



Parent Carer letter – end of Autumn term (first half)

22 October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the half-term holiday it seemed an appropriate time to provide an update.

Coronavirus

With a backdrop of rising rates locally and nationally, we have probably been overdue a positive case (having had no more since those already reported to you at the start of term). Yesterday we were informed of an individual student who has tested positive for Covid-19. They became symptomatic on Sunday and last attended the previous Thursday so we have not had to isolate any other students. Whilst this appears to be a one off, we must be pragmatic and expect more cases over time, but we know that our systems and procedures for dealing with a positive case are robust.

Two-thirds timetable model

As you know we will be operating with our two-thirds timetable for the foreseeable future. We believe this is the best compromise of maximising quality classroom contact whilst enabling social distancing measures. Our staff are working hard to make it work and students are now settled into new routines. Different courses will not approach delivery in uniform ways and in normal times we allow a range of different approaches for all sorts of academic, pedagogic and practical reasons.

Social spaces

We have increased the management and oversight of the use of social and study spaces. Our expectations remain the same – students should distance from each other at 1+ metre and wear face coverings while in transition and when distancing cannot be maintained. Students have been really compliant with these measures – particularly in wearing face coverings. A reminder that social spaces close at 3pm (except on Tuesdays) as we are unable to provide staffing after these times and those students left onsite should be in lessons or the library. We keep these measures under regular review and if the local Covid alert level increases from Medium we will again review the appropriateness of our restrictions.

Reading Week

From Tuesday 10th November to Friday 13th November we will have 'Reading week' where lessons will be collapsed to facilitate one-to-one appointments for all first year students with teaching staff (these will occur remotely via Teams). Second year students have one-to-one appointments next term. We will also be delivering our Virtual Open Evening (and providing the training for staff to do this) and some of our departments will be completing the move into our new Elms Building. Students are expected to progress with their college work this week and the library and hall will be open for students wishing to study onsite on these days.

Student Reviews and Parents' Evenings

One-to-one appointments are part of the student review process. Student reviews will be published to parents (all year groups) on Advantage on Thurs Nov 19th and these will be followed by parents' evenings for second year students (Thursday 26th November and Wednesday 2nd December) with first year parents' evenings taking place on 14th and 20th January. These will all be via video appointments with more details of the booking process to follow.

New Building – Timetable changes

Our new Elms building is being handed to us over half-term. This £10m block is providing us with much needed specialist accommodation for Biology, Drama, Film, Media and Music with additional general classroom and social space. Some students will have room changes as a result of the Elms building coming into operation – students should check timetables online on Monday 2nd November to make themselves aware of these. Note that any changes are date sensitive and will only appear on the system from this date. Teachers will also reinforce these with their groups.

Colleges Live

I'd like to plug 'Colleges Live' a student conference on 18th November that will be held virtually and will explore themes that have dominated 2020 – social justice, climate change and overcoming adversity. Students will hear insights from a host of inspirational speakers and we hope they will make the most of this opportunity. They will receive more details on how to access the event after half-term. For now, additional event details are available [here](#).

Half-term holiday

A final plea from me. Please encourage your young people to minimise mixing and socialising over half-term. I'm hugely sympathetic to the adverse impact these restrictions are having on them, but we have also seen from the start of term the impact that partying can have on infection rates. We have fantastic students and great support from you at home. Thank you again for helping us to manage this and to keep BHASVIC open.

Yours sincerely,



William Baldwin
Principal