Dear Parent/Carer,

What a fantastic year the students and staff of Ninestiles have had; I have also greatly enjoyed my first year as Principal. As you will have seen over the course of the year, our students have achieved great success both academically and personally.

One of the key successes is our partnership with families, and your continued support at events and the work of the school to develop secure, happy and successful futures for your brilliant children. Please take time to read about a small selection of the activities over the last term and I would encourage all students to grab every opportunity that the school provides for them when returning in September.

Maths Superstars

It’s been another busy term in the Maths department, with hard work and competitions across the school. We recently hosted our annual Times Tables Rockstars competition, which Earth house won with an average of 42.5 questions answered per minute. The fastest student in the competition was Sajjadali Hirji, who completed 109 questions in 60 seconds! Earth house also won the staff competition, with Mr. Guerin achieving the highest score followed by Mr. Power in second place.

Ninestiles was also the second highest-scoring school in the West Midlands Times Tables Rockstars competition, with Wahhaj Bhatti achieving a high score of 120 questions in a minute!

Pupils across the school have been completing weekly homework on the Hegarty Maths website. Ninestiles has already completed over a quarter of a million questions since January with Ethan Reid (Year 10) completing over 6000 questions alone!

In this year’s UK Maths Trust Junior Challenge, 18 students gained awards, with Mohammed Younus in Year 8 and Harry Cremins in Year 7 achieving gold certificates. Harry also set a new school record on this challenge, and went on to achieve a merit certificate in the Junior Mathematical Olympiad.

In preparation for Year 11, 60 of our Year 10 students have been attending after school Maths higher paper revision lessons each week, demonstrating that they are already willing to put in the extra effort required to combat the higher GCSE paper next year; we hope this continues and their efforts are rewarded.
An author among us!

Lauren Law is a Year 10 student who has discovered a true passion for writing. Since Year 8 Lauren’s achievements have included winning a school writing competition and having two short stories published in books that have gone on sale to the general public. Lauren discovered her love for writing when she joined a website called Young Writers. Her latest work can be read in a book called Fright Night; it features a selection of short horror stories written by young people aged between 11 and 18.

Lauren is pictured with a copy of the book with Mr. Power.

Historical happenings

It’s been an exciting year for the History department at Ninestiles, full of significant events and anniversaries to keep us all on our historical toes! Students marked the centenary for the first women to get the vote in England with a ‘Votes for Women’ project in Year 8.

To commemorate the end of World War One the History and Drama departments worked in collaboration with students to create a series of personal and reflective experiences from the trenches that will be showcased later in the year. Naturally we’ve all had World Cup fever with a series of themed lessons on the beautiful game!

The lead up to the GCSE exams was, as always, very busy. We recently invested in visualizers for the department and have been using these extensively both in lessons and in whole department ‘walking talking mocks’ to support students with their exam responses. This has allowed us to really hone in on exam technique and provide students with immediate feedback and guidance.

We have also had some important changes in the department too. Miss Lappage has recently been promoted to Associate Assistant Principal and the department would like to thank her for all her hard work over the years and wish her every success! Miss Harris is very excited to be the new Head of History and would like to thank all the students and History teachers for all their hard work this year!

Speech & Language training for teaching assistants

During the academic year 2016-2017, four teaching assistants were given the opportunity to complete ELKLAN training, a practical training course, delivered by Speech and Language therapy.

The ELKLAN course gave staff the chance to learn and put into practice strategies to support language learning and maximise the potential of students’ speech, language and communication. During the course staff members developed and gained knowledge of: supporting communication inside and outside the classroom, identifying students who may need a speech and language assessment, gaining more knowledge and understanding of speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and speaking with parents and carers about these, understanding abstract language, models of memory and expressive language skills and how to promote these in a learning environment.

All staff members successfully completed the course, each submitting a portfolio of evidence.
Un voyage à Paris!

The MFL department has recently returned from a wonderful trip to France. Forty-eight students from years 8, 9 and 10 enjoyed 4 days exploring Paris and the surrounding attractions. Upon arrival, we enjoyed a traditional French buffet dinner on the first evening and checked in to our lovely hotel. An early night set us up for the next day, as we spent a whole day and evening in Disney Land. Staff and students had a magical time exploring the rides, gift shops and restaurants and the highlight of the day was the brilliant parade. On Wednesday, we enjoyed a continental breakfast at the hotel and left bright and early to visit the centre of Paris. Students were amazed by the Eiffel Tower and we enjoyed a river cruise in the beautiful sunshine. We visited the Palace of Versailles and learned about the history of the monarchs who resided there. With macarons and souvenirs in hand, we continued our cultural day into the cobbled streets of Montmartre, where we were treated to a typically French three-course meal. We travelled back to the restaurant after taking photos of the breath-taking view of Paris from the steps of the Sacré Cœur. Our final morning was spent at the poignant Vimy Ridge war memorial and from there we started our journey home. All students and staff had a brilliant time making memories and experiencing French culture. A special thank you to Miss Simpson for organising such an enjoyable trip.

