel like it!

JASMINE BELL

Don't leave your work until the last minute because it all ends up piling up and completing your work becomes more stressful. Get your work done and then you can have your free time to relax. For online learning set a time in the day to do your work and do it. Don't procrastinate and put off doing any work, remember to take a few breaks whilst learning at home to not burn out your brain.

ISABELLE HUGHES-BROWN

The main advice to being happy and successful with school, during this time, would be to stay in contact with everyone. Disconnecting yourself from people shouldn't be an answer, you should try to keep yourself motivated - FaceTime and Zoom-call friends and classmates, email teachers, and overall keep going.

At this time it probably feels like everything is failing, but you aren't. Keep going, do school work, talk to your family, learn new skills or improve current skills, and eventually time will pass by and you'll feel better about everything.

Don't be a 'the cup's half empty' type of person; positivity is essential at this time. So do it. Be positive. Be motivated.

SINDY FILIPUSKO

For those who are about to leave The Lakes School - or just to anyone - as cliché as it might sound, you've got to believe in yourself and 'Just Do It'. Even if you think you can't - you can.

With whatever you might be struggling, try to think positively and the end result will always be worth it. And as crazy as your future dreams might be, it's never impossible to achieve them. Take small steps at a time and it will lead you to where you want to be.

KIRSTY LAVERACK

The first lockdown definitely had an impact on my motivation and drive towards schoolwork. I found that using each day efficiently by not overworking myself was the answer. Getting out for a small walk every day provided me with a space where I could forget about schoolwork for a while and not feel overwhelmed. It was a break from the technology! By maximising my time in the day, I increased my focus and desire to work.

To the current Sixth Formers in particular, going to university (despite COVID) is the best decision I have EVER made.

Motivation might be hard to find, but finishing your coursework etc is the final push to get there. Smash it!

MAISIE CRISP

Having watched my older siblings complete their secondary education and go onto different places (University and work), I was lucky enough to have some insight into ideas for my own future. With the pressures of going to university, and the expectation of having it all figured out before I had even finished school, I found that it took me a bit longer to get a clearer picture.

My advice to younger students at The Lakes School is to not worry about where you are going and what you're going to be when you leave school. Some might know what they want to do straight away, others may take more time - and that's absolutely okay.

The best decision I made was to focus on what I wanted to do, not what others were telling me. Exploring your options beyond university is a great place to start (ie. apprenticeships and short college courses) which will lead you into work without having to sit through education system once more.

Best of luck to all those leaving school this year, especially under this current climate!

JESS BUTTERFIELD

For me, Sixth Form was an eye opener, this is because I found that it wasn't the correct route for me to take. I was helped along the way to make the best decision for me which ended up being to leave and take a different path.

I am now doing an apprenticeship in Business Administration which was 100% the correct path for me. My advice to all Year 11s looking into going to Sixth Form is to look at all the options out there and not just take the easy and comfortable option - don't just go because you know the people. Look into apprenticeships and college. If you don't think at the time they are right, and you think Sixth Form is, don't think you have to stay if you end up thinking you have made the wrong decision because at the end of the day it will feel like a chore.

Although I left Sixth Form I definitely don't regret going. If anything, it made me stronger and made me feel like a better person for admitting I made the wrong decision for me.

JOSEPH BLACK

Year 13s; grades aren't the end all. On results day I got a D in Biology, but ended up with offers from some great programmes and universities.

If you do happen to be rejected by a university, think of it as their loss, another's gain.

Quite often, as long as you have the necessary UCAS tariff on results day, universities will happily accept you.

It may not be where you originally wanted to go, or maybe even what you originally wanted to do, but sometimes it works out better.

Once at university, don't be afraid to try out some of the stuff the university has on offer. Sports and societies are a great way to get out and meet new people (and maybe even discover new cultures), especially in these trying times.

Be sure to make the most of the opportunities you are given, as these could open doors for you further down the line.

ALEXANDER BELL

I would say that getting into a routine is the most important thing. Getting up early and following your usual school timetable will help you stay productive and on top of work during lockdown. Taking regular short breaks and getting outside will also help in reducing stress.

ANONYMOUS

Make sure to stay on top of your work or else it will build up into a huge mass. However, you also need to take regular breaks.

RUBY HIRD

Whilst working throughout lockdown the most important part for young students is a healthy mindset, always reminding yourself that's it's okay to have bad and good days, to feel unmotivated and unhappy because we are all feeling the same way. It helps to prioritise things that help you escape at the same time as keeping up with school work. Making sure to keep in touch with friends that you would normally see often and spending time in the day for yourself whatever that may be to you. At least that's how I've been keeping busy!

ANONYMOUS

The most important thing to success is happiness. Hard work pays off, but unless you can find a way to balance working and being happy then hard work will feel a lot harder. Balance is important, and success can't come without putting the time and effort in, but try to remember to do things that keep you happy and that way you will be more motivated when the time to do work comes around again.

