

5th March 2021

Dear Parent and Carer

As we approach the end of our first week of student testing I just wanted to share some messages ahead of our full return to school on Monday 8th March. It does feel very good to be writing that! I really hope that the students are looking forward to coming back to school. We know that it may be feeling strange to them (18th December feels like a long time ago) but we want to do everything we can to make them feel as safe and happy as possible about coming back to school.

Testing

The students have been fantastic this week. Our testing team has asked me to pass on their thanks for how polite and courteous they have been. This has really helped the process and the timings have worked out very well. We have completed over 1,500 tests so far this week (all negative) and we can further increase our speed once the students are back in school and we have the ability to call for Tutor groups earlier, if we are ahead of schedule. There is an outline plan for the 2nd and 3rd tests at the bottom of this letter. Please note we will not alter the timings to any 6th Form groups as we are aware that they can come and go from the site in between lessons. If a student misses a test for any reason Mr Abbott and his team will monitor this and offer a 'catch up'.

Students who have taken part in the testing programme are entitled to be given home testing kits each week, once the in school programme is completed. This is not compulsory but is an offer from the government should you wish to take it up. If you would like your child to be given a test, then please can you let us know by filling in the following Google Form: <https://forms.gle/VusZfKBzR8ec1hSo9>

You do not need to complete the form if you do not want the tests. Home testing kits are also now available for other family members who live with a child attending a secondary school. This is available to help detect potential community transmission now that students are returning to school nationally. These are not available from schools but can be collected from a local testing centre. The following link contains the information that you will need should you wish to access this offer.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rapid-lateral-flow-testing-for-households-and-bubbles-of-school-pupils-and-staff>

Student checklist!

As the students get ready to come back to school, it would be helpful if they can make sure they have got everything ready. It is very important that they bring back any books and resources they have been using e.g. Learning Booklets and exercise books. I am sure they are looking forward to using pen and paper again and discussing subject matter with their teachers and classmates, rather than just typing on a keyboard. As it has been a while, they would also be advised to make sure they can find their school uniform and that they have reminded themselves of their start time and entry points at the start of the day. This reminder was in the letter I sent to you on 23rd February and is still available to access on our website. To account for the new government recommendations of students wearing face coverings indoors, we have added an additional morning and afternoon break into our schedule to help make this process more comfortable for them. When the wearing of a face covering in indoor areas of congestion e.g. corridors and canteen queuing, was introduced by the government during the Autumn Term, we advised parents that if they wanted to request an exemption for their child this could be done by contacting our Medical/Health and Safety Officer, Justin Abbott. This remains the situation and Justin can be best contacted by email jabbott@budmouth-aspirations.org. To help our staff know who this applies to we share the list of names with them and supply the students with a discrete wristband that can show should anyone ask them.

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Sports Clubs

Although we are on the brink of returning to school, I know that many students are still missing their community sports clubs. The Department for Education Guidance says that schools can offer their extra-curricular sports programmes (within safety guidelines) and we think this is needed more now than ever. We will begin after school sports clubs from Wednesday 10th March.

Free School Meals Entitlement

Over the last twelve months, we have seen an increasing number of our students become eligible for Free School Meals. If your circumstances have changed and you want to check to see if your child could be entitled to this support then you can do this via the following link.

<https://www.budmouth-aspirations.org/parents-information/free-school-meals/>.

Dorset Council has just informed us about some special opportunities they are putting on during holiday periods and we are sending this information to the parent/carer of any student who is in receipt of Free School Meals or who receives other support via what is called 'Pupil Premium' funding.

Cancelled Exams 2021

Last Friday I wrote to parents of Years 11 and 13 confirming the government's recent statement about the ways in which teacher assessments will replace exams this summer and the changes to exam results days. Mr Hudson (Vice Principal link to Year 11) and Mr Henman (Director of Sixth Form) will be sending further guidance to the students.

I have been asked if we have identified a definite 'leaving date' for these year groups. We are not in a position to do that at the moment as we need to carefully plan how we can ensure that we give our students lots of opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in all subjects via a range of assessment opportunities. These teacher assessed grades have to be sent to the exam boards no later than Friday 18th June. As soon as we can confirm a leavers' date, we will do so. We also have many students enquiring whether or not the relaxation on social distancing measures in June will make things like leavers' celebrations and Proms a possibility this year. Our staff are following this very closely and if we are fortunate enough to find ourselves in a position to enjoy traditional end of year celebrations then we will do so within whatever guidelines are in place. It will be for that reason that the word 'Provisional' will have to be placed in front of all plans and dates.

Not a lost generation!

Finally, as we prepare to bring our students back to school, I just wanted to comment on some things that have been written and said about young people by some national commentators on the effects of the national school closure. There have been some references to a 'lost generation' of young people, there have been figures suggested about how many months (years even) students may have fallen behind and even suggestions of how much this may affect their potential earnings in years to come.

