

Our Ref: SLT/FSC-2201WSL

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

It's been another very busy week here at Baysgarth. Over 100 students are in school every day, a figure that we think is the highest number in any of the secondary schools in the Local Authority. It's nearly 15% of our total students, so is well above the 5% that is the current national figure for secondary school average attendance. We have carried out nearly 500 Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests over the last week, with every student and member of staff who has given consent being tested, some on a daily basis. We have now settled into a routine in school and are really pleased with the attitude and effort of students, both in school and those working remotely from home.

Of course, now that we have spent weeks setting up our testing station, training staff and delivering hundreds of tests, the government has done another U-turn to declare that children will no longer be tested in secondary schools! This means that we have to go back to students self-isolating for 10 days if they are identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive. There have also been many hints coming from the government over the last week that schools will not reopen next month. Nothing official has been released, but it may be that we don't fully open again until after Easter. This is a significant blow to us, as we want schools to be fully open as soon as possible, but we know this can only happen when it is safe to do so.

In these circumstances, I'm pleased that we have pressed ahead with our Chromebook leasing scheme. This might be a good way to guarantee your child can work from home effectively for what might be another prolonged period. Look out for the separate communication from me about the leasing scheme next week. Priority will be given to those who expressed an interest before Christmas and to our vulnerable families who we are currently lending equipment to. Then, we will open the scheme to other families, with a further opportunity in the summer term for any who miss out this time around.

### **Recruitment**

As well as running the school in these testing times, we have been busy recruiting new staff to join our team. With our school continuing to increase in size year on year, our staff team also needs to grow. This week has seen our new IT Technician, Craig Bradley, start with us after spending the last 10 years working in an Outstanding school in Hull. We have also appointed Louise Carter as a new Learning Support Assistant. She will start after half term and will be another fantastic asset with plenty of experience working in Hull secondary schools.

On Thursday, we appointed Levi Naylor to cover Miss Frobisher's maternity leave from Easter, and today we are holding interviews for a new Maths Teacher to increase the size of our Maths team ready for September - I'll let you know the outcome of this interview in next week's letter.

We have also been successful in obtaining a Mentor to work with our students as part of the government's Covid-19 Catch-up programme. From Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February, Katy Hewis will be joining us to support our students in school and those working remotely with their Science learning.

We also currently have adverts out for teachers of Science, Art, English and Business Studies. We don't have any teachers leaving; these are all adverts for new posts to ensure we are fully staffed for the growth of the school. The closing date for these posts is Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February, so if you know someone who may be interested in applying, please let them know. You can find more information and application packs [on our website](#).

## Remote Learning

Thank you for all your feedback on remote learning. We are very grateful for the positive messages that you have sent through and we have tried to take your suggestions for improvement on board. One of those was that we make sure that work is set by Friday afternoon for Year 7 and 8 students, so that parents can support their children planning out the work for the week. This will be actioned this week for our Year 7 and 8 students, with work being released on a Friday evening.

The other issue we were made aware of is that some programmes we are using, such as Quizzez, is not allowing students to make a late submission. We know that families all need flexibility with home schooling and we do not want any student to be restricted from submitting work, even if it is after the submission deadline. We have made Heads of Faculty aware of this and we are looking to a solution with the programmes where there is an issue. The Friday deadline for Year 7 and 8 will remain in place as that helps generate a report, which you as parents and we as teachers can use to follow up students who haven't met this deadline.

Our live lessons continue to go well and I know some parents have even been listening in and learning themselves! The work that is set following a live session will have the deadline of 3pm that day. Therefore, parents of KS4 students will be alerted on the day if the core subject work hasn't been completed, so you can work with your child and ensure if they need support, they reach out to us.

I'm very pleased to say that 95% of our families are now signed up to our weekly Google Classroom parental email summaries. This means that for 833 out of our 892 students, their parents or carers are informed of what work they have to complete and any deadlines missed every week. Thank you for supporting this form of communication - the more school and home are talking to each other, the better our chances are of getting the best out of our children and supporting them to achieve.

As we mentioned last week, our expectation is that all of our students working from home complete a variety of physical activity tasks each week. Mr Wright and his team have put together a superb [PE Home Learning website](#), which has gathered together the best resources from the web into one place. It's great for the whole family to keep fit and challenge themselves in these trying times, so please check it out!

