

Our Ref: SLT/FSC-1111WSL

Wednesday 11th November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

It's been another week where we have been tested to the limits here at Baysgarth. My staff have volunteered to cover extra classes when other staff are self-isolating, so that our students have teachers in front of them that they know most of the time. We know we can't sustain this in the long term, but now that there is a prospect of a vaccine early in the new year and we can see light at the end of the Covid-19 tunnel, we are more confident that we can keep the school open for the rest of this term.

We have had more staff and students test positive this week. On Saturday morning, we were alerted that a student had tested positive and within an hour my staff had identified all close contact and had spoken with families to let them know to self-isolate and inform us if they develop symptoms. Again, as we have seating plans for all lessons and buses, we can identify close contacts quickly and only keep off school a small number of students, rather than sending home whole year group bubbles. I'm really proud that the systems we have set up are working efficiently and effectively and as a result, even though we are now at the peak of this Covid-19 wave, we can still have virtually all students in school.

With this second lockdown have come new laws and they do affect all of us. It is now the law for facemasks to be worn in corridors, social areas and on school buses for all secondary school students. For us, this is not a change as we were doing this anyway, but we have been reminding our students and staff of this legal requirement. All students must be in school, other than those who have a letter from a doctor or hospital consultant telling them that they are clinically extremely vulnerable. For these students, and those who have been told to self-isolate, remote learning is available in all subjects.

The Local Authority has issued some 'Top Tips' on staying safe and I am including a copy of these with this letter. I would emphasise the need for a clean facemask every day and remind you that facemasks should be washed at a minimum 60 degrees to effectively kill the germs that build up on them.

Our changing rooms still cannot be used, so students still need to come in PE kit on days they have PE lessons. Mr Wright has praised students for remembering to bring a plastic bag in for dirty boots and shoes when they have cross country lessons, and for bringing in spare shoes and socks to change into. We are looking forward to our annual cross-country year group races, which take place at the end of this month.

We have reiterated that students must bring a blazer with them every day to school, whether they are in PE kit or not. They have been reminded that if they fail to wear a blazer around school at all times in the main building, they will receive a sanction, so as parents, please can you make sure your child has their blazer with them every day.

With no extracurricular activities or clubs taking place at the moment, all of our students leave site at the same time at 2.40pm. This is unusual for us as normally we would expect roughly one third of all students to stay behind each night of the week for extra activities. This fact, and the growth in the size of the school, has meant that the period between 2.40pm and 2.50pm at the school gates has become very congested. Last week we had one student hit by a car on Barrow Road. Thankfully, their injuries were minor but the risks of a major accident have increased

significantly since September. We have contacted the Local Authority to ask for improved road crossing facilities for our students and are awaiting a response. In the meantime, we would really appreciate it if you could remind your child(ren) of the importance of keeping distance from each other at these busy times, and taking care when crossing the road, using only the traffic island or pedestrian crossing to do so.

Year 11

I want to say a big thank you to last year's Year 11 students. We contacted them to ask them to give advice and support to our current Year 11 students, telling us about their college experiences so far and for their top tips on how to approach Year 11. They did a fantastic job and their advice has been put into a booklet to support our current students, showing the strength of our school community.

Our current Year 11 have their PPE (mock) exams starting next Monday, 16th November, and I know from the students I teach for intervention, that they are working hard and taking these seriously, despite the distractions and complications of the pandemic. They are also being given advice and support about college applications at the moment and we are encouraging them to attend the online open events that all the local colleges are hosting. The details of upcoming events for some of our most popular colleges are as follows:

- [North Lindsey](#): Thursday 12th November 4.30pm-7.30pm
- [Wyke](#): Thursday 12th November 5.00pm-8.00pm
- [John Leggott](#): Wednesday 18th November 5.00pm-8.00pm
- [Bishop Burton](#): Saturday 28th November 10.00am-1.00pm

For anyone interested in an apprenticeship you need to head to the [HETA website](#). We're very lucky in this area to have access to three fantastic training sites in Hull, Scunthorpe and Stallingborough. However, the competition for places is always fierce, so it's important to access their open events and get any applications in as soon as possible.

