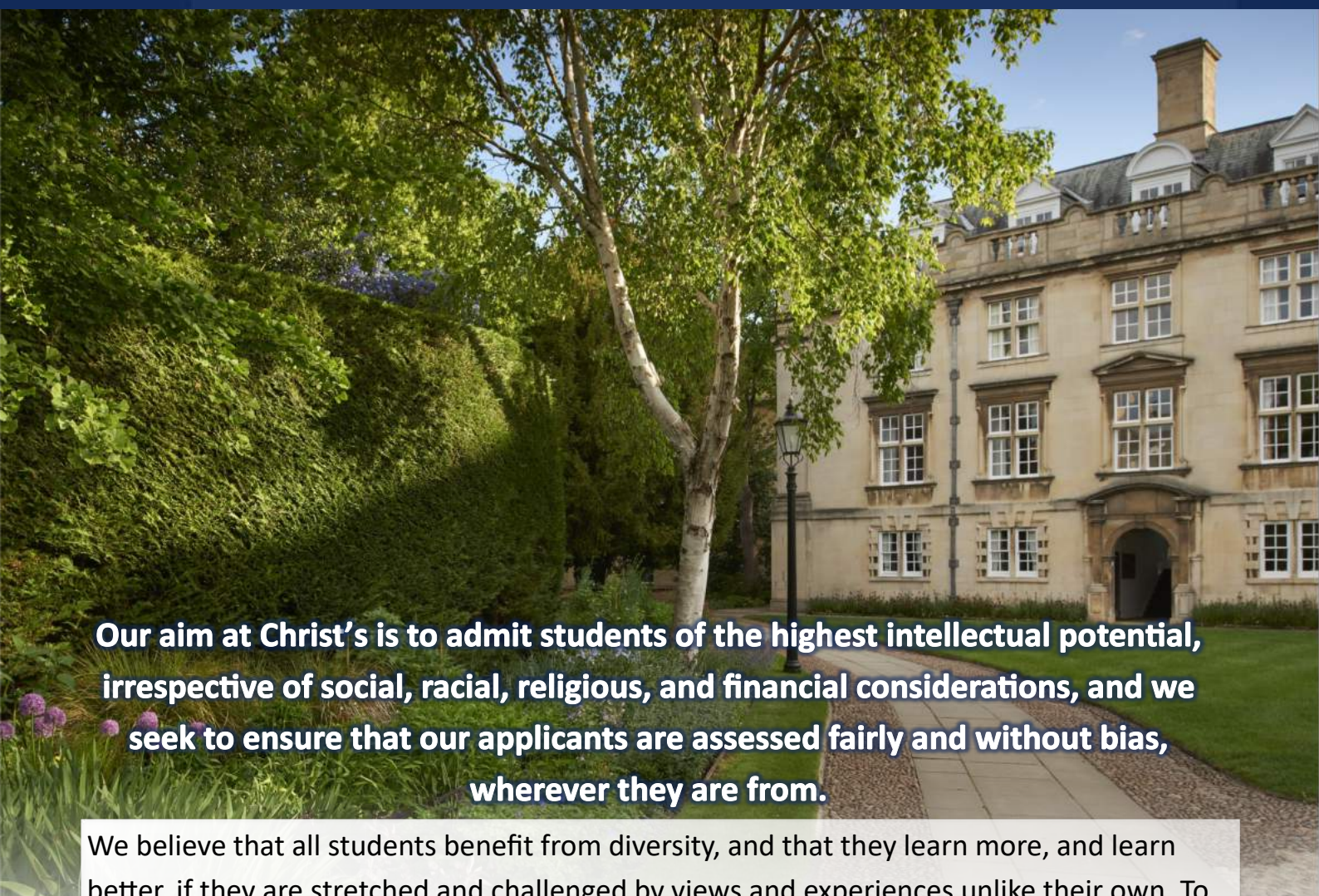




Outreach News 2020/21



Our aim at Christ's is to admit students of the highest intellectual potential, irrespective of social, racial, religious, and financial considerations, and we seek to ensure that our applicants are assessed fairly and without bias, wherever they are from.

