

## Summary

This has been a busy year of embedding the new careers programme into our PSHCE timetable, building up resources for the girls to access, providing CIAEG in 1:1 appointments, hosting talks and events, and supporting the Sixth Form in clarifying and progressing their immediate career plans post-18.

With Covid restrictions eased, we have been excited to welcome a range of inspiring speakers into School to talk about their jobs and career paths. As a practitioner with a particular fascination for people's career journeys, I am always interested to hear about bumps in the road, the appearance of unexpected opportunities, deviations and diversions

from traditional career paths and the points where people stopped to re-evaluate what they wanted from their job. These lived experiences are hugely beneficial to a young person's understanding of the working world, and as important as being told what subjects, grades, and degree you need to study.

This year girls have heard from a female surgeon achieving recognition in a male dominated career, looked at the work life balance of those in the allied healthcare professions, been startled that a junior doctor in A&E was expected to sort the leaking roof, and amazed that a manufacturing engineer could work in cell and gene therapy!

## Events

These are some of the events we have hosted in 2021-22

- **Space Day Launch** – Maggie Aderin-Pocock
- **'Studentification' project** with Loughborough University and Leicestershire Constabulary
- **Careers in surgery** – Consultant Surgeon, UHL
- **The realities of medical training** – Junior Doctor
- **Personal branding** – Macildowie Recruitment
- **Summer 2022 Programme** – National Citizen Service
- **Journey from Engineering to Biometrology** – Loughborough University Academic
- **Careers in Law** – Barrister
- **Allied Healthcare Professions** – Leicestershire NHS Partnership Trust

Plans are now afoot for the next academic year and the focus initially will be on careers for students studying creative subjects, business, and humanities.

If you would like to be involved in any of these then please get in touch!





## Firefly Resources

Careers resources on Firefly continue to be developed and updated and include information for all years.

As there are links to key careers websites and materials, I would encourage girls exploring options to visit the page to help them get started.

Topics include:

- Choosing options
- Pathways (post 16 and post 18)
- Careers talks and events (internal and external)
- Work experience
- Volunteering
- Taking a gap year
- Labour Market information
- Funding for university

## CEIAG Appointments

**A reminder that all girls can access careers appointments irrespective of their age or year group.**

To make things easy, a booking system has been set up, accessed via my Firefly pages, and appointments can be quickly arranged for a simple chat about ideas and plans, a review of a CV or university personal statement, or for a more in-depth guidance consultation.

## Online Career Platforms



**Xello is now successfully embedded into PSHCE for Years 7-11. Pupils have engaged well with the platform and have enjoyed discovering the wide range of career profiles that match to their interests, skills, and personality.**

Unlike other similar tools, there is a crucial second stage to the process which encourages users to review and refine their answers to their assessment questions in the context of a particular career. This ensures that students appreciate why they have matched to the role and allows them to gain a clearer understanding of what each job entails. This helps put the student at the heart of the process and gives them ownership of the outcomes.

One comment from this year's feedback sums up a key reason for using Xello –

*"I liked seeing the careers that I hadn't thought of".*

Exposing young people to the many opportunities in the world of work is a crucial first step to ensure effective career planning and decision making.

Unifrog is available to students in Year 11 and above and is already an integral part of careers activity in Sixth Form. It aims to be a one-stop shop of graduate destination information allowing girls to research the full range of opportunities open to them.

For those in Year 12, as we approach the launch of the UCAS process, we would particularly recommend the following activities:

- Gather and record activities, competences, and interactions relevant for personal statement
- Check out the Career and Subject Libraries for career direction
- Read up on pathways including apprenticeships and universities
- Begin researching institutions and courses



## Busting Graduate Job Myths

**Universities UK published a report in April called Busting Graduate Job Myths, which makes for very interesting reading.**

**Myth 2,** 'There aren't enough graduate jobs', focuses on the different ways of measuring graduate employment, the conclusion being that 'most graduates are in jobs for which a degree is an appropriate qualification'.

**Myth 3,** 'some degrees have little value to employers' may be of particular interest to students and parents; it is a myth that appears in the media on a regular basis!

There is no doubt that the biggest issues around graduate level roles are that the UK labour market has been fluid and changing for many years. The wider use of technology, along with other developments, means that job roles have been transformed, and employers are now demanding a more comprehensive and advanced set of skills. Of course, an

employer is not recruiting a graduate as the finished article, but rather looking for a well-rounded individual who is adaptable and who can move beyond merely coping to thriving. The report suggests that in a labour market now more focused on business services than engineering, these skills and attributes can be more important than degree specialism –

*'It doesn't really matter if you have studied fine art or physics, as long as you have the skills and behaviours needed for the role.'*

This is worth reflecting on when considering university options. Indeed, a new report looking at Gen Z Job Success, from **Cappfinity** and the **Institute of Student Employers**, has also found that employers are

*'typically now looking for a broad range of behaviours to help them identify potential'.*

The key take-aways in this section should not be a surprise but are worth restating, particularly if you are in a position of influence with a young person making career plans. The situation may well be very different to our own generation's experience of entering the workplace.

