

Brine Leas School

Headteacher's Update

(19th June 2020)



Dear Parents and Carers,

There has been a lot happening this week, not least of which is the partial return of Years 10 and 12 to school. It has been a real pleasure to see so many of them back with us and we look forward to a continuation in the coming weeks, with some changes that I'll outline later in this newsletter. The country is remobilising, and this applies to some areas of school too. We continue to adapt our plans to make the best use of what we have available and to try to offer as much as possible to all of our students. While there is speculation in the press and media over plans for schools in the next few weeks and beyond, the only actual change to the current guidance concerns Years 7, 8 and 9 and what's being considered can be found below.

I've continued to sub-divide the information for each cohort to make it easier to navigate, but please don't feel you have to read outside of your son/daughter's year group unless you want to.

YEAR 6 STUDENTS

The guidance for Year 6 students and their secondary school for next year is unchanged in terms of them not being able to physically visit the school before the summer break. We will continue with our virtual transition sessions and Mr Mottram has started his weekly video updates. These are being shared with families and primary schools alike. This week's update is a virtual tour of the school, with a surprise music session in the middle.....

YEARS 7, 8 AND 9 STUDENTS

While it is still the case that remote learning via Microsoft Teams (including assignments, pre-recorded lessons and feedback) continues to be the core provision, this will be supplemented with live lessons from each subject starting next week. This will mean the discontinuation of the Zoom clinics for these year groups. Look out for more information from Mrs Skelding and Miss Lewis on the details for this shortly. The official guidance for students in Years 7, 8 and 9 has also changed to give us some flexibility on trying to provide a limited in-school opportunity before the end of the summer term if we can do so safely. I will contact you by email in the next few days with potential plans for a one-off in school session at some point in July. In addition to sharing the plan in more detail, I'll also be asking you to complete a survey with your intentions on taking up this offer before finalising the plans. If we can provide this then it will be a great relief to us all to be able to see your children in school again, if only for a limited time.

YEAR 10 STUDENTS

Year 10 students have returned to school for one day per week as of Monday 15th June 2020 and this offer has pleasingly been taken up by most families. The sessions have contained pastoral support and English, Maths and Science lessons delivered into each room by video conferencing. While the site has been altered to make this possible, with many signs and new ways of moving around, the student's willingness to follow the new systems has made this a success. It has been great to see so many of the students back in school. As previously explained, the one day per week sessions will continue for three more cycles after this week and the day that you have been offered this week will

remain the same throughout this time. The school buses arrived on Monday morning although we hadn't been told to expect them, so it came as a surprise to us. With what we've learned from operating this week, there will be some changes to the timings of next week and I'll communicate these to you later today. There will still be remote learning provision via Microsoft Teams (including assignments, pre-recorded lessons and feedback) and this will continue to supplement the in-school provision from English, Maths and Science and the live lessons will replace some of the other work on Microsoft Teams. The aim is to further supplement this with some live lessons from each subject from 29th June 2020. This will mean the discontinuation of the Zoom clinics for this year group. Look out for more information from Mrs Skelding and Miss Lewis on the details for this shortly.

YEAR 12 STUDENTS

Year 12 students have started returning to school this week for 20 to 30-minute sessions with a member of the BL6 team. These will continue into next week as it will take us the two-week cycle to see every student for an appointment. The aim of these sessions was to find out how we can best support the students at this time, and we have had some good dialogue with them. It has been nice to see and talk to so many of the students and find out how they are coping with the current situation. There continues to be remote learning provision via Microsoft Teams (including assignments, pre-recorded lessons and feedback) alongside these appointments. It is not our intention to do another round of appointments after this one as we will be able to put more time into the provision of some live lessons via Zoom. These lessons will begin to be rolled out from Monday 22nd June 2020 and will run for a minimum of three weeks. This will mean the discontinuation of the Zoom clinics for this year group. Look out for more information from Mrs Skelding and Miss Lewis on the details for this shortly.

VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND THE CHILDREN OF CRITICAL WORKERS

This provision remains unchanged from my last update. We continue to provide supervision and support with remote learning activities for these students, as we have done since the school closed. Some parents have asked if their child can return to school as they believe themselves to be a Critical Worker. The guidance on eligibility can be found here and it may be necessary for those who think they are eligible to provide a letter from their employer, confirming how their job is necessary for the undertaking of the critical work as described in the guidance. Vulnerable students are defined as those with an Education and Health Care Plan or those with formal engagement with a named social worker (i.e. those classed at Child In Need or Child Protection) and they continue to be eligible for inclusion in this provision regardless of their age. In either of these two circumstances, please contact the school on info@brineleas.co.uk if you are unsure.

OTHER INFORMATION

We continue to contact many students for welfare calls on a regular basis. If you have a concern about your son or daughter or any other child in school, then please contact us and we will do our best to give support and advice. Many of the agencies that deal with child welfare have continued to operate as normal over the past few months and you can find details of all of them on our website.

There are still no doubt many announcements and revised guidelines to come in the next few weeks and if the situation changes beyond what I've communicated here, I'll let you know as soon as I possibly can.

Now that the school has started the first phase of reopening, it will not be possible to have any visitors on site, including parents, except for those external agencies that work with children and young people such as Social Services and NHS staff. This will therefore mean that the school reception is unavailable in person for the remainder of this term, but you can still contact the school via telephone

during normal school hours or by email. It may take longer to get a response than in normal circumstances due to changes in staffing and working patterns brought about by current Government guidance, but we will endeavour to reply to you in as timely a manner as possible. On one last note, can I remind you to please not bring vehicles onto the site, particularly for drop-offs, as we continue to have very strict measures in place as per the guidelines on COVID-19 for educational settings. This has caused a few minor issues this week, but with your support it can be easily resolved.

I hope that you continue to stay safe and well.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Cole', written in a cursive style.

David Cole
Headteacher