

## Work Experience

On Monday September 5<sup>th</sup>, 293 students in Year 11 began the academic year by taking up their Work Experience placements. The range of placements was as wide as ever. Local employers were once again very willing to offer our students a huge number of very exciting and varied opportunities. The students naturally had some anxiety about starting their work experience in a very different environment, but they also had a spirit of adventure and a keen sense of enthusiasm. This type of start is important in focusing the students on the kinds of opportunities that will be open in their future, and help them to appreciate the importance of this year. Many students also recognise that although the environment out of school is very alien there are many similar skills required. The development of key practical and social skills ensured that most students found their placement thought provoking and challenging. The students found themselves in placements as far afield as Italy, London and Cambridge as well as more locally in Woodbridge and Ipswich. The range of businesses that provided students with a realistic scheme of work included retail outlets, offices, garages, hospitals, veterinary practices, nuclear energy, financial institutions, the legal profession and publishing firms. The staff carried out visits and also made telephone contact with the students and reported some very complimentary comments made by the employers. After getting over their initial shyness our students impressed with their hard working enthusiasm, adaptability, responsibility and initiative. Several employers commented that our students always proved to be mature and useful additions to the workplace and, as always, many students were offered holiday and weekend jobs as a result of their placement. The students returned to school on Monday September 12<sup>th</sup> and spent the morning considering and evaluating their time in the workplace and undertaking target setting to help plan ahead. The year group has now settled into the serious business of their GCSE studies. Their teachers recognise that most students approach their work with new insights into their futures and have a greater sense of self-confidence and maturity as a result of their first real exposure to the working world outside of the school environment.

Mrs Frazer