

6th July 2020

Dear Year 6 Parents and Carers

I am writing with regards to the upcoming Budmouth Induction Days we had planned to take place week beginning Monday 13th July. **It is with regret that we have taken the decision to cancel these.** However, I do hope you understand that this decision has been made with the very best of intentions.

Once it became obvious that we would not to be able to hold the usual Induction Day for all students on 7th July, Miss Guppy (Transition Leader) began working to arrange nine separate morning events so that the children could meet their new group, Tutor and become more familiar with the site. Miss Guppy has been sharing the plans and dates for these mornings with Year 6 staff.

However, it became clear that the need to schedule these events on nine separate days (to ensure social distancing) presented two main issues:

Firstly, in some cases, the different dates are presenting clashes with the different primary schools' calendars and specifically some end of term leavers' events that are taking place. Some primary schools have activities running right through the last week of term. We do not want children to miss an enjoyable last week and any special events they have been looking forward to.

Secondly, in some cases, schools own Risk Assessment processes are preventing children from going back to their schools if they have been in contact with other children, in effect a 'quarantine' period. We were requested to look at this specific issue and were pleased that the Department for Education confirmed there was no problem with such transition events (we were not the first secondary school to ask) and that specifically there was no requirement for any quarantine period, as long as the children remained socially distanced. This feedback was shared with the schools who enquired and with education leaders at Dorset Council.

Regardless of the DfE advice, we understand that schools have their own procedures. Whilst some schools are not requiring a quarantine period we know that others are and, in some cases, these go up to 48, or even 72 hours. We have had communication from some anxious parents who are in a position where they/their children have to choose between attending the induction morning, or being able to attend end of term/school activities and have been seeking our advice on what to do. We do not want this to be a choice that anyone needs to make. The 'rite of passage' events surrounding leaving primary school are very important. I have watched three of my daughters do this already!

Although we know this does not affect everyone, the last thing we want to do is add any more anxiety at the end of what has been a very difficult two terms for everyone. It is with this in mind that the decision has been made to cancel these events. If some children attend and others do not, it will lose some of the value and we really do not want to put the children, yourselves, or indeed the staff in a difficult situation.

Miss Guppy has done a terrific job on transition during the period of closure and the positive communication between her, our SENDCO (Mrs Dooley) and the Year 6 staff has been really helpful. As you know, each child/family also took part in a video meeting after Easter. We received some excellent feedback about these and we will most likely do the same next year. I think the children, by and large, are feeling confident about their move.

In the circumstances, we do not think cancelling these induction mornings will disadvantage the children. They have already had an unusual year as it is! We are bringing them in one day earlier than the rest of the school on **Friday 4th September (arrival at Clare Hall between 8.30 and 8.40am)** and this will give us ample opportunity to get them settled and to do some of the intended activities from the planned induction mornings.

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In the meantime, we would like them to enjoy their last two weeks in Year 6 and, with that in mind, I would be grateful if you could please share with them the following message from me.

Kind regards.



David Herbert
Principal

Dear Student

I am so glad that you are getting the chance to finish the year back in school. When you took part in the video interviews with me and my colleagues, we did not know when we were going to return to school.

I hope you really enjoy the last days at your primary school and that any leavers' event you have planned go really well. I am sure you will be taking some very fond memories away with you and that there is an awful lot you are going to miss. Do not forget to tell your teachers!

I really hope you are looking forward to your new start at Budmouth in September. It may be a little different as there will be new measures we have to try and follow to keep year groups separate in 'bubbles'. This is the precise opposite of what we would want to do at the start of your new year when the older members of Attenborough, Shelley, Hawking and Turing Schools would be keen to welcome you in your first 'school' assembly.

However, there is absolutely nothing to worry about and we are all looking forward to you joining us. We have decided not to hold the planned transition mornings, as we did not want any of you to miss out on your last days at primary school. It is important you can all enjoy this. We are bringing you back to school one day earlier than the other year groups and you start on Friday 4th September. This will give you the chance to meet your new group, meet your form tutor and become more familiar with the school site. It should be an exciting day!

So, I hope you have a brilliant end of term and that when it comes along, the summer holidays give you a chance to relax, get refreshed and to prepare yourself to start your new school life as a Year 7 student at Budmouth.

I look forward to welcoming you.

Mr Herbert