

3rd September 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians

I hope you have all had a good summer holiday and we are all looking forward to welcoming the boys back next week. Please find enclosed our re-opening plans which are very similar to the plans previously sent out before the summer holiday. The key changes you need to be aware of are that all boys will be expected to have a face mask and a sealable plastic bag. Boys will not be expected to wear face masks all of the time however, there will be key times and locations when they will be required, as outlined in the attached document. The other key change is that boys must follow Government quarantine requirements if returning from abroad.

Staff have continued to meet regularly throughout the holidays in order to plan effectively for September. Whilst safety is our main priority, we are also trying to balance that with continuing to offer as much of the after school provision as we possibly can. Please be aware we will continue to monitor every activity, the day to day operations of the school and boarding which will no doubt lead to further changes as we adjust to the new way of working.

Boarders will be expected back on Monday 7th September. However, this will be slightly earlier than usual so that we can stagger their arrival. We expect Year 11s to return first, between 12.00pm and 1.15pm. This allows us to brief them on the boarding procedures we have designed to keep boys safe and will mean they will be able to support each other and younger students. It also allows us to offer 'catch up' for boys in Year 11 who need it. Lunch will be available for Year 11 only. Year 7s are expected back between 1.30pm and 2.45pm. Again, this is to give us time to help them to settle in and to run through key safety measures with them. We then expect Year 10s to return between 3.00pm and 4.15pm, Year 8s to return between 4.30pm and 5.30pm and for Year 9s to return between 6.00pm and 7.00pm. This allows us to work with each year group in turn, to go through procedures that prioritise their safety and wellbeing. A key change for boarders is that Government guidance now says that if a boy has a confirmed case of Covid- 19 then he must isolate at home and parents must be prepared to pick up their son if this is the case. If you have more than one son then please bring them in on the later of the two sessions. If your son is starting in a year other than Year 7 they should arrive with the relevant year group.

Out-boarders are expected to return to Brymore on Tuesday 8th September between 8.15am and 8.30am. Boys will be expected to go to their tutor base and staff will be on hand to meet the new Year 7s. For the foreseeable future we ask that out-boarders are dropped off after 8.15am and picked up by 4.00pm if they are not taking part in an activity. I realise this may not be possible for everyone but your co-operation in reducing the amount of boys on site after school is very much appreciated.

Our overriding philosophy is one of keeping the boys clean and minimising contact with others. Boys will be expected to use hand sanitiser at the start of every lesson and we will stagger breaks and lunchtimes so that not all boys are socialising at the same time and will need to remain in their year groups. We will be running after school activities but where possible they will be offered to out-boarders before tea and boarders afterwards.

There is considerable national concern about the amount of learning that has been lost as a result of Covid-19 and in particular the gaps in learning between some students and others that will have

been further widened over the past few months. I am well aware many of you have struggled with home schooling and that it was becoming a point of conflict within many families. Inevitably this has created a situation where every boy in the school, and every child nationally, is at a different stage of their learning, which is an obvious challenge for teachers at this time. We realise that this challenge will not go away in September and staff are currently planning their 'recovery' curriculums; what to teach and when, in order to catch the boys up as quickly as possible. My biggest concern is the new Year 11 boys, as they have less time (around two terms) to catch up. Ofqual are currently consulting with schools about what, if anything, can be left out of subject exams. Mrs Davis will write to Year 11 parents separately outlining the catch-up programme that has been planned for them.

I am well aware that many of you will be nervous about your son returning and many of the boys will also have anxieties about returning, after such a long time at home. We have an extensive tutorial programme planned and boys will spend time with their tutor four days a week in order help alleviate these worries. If you have any specific concerns then please contact your son's tutor or Mr Winter at the school.

Unfortunately, we will not be holding the Year 7 Hog Roast at the end of the first week, and Year 7 out-boarders will not be expected to stay in late in the first week, unless taking part in an activity. There will be a modified induction programme and Year 7 boys will have a chance to meet each other and work together throughout the week.

Finally, can I please ask that you do not leave your car when dropping off and picking up your son unless you need to visit reception and this should only be in emergencies. I realise you may have many concerns or questions, especially new parents, however if you could telephone or e-mail the school where possible that would be appreciated.

Thank you all once again and I look forward to welcoming all the boys back in September.



Mark Thomas
Headteacher
Brymore Academy