We believe that all students benefit from diversity, and that they learn more, and learn better, if they are stretched and challenged by views and experiences unlike their own. To that end, we work to recruit students from a wide range of backgrounds and demographic groups, including groups currently under-represented at Cambridge, and we do our best to ensure that no student with the ability to succeed here is deterred by misconceptions or a lack of information about what our processes entail.

As the pandemic has continued and provided ever-evolving challenges, our team has continued to adapt and innovate in response to feedback, and to reflect our own increasing experience in the world of online outreach, in order to continue supporting students and schools whilst we are unable to hold events in person. **As we gradually move toward more in-person work, we will continue to develop a programme of support that brings together the best of both into the next academic year, and there is no doubt that it will remain a key feature of all future outreach work in the years to come.**

The Pandemic Timeline

University Open Days.

Emily to Nordic Study Abroad (See more on International Outreach on page 5).

Lincolnshire applicants support Webinars in collaboration with Lincoln College Oxford.

Interview technical support webinars begin.

Christ's regular webinar programme returns for the New Year.

Co-ordination of Slipstream Mentoring programme across Cambridge—formerly Project Access UK—225 students.

Women in Maths eight week programme begins—learn about this on page 6.

Project Access Denmark Virtual Road-trip sessions take place.

Emily virtually visited schools in four other countries.

Four link area virtual visits—Park High Stanmore, Bourne Grammar, Pershore High, and St Augustine's.

Final of the five virtual sessions for the Brilliant Club ran this month.

LPN Summer School 2021—See page 7.

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

First of Annual Year 12 Open Days.

Denmark Academy of Talented Youth Two Day Virtual Visit.

We processed 997 applications!

Interviews for the 2020-21 Admissions Cycle take place—learn more on page 3.

Six virtual School talks and visits took place over the course of Lent Term.

SEO London webinar programme begins
Second of our annual Year 12 Open Days—our largest yet—figures on page 4.

From early March to late April our Subject Taster Series runs online.

Teach First Christ's/King's Webinars take place over three weeks—with subject tasters, social sessions, and info on applying.

Making the most of Open Days Webinar.
International Outreach Webinars.
Virtual July Open Days.

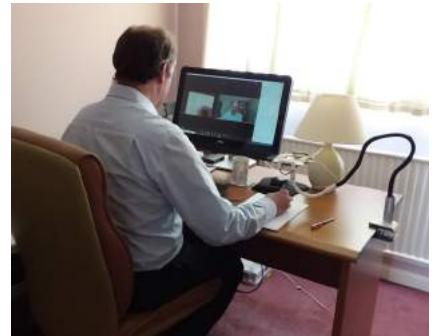
And it all starts again for 2021-22!

'I thought everyone was really helpful and honest about their experiences, making the webinar series really useful to me. I also thought Ellie was really approachable and her energy was very comforting and non-judgemental of our experiences.'

SEO London Webinar Series Participant

Interviews in the Pandemic

Interviews took place in the usual period in December 2020; however, travel restrictions and health and safety concerns meant they had to take place virtually. Whilst the contents of the interviews were still the same, the Admissions Office put in a lot of work to keep things running smoothly for both applicants and interviewers.



Technical Support—

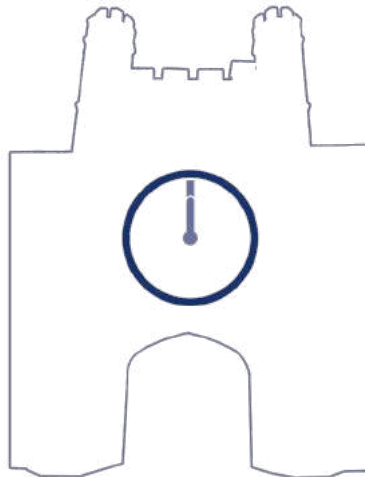


In the run up to the interviews, **demo sessions** were held with interviewers to trial the software, reducing help needed on the days.

Interview Content—

Whilst this remained mostly the same, innovative techniques had to be employed to carry out aspects such as working on paper, using images, or sharing screens, **as can be seen in the image above.**

Scheduling Interviews—



Interviews had to be scheduled across multiple time zones—**ranging from USA to Australia!**

Effects of teacher assessment on grades — A major topic of contention in 2020, Christ's was prepared this admissions cycle. With decision day on **25th January**, we knew exams were not being sat when making offers, and took this into account to ensure that we hit our targets.



