

11th October 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

Open Days/Evenings

Last week we really enjoyed the chance to open our doors to prospective students and parents. As well as the usual 'Open Evening' activity, we also offered morning tours to see the students in action! In total we welcomed over 800 visitors to Budmouth over the course of the two days/nights and I just wanted to comment on how incredibly helpful our students were during this time, not just those in formal roles, but everyone who welcomed guests into their classrooms showed them their work and helped them find their way around. They were a credit to Budmouth!

New Parent Forum

Thank you very much for the response to this. It is clear that we are going to have support in creating a new group. A reminder that the first meeting takes place on Tuesday 12th November at 6 pm, and if you are interested but have not yet let us know, then do please email: office@budmouth-aspirations.org.

Car Parking and Drop Off/Collection

I do not know of a school that doesn't experience some form of issues with stopping off and collecting students, especially large schools like Budmouth. These are always greater on wet days when more students get dropped off or are collected by car. Your support with the following two requests is much appreciated:

1. Please ensure that the 'Entry' and 'Exit' gates are respected. There have been some instances of drivers using the 'No Exit' gates to drive out at the end of the day to avoid the queue. This places students, staff on duty and other road users in a very difficult position.
2. Please be respectful of our nearby neighbours. We have received some complaints that cars have been parking in a way that has blocked entrances to house and driveways. Your support with this matter is much appreciated.

New Student Action Groups

Budmouth has always had its fair share of student groups being set up to help tackle important issues and get involved. I am delighted that in recent weeks we have seen the emergence of two new groups being led by students. Extinction Rebellion is making its presence felt at Budmouth under the leadership of Briony-Mai Green and Ben Oldham who are XRY Dorset Leaders. My thanks to the teachers who were soaked with sponges to help some much needed fundraising, you were very brave! A new group 'LAMP' (Looking After My Planet) has been created by students in Year 8: Coverley Walker, Rae Smith and Isla Clark. They are going to present to school assemblies and want to focus their efforts on the school environment. Well done to all of these students on taking the initiative.

Parent App

I am pleased to see that as the term has progressed more and more people are taking advantage of the new SIMS Parent App, at the present time, 25% of parents have registered as users. Your feedback about this is very helpful and it is not always easy to tie in school systems with the functionality of the App. We have made a number of requests to SIMS, based on your feedback and the experience of staff. If other schools report similar issues, there is a better chance of them making some of the changes we have requested.

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In the meantime:

- The attendance module is all working in real time for both lessons and am and pm attendance. We would urge parents not to make immediate contact if they see a missing mark. We do have systems in place for tracking missing students and we are not perfect and know sometimes mistakes can be made on a class register! If your child is either going to be absent from the Academy or you notice missing marks, please contact our Attendance Officer Mrs Aileen Sheppard: asheppard@budmouth-aspirations.org.
- Homework that has not been marked by the teacher as being completed will automatically show on the App. This is a system default, and unfortunately we cannot change this. There have been some instances where a teacher has not ticked the box on their electronic register to confirm that work has been handed in, when it has. We are also aware from feedback that staff need to be more consistent in ensuring that homework set has been inputted into this system. This is new to us all and I am sure it will prove beneficial in the long run.
- Achievement points are being added to the system and viewable on the App. After feedback, we can see the system does not automatically say who issued them and in which subject. We are not the only school to have been given this feedback. In the meantime, for 'Above and Beyond' or 'Exceptional Piece of Work' we are asking staff to add additional information so the subject and teacher can be identified. The positive points ticked on the BfL card are added by the tutor on Fridays. They are not in a position to say who awarded it and why, but if you see this in the App you will know it will be for good conduct in school and that it has been recognised.
- We are ready to make the behaviour module go live. We have decided to restrict this to the following events: stage 2 class exit, stage 3 subject removal and detentions or higher level sanctions. The stage one verbal warning will remain between the teacher and the students and not be logged on the system and therefore will not show in the App. The same will be true of the negative BfL side of the student's cards. Staff have fed back very positively on the impact these have had in them being able to monitor tutees for example. However, in future, staff are not going to log these on the system and these will not be viewable in the App as a result. Tutors will monitor these on Fridays and, in the case of more persistent issues they will intervene and discuss with students, consult parents, Subject Co-ordinators or Heads of School as appropriate. This change will be made starting Monday 14th October, however, in making the module go live it will automatically show all negative events marked prior to this date.

IT Update

The team have had a very busy half term preparing for the installation of new systems:

- New broadband has now been installed increasing speed.
- The WIFI upgrade is scheduled for half term.
- The upgrade to Windows 10 is ready to be completed and is also scheduled to take place over half-term.
- New staff emails will be in full operation from half term. Staff are currently having to monitor two in-boxes at the moment while the migration takes place.

And finally..... congratulations!

Our new 'Schools' have selected their student leadership teams. I would like to wish the following students the very best of luck in their new roles:

Shelley:

Head Boy/Head Girl: Joe Aubrey-Batchelor and Caprice Locke-White
Sports Leaders: Holly Calton, Taylor Luke, Alton Morris and Paige Colley

Turing:

Head Boy/Head Girl: Edward Goodrick and Beau Pointing
Sports Leaders: Jacob Brunell, Reece Nutman, Malindi Berry and Charlotte Moore

Attenborough:

Head Boy/Head Girl: Harry Mason & Amy Marson
Sports Leaders: Olivia Scholes, Lily Cole, Amelia Stocker, Tom Collins, Josef Hodder and Taylor Edmonds

Hawking:

Head Boy/Head Girl: Toby Scriven and Mailia Brown
Sports Leaders: Brin Doyle and Ruby Petty

Yours sincerely



David Herbert