



Update from the Principal Thursday 21 October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Vaccinations

The recent roll out of vaccines for COVID and the Flu was very successful, with around 60% of pupils taking the opportunity to get vaccinated. The NHS team were very complementary about our pupils and the school in general. The pupils handled it all exceptionally well and were a credit to us all.

We have seen the daily COVID cases start to drop this week, so hopefully we will see this continue after the half term break and we can go back down to the Blue category of COVID status. I will of course keep you updated.

House / School Council

In order to have an effective pupil voice in our school it is essential that we have effective House and School Councils in place. Heads of House are putting these in place ready for after half term, so please do encourage your child(ren) to consider representing their tutor group on the House Council, or perhaps representing their House on the School Council. We recently appointed Elliott Forster as the Student Principal (Year 13) who will be running the school council and meeting with me on a regular basis to discuss issues that are important to the wider student body.

Punctuality

We have had a rise in lateness to lessons in recent weeks which is having an impact on learning, as the vast majority of lessons have a planned starter or "Do it now" task for pupils as soon as they enter the room. This is often either a recap on prior learning or something linked to the main lesson. It is therefore essential that pupils arrive promptly to their lessons so they can make the most progress possible.

To address this issue we will be running a daily punctuality report via the class register and placing pupils in a lunchtime detention the following day if they are unreasonably late, with no valid excuse.

Messages will be sent home to inform you each time this happens so you can discuss this with your child(ren).

Staff

This half term has been very challenging in terms of staff absence due to Covid, but we have managed to keep every year group and class open. It has meant having more cover lessons than we would usually have to deal with, but staff have been fantastic in setting quality cover work when they have been off and the impact therefore has been as minimal as possible. After

the break we should be back to almost a full teaching complement, so hopefully the number of cover lessons will reduce significantly. Thanks to all the pupils and you as parents/carers for bearing with us.

This week we say goodbye to Lorraine Stacey our Catering Manager who is retiring after 28 years of service. She has provided countless meals over the years and certainly been a driving force in the quality of food production. We are very grateful for her hard work and wish her a long and happy retirement.

Mr Madge has been acting as Head of Bailbrook House this half term and will be returning to his other jobs after the break as we welcome Mr Richards to the school, taking over as Head of Bailbrook. Thank you Mr Madge, and welcome Mr Richards.

Uniform

The vast majority of pupils come to school appropriately dressed and very smart, but there are a few that still attempt to wear non-uniform tops and piercings. When we return after half term any items that are deemed non-uniform will be confiscated on the first occasion and will be kept until parents can collect them. We do have our own stock of uniform to replace confiscated jumpers to ensure pupils remain comfortable, if they wish to use them.

Police

We had the local PCSO and beat officer in school this week for a visit. Contrary to the rumours afterwards, this was a planned visit and purely to allow them to get to know the site and meet pupils. No arrests were made! There was quite a bit of excitement and they were seen having selfies with pupils as they walked around the premises. We have invited them to visit more frequently so that the pupils will see them as members our community and not as a novelty.

Lockdown

We conducted a successful lockdown drill this week as part of our Health and Safety tests. It is important that staff and pupils understand what they need to do in the event of either a fire or a lockdown so we conduct a drill every term. This week's went very smoothly, so thanks to pupils for their calm approach to the drill.

House Competition

So far this term we have had a trophy design competition and poetry competition, but there are many more planned for after the break. It has been great to see the competition running again and so many pupils involved. As it currently stands Chelston are in the lead, so well done to Mr Wood and his team. I am sure the other Heads of House will be hot on his heels though as we progress through the year.

Events

The Huish Community Learning Partnership is running various information sessions for parents/carers in H1, Huish Sixth Form. Please see the attached flyer for further information.

Vacancies

We are recruiting for the following vacancies. Please see the [vacancies](#) page of our website for further information:

Receptionist/Administrator

Teaching Assistants
Site Maintenance Operative (Caretaking duties)
Teacher of A Level Sociology (0.6fte) with option of taking on 0.4fte as Teacher of Psychology

We also are looking for Maths, English and Science qualified tutors to work with pupils who require intervention to help plug any gaps in learning that are evident from the covid lockdowns. Although we would prefer teachers, we would consider applications from those with relevant experience.

We are also currently looking for minibus drivers on a casual basis. Please contact the Academy to register your interest.

The Huish Community Learning Partnership Schools have a vacancy for a Parent and Family Support Adviser (PFSA). Please see the attached advert.

As per previous communication sent home, Monday 1 November is now an Inset Day. **We look forward to welcoming students back to the Academy on Tuesday 2 November.**

I hope you all have an enjoyable half term.

Mr Chris Wade
Principal