In short, we need to recognise that, in a long working life, young people leaving school and university will now face considerable change within roles as well as within the job market.

*'What is clear is that while degrees are still valuable, specific degree subjects are less significant in many sectors. Degrees widen the options available to graduates compared to non-graduates who may have taken more specific job training.'*





## MHFA Training

This half term I have been part of a group of LHS staff undertaking the Youth Mental Health England First Aid training, having completed the Adult version a few years ago.

In my role, it is important for several reasons. Firstly, research such as that from the Career Development Institute and Edinburgh Napier University, strongly suggests that career guidance from an early stage can enhance wellbeing. Taking time to chat with someone about your interests and hobbies that bring enjoyment and fulfilment, identifying personal skills and accomplishments, and constructing positive future plans, all give a sense of self-worth and control.

Secondly, guidance conversations, like counselling, can trigger strong emotions and reactions. Studies have explored the debilitating impact of poor mental health on decision making. Focusing on the future when struggling to function on a day-to-day basis can seem senseless, or even absurd. Similarly, for those with low self-esteem, acknowledging strengths and achievements might be an impossible task. As a careers professional, my job is to identify where fear, anxiety and discomfort might come from and



work with students to shrink barriers to decision making, lessen pessimistic or unrealistic thinking, and generate positive engagement with career plans that focus on optimistic outcomes. Reassurance that decisions do not need to be long term or permanent can be particularly helpful in these situations, too.

With the YMHA training behind me, and a deeper understanding of the impact of various mental health disorders, I hope to provide a more enhanced level of careers support for those who are finding life particularly challenging.

## Springpod Virtual Work Experience

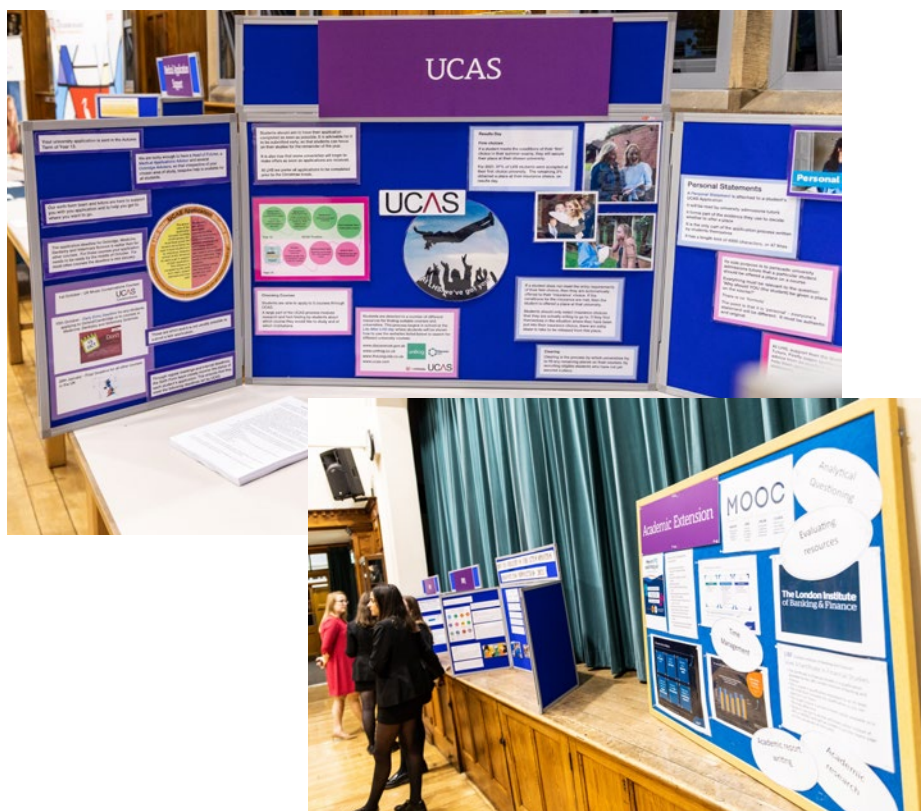
Over the last two years Springpod has become a leading provider of FREE virtual work experience and many LHS girls have benefited from their programmes at a time when almost all other work experience was curtailed. Although face-to-face opportunities are beginning to reappear, Springpod still has a place for those wishing to try out roles or investigate specific sectors.

Anyone wishing to find a virtual experience for the summer holidays can sign up now at [www.springpod.co.uk](http://www.springpod.co.uk) and receive updates as new programmes are added.



## Can you host a workplace tour?

Whether you are LSF alumni or an interested parent, we are always looking for people who could host one or more students for a workplace tour, work shadowing or work experience. Alumni can now register interest via the new Loughburians Live platform, whilst anyone else is welcome to email me at the address below.



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