



NEWSLETTER EXTRA EXTRA

**No. 695b: EXTRA #2
w/c Tues 5 January
will be Week A**

Dear Parents and Carers,

I wouldn't be at all surprised if you are still reeling from the implications of the Prime Minister's announcement of a third national lockdown; even if it was largely expected, it still came as a shock to the system, or in fact most systems.

Where to start ? By setting out what we believe in, and what our priorities are, which have not changed since 23rd March (and actually, before then). We are a COMMUNITY College, where people are valued, and will do our best to help everyone in our College community and more widely, where we can. Our first priority remains to achieve a strong sense of belonging to the Clyst Vale community. For the most part this will be through daily contact in the form of remote lessons, but there is also Microsoft Teams, e-mail, and for parents the phone. Not to mention the weekly communications. Please keep in touch with us; we definitely can't help if we don't know about problems.

Our key principles of Safe, Happy and Successful still apply. OK, few people are actually "happy" in lockdown, but if we can do our bit to remain optimistic and support students who are anxious and unhappy, then we will. No student learns well if they are unsafe or unhappy, and we will be doing our best to make sure that students do not fall behind in their learning. The biggest challenge is engagement; some students compartmentalise school into "work" and home into "fun, relaxation". Not surprising: a lot of adults do, too. However, one area where we really need parental help is to encourage engagement.

Yesterday's announcement has, yet again, thrown up many, many questions. All I can do in less than 24 hours is try to set out what we will be doing at Clyst Vale, and what we know about some of the biggest issues and concerns (which, in some cases, is not much). Please screw up and throw away yesterday's Newsletter Extra, which is largely out of date after only a few hours. The following now applies:

STILL NO CHANGES TO PLANS FOR THIS WEEK

- Today was an INSET Day, and no remote learning was set. Just under 20 Keyworkers' children and vulnerable students (KWV) attended.
- From tomorrow, lesson 1, remote learning will be set for all students. Just over 70 KWV students have "booked in".
- KWV students should use the main entrance through Reception.
- They should be in "PE Kit" uniform. Most of their day will be studying in College.
- There will be a canteen service, providing cold options. Students receiving FSM may therefore choose their food.
- School Transport is running.
- The **Year 11 Parents' Evening** will go ahead as planned.

THIS IS NOT THE SAME AS THE MARCH LOCKDOWN

There are a number of similarities, though, and we will keep the best of what we learned from the days of "ECP". One thing is that we will be calling the on-site provision "KWV" provision: this is because our expectations of students will be higher than in the summer, where the C in ECP stood for "childcare".

- We will be actively discouraging external visitors from the site.
- Meetings will be held remotely.
- There will only be one entrance (through Reception).
- We will again be reducing the areas of the College in use.
- The timings for KWV are the same as the normal College Day (08.50 start, 15.20 end). It *may* be possible to make individual arrangements on request, especially a few minutes at the end of the day.
- We will be maintaining all the hand sanitising, distancing and separation of year groups (ECP was run across year groups; KWV will be based on year groups). The site must be safe for students and my colleagues.

Remote Learning Expectations

- This applies equally to students at home and in College; KWV will be largely supported on-line learning but in College ! All students will follow their normal timetable of lessons
- The timings will be the "Autumn Term" lesson timings, not the original ones. In other words, Year 8, 11 and 6th form's lesson 2 starts at 10.15, while Year 7, 9 and 10's lesson 2 starts at 10.35.
- Teachers will set work for every lesson. Students are expected to log into Teams at the start of the lesson, where there will be further instructions. It could be a live lesson for the full hour; it could be a teacher introduction and independent work; it could be an independent task.
- I don't want to be too prescriptive about what teachers set, because students at home need variety. Being plugged into five hours of powerpoints is not varied, and does not really employ a range of skills. By allowing my colleagues to follow their subjects' demands and being "creative" will provide variety and increase engagement. Turning the computer off and working on something different is valid learning, too.
- *This approach is a starting point.* Following parental feedback, Ofsted and DfE comment, and enabled by better connectivity, it is more challenging than during the first lockdown. If it is *too* demanding or not achievable, we will adapt. As always, if your child is struggling, please tell us. If your child has SEND needs, please contact Additional Support.

- To encourage the sense of belonging and engagement, we are also asking students to log into their tutor group Team at 08.50 on a Monday and Thursday morning. This is to make contact, receive notices, and engage in tutor activities.

“KWV”: Important

- The context for this changed slightly with the Prime Minister’s announcement. When preparing for Years 11 and 13 to return on 11th January and the rest a week later, like many schools we were more relaxed in defining “KWV”.
- Now that the strapline is “Stay at Home”, I would ask parents who have booked KWV places to consider whether they really need that place, or at least need the place every day. We are pretty flexible ! Please contact Reception on 01392-461407 or kwvbookings@clystvale.org. [*This email address will go live from 8pm on Tuesday 5th January 2021.*] For example, a place under Keyworker status can be requested if just one parent/carer is included on the government Keyworker list. It might be possible for parents/carers to consider whether they have any capacity *not* to take up a Keyworker place in the school if there is an alternative option for your child/ren to remain at home with an adult who perhaps is not currently working/is furloughed or is not on the Keyworker list themselves.
- This is Clyst Vale, so we are not going to turn anyone away or impose limits (unless we absolutely have to), but remember that the overall aim is to reduce mixing, limit journeys, etc, and we will eventually have issues of capacity if numbers build too high.

Mass testing

- It’s not currently clear what the national decisions are on mass testing. We will send out parental consent forms very shortly. We also intend to test any student (KWV) or colleague on site according to the original guidance. For students this would be two tests a few days apart on their return to College, and in the event that they are a close contact of a positive case; for members of staff, a weekly test. (My reservations about mass testing remain; however, the situation has “officially” worsened, we have to be practical, and on balance it is for the best, even if just for further reassurance and confidence).

Exams, Exams

- This is a confusing and stress-inducing mess, and if I had time I would be furious again. Yesterday all exams were off, except this month’s BTecs. Today, it seems that some exams in the summer might be on, and BTecs are still on but being questioned. This is no way to treat young people, nor their teachers. Gavin Williamson will make an announcement tomorrow (Wednesday), in which hopefully he will clarify how students WILL be assessed in the summer. It is really important for students in Years 11 and 13 to remain focused; it is extremely unlikely that the government will simply allow the end of their courses to stop in January. Certainly, teachers will be continuing with the syllabuses.

Free School Meals

- The government has indicated that it will fund FSM for families not attending school. We have had no details about this yet. If it drags on as it did last March, we will issue Tesco vouchers ourselves.

Best wishes,
Kevin Bawn
Principal

Evenings & weekends – reporting of Covid-19 positive test results

As a further precaution, we have introduced a dedicated phone number, solely for reporting positive Covid-19 test results at evenings and weekends

The number is: **07818 212 931**

It is not for suspected cases, non-Covid-19 illness or absence, and is not an advice line.

We would prefer you to text positive Covid-19 test result information to this number, including:

Name of student

Student's tutor group

Date symptoms appeared

Date of test

Date of test result

If necessary, someone will contact you having received this information. Thank you!