New Staff

To support all of our students, and particularly our Year 11s in the short term, we have just appointed an Employability Mentor to join the school. Miss Stuart will join us next month and her role will involve careers interviews, providing employability experiences for students in every year group and organising work experience placements for Year 10 and Year 11 students from next September.

Last week we also appointed a new Duty Patrol Officer, Miss Smith, who will be replacing Miss Staves, who is joining our Personalised Learning team as a Learning Support Assistant. It's been great to have strong fields for our vacancies and to be able to carry out interviews, even in the current difficult conditions, and we welcome these two new staff to our school community.

Parent Governor Elections

A reminder that we do have a vacancy for a Parent Governor at the moment. We have had a number of enquiries for this position so far and if you are interested there is still time to register this interest before the applications close on **Friday 20th November**. Further details can be found on our website [here](#). We will then organise a vote so you as parents can decide who will represent you on our Governing Body.

Home School Communication

Nearly 100 of our families were contacted last week by members of staff as part of our drive to improve home school communication, with 75% of these contacts being for praise and positive feedback. This week, all of our Year 7 parents will be contacted by phone to discuss how your child has settled in at Baysgarth, so please make sure you answer any calls from an unknown or withheld number, as this may be us! From the calls made so far, it has been really warming to hear such positive comments from parents about how their child has settled and how much they are enjoying learning at Baysgarth.

This week has started our process of collecting effort data for our Year 8 students, who are on our Expert Learner programme. We were so disappointed that we didn't get to complete the process last summer, but as you are aware we have extended the process until January. Therefore, this data entry will allow us to see where each of our students currently are and where we predict they will be in January. As you are aware, the home school partnership is critical in this process and if there are concerns your child won't graduate, we will be in touch over the next few weeks. This will enable us to work together to rectify any issues before January.

New Teaching Block

It's been an exciting week for the school as we met with the Local Authority to discuss the next phase of building works. We now know that work will begin at Easter to create a new car park and replace the cycle shelter at the front of school. Then, when the students have finished their exams in the summer, work will begin to build a new two-storey block on the existing car park, which we will move into either at Christmas or February half-term. Exciting times ahead!

Remembrance

We know Remembrance services and commemorations have been more muted this year, but we will still have our traditional period of silence at 11.15am on Wednesday 11th November. This week we are welcoming 20 members of the Armed Forces to Baysgarth to work with our students in a socially distanced way on planting new trees around the site. This is as a result of a successful bid we have made for trees to enhance our school environment and help reduce the impact of climate change. We hope to have some pictures of this event for next week's letter.

Free School Meal Vouchers

The school is now in receipt of Free School Meal vouchers that the Local Authority have issued for each eligible student to cover additional costs incurred over the recent half term holiday. These vouchers are supplied as Tesco gift cards with a value of £15 per student. Students can collect them from Student Support and will be required to sign to confirm receipt of them. Please remind your child(ren) to collect.

And Finally...

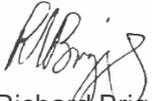
We are incredibly grateful for the messages of support from our community at the current time. It's sometimes hard to lift your head above the parapet in a school at the moment, as the day-to-day pressures are huge, so we appreciate the kind words on the street and emails of support. Ongo had 20 hampers to deliver across the Humber region to say thank you and one of their employees chose us to be the recipient of one of these boxes. Their reasoning was:

'Baysgarth School deserves a thank you box. The communication and support they have given parents/children through this time, through weekly letters and online learning, (on the days the children weren't in school) was fantastic and this meant the students could carry on learning. Baysgarth school catchment covers a lot of our Ongo tenants in Barton, Barrow, Goxhill etc. Not only is it's catchment area for a lot of our tenant's children, it is also my children's senior school, which is why I know how well they have dealt with such a difficult start to the year.'



Thank you very much for your continued support; take care of yourself and each other.

Yours faithfully


Richard Briggs
Headteacher