Bikeability

This term thirty Year 8 students went out with Bikeability to complete their Level 1 and Level 2 cycle safety training. The students had a great time learning about how to share the roads safely. A particular highlight was a final session of cycling, putting everything they had learnt into practice on a bike ride through local parks, woodland and along the canals. We’ve got some great candidates for Level 3 and are looking forward to getting many more students qualified next year. Thanks to all who took part and helped out. Happy summer cycling!
UNICEF Celebration

On Friday 13th July students from Ninestiles attended the annual UNICEF Rights Respecting School Celebration at the REP Theatre in Birmingham. This year Ninestiles submitted a film created by Paul Davies and the team at VYKA Ltd. The film starred our Year 11 Performing Arts students, and demonstrated our students understanding of their own and others children's rights. The students were a credit to the school and showcased a clear pride to be part of something so wonderful. We ended our day by visiting the spectacular Library, where they had the pleasure of meeting Dippy the Dinosaur, and Birmingham Museum.

Literacy Skills

The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.  L. Wittgenstein

At Ninestiles, we are continuing with our whole school commitment to improving the literacy skills of all our students. A vocabulary curriculum has been created to teach academic vocabulary (tier 2 words) across the school. These words can be found on our school website as well as in your child’s planner. We would value your support in encouraging your child to learn the meanings and spellings, and apply them in spoken or written communication. Vocabulary knowledge plays a central role in all reading comprehension; your child’s ability to make sense of a range of texts depends on their ability to understand the language used. Studies show that students need to add in excess of 3000 new words to their vocabulary each year in order to meet the challenging requirements of the new GCSE texts and exams.

To support this further, we have adapted our School Policy to include a key reading requirement. All students at Ninestiles will be required to bring in a book or alternative reading material (magazine, journal, newspaper etc.) as part of their equipment every day. Opportunities will be provided during lessons and tutor time to read as a class. It is important that you ensure that your child has suitable reading material at all times. Please see our school website for key book recommendations for key stage 3 and 4. Thank you for your support.
Letting off steam!

On 28th June, Mrs Qaissar, Mrs Parvez and Mr Burden were delighted to take twenty-five Year 9 students to attend a chemistry guest lecture on steam to nuclear power in the Great Hall at Aston University. The lecture was designed to fascinate the young audience of future chemists. The students were really enthusiastic and engaged and the behaviour of our students was exemplary. Several of the students also volunteered to take part in demonstrations—how very brave!

In the photo we can see the reaction between liquid nitrogen and eggs—not sure we’d want to eat that egg!

News from the English department

We have had another busy and successful term in the English department. After months of hard work and preparation, Year 11 completed their exams in English Language. Having been so focussed in lessons and attending intervention classes after school, students generally came out of the exam feeling very positive. Whatever the outcome, we are very proud of all of the students and have everything crossed for them.

Year 10 have had a very productive end to the year which has seen them develop key skills and knowledge that they will need in preparation for starting Year 11 in September. After their set PPE examinations in English Language, they completed a ‘reflection fortnight’ where they were able to look at top-band responses and improve on what they wrote in the exam - all of this will come in very useful next year. They have concluded the year by studying fifteen poems that they will be assessed on in their English Literature exam next year. They should continue to look over these over the summer break.

Key Stage 3 have all completed end of year tests and behaved impeccably throughout. It was very pleasing to see so many of our students revising in their spare time and working hard in lessons to give them the best possible chance of success. The experience will be an invaluable dress rehearsal for them as they near Key Stage 4 and their GCSEs. They too have completed a ‘revision fortnight’ where they have looked over their papers and drafted improved responses based on model examples they have been given.

As always, we are offering lots of extra-curricular activities within English. Debate club continues to grow and thrive as does the new Creative Writing club which is run by Miss Wyer. We have recently launched a Handwriting club which is being run by Mr Bond. Neat handwriting is so important in examinations so attendance is encouraged.

Finally, we wish a fond farewell to Mr Atkinson, Ms Luckman, Mr Dominy and Ms Wilkie. All of them have played a significant role in the department during their time at Ninestiles and are liked by students and staff alike. We wish them well in their next ventures.

We hope students enjoy their well-deserved summer break. Read lots and come back roaring and ready to go in September!
A trip to Ackers

On Tuesday 3rd July, thirty students from KS3 were invited to Ackers Adventure Centre for a day of outdoor and adventurous activities. The aim of the day was to increase students’ self-esteem and learn the importance of teamwork and independence so they could become well rounded learners. The students had lots of fun throughout the day taking part in skiing, archery, canoeing and a jungle challenge. It was great to see them all learn new skills and develop pride and confidence in their physical ability. Most importantly, it was great to see them smile and enjoy themselves.