## North Lincolnshire Libraries Service

Another part of every one of our student's daily routines should be reading for pleasure. It's a great way to relieve anxiety and stress, as well as develop vocabulary and knowledge of the world. Our local libraries are supporting this during lockdown; you can find out more about this offer [here](#).

North Lincolnshire Libraries have recently extended the range of stock available on Borrowbox, an e-book and e-audio book service, and an exciting addition to libraries' existing online offer. Library members can borrow 10 titles at any time, for 21 days, for **free**. North Lincolnshire Libraries have a large range of high-quality online resources for study and/or the reading for pleasure at home. All resources can be accessed free with North Lincolnshire Library membership. Membership can easily be obtained by emailing [library.enquiries@northlincs.gov.uk](mailto:library.enquiries@northlincs.gov.uk). You will be enrolled remotely and your card number will be sent via email, which will give you immediate access to all online resources.

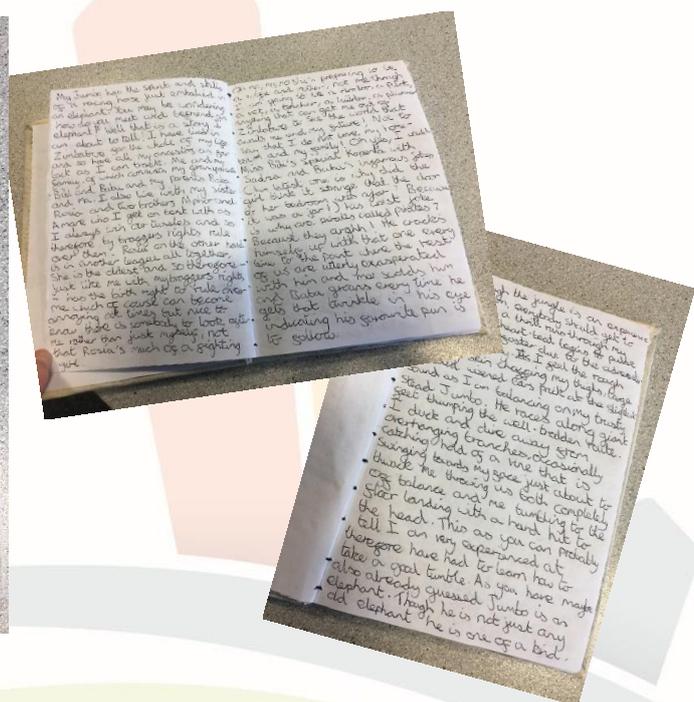
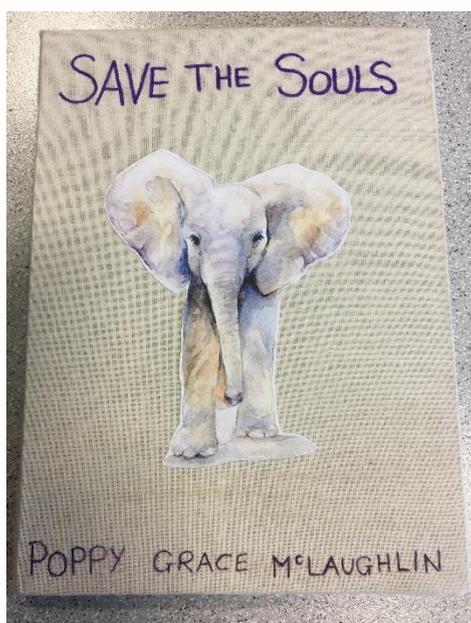
## Student Success

Of course, if you've been inspired by reading books, the next step is to write one of your own! One of our Year 7 students, Poppy McLaughlin, has begun writing her own book, 'Save The Souls'. Her initial intention was to create this as a Christmas gift for her Dad, but since, she has enjoyed the drafting and editing process of writing so much - she now intends to continue writing. Poppy has said the following about her book:

This is a story about a young girl, who has to protect an elephant from poachers. Having been inspired by her Grandmother, who has worked to support and care for animals all of her life, her mission in the story becomes very clear. We later learn that the protagonist is linked to her Grandmother and the book has it's main themes of hope, strength and becoming a saviour. Throughout the story, the young girl encounters many challenges in saving the elephants against the poachers...

