

Our Ref: SLT/FSC-0311WSL

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that you and your family have managed to have a restful half term. In our rapidly-changing world the situation is changing on an almost daily basis, so I thought I would give you a quick update on where we are today!

Baysgarth is open as usual and our intention is for this to continue throughout the lockdown period. The government has made it clear that it wants all children to continue to attend school, college and university, and we will do our best to play our part in making this happen.

There is no doubt that the number of cases is increasing rapidly in our area and this is having an impact on our ability to provide consistently high-quality education. Yesterday, we had 17 members of staff not in school due to them having to self-isolate. Staff are covering for absent colleagues and we have a number of supply teachers in school, so over the coming weeks students will need to get used to not always having their regular teacher in front of them. We would like to reiterate that we have a dedicated staff who are continuing to go above and beyond to ensure our students receive the best possible education in difficult circumstances.

If the number of cases continues to escalate at the current rate, there may come a point where we cannot continue to open to all students. We will review this on a daily basis and institute a rota system if necessary. I hope this never needs to happen but if it does we will prioritise our Year 11 students, who will be exempt from any rota and who will be expected to be in school every day.

So far, we have not had to send students home to self-isolate following a student testing positive but it is inevitable that this will happen in the coming days and weeks. We will be able to identify close contacts in school through our central seating plans and CCTV footage for breaks and lunchtimes. We also have fixed seating plans for the school buses and we will use these to identify close contacts here. As a result, we do not expect to send home whole classes or year groups to self-isolate and we will contact parents of any children affected directly.

The rules about this second lockdown have still not been debated in Parliament, agreed and published, so in many ways we have no more information than any of you. However, North Lincolnshire is now officially Tier 2 until Thursday when the lockdown begins and therefore, we continue to follow the latest advice in this regard. You can find out more [here](#) about alert level high, and read the comprehensive guidance [here](#). As a school we are following the same Public Health guidance as that of the Track and Trace system. We have received communication from the Local Authority which backs up our stance in school:

Message from Peter Thorpe from North Lincolnshire Council:

*While the local alert level has been raised, the public health intelligence continues to support North Lincolnshire settings following the national guidance for education and childcare. Where students in Year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by adults and students when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, and in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. This does not apply to younger children in primary schools and in early years settings. All children and young people, including those who are clinically extremely vulnerable, can continue to attend their settings*

unless they are one of the very small number under paediatric care (such as recent transplant or very immunosuppressed children) and have been advised specifically by their GP or clinician not to attend.

You can read further advice from the Local Authority [here](#).

The government expects students to come to school and we are following those expectations. Baysgarth will continue to provide remote learning from day one for any student who has to self-isolate. However, if parents choose to keep their child off school there is no compulsion for us to provide any work. That's why it is critical to keep sending your child into school unless there is a medical reason not to. For those students who are unable to attend school due to a medical reason, we are exploring ways to support them academically and pastorally during this difficult time. Should this guidance change, we will let you know as soon as we know.

You will be aware of the controversy in the media over Free School Meals and the government's refusal to extend this scheme to cover October half term. The good news for our children is that North Lincolnshire Council is stepping in to support our most vulnerable families. Here is an extract from the letter sent to schools last week:

#### **SCHOOL HOLIDAYS FREE SCHOOL MEAL SCHEME**

*The Leader of the Council has taken the decision to support a Free School Meal Scheme for eligible children during the October half-term holiday. Due to the timing of the decision, the benefit will be retrospective and we are seeking your support to work in partnership with the council to safely distribute supermarket vouchers to eligible families. In the next week you will receive a batch of envelopes; each will be individually addressed with the child's name and will contain a £15 voucher and an accompanying letter. You will also receive a list of all the children for whom the vouchers are intended. Spare vouchers, based on your cohort of eligible students, will be included to give you some flexibility. For example, if any student has not appeared on the Local Authority records, but you know that they now access Free School Meals. If you have vouchers left over, please use them at your discretion. If you receive queries from families they can be signposted to the Customer Contact Centre on **01724 297000**.*

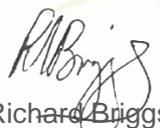
We know that with a second national lockdown more of our families will face financial hardship in the coming weeks and months. For many families, this may be the first time they have experienced this level of financial worry and we encourage you to seek support using the above number.

Over half term, we had the official handover of our new canteen and this is now open to students. This improves our ability to socially distance students during break and lunchtimes but our policy remains to keep students outside the building wherever possible to minimise risk, so we remind you that students really do need to bring a coat to school as we head towards the winter months.

We will continue to update you as and when we receive further information from the government or the Local Authority.

Take care and thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

  
Richard Briggs  
Head Teacher