‘Super 6’ Athletics

After taking part in the qualifying ‘Super 6’ athletics heats earlier this month, our Year 8 girls team came 1st and our Year 7 girls team came 2nd, and so secured a place in the School Games final at the Alexander Stadium, Birmingham, on Thursday 21st June. The twelve students who represented Ninestiles were an absolute credit to the school. Sadly, both teams missed out on a medal place, but performed to the best of their ability and made Ms. Ferguson, who took them to the event, very proud! Over 450 students from 37 schools participated; the competition was very tough but well spirited.
Summer Camp 2018

At the end of June 39 students from Ninestiles and 20 students from Cockshut Hill enjoyed a wonderful week staying in the Forest of Dean, on the border of England and Wales. Activities such as walking, canoeing, caving and mountain biking were completed. All students enjoyed themselves, with many vowing to return again in 2019. We were very fortunate with the weather and did not see a single drop of rain!

We had great pleasure in welcoming Ninestiles Principal, James Power, and Cockshut Principal, Jason Bridges, who both took time out of their busy schedules to visit the camp site. Principal Power enjoyed an evening game of football and also became very addicted to ‘Bop it’ – the challenge to beat the students’ highest score of 100 still remains.....

A big thank you from Camp Leader, Steve Croxall, to group leaders Jenny Mace, Hayley Rock, Becky Lynch, Chris Guerin, Tom Bond and Shah Jalal for supporting this event and making it a success. Despite a tiring week, we are all looking forward to Camp 2019.

Athletic Leaders

On Monday 11\textsuperscript{th} June Ninestiles hosted the annual School Games Level 2 competition for Year 3 and 4 primary school pupils in the Ninestiles Partnership and Clifton Primary Partnership. Twenty five teams took part involving 250 pupils taking part in a series of events including 50m sprint, 400m run, javelin throw, long jump and relay.

To assist the athletes a team of 18 Sports Leaders from Year 10, timed, measured and ensured that all pupils tried to do their personnel best and achieve as many points for their team as possible. In what were very hot and trying conditions, the leaders were excellent, with many of the primary teachers commenting how professional and enthusiastic the leaders were. The success of the event is very much down to how good the leaders were and this group were not only a credit to themselves but also represented the school in the best possible way.
**HS2 Workshop Pilot**

Ninestiles was approached by HS2 to support a pilot programme they have designed for KS3 students. Sixty students from Year 7 were selected to take part in the STEM activities.

The day kicked off with a welcome activity where students assigned each team member a job role relating to their individual skills; this lead nicely into the ‘Stations of the Future’ activity which developed students’ creative thinking whilst designing an inclusive and diverse station of the future.

The engineering challenge, ‘Building an Infrastructure’ supported students’ understanding of construction methods and developed their innovative and collaborative skills. Students really enjoyed the problem solving element of this project and it was wonderful to see the students working together to build a light but strong tunnel. The challenge was won by Isa Rafiq, Muhammad Ansar and Alasan Njie-Morgan, who created an incredibly strong structure, using minimum materials.

The final session of the day was the high speed rail game – Rail Rush. This gave students an understanding of the HS2 project and the careers that are involved with the project.

Teams who attained the most praise throughout the day for demonstrating their STEM Powers were:

- **T12** Emily Ross, Ammarah Hussain, Amandeep Panesar, Safira Ali
- **T10** Qasim Amin, Mohammed Abbas, Mohammed Umer, Zain Ali
- **T4** Isa Rafiq, Muhammad Ansar, Alasan Njie-Morgan
- **T5** Mahir Muzumder, Harry Cremins, Jack Weston and Muhammad Ahmed.

Overall, a fantastic day was had by all. Thank you to HS2 for the opportunity.
Careers and WRL: Practice Interviews

May 16th, 17th and 18th saw the whole of our Year 10 participate in mock interviews. We were delighted to have 34 representatives from a wide range of professions join us over the three days, all of whom were allocated students and given copies of their CV’s and covering letters. Our interviewers held nothing back, giving our students a ‘proper grilling’ and an invaluable real life experience of an interview. The feedback from interviewers and students alike was tremendous. The adults were impressed by the achievements and dedication of students they met, and our students were absolutely buzzing after the experience. It was overwhelmingly agreed they now feel better prepared for that first college interview next year.

The OLA was a lovely venue for this event and Miss Sutton would like to thank everyone who helped and was involved; it was a very memorable three days.

Careers and WRL: Work Experience

At the beginning of July, 177 of our Year 10 students went out on work placements for the week. They have developed transferable skills, such as communication, team working, understanding how organisations work, building confidence in interacting with adults and ultimately providing valuable content for their personal statement to give evidence of an interest in a particular subject or occupation.