Having asked Poppy what her intentions were in writing her book, she said, "My Mum gave me a small elephant teddy, which says, 'To my daughter. You are very loved by your family', which inspired me to create a story about family connections and animals". Poppy's parents are Key Workers (her Mum working for the NHS and her Dad is a firefighter) and she too has high aspirations and aims to become a Doctor or a Vet in the future.

If Shakespeare himself made use of being quarantined during the plague (to write King Lear), then maybe some of our students here at Baysgarth, will one day be remembered for their writing too! Here is a sneak preview of some of the pictures from Poppy's book:



## Year 11

The government has launched a consultation on how grades should be awarded for Year 11 students this summer. This will run for a fortnight and then the government and Ofqual will take the responses and come up with a definitive answer for school and students. They are welcoming comments from parents and students as well as teachers, so if you want to contribute [you can find the consultation here](#). This leaves us in a bit of limbo at the moment, with the only clarity we have being that teacher assessment will be the major form of assessment this summer. As ever, our advice to all students is to keep on working hard and impressing your teachers with the quality of your work.

There are many other things that our Year 11 students can be looking at to support them in their quest to get into the top apprenticeships, colleges and eventually universities. Baysgarth is part of PiXL, the largest organisation in the country dedicated to school improvement. They have released a fantastic series of digital conferences directly aimed at students to help them understand which pathway they want to take and how to get into their top choice of university, degree apprenticeship, apprenticeship or job. [You can watch the trailer here](#). Year 11 students need to check their emails to see how they can access these excellent resources. One of them is an interview with a doctor who is currently working on a Covid-19 ward in London, and who was educated down the road in Immingham, showing with hard work and determination, you can achieve your ambitions. Well worth a look for our students and parents as well.

### **Free School Meals (FSM)**

Last week, we sent all our eligible families a form to indicate whether they would prefer a food hamper from the school or a voucher to spend at their local supermarket to fulfil their weekly FSM allowance. This week, we have placed an order for online and postal vouchers for families who have submitted their response. These cover the period from 18<sup>th</sup> January to 12<sup>th</sup> February and should arrive in your inbox or at your home address over the next couple of days. Please note, adjustments have been made for students who are attending school and in receipt of a lunch on a part time basis. We politely ask that any parents or carers who are still to complete [the form](#) do so by Wednesday of next week, 27<sup>th</sup> January, to allow another order to be placed. A reminder of what we said last week - our Local Authority has committed to providing free school meals over half term and vouchers for this will be distributed before the break.

### **Wellbeing**

We know that lockdown is hard on us all, whether we are still in work or school, or working and studying from home. We have made it clear that we want our students to focus on their own well-being and build wellbeing activities into their daily routine. Students have access to a well-being Google Classroom set up by Miss Burrows, and this contains a range of different wellbeing activities so that students have the flexibility to undertake any of the nine activities that appeal to them. These activities will be updated each week. Students can see examples of the activities that have been completed on the Tutor PowerPoint that is shared with them each week.

### **Thank you**

Thanks again for all your positive messages of support. Here's a flavour of some of the messages that we have received in the last week:

"We are so proud of Isabelle and her hard effort. She feels well supported and enjoys her school work and works so hard. We have to mention that we're also impressed with the efforts & care shown by yourself and the rest of the Baysgarth Team". (Parent)

"Please may we pass on our sincere thanks and well done to yourself and the whole of the Baysgarth team for the fantastic home-learning which has been delivered over these last two weeks. We appreciate what an amazing job you are all doing under such difficult and testing circumstances". (Parent)

A parent who works on a Covid-19 ward at Scunthorpe General Hospital said, "I would also like to thank you for continuing to work, because without you and the all the other teaching staff, I especially would have struggled to work and this in turn has a knock-on effect on the staffing numbers which then affects the patients when they need us the most. Some shifts have been so under staffed due to fellow Nurses and care assistants not being able to get a place for their child at school due to other not so critical workers taking a place. Not at our school I hasten to add, this is colleagues in Grimsby and Scunthorpe. So, thank you very much and please pass on my love and respect for all that you are all doing".

Thank you as well to the more than 100 of you who have taken time out to complete our Ofsted parent survey. This closes on Monday, so if you haven't had the chance to complete this yet, you can still do so [here](#).

From everyone at Baysgarth, take care, stay safe and have a lovely weekend.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Briggs', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Richard Briggs  
Head Teacher