'The work put into developing interview tech set-up webinars certainly paid off, with a majority of our applicants attending; it definitely helped reduce potential problems during the interview period itself and meant it went relatively smoothly overall.'

Ellie Wood, Admissions and Outreach Officer

Outreach online...

With in-person events still curtailed for most of this academic year, we have taken this time to develop our online work, to increase its impact for prospective students

Just a small investment in a gimbal phone holder made a world of difference for our work, allowing us to make more dynamic video content—including an interview set-up webinar for applicants, explaining how they would work technically, as well as six short videos on College for the Cambridge Virtual Tour. The latter can be seen here:



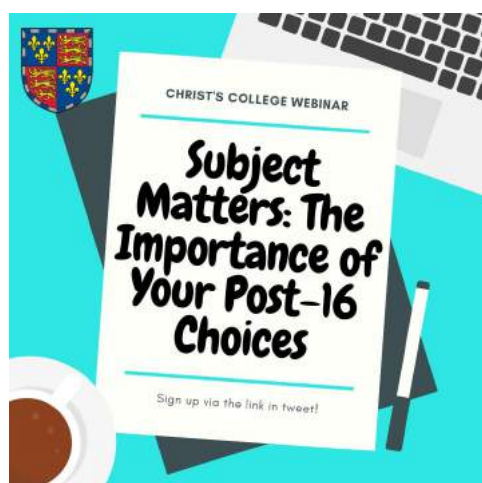
<https://bit.ly/39M5icA>



With this gimbal phone holder, and the help of our students, particularly **Alice Maynard** (m. 2018), and a lot of practice with video editing software, we were even able to make a virtual tour of Christ's for Freshers, when these couldn't be held in person.



Over the last twelve months, the team have refined our regular webinar offering, with a set of four sessions that run throughout most of the year. When running, each of these take place around every 4-8 weeks, and more often where demand requires. The ethos of our regular webinar programme is to ensure a student can



access helpful information sessions year-round, no matter which stage of their journey they are at.

The new addition to our webinar programme since last year is *Subject Matters*—designed to provide guidance to students sitting GCSEs on where their post-16 A-Level, IB, Higher qualification, or other choices, can lead them. It also focuses on what subjects should be chosen to make competitive applications to top Universities.

'The atmosphere created over the difficult medium of a webinar was fantastic. The participants felt at ease with asking questions and I was so interested by the vast range of subjects at university level that I had never considered studying prior to the webinar. So many rumours about post-16 subject choices were dispelled, leaving us all with a clearer view of what the future might hold for us. Absolutely brilliant.'

Participant from Subject Matters Webinar

... and Opening up the College

We've worked hard to consider how we might be able to replicate our open days whilst they had to be held online—and then to prepare again for in-person visits. We were fortunate in the previous year as we had already done our two big open days before Lockdown hit, but this was not the case in 2020-21, and thus presented a new challenge.

We extended them to a **two-day programme**, so that students weren't exhausted from a full day online. We ran subject meetings with Fellows and specialists in breakout rooms, as well as offering various Q&As, including a session on preparing in Year 12, and the personal statement.



February 2021 Open Day



Re-opening with Restrictions

Prospective students are once more welcome on College grounds, able to take part in self-guided tours, with leaflets with information available from the Porter's Lodge—as well as some smaller events.

We also learned from what we used in Lockdown—adding quotas to our sign-up webforms for the small guided tours we ran over Summer, allowing us to confirm places instantly for those attending

QR Codes, such as those in the image to the right from the archway, have been extremely useful—allowing students to download leaflets for their tours as they enter Christ's, and easily access news about open days and events in College.



If you know a prospective student and wish to visit Christ's, you can go to christs.cam.ac.uk/visiting-christs—our next online open day is 16 February for those applying in 2022 for 2023 entry (or 2024 deferred entry).