I actually think these observations do a great disservice to the hundreds and thousands of young people up and down the country who have worked extremely hard during the last few months and who in many cases learned a whole new set of skills. I would certainly not suggest that it hasn't been very difficult for a great many of them and there may well be gaps to fill and support needed for some catch up. However, some of our students have contacted me to say they feel that reading and hearing about this is demotivating and that they are actually very proud of their achievements and in some cases feel they have made real gains in their learning. I agree with them and I think this needs to be recognised. So, while it is important that we look out for students who may need support 'catching up' and settling back into school, I just want to end this letter by congratulating our students on the way that they have handled themselves during the last twelve months. My personal belief is that with the experiences they have had they will grow up to be wiser, smarter, better organised, more independent and more considerate adults in the years that lie ahead.

Far from being a lost generation, they are young people who have fantastic opportunities ahead of them and we can't wait to see them again and help them on their way. Well done to them all.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



David Herbert

Testing information from Monday 8th March 2021

6 th Form		
Tutor Group	Test 2	Test 3
LEG ACW ML	Monday 8 th March 8.30am	Thursday 11 th March 8.30am
PJN SRL HAL	Monday 8 th March 9.30am	Thursday 11 th March 9.30am
JSB AJC AJD	Monday 8 th March 10.30am	Thursday 11 th March 10.30am
Lunch until 12.30pm		
SR JER GDR	Monday 8 th March 12.30pm	Thursday 11 th March 12.30pm
SGD PD LC	Monday 8 th March 2pm	Thursday 11 th March 2pm

Year 11		
Tutor Group	Test 2	Test 3
A11-HMS A11-LEE	Tuesday 9 th March 8.30am	Friday 12 th March 8.30am
A11-ELA H11-EJJ	Tuesday 9 th March 9.15am	Friday 12 th March 9.15am
H11-AJM H11-EQF	Tuesday 9 th March 10am	Friday 12 th March 10am
S11-LE S11-SRB	Tuesday 9 th March 10.45am	Friday 12 th March 10.45am
Lunch until 12.30pm		
T11-AKB T11-ND	Tuesday 9 th March 12.30pm	Friday 12 th March 12.30pm
Year 7		
S7-TSE H7-CMW	Tuesday 9 th March 1.15pm	Friday 12 th March 1.15pm

Year 10		
Tutor Group	Test 2	Test 3
A10-SRS A10-SBR	Wednesday 10 th March 8.30am	Monday 15 th March 8.30am
H10-ZG H10-CMS	Wednesday 10 th March 9.15am	Monday 15 th March 9.15am
S10-JR S10-TJJ	Wednesday 10 th March 10am	Monday 15 th March 10am
S10-HJC T10-RGP	Wednesday 10 th March 10.45am	Monday 15 th March 10.45am
Lunch until 12.30pm		
T10-HMP T10-LDH	Wednesday 10 th March 12.30pm	Monday 15 th March 12.30pm
Year 7		
A7-DLS A7-HJP	Wednesday 10 th March 1.15pm	Monday 15 th March 1.15pm

Year 9		
Tutor Group	Test 2	Test 3
A9-STE A9-TAR	Tuesday 16 th March 8.40am	Friday 19 th March 8.40am
A9-JRB H9-SMM	Tuesday 16 th March 9.20am	Friday 19 th March 9.20am
H9-NPT S9-JB	Tuesday 16 th March 10am	Friday 19 th March 10am
S9-ESS T9-JCB	Tuesday 16 th March 10.45am	Friday 19 th March 10.45am
Lunch until 12.30pm		
T9-MPW	Tuesday 16 th March 12.30pm	Friday 19 th March 12.30pm
Year 7		
T7-RKB T7-LJB	Tuesday 16 th March 1pm	Friday 19 th March 1pm
H7-SCF	Tuesday 16 th March 1.45pm	Friday 19 th March 1.45pm

Year 8		
Tutor Group	Test 2	Test 3
A8-HSH A8-ELC	Wednesday 17 th March 9am	Monday 22 nd March 9am
H8-RRE H8-MCW	Wednesday 17 th March 9.45am	Monday 22 nd March 9.45am
S8-LCA S8-JJH	Wednesday 17 th March 10.30am	Monday 22 nd March 10.30am
S8-NAR T8-PLP	Wednesday 17 th March 11.15am	Monday 22 nd March 11.15am
Lunch until 12.30pm		
T8-KRP	Wednesday 17 th March 12.30pm	Monday 22 nd March 12.30pm
Year 7		
H7-YAJ S7-CMC	Wednesday 17 th March 1pm	Monday 22 nd March 1pm

Please note re Year 7

Year 7 Tutor groups are tested after lunch on different days, depending on their Tutor group.

If your child is being tested at the start of each day, please tell them **NOT** to go to class before they are tested.

It would be very useful for students to keep a record of the timings for both test dates.