

ISSUE NUMBER 4 • MARCH 2025

TOWNLEY

Careers Newsletter

FROM THE TOWNLEY CAREERS TEAM

WELCOME BACK!

Welcome back to another edition of the Careers Newsletter brought to you by your Senior Career Prefects!

Issue 4 consists of accounts of exciting trips students have been on from across the years, some insights into the careers pathways of Associate staff at Townley and hear about the experiences and successes of this year's Senior Prefect team.

This is the last edition brought to you by the Career Prefects 2024-25 and it's been our pleasure to bring these termly newsletters to you - the next issue will be from the upcoming new Prefect team who we are sure will do a fabulous job!

As the shortlisting process begins for the Prefect team for the next academic year, this issue includes some of this year's achievements and experiences from various gold, red and silver ties, as well as an interview with the Head Girl and Head Boy for 2024-25.

We hope you enjoy reading this term's newsletter, brought to you by Romani, Chhavi, Norah and Yu Shen, Career Prefects for 2024-5.



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YEAR 12 TRIP TO OXFORD UNIVERSITY

As part of the Oxbridge Elective, 30 Year 12s participated in a bespoke insight day into Oxford University at Mansfield College.

After an introductory talk about Oxford, we were introduced to a first-year Law student and a second-year English student for a Q&A session. Year 12 were able to ask questions on any aspect of university as the undergraduates shared their experiences of the application process, interview stages and a typical day of study at the university.

Following on, the group were taken on a guided tour of Mansfield College including the library and the onsite accommodation as well as the ornate refractory where they enjoyed a typical student lunch. After a feedback opportunity, the group split into Sciences and Humanities and joined in a tailored academic taster session run by postgraduates.

The science option gave our future scientists an experience of a laboratory experiment as they tested out different types of material being researched for solar panels. Some good results were attained as the postgraduates explained the background to their research.



TRIP TO GOLDMAN SACHS

In October, Year 12 studying Economics were invited to a 'Girls in finance Super Day' at Goldman Sachs International offered by a Townley alumna Cassylda, who works as a Wealth Management Operations Analyst at their Plumtree Court office in Farringdon. We were joined by female staff from all areas, both junior and senior levels at Goldman Sachs, including a Company Director whose next step was to become a Partner.

After an introduction to Goldman Sachs, their work culture and the types of roles available, we learnt more about how involved Goldman Sachs are with their employees and the sense of community created.

Starting with a group task Year 12 had to decide what they would take on a desert island and then present this with their reasoning to the audience. Staff from Goldman Sachs then gave some personal advice to everyone as they reviewed their CVs and then discussed working at Goldman Sachs over a networking lunch.

By far the most popular session was the speed mentoring and mock interviews where Year 12 were able to discuss their individual aspirations and receive some advice. Finishing with a 'ask me anything' panel discussion, we learnt more about their interests and their career journeys. Goldman Sachs were impressed with the questions asked by Year 12 and for their engagement and involvement in the day.



ALUMNI BIOGRAPHIES

Here are some of our alumni's stories:

Rebekah Evans

I joined Townley as a (very small!) Year 7 back in 2009, and left after I finished sixth form in 2016. I read English at King's College London, and then studied with the Press Association to become a fully qualified, and subsequently award-winning Journalist. I have worked on local and national news desks, travelled across the world for work and have interviewed politicians, activists, scientists, celebrities and more.

Your current position and any notable accomplishments in your field.

I currently serve on the UK and US editorial team of TheWeek.com. And it all began with a trip to The Guardian at Townley! Visiting the newspaper as a blue shirt cemented the knowledge that I one day wanted to work in the media, and I was able to chart my path from there.

Micheal Odumala

I went to Townley Grammar school sixth form, from 2017-2019, which was one of the best decisions I could have made for my future career, during my time at Townley the teaching and the support from staff was amazing, which allowed me to get a place at medical school. During my time at Townley I was also able to meet individuals who were also high attaining academic students, which pushed and motivated me to be better.

Townley also offered a range of extracurricular activities, which were a great opportunity to get involved within the Townley community. During my time at Townley the staff were very supportive in helping me start the school's first boys basketball team. All in all, I had a very positive experience at Townley grammar.

Micheal is also part of Sozomedics, a group of medical school students supporting those aspiring to study medicine.