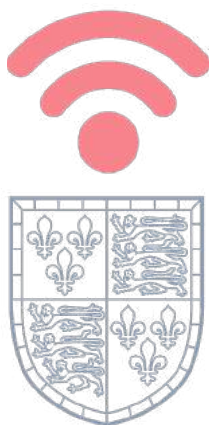
'Thank you SO much Ellie, your advice and guidance has been truly invaluable and always delivered in a concise and easy to comprehend way. Looking at Uni websites can often be so overwhelming, but the way you broke it down quashed any anxieties along with outlining exactly what steps we should be taking at what times.'

Feedback from a session on Personal Statements

International Outreach

The pandemic continued to curtail international travel for Admissions work, but that didn't prevent us from maintaining our links abroad—particularly in our target areas across Scandinavia and Europe.

Online Bootcamps took place in...



Austria
Finland
Germany
Norway
Poland
Sweden

.....



...organised and run by Ellie and Emily,
in conjunction with Project Access.

Christ's College: Virtual Open Days

13th-15th July 2021



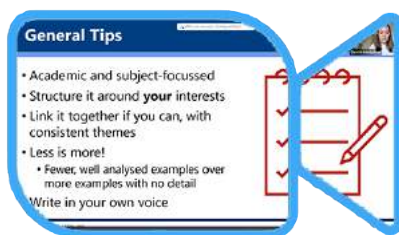
As part of our Open Days, **for general attendance**, we held specific access sessions for:

**Singapore and
Malaysia**

Cyprus

EU Countries

We also ran a follow-up webinar for **Hong Kong** specifically, after our Open Days.



This, of course, was all alongside the fact students were able to attend all of our general webinar series, especially the grounds and facilities sessions to view the College from abroad, and could join our other open days.

‘It was very helpful in that it took all of the information that tends to be scattered across the website and internet and condensed it down into a single webinar. I found the images were the most helpful in conveying what the college is really like ’

Attendee of Christ's Grounds Webinar

Residentials, and Outreach Impact

In 2020/21, we weren't able to host any of our residential or taster day programmes as normal. Instead, building on feedback from previous events, we restructured our events to better factor in online teaching provisions, and the return to schools in March 2021.

March and April ended up being quite busy!



WOMEN IN MATHS RESIDENTIAL

Our regular residential with **Trinity College** was held over **eight consecutive weeks**, with one keynote session **open access** on YouTube



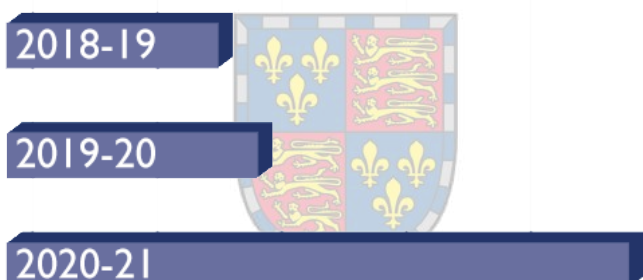
Taster days became a **six week** online programme—with sessions on **Biology, History, Economics, and English and Theology**

However, this allowed for a different kind of engagement, with students feeling more comfortable asking questions in chat rooms, pre-reading for sessions, and the ability to engage with the week's topic without being moved quickly to the next one.

The results of our online Outreach work speaks for itself:

We worked with students from at least **1,000 different schools** this academic year, UK and abroad.

This compares with 339 different schools in 2018-19, and 403 in 2019-20.



And lots of positive feedback—seen throughout this report!

of Christ's applicants in the **2020-21 admissions round** had attended one of our **events** or **webinars**



'I loved being surrounded by like-minded girls all with the same passion for maths. I loved the chances we got to talk to one another, as it made it so much more personal, and made me feel slightly less alone in the male-dominated subject. I also loved the talk by Paul Fannon - he was an excellent and enthusiastic teacher and I was so engaged!'

Feedback from Women in Maths Participant

The Old and the New

LPN Summer School 2021

- Over 120 students, cross-UK, in 8 subject streams
- Ran over two week period in August
- Opportunities to attend 13 different subject tasters
- Student check-ins every morning, Mon-Fri



Following what we learned in 2020, as this event was again held online, we worked to streamline our offering. Alongside the academic programme above, we also provided sessions about applying to Cambridge—including a Q&A with Dr Tomlinson and Dr Sumnall (Sidney Sussex) - and sessions on post-16 choices as well as super-curricular activities.

