

22nd May 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope this final letter of the half term finds you and your family safe and well.

Thank you!

I wanted to start this letter by offering my sincere thanks to everyone for their support and understanding during what has been the most unusual time. I would also like to thank a significant number of parents who have taken the trouble to contact me and other members of the Leadership Team thanking our staff for the work they have been doing since the school closure.

I was also reassured following my letter dated 13th May confirming that we will not be re-opening to Years 10 and 12 on 1st June that parents have understood the position we are taking on this. As reiterated in the combined letter from Local Secondary Principals, it is important that we plan any return thoroughly and take on-board all of the guidance available to us. A number of parents have also been in touch to express support for this considered approach and this has been much appreciated. Decisions like this are never easy and it has been comforting to know we have your support in keeping the children and staff safe, whilst planning to get them back to school as soon as we can. After half term, I will write to Years 10 and 12 to outline the plans and dates for any partial return.

Transition

Over the last three weeks myself and the Leadership Team have been conducting video meetings with the Year 6 students who are joining us in the next academic year. This has been a really enjoyable experience and thank you to everyone who has allowed us into their living rooms! With another full year group moving up in September we have almost completed 260 interviews! Miss Guppy is managing the transition this year and things have to be a little different this time round.

Free School Meals

After a very difficult start, the national system for supplying vouchers (run by Edenred) is now working more smoothly. This will continue and Mrs Warr is booking the vouchers on a monthly basis. In Wales this scheme is going to run through the summer holiday period as well. We have not yet heard when this scheme will finish in England, but we will keep you posted.

Support in School

Ever since the national school closure we have remained open to a small group of students made up of the children of critical workers, students with an Education Health Care Plan and some other children classed as 'vulnerable'. Parents were able to book children into a session, a day, or more than one day using a Booking Form. If your child has not been attending this and you would like them to, please make contact with the relevant Head of School in the first instance: Mr Lydford (Hawking), Miss Guppy (Attenborough), Mr Clark (Turing) or Ms Carter (Shelley). It remains an option only for those in one of the eligible groups.

Staffing Update

Even in lockdown life goes on.....

Miss White (PE) is going on an exciting journey to teach in the Middle East! She will leave Budmouth at the end of this academic year and we are thankful for everything she has done at Budmouth. In our first ever 'video interviews' we appointed Louise Bugler as teacher of PE to replace Miss White. Louise will be known to many of our girls as she is involved in the local netball scene and already coaches many of the girls as part of the West Dorset Satellite. Louise has most recently been teaching at Yeovil College.

.../

Many congratulations also to Mr Lydford and Mrs Parkes on well-earned local promotions. Mr Lydford has been successful in being appointed as Vice Principal at Wey Valley Academy where he will lead the pastoral system. Mrs Parkes will join him as Assistant Vice Principal and she will be responsible for developing teaching and learning. Whilst it is always sad to see staff move on, I am personally delighted that they have been successful and it is a great opportunity to develop their careers in leadership.

In addition, our English Department will be joined by Tia Ellis who has been training in Devon this year. Lois Collins also joins our team as a teacher of Maths and PE. Lois has spent the first three years of her career teaching in Portsmouth.

Work Setting

It is clear from parental and student feedback that the changes we made to the work setting schedule for this half term was positive. Your feedback to Mr Cavill's survey was very useful. There are fewer students feeling overwhelmed and fewer with too much time on their hands. However, as ever, if you have any individual feedback you want to share please do contact your child's Form Tutor or Head of School in the first instance. We will not be setting work for the half term period as the students and staff need a break.

Mr Henman has already confirmed that after half term Year 11 will cease to do GCSE work and will instead be making a start on work for their new 6th Form course at A' Level or BTEC National Diploma and get a 'head start' for next year. In recent weeks, a number of students have changed their mind in respect of next year and have submitted late applications to Mr Henman. There are still spaces on some courses and he can be contacted on:

mhenman@budmouth-aspirations.org.

InTouch

We have been made aware of an issue after Easter with our service provider. InTouch messages to some email addresses were going directly into 'spam/junk' folders and please accept our apologies if you were inconvenienced by this. I have been informed that this situation was resolved and would like to remind you that all the letters we send out can also be found on our website under the Parents' Information tab, 'Parent Letters'.

Finally

I hope that the children are able to enjoy a good half term and that you can enjoy some part of this with them. I am conscious that as the country starts to return to work across more sectors this means different challenges for families. I will be watching the government review on 28th May with great interest and will be hoping that the signs are positive for a fuller return to some form of normality for us all.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



David Herbert