The feedback received from employers during visits to the placements has been overwhelmingly positive about our students, and equally, the students have been incredibly positive about their experiences. They felt that the opportunity to confirm their interest in a career or, equally useful, deciding it is not for them was invaluable. Thank you to all of the employers—without their support the week would not have been the success it was.

![The picture shows David Tre in Year 10, enjoying his work experience in the Greenwood restaurant here at Ninestiles.](image)

Careers and WRL: South & City Taster Days

In the same week, students who did not have a work experience placement were given the opportunity to participate in two days of Taster Sessions provided by South & City College. Hall Green and Bordesley Green campuses were the venues and students were offered the choice of practical sessions in Brickwork, Painting & Decorating, Plastering, Public Services, Electrics, Carpentry, Engineering, Business, Sport, Science, Hair, Beauty, Health & Social Care and Travel.

This gave the students an insight into a range of subjects and the experience of college life.

Students thoroughly enjoyed the days and Miss Sutton would like to thank South & City College for providing this opportunity.
A year in the OLA - the best bits!

September: Year 7 students were given books courtesy of The Book Trust.

December: Students bought over £500 worth of books, posters, stationary during Book Fair.

March: Staff dressed up as characters from their favourite books.

July: Our Top Ten borrowers in each year group.

Keep reading over the holidays:

A student who reads 20 minutes a day gains a vocabulary of 1.8million words and the time spent reading is equivalent to 60 school days!
**Forthcoming events**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Tuesday 4th September</td>
<td>Inset day</td>
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<td>Wednesday 5th September</td>
<td><strong>School re-opens to all students at 8.30am</strong></td>
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<td>Monday 29th October – Friday 2nd November</td>
<td>Half term</td>
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<td>Friday 30th November</td>
<td>Teacher Training Day – students not in school</td>
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<td>Monday 17th September, 5-6pm</td>
<td>Year 11 Parental Information evening (Achievement)</td>
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<td>Monday 12th November, 5-6pm</td>
<td>Year 9 Parental Information evening (Achievement)</td>
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<td>Monday 19th November, 5-6pm</td>
<td>Year 7 Parental Information evening (Achievement)</td>
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<td>Tuesday 25th September, 2-6pm</td>
<td>Year 7 Parent and Tutor meetings</td>
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<td>Thursday 27th September, 2-6pm</td>
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<td>Thursday 20th September, 5-8pm</td>
<td>Open Evening</td>
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<td>Tuesday 25th September, 9.30am-12pm</td>
<td>Open Morning</td>
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<td>Thursday 27th September, 9.30am-12pm</td>
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<td>Friday 28th September, 10am-12pm</td>
<td>Macmillan Coffee Morning</td>
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<td>Thursday 25th October, 5-8pm</td>
<td>Futures Fayre for Years 9, 10 &amp; 11</td>
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<td>Tuesday 18th December, 6-7.30pm</td>
<td>Performing Arts Christmas Showcase</td>
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**Stranger Danger reminder**

With the long summer holiday fast approaching the police have asked us to issue stranger danger advice to you to share with your children to help keep them safe when they are out and about.

**Stranger Danger prevention advice**

- Here are some simple steps you can take to make sure you stay safe on the street:
- Never go off on your own with a stranger, take things from them or get in a car with them
- Make sure you tell your parents where you are
- If someone scares you, or makes you feel uncomfortable go somewhere safe, which could be your home, your school or a police station
- Remember to tell someone what has happened straight away
- If you have Snapchat check the settings on the new location sharing feature, Snap Maps, including details about how to change your settings and tips for staying safe.

**Useful links for parents**

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) is the only children’s charity which can safeguard children. Visit their website for more information:

Help us to celebrate our students’ achievements

I am sure you are familiar with our website, but we also have Twitter, so please follow us @ninestiles. Please do follow us to make sure you are up to date with all the student activity, achievements and information which goes out on a regular basis. Also, please let us know if your child achieves success outside school in any of the activities they participate in. We will always celebrate this with them and we would love to publicise their success on our website and social media if permitted. We have fantastic students and we want everyone to know about their amazing achievements.

Final words

As I said in the Easter newsletter, school is a time where students can explore their dreams and ambitions, but ultimately hard work, dedication and perseverance will enable your child to achieve excellent academic qualifications. However, it is also important that students develop themselves through sport, hobbies and other activities that they can continue to enjoy throughout their lives.

During the summer break, it is important to keep up with activities such as sport and reading – whether it is a book, newspaper or article. A reminder that from September, every student should prepare to carry a reading book with them every day as we know that reading regularly is one of the keys to success in life.

Please have a fantastic summer break with friends and family and I will see you in September.

Yours sincerely,

James Power
Principal
Ninestiles, An Academy