Social elements were also included in the programme, both with dedicated activities, and drop-in slots for students to spend time in video call with each other more informally.

Indeed, such a positive relationship was formed between attendees and outreach staff, that Ellie and Stuart (Sidney Sussex) even got **rick-rolled** more than once!

We're excited to work with such an engaged cohort over the coming year!

This year also saw us develop a new partnership with SEO London, supporting students enrolled with them wishing to apply to Oxbridge.

26 students were involved, all attending state schools in London, with a majority from minority ethnic and low socio-economic backgrounds.

This programme included a visit to Christ's in August, and even some advice sessions.

1 to 1



Monthly webinars from this programme covered:

- *An Introduction to University and Cambridge*
- *Student Life Q&A*
- *Finance, Accommodation, & Budgeting*
- *Information sessions for parents and guardians*
- *Personal Statements and Interviews*

'I really enjoyed being able to meet so many lovely and intelligent people my age, and engage with them on so many different topics. I loved being able to share my passion for my subjects with them and with everyone from Cambridge who took part, especially since much of it was academically on a higher and thus more stimulating level than it had been at GCSE.'

LPN Summer School 2021 Attendee

Bridging Course Part II

The Bridging Course ran once again in September 2021, this year in collaboration with **Gonville & Caius College**, as well as our initial partner **King's College**. Following feedback from its inaugural year, the Bridging Course ran as a **two week** programme:

One week, in-person stay in Cambridge, with both academic and social sessions...



... And a further week of online lectures, seminars, workshops, and supervisions.

Participants attended a variety of lectures, seminars, workshops and **supervisions** in their subject areas, giving them a sense of different teaching methods and styles and what to expect once Michaelmas term arrives.

Throughout the week they were supported by an undergraduate mentor, and got to take part in a **variety of social activities** to help them make friends both within Christ's and across the other Colleges - including games nights, a quiz, bowling, and a **formal dinner hosted by Christ's** to round off their stay, for which the excitement was palpable!



All Christ's respondents to survey (9 of the 10 who took part) said it had increased their confidence about coming to Cambridge in October to begin their studies.

'Simple: arrive in Cambridge and be unapologetically confident in yourself and your ability. You will meet great people and remember that you deserve to be in Cambridge.'

2021 Bridging Course Attendee giving advice to future attendees

Thank Yous

Once more, the list of people that have helped us through another difficult year would stretch on for multiple pages—but we wanted to give some specific thanks for the hard work of key individuals.



Jenny Gibson, who works in **Education** in the University, and was **Director** of the **Bridging Course**—she was a huge help in organising and running it this year.

Paul Fannon, who again led the **Sciences Strand** of the **Bridging Course**, as well as running sessions for **Women in Maths** and the **LPN**.



Into University, who supported online sessions with students, as well as our **Christ's Representatives** for giving their time for Q&As.



Our Fellowship, with over **20** taking part in online outreach sessions...



... and **in general** for all their help, flexibility, and understanding this year!



And, as always, thank you to our donors for your generosity!

'Collaboration is key to the success of all our outreach activities at Christ's, and my personal shout-out this year goes to our wonderful student volunteers, whose willingness to pitch in and "pay it forward" is helping us recruit the next generation of stars to the College.'

Dr Emily Tomlinson, Admissions Director

The Next Steps

As we look forward to the future, the steady relaxing of pandemic restrictions will mean we will be reassessing our outreach once more in the coming months. The next challenge to face will be bringing together our new online offerings, with existing in-person programmes, and considering how both can be used to maximise their impact.

IntoUniversity

We intend to host two visits this Academic Year - November 2021 and March 2022

Webinars
targeted at a wider range of prospective students



West Midlands
Webinar Series



SEO /LONDON



Working with a new cohort of students, and developing our partnership—hopefully with some successful 2022 offer holders!

