

17th December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope this letter finds you safe and well and with just a few days to go before the Christmas celebrations begin, I hope that everyone is able to enjoy a really lovely festive break. I know that many of our students and staff are looking forward to seeing members of their family that they have not seen for such a long time and I do hope that everyone who is looking forward to spending some precious time with loved ones is able to do so. In the meantime, here are some updates:

FAB!

Our Friends and Associates of Budmouth group held an online virtual meeting last week. We do look forward to the time when we can hold such meetings face to face but, in the meantime, it was lovely to be able to catch up and answer general questions and to share our experience of what it has been like to manage a school with such unusual restrictions. As always, the notes from our meeting will be placed on the website. There was specific interest in whether some of the changes we have had to make due to Covid-19 restrictions may in fact be worth keeping permanently. The split lunchtimes and virtual Parents' Evenings were raised as examples of these. We do intend to review our amended practices and we will consult on a number of these later in the academic year.

No changes to Key Stage 3 Bubbles in January

As there are more teaching groups in operation for Year 9, it is not possible for them to be based in the Clare Tower area for their teaching. Therefore, Year 7 will remain in this area until February Half Term. After the Half Term holiday they will swap back again with Year 8 and return to the Hub.

Budmouth Life and Times

Budmouth Academy's Life and Times is an anthology of written articles about student life as seen and written by students themselves. The project is a good example of how students can gain quality mentored work experience whilst at school and the opportunity is open to all year groups. The group is led by a team of 6th Form students and is supported by Mr Hill (Resources Centre Manager). Our student team has once again been busy in keeping our online journal going. You can read the latest edition by following this link: <https://www.budmouth-aspirations.org/news-dates/newsletters/>.

Director of Student Leadership and Engagement

I am very pleased to inform you about a new appointment that we have made to the Aspirations South West Region. Andy David will be joining us in September 2021. Andy is currently a national leader for 'PiXL Edge' and helps schools across England and Wales to implement this excellent leadership programme. It is good news for us that he will be joining us to do exactly that and to develop other student centred projects that will support our pastoral and rewards system. Andy will work with other Aspirations Academies in the region, but be based at Budmouth where the majority of his work will be in the first instance. Andy is a former PE Teacher of the Year and Athletics Teacher of the Year and will also become part of our Sports Team.

Student Safety

We have seen an increasing number of students riding to school on bikes and scooters who are not wearing a safety helmet. It is obviously very important for their own safety that they wear an appropriate helmet. We will not allow them to bring their bike or scooter to school if they do not comply and, as a place of education, it would be wrong for us to turn a blind eye to this dangerous practice. The message from us is '*No helmet, no ride*'. If Santa lists have not yet been sent away then it is not too late to add a helmet onto the wish list!

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Face Coverings

It remains the case that students must wear a face covering in indoor areas where there is mass movement. On the whole our students have been very good at remembering them, but in recent days we have been having to issue more daily disposable use coverings and these are not cheap, so please ensure that your child has a face covering each day they are in school. Any exempt students have been issued a wristband that they must wear to easily identify themselves to staff.

As mentioned in my 4th December letter, just a reminder that during the first week of the holidays, school staff will be required to support 'track-and-trace' in any cases where students may have come into contact with someone who had a positive test at the end of term. To share information in relation to this, please use the following contact information: Mr Justin Abbott, Medical/Health & Safety Officer: jabbott@budmouth-aspirations.org.

And finally.....

That is it for 2020! Looking back, you could not have imagined one year ago what we were about to experience across the country in our personal, family and professional lives. I would like to thank everyone for the support they have given to each other and to us at Budmouth. As we move into the Christmas period there is no doubt that the term gone by has been very demanding for teachers and students.

I would like to end this letter by thanking our wonderful team of staff for everything they have done to make sure we have kept running smoothly and, above all else, enabling us to stay open every day this term for all year groups. It would not have happened without a team who were so willing to pull together and help cover each other's workload whenever necessary.

Thank you for your continued support, and however you spend it, have a lovely Christmas break and an enjoyable New Year. We will see students back on 4th January 2021!

Yours sincerely



David Herbert