Ann Dickerson

I left Townley in 2011 and I am now a primary school teacher. And I have been since I left university in 2015. I've been Subject Leader and held various other responsibilities at the primary schools I have worked at.



"I currently serve on the UK and US editorial team of TheWeek.com. And it all began with a trip to The Guardian at Townley! Visiting the newspaper as a blue shirt cemented the knowledge that I one day wanted to work in the media, and I was able to chart my path from there."

REBEKAH EVANS

SENIOR PREFECT TEAM

Gold Tie Team

This team consists of the Head Girl, Head Boy, and the Deputy Head Students representing various roles under community, learning, mental health and more. The gold tie team play pivotal roles in organising events, bringing plans into action, having frequent meetings with the Senior Leadership and more. The role provides opportunities to host whole school assemblies, work with younger years and collaborate to improve Townley. The team serves as a platform for students' voices to get raised directly to the Headteacher, and leaves you gaining various skills in public speaking, teamwork, leadership, communication, time managements and more, alongside making many memories.

This year the Senior Prefect team have worked together resulting in many successes. Some things the team have been involved in organising include Asian Celebration Evening, the Valentine's Roses, Y12 Winter Ball, the Diwali Party, Y12 Teambuilding day, celebrating Teacher's Day, helping with EDGE days and much more, hoping to leave a lasting legacy.

Silver Tie Team

As a silver tie in charge of Careers, I have learnt so much in terms of all the different career pathways you could take, such as apprenticeships, gap years, straight into the workforce and the most standard route, through university. As a Career Prefect, you will be involved in working with Mrs Williams (Townley's Career Adviser!) and a few other Prefects to create newsletters as well as developing new ways to inspire others of what their desired career pathway could look like (from Year 7 to Year 13). Irrespective of what your specific role is as a silver tie, there are so many opportunities through being a Prefect, such as hosting assemblies, leading sports days, guiding Year 12s who are interested in joining Townley and many more!

Red Tie Team

'Being able to create a change that truly benefits the school community is what being an Equity Prefect is all about to me. As a red tie, you'll be able to oversee equality, diversity and inclusion not just in the year group you are allocated, but throughout the school, bringing awareness to situations and movements that may benefit different communities in the school. It's an amazing opportunity to bring your vision of a truly integrated school in Townley'



SENIOR PREFECT TEAM - HEAD GIRL AND BOY INTERVIEW

Can you describe your role as Head Boy/Head Girl?

Caitlin - The role of Head Girl is about trying to manage a large group of people, its a role about efficiency, breaking down large projects into smaller parts and utilising everyone to their max potential

Tré - As Head Boy I believe my role is ever changing, however what stays the same is the commitment to my aim; to be an asset in cultivating a community that ensures promising futures. With that comes with empowering students through assemblies, coordinating events for students and strategising with the whole school community on how we can further launchpad Townley's success for years to come.

What are some skills you think you need to have in this role?

Caitlin - You have to grow a very thick skin, be good at organisation and be confident in yourself and your ability as well as confidence in managing such a large team. You need to be able to focus your mind on efficiency, be able to zoom out and break things down as you are often organising big chains of things as well as organise your studies around your role. Communication is one of the biggest skills needed, as you're constantly communicating with both SLT and other people in the Senior Prefect team.

Tré - I think you need to have strong communication skills, effective time management and an ability to delegate. Having the skill to utilise all of your team's strengths will make the difference between becoming a consistently charismatic leader and a real life stress-ball! With this comes effective communication, not only with others but yourself. Honesty with yourself on how you juggle deadlines with your schoolwork is the only way you can excel holistically.

What would you say are you greatest achievement in this role?

Caitlin - Managing the Townley ACE team who were such a passionate and driven group and it was an honour to work with them. Also managing the really stressful September to December period, where I was also juggling early university applications alongside my role, getting through that was a big achievement.

Tré - I'd say my greatest achievement in this role is planning Y12 Teambuilding day with a group of Prefects. Planning this day was the first time as Head Boy I felt like the raw amount of work I had put in had an overwhelmingly positive impact on the school community. I could see for myself the aim of the day completely coming alive in the Y12s' faces, which made the effort we as Prefects put in worthwhile.