It is easy to feel unmotivated while remote learning is happening; distractions are far more frequent at home, but keeping on top of all your work will make it so much easier when we do go back to school and you won't have to catch up on everything you have missed - and you can spend more time doing the things you want to do rather than what you have to do.

LISA MORTON

Take advantage of this time of working remotely, and having to be self motivated at home, to get work done as it prepares you well for becoming an A-Level student or going to college.

In Sixth Form, you have a lot of non-contact periods which require you to work independently in school, hopefully this time of working at home will provide you some of the skills to do this. The experience of going through the first lockdown in Year 12 certainly improved my abilities to learn independently and also taught me to reach out to teachers when I was struggling to understand something.

ADELE BAYMAN

I think it's important to be aware of the different lesson and activity styles that teachers use in class and how effective each one is for you. This allows you to build an understanding about what kind of learner you are (e.g visual, auditory etc). Knowing what method of learning suits you best as early as possible will really help when it comes to revision for tests or exams as it allows you to set attainable goals and ensure all your time is used meaningfully.

ANONYMOUS

It's important to find a good work to life balance, whether attending school physically, or doing online learning. Don't let one outweigh the other.

Additionally, try not to mix the two, by watching a Youtube video while working. The reality is you're absorbing neither fully. Keep them separate - concentrate on your homework or revision first, then relax and enjoy some time off. During online learning, getting outside is essential - don't take a break from one screen, just to replace it with another. Go for a walk, even if its just for 20 minutes to get some fresh air.

ANONYMOUS

Putting yourself out there and making sure you have good friends around you makes school life a lot easier. Do whatever you think is right for you at that time. You know yourself better than anyone. Keep moving forward.

ALYSSA MIRANDA

The past year has been difficult for everyone but particularly the students, with changes to online learning and studying from home, it is not something we expected. However, to those Year 13 who are looking to go to university - you should still remain excited!

Hopefully, by September, everything should be back to normal. To help ease the transition to university, it would be useful to learn how to make your favourite meals or learn new recipes and since it's lockdown, you will have plenty of time to practice cooking! Also learning other basic skills would be helpful as you will need to do it when you move to your accommodation.

During this lockdown, I would advise Year 11 or Year 12 students to take advantage of the spare time they have and keep busy. This could be through continuing their studies, pursuing their hobbies or going on a daily walk to get some fresh air. These will help your mental health as well.

Don't let this lockdown get you down and remember to wear a mask and wash your hands!

TESSA KNOWLES

Remote learning: I much prefer doing any work we are given (outside of the scheduled calls) downstairs while my mum and brothers are working, too, so we're not feeling completely isolated from everyone. This is much more effective for me than trying to focus for a few hours at a time in my room where it's easy to find distractions (social media etc) because when I'm working with other people in the room I feel more 'observed' and so am, in turn, more motivated to do work without frequent distractions slowing it all down.

When it's a nice day (not raining basically) I sometimes take whatever book I have to read for English and sit with it outside, often by the river above our house. Fresh air and the sound of nature can be very replenishing.

I try not to work too late at night, my limit is around 9pm. This stops me from tiring myself out or over-obsessing about anything. Sleep is important!!

General advice: In Year 7 and 8, I'd have loved to have been told that petty arguments with friends over stupid things (fighting over a computer in a computer room, being left when you go to the canteen and no one in your group does etc) is totally pointless. Your energy can be focused on much more helpful things.

Sitting in the toilets so skive a lesson you don't like is ridiculous and won't do you any help. Go to those lessons and do your best to listen and do the work. It will help! And! Respect your teachers! They only want to help you

and it is okay to tell them you don't understand. I emailed in the past, specially in science, to explain what I was struggling with.

Homework is set for a reason (to keep your brain active while you're not in the school environment is the main one for me) and you will benefit from doing it! You're not disadvantaging the teacher by not handing it in (in fact, it gives them less work to mark). It will disadvantage you only!

There is no shame in talking to someone if you need to. The staff are all there to help and you should use them while you have the opportunity. You may not always have people readily there for you once you move on into adult life.

It's okay to struggle with work and with how much you have. Tell your teachers if this is so. Like I said, they only want to help. Getting overly stressed over work load is avoidable.

Don't be a bully! It makes other people's lives miserable and you can do much better things with your time.

And if you are being bullied, tell someone!

ANONYMOUS

Make sure you keep talking to people! Anyone will be happy to listen you you. Never think you're alone as so many other people around the world will be having the same struggles as you. Do your best and it'll all be worth it. Take care of yourself in the hard times and definitely don't be hard on yourself as you're going through a hard enough situation.

NATHAN TYSON

It will help keep you motivated and energised to do your work. Also avoid going to bed extremely late even one night; I did that and it messed my sleep pattern up even until today, oops.

Make a plan for what you want to do and make sure, if it doesn't work out, to learn from the mistake and why it didn't work so that you can improve it. This won't just help getting through GCSEs and A-Levels but will also help in whatever you do after the Lakes School.

University requires a lot of motivation and hard work just as apprenticeships require passion and dedication.