

## Headteacher update - 8

Dear Parents/Carers

Well we have made it to the end of a very different, but positive, half term. Students and staff have adapted to the new expectations and it has been business as usual with regards to teaching, learning and student progress.

Just to add to the excitement this week we had a 'fact finding' visit from Ofsted yesterday. We were randomly selected as part of a national sample. This was not an inspection but an opportunity for Ofsted to collect evidence about how Covid-19 has impacted on schools and how schools are adapting to manage in the current circumstances.

Two inspectors joined us for part of the day and we were able to inform them of everything we have been doing. In due course we will receive a letter confirming their visit, this is a pre-populated standardised letter that will provide simple factual information about the school. We will of course share it when we receive it.

Whilst the inspectors were not able to comment or make judgements directly on the work that the school has been doing, they were very complimentary about the school and our provision.

As stated last week, we have been reviewing the way we operate, and we will be slightly amending our systems and structures after half term. The main changes affect the middle campus, we have explained the changes to the students during virtual assemblies today and these are explained below.

Could we please ask you and your families to do their part over half term in ensuring our community remains safe and our school continues to operate. Please follow Government guidelines and reinforce school expectations at home.

### **Reporting COVID cases during half term**

During half term, it is essential that we as a school are notified of any students that test positive for COVID-19 or have to self-isolate as they have been in close contact to a confirmed case.

If your child tests positive for coronavirus at any point during half-term, please notify us as soon as possible so we can complete the relevant tracking and tracing process with public health and notify any other children or staff who have been close contacts and need to self-isolate. During half-term you should email [communication@barnwell.herts.sch.uk](mailto:communication@barnwell.herts.sch.uk). Please do not call the normal absence line as this will not be covered during half-term.

**Remember as soon as your child or any member of your household develops symptoms, they must start self-isolating immediately and book a test.**

### **Main symptoms of coronavirus are:**

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- a loss or change to sense of smell or taste – this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If you are not sure whether symptoms suggest that they have coronavirus or an everyday cough or cold, you can consult this online NHS symptom checker: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

### **Please do not send children back to school if any of the following apply:**

- they have symptoms of COVID-19
- they, any members of your household, or any close contacts (including extended family or friends they have seen and bubbles at half-term activities and sports clubs) have tested positive for COVID-19
- they have not completed the full 14-day isolation period requested

If you or your family are affected by COVID-19 and need support locally with things like shopping, getting medication or financial advice, visit: [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus)

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### **REMINDER: COVID-19 Webpage**

If you have any queries about COVID-19 and Barnwell School, please visit our designated COVID-19 webpage. This page has information regarding our COVID-19 procedures as well as our [school contingency plans](#), information guides and all previous parent/carer communication. <https://www.barnwellschool.co.uk/covid-19-info-2/>

### **Timings of the school day**

To further improve our COVID measures and to minimise contact between year group bubbles, we have slightly amended the timings of the school day for after half term.

Please click [this link](#) to see a spreadsheet view the new school day structure.

Please click [this link](#) to see individual year group timings of the new structure.

- DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) will be at a fixed time in the day to add consistency and also to allow the opportunity for pastoral assemblies and other key activities to have an allocated time slot.
- Year 7 and 9 will have their break and lunch at the same time. There will be separate dining areas and social areas. Year 8 will have their own break and lunch time.
- Break time will be extended on both campuses and lunch on upper will be extended. This will allow staff and students, that are travelling, more time to get to the right place in plenty of time.

### **G Block line-up**

At times during the first half term, G block has been congested with students leaving classes and others waiting to enter whilst the teacher is cleaning and preparing the classroom. We are therefore going to adopt a lining up system outside of the block. Students will have designated line up positions and the teacher will collect them for the lesson. The line up process will be supervised by a member of the senior leadership team.

### **Year 7 and 8 Learning partners**

After half term, students in year 7 and 8 classes will remain in the same classes as they have been so far. We will however be removing learning partners and individual teachers will be organising seating plans that best suit the learning activities in the class.

### **Governor Spotlight**

Last week we had the pleasure of introducing Mary Patrick, one of our Governors, to you. Barnwell School is very fortunate to have a strong and supportive Governing Body. The team consists of current and former parents/carers and other members of the community committed to ensuring we continue to deliver an outstanding provision to our students. This week, we would like to introduce you to another of our governing body by clicking on our Governor Spotlight [link](#).

If you are interested in becoming a school governor, please email [communication@barnwell.herts.sch.uk](mailto:communication@barnwell.herts.sch.uk)

### **Free School Meals over half term**

As has been publicised widely in the press, the free school meal provision will not be available over half term. As a response, several local businesses have stepped up and are supporting young people in the community.

Below are details of businesses that have contacted the school and have asked if we would promote their offers of support.

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### *The Pied Piper – Oaks Cross (01438 312035)*

We are offering Kids Eat for £1. Normally this promotion involves the purchase of an adult meal but we have decided to remove this element of the deal and therefore parents can either come in and have a coffee or drink and ensure that their child is getting a hot meal. or we can provide the meal on a takeaway basis. With the COVID restrictions we require parents to book a table and tables are restricted to a maximum of 6 people. We offer a full table service.

### *Stevenage Helps Community Hub*

In order to assist struggling families over the school holiday we are offering a lunch box collection service from locations around the town, in addition if families are unable to attend one of our pick-up points, we are also offering a delivery service. Click [the link](#) to access a poster with details of the locations and service offered.

### *The Peartree Pub*

We have an amazing team and kitchen staff who just want to help!

Parents of Stevenage, if your child or children rely on a FREE school meal then we will provide a cooked meal, drink, fruit and of course a pudding. We will have hot lunches ready for collection between 12pm and 2pm on Monday through to Friday.

You can either send us a Facebook message <http://www.thepeartreeinstevenage.co.uk/food-menu.html> or call us. [01438 340264](tel:01438340264)

We will respond to as many requests as possible with days and times helping us to manage social distancing, please do not arrive unless you have contacted us and had a response. Please remember that there are families out there that really do need help during these crazy times, we are putting our trust in you to make the right decision and only use this service if your child truly needs it.

### *El bar de tapas*

We have an amazing fitted kitchen with a really talented team operating it.

Parents of Stevenage, if your child or children rely on a FREE school meal then we will provide a cooked meal, drink, fruit and of course some churros! We will have hot lunches ready for collection between 11am and 12pm on Monday through to Friday.

### **REMINDER: Face Mask update**

Many students are wearing re-usable masks but as advertised in government guidelines, it is essential that these are washed daily. With disposable masks, these should be thrown away at the end of the day and students should bring new ones each day.

### **REMINDER: Communications**

Could we please remind parents and carers that due to the current structure of the school day and increased duties, on occasion, staff will not be able to return communication within the school day. A reminder of the school communication protocols set up last year can be found by clicking [this link](#).

If you would like clarification regarding any school matters, please do not hesitate to get in contact via [communication@barnwell.herts.sch.uk](mailto:communication@barnwell.herts.sch.uk)

Thank you once again for your support and have a lovely weekend.

Mr Fitzpatrick  
Executive Headteacher

Mr Roberts  
Head of School