ASSOCIATE STAFF CAREER PATHWAYS

Here are some intriguing insights into the career pathways of Associate staff at Townley:

Mrs L Avery

- Reprographics Officer

Which skills do you most use for your role?

Practicality, a good knowledge of design tools eg Photoshop, InDesign, etc.

What are the best parts about your job?

No day is the same and I don't just photocopy. I get to do some design work, the accounts for the photocopiers, tendering for new contracts for paper, copiers, equipment etc.

What are the challenging aspects of your career?

Often as in most schools a lot of work is required very quickly so you have to be able to drop one job and pick up another - be flexible.

What does a typical day involve?

Photocopying, designing posters, decorating for events, checking accounts

What did your career path look like to get where you are now?

Post 18 I joined the Bank of England and worked my way up on the secretarial side. I then joined Midland Bank as a Junior Secretary rising to a Personal Assistant when it was taken over by HSBC. I then left to have a family and went back to work by joining Westwood College (now Harris Academy in Falconwood) as a part time Receptionist/First Aider. I worked there for 5 years and then left to join Townley Grammar School as a Reprographics Officer. I have been here for over 20 years.

Mrs E Pritchard

- Educational Mental Health Practitioner

Which skills do you most use for your role?

Listening, empathy and organisation

What are the best parts about your job?

Working with young people and professionals and supporting the development of mental health provisions in schools.

What are the challenging aspects of your career?

Ever changing challenges faces by young people and the impact this has on their wellbeing and mental health as well as keeping on top of current research into mental health developments and services.

What does a typical day involve?

Meeting with young people, holding support group sessions in school, attending training, meetings and a fair amount of administration for planning and referrals.

What did your career path look like to get where you are now?

Studied business and worked in marketing/events before changing to work in education after having children. Recently qualified for Diploma in HE for Psychology and currently studying for BSc in Psychology with Counselling. In school I have trained as an ELSA to provide Emotional Literacy support.



ASSOCIATE STAFF CAREER PATHWAYS

Miss F Aldridge

- Data and Admissions Manager

Which skills do you most use for your role?

Mainly excel skills but we all utilise a lot of people skills, responding to emails, speaking to parents etc. Need to be very organized managing lots of different tasks

What are the best parts about your job?

Constantly learning new things and having new challenges

What are the challenging aspects of your career?

Constantly having to learn new data programs, it is a fun challenge but there are so many new things coming out every week!

What does a typical day involve?

Responding to parental queries, analysing reporting data, supporting staff with data queries, managing and creating spreadsheets, organising admissions events. No two days are the same

What did your career path look like to get where you are now?

I graduated university in 2020 and came to work at the school during lockdown to help out on reception.

I then became Sixth Form Attendance and Administrator here for a year, then moved on to Exams Assistant. The Data Analysis role came up in the school and they offered to put me on an apprenticeship to learn how to be the Data Manager, so I completed my apprenticeship through the school and then got promoted to Admissions and Data Manager this September.

Mr V Barabhuiya

- Science Technician

Which skills do you most use for your role?

Practical ability to apply chemical knowledge

What are the best parts about your job?

Using my practical knowledge to help deliver the curriculum to the upper school

What are the challenging aspects of your career?

Sometimes it can be physically demanding to deliver what has been requested at busy times

What does a typical day involve when working?

Preparing reagents and equipment for practicals

What did your career path look like to get where you are now?

Currently semi-retired, having worked as an Analytical Chemist in industry for more than 30 years

CAREERS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

In January, we welcomed back alumna Rishona who is now in her third and final year of the Civil Service Fast Stream programme, the accelerated leadership programme for graduates who wish to build a career in the Civil Service. Year 12 were invited to participate in a workshop to learn more about the career pathways available in the Civil Service.

We asked why students want to attend and what they already know:

"I like to go into the politics or the international affairs field; enhance my knowledge on the role of civil servants; unique opportunity to delve into macroeconomic issues; taster of what it is like working in the civil service and what impacts they have on society"

"Civil servants are responsible for implementing any government decisions; from economics to humanitarian act as the bridge between the people and the state; handling administrative work across the country; politically neutral"

Rishona's insight was invaluable as she had worked across a number of the 22 departments within the Civil Service and is currently working in the Cabinet offices. She covered all aspects of this type of work and that she had particularly enjoyed the Project Management roles where she interacted with different colleagues and departments. Building her skills in small teams and large teams, she is now at the end of the programme and looking to move into a permanent position.