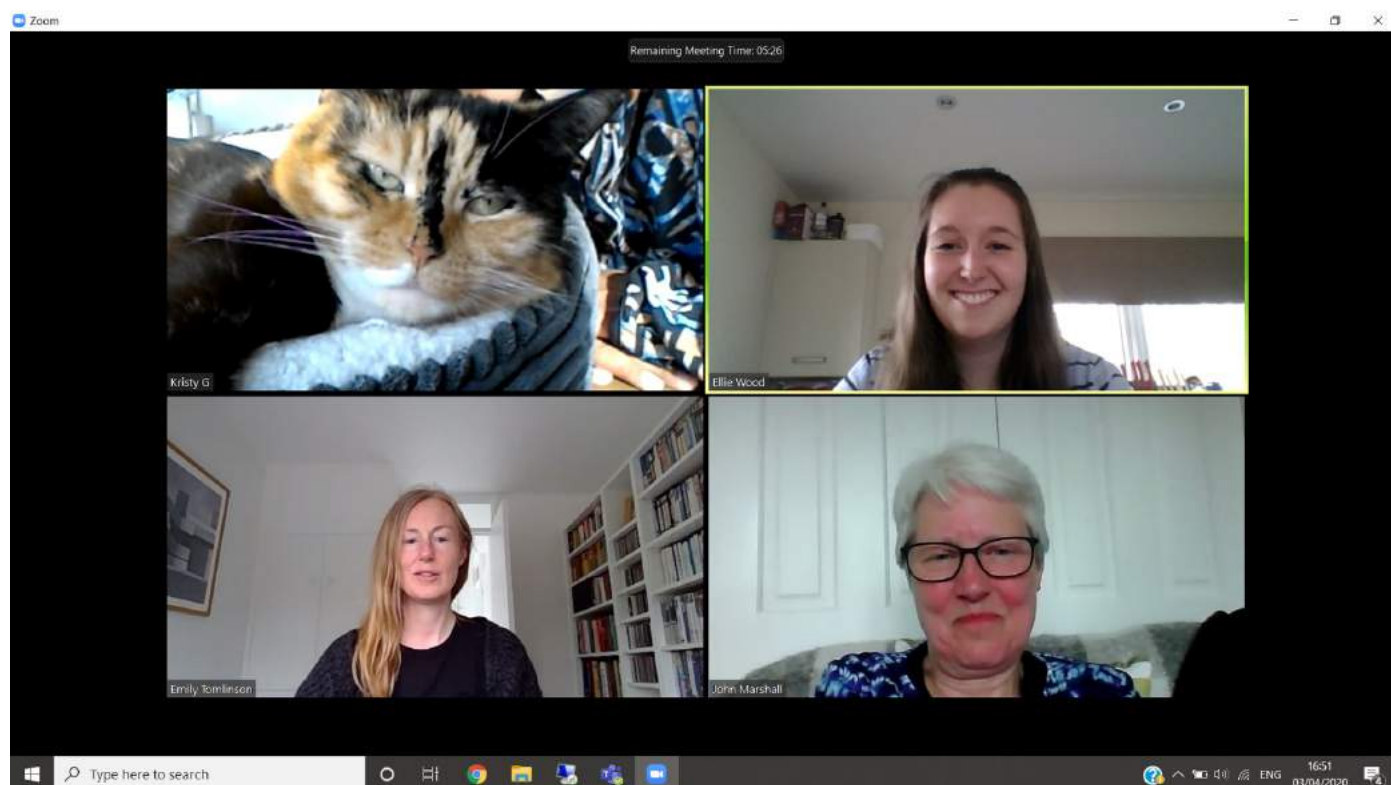
And, of course, we are looking forward to welcoming prospective students in-person for our key events in 2022!



'The SEO Schools team feel extremely privileged to be partnered with Christ's College and Cambridge's 93% Club. Last academic year, Ellie at Christ's College delivered a fantastic programme for 26 of our students, which... boosted the student's confidence and inspired many of them to apply in October 2021. SEO Schools looks forward to continuing the partnership this academic year and (hopefully) beyond!'

Jessica Wallis, Programme Manager at SEO London

Get in Touch!



From top right, clockwise: Ellie Wood, Jan Marshall, Dr Emily Tomlinson, and Kristy Guneratne - although Rocket is hogging the screen!

We are delighted to talk about the work that we do here in the Admissions Department. If you have any questions about anything in this report, feel free to get in touch through the Development Office – development@christs.cam.ac.uk

To give to any of the causes in this report, use the following link to our Online giving platform - <https://bit.ly/2VOZb0t>

And follow us on Twitter! @ChristsAccess