With a full overview of the career opportunities within the Civil Service, Year 12 were then tasked with an interactive activity on policy crisis management to allow each to 'act' as Civil Servants.

Given different departments to 'take charge of' they had to come up with a solution to an issue the department faced and give their reasoning behind the decisions made.

Civil Service Career matcher:
<https://www.civil-service-careers.gov.uk/career-matcher/>



Civil Service

"Civil servants are responsible for implementing any government decisions; from economics to humanitarian act as the bridge between the people and the state; handling administrative work across the country; politically neutral"

UNIVERSITY INTERVIEW PREPARATION WORKSHOPS

Future Medics, Dentists and Vets (MDV), along with all those making applications to either Oxford or Cambridge universities, are expected to attend an interview as part of the selection process for these highly competitive courses. Aware that preparation is key to success, applicants attended relevant workshops to learn more about the interview process and to perfect their interview skills.

Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science

For MDV applicants, there may be either a panel type interview or a series of mini interviews, known as MMI. In November, the Programme Director from Bexley GP Training Scheme offered to help Year 13 with their interview practice and arranged for an MMI practise session to be run at Bexley Grammar School. The session consisted of various stations run by GPs who ran scenarios, such as those related to ethics, background and motivation, strengths and weaknesses. Year 13 were given feedback on how they responded as well as tips and advice on how they could improve. There was also a separate room where small groups had the opportunity to ask more general questions about the GP's roles and backgrounds. Year 13 found the MMI tasks quite challenging and were surprised on how many local GPs supported the event.

In January, following on from their successful Year 12 Careers in Medicine workshop in the summer term, Sozomedics (Townley Alumni) returned to Townley to offer a bespoke and interactive session on interviews. Wanting to 'give back', these 4th and 5th year medical students have been a great support to our Sixth Form Medics, especially their advice on the interview process and their knowledge gained during their medicine course.

Oxbridge preparation workshop

An annual event hosted at Townley in late November, was the workshop offered by both university's outreach departments for Oxbridge applicants in local Bexley schools. Representatives from Gonville & Caius college, Cambridge and Mansfield college, Oxford provided a personalised session addressing all aspects of an Oxbridge interview and how best to prepare. Split into degree subjects, Year 13 were given various tasks related to both their subject and interviews in general and through liaising with each other and questioning the speakers, were able to gain experience useful for their future interview(s).



Interviews are a part of the university application for competitive degrees and universities. They allow assessors to look at your application as a whole, using it as a chance for you to show your values, skills, experiences and personality

2025 APPLICATIONS - 6TH FORM

29
JAN

(18:00 UK time) Equal consideration date for applications for most undergraduate courses

You can still apply after this date but universities and colleges do not guarantee to consider applications they receive after 29 January 2025, and some popular courses may not have vacancies after this date.

Please check with individual universities and colleges if you are not sure. You are advised to apply as early as possible.

26
FEB

Extra opens

If you've used all five choices and are not holding any offers, you may be able to add another choice in your application. For more information, visit our [Extra page](#).

30
JUN

(18:00 UK time) Applications received by this deadline will be sent to universities and colleges

After this time, applications are automatically entered into [Clearing](#).

04
JUL

Last day to add an Extra choice in your application

05
JUL

Clearing opens

Clearing opens for eligible applicants, and vacancies are displayed in UCAS' search tool. Applicants can release themselves into Clearing. Discover information and advice on our [Clearing and Results day](#) pages.

FEATURE IN TOWNLEY'S CAREERS NEWSLETTER!

Townley's Careers Newsletter is published every term for members of the school community to engage in.

It is put together by Mrs Williams and the Careers Prefects in year 13 - Romani, Yu Shen, Norah and Chhavi.

If you would like to contribute or feature in an upcoming article, email 18PathakR@townleygrammar.org.uk

EDITOR'S NOTE

Thank you for taking the time to read Townley's Careers Newsletter!

If you have any feedback for us please email Mrs Williams at wwilliams@townleygrammar.org.uk or talk to one of the Careers Prefects - Yu Shen C, Romani P, Chhavi S, Norah C-D



Reach out to
mentors, staff
and older
students – they
will have plenty of
advice and
support for you
and provide
different
perspectives