

NEWSLETTER

No. 696
w/c Mon 11 January
will be Week B

THOUGHT OF THE FORTNIGHT

"Great things never came from your comfort zone."

Dear Parents and Carers,

Do you ever have those weeks which feel like a month? Yet again, we have managed to get a very good framework and structure in place at very short notice, and yet again I must thank parents and students for being so understanding and adaptable. We are not going to get everything perfect immediately, but we have learned many lessons from the first lockdown. We were lucky to have two days to prepare, although unlike many schools we were open to "KWV" students on the INSET Day. Speaking to students in College and to my teaching groups, it seems that remote learning has started well: there is more of it in total, there is more interaction with teachers, and there is more "live" teaching. Many of the IT issues from the first lockdown have been resolved. There will be difficulties and missed communications: please alert us as politely as possible and we will sort them out. There will also be changes and tweaks and improvements along the way. That said, I have been really pleased with the way we have turned things round this week, and while a good start is just that, a good start, it's much better than a bad one!

Year 11 Parents' Evening

Thank you to the dozen or so parents who have contacted us to say how much they like the on-line parents' evening approach. Thank you as well to all parents who logged in and engaged in a focused discussion of their child's progress. Naturally, there were a few queries and understandable worries about the GCSE exam situation, which I mention below, and we will have to wait until next month for more detail (this applies to Years 12 and 13, too). Every time we hold an on-line parents' evening we improve things, and even though more colleagues were speaking from home there were fewer glitches. The biggest problem remains demand for booking slots being bigger than supply; less of an issue with Year 11 than perhaps Years 7-9, and we are looking at solutions to mitigate this.

Remote Learning Expectations

- As noted, I have been delighted with the way students and my colleagues have switched back into remote learning mode. Remote learning is different to face-to-face, and it will never be quite as good until technology is perfect and we can pick up on all the subliminal and non-verbal cues humans use to communicate. We're learning and improving all the time: one of the big challenges facing all teachers everywhere is differentiating lessons for different abilities, for example. Teaching live lessons is demanding: most parents would flinch at the thought of chairing 5 successive one-hour zoom meetings, let alone chairing 5 meetings of children of different ages and interests! The same goes for students: it's exhausting being plugged into a computer for five one-hour meetings/lessons, so we are deliberately trying to mix it up: not every lesson will be a one-hour live lesson with a performing teacher.

Some lessons will be; many will have teacher input at the start and end, with a space for off-line working in the middle (so far, this is getting positive feedback from students); some lessons will be more off-line; some lessons will be demonstrations; as I said, we are trying to mix things up to provide variety and improve engagement. The Technology department will be posting packs to all students in Years 7 to 9 to give them something practical to do at home linked to this term's projects.

- PE lessons. BTec and GCSE PE classes will have live lesson log-in as for any other exam subject. Core PE lessons (called "games" in the last century) will not; however, Like last full lockdown the PE department will be contacting students on the morning of the lesson with some ideas for activity, plus a cheery "hello".
- "Move and stretch". Just a reminder to anyone who reads this that five hours hunched over a laptop or iPad is not good for the body, and we all need to get up, move, stretch and un-hunch at regular intervals. Even though young people are generally more flexible than we oldies, it still applies (although in some cases, the challenge is actually keeping still for long enough to concentrate....☺).
- "Appropriateness". I've put the following in the Student Bulletin, and would be grateful if parents and carers could keep an eye and/or reinforce at home:
- "Teams Expectations". Nearly all of you are brilliant already, and are joining meetings with camera off and muted. If your camera is on, you need to be *properly dressed and check your background!* Also, most of you use social media and messaging, and the language used is quite informal; remember when you are using Teams "Chat" you are speaking to at least one adult, so it's different. I suppose it's a bit like the difference between talking to your mates and talking to teachers/parents: please don't be careless, rude or say anything offensive in Chat. It's recorded as well, even if the whole lesson isn't recorded on video.

Connectivity and Devices

The situation is overall much better than in the summer. However, if you are having difficulties, *please contact us*. We helped many families in the first lockdown, and we may be able to help again.

Using Xbox or Play Station to access Microsoft Teams

Below my signature on this Newsletter you will find brief instructions for accessing Teams through an Xbox or Play Station. There is one additional requirement, though: it will need a USB keyboard in order to type. Even so, this could be very useful as a back-up plan if a household is short of devices, or if a device ceases to function at short notice. Of course, it will take even more self-discipline than usual to stay focused and on-task.....

Lateral Flow Testing

In order to add another layer of protection we will be testing colleagues weekly who are on site, as well as following the government guidance for initial testing of students in KWV – two tests a few days apart – and any close contacts in the event of being a "close contact". I did my test this morning. It has not been made clear whether schools will be required to run mass testing when we return in February (let's think positively), but it would seem reasonably likely.

There is still a debate raging about the accuracy of these tests, and as reported in the news the Department of Education has withdrawn its template letters which claimed 99% efficacy, as this is misleading. However, this does not fundamentally change anything about the process, and we are in accord with the majority of schools who think that the advantages of testing outweigh the disadvantages, especially if we can successfully guard against a false sense of security or relaxing of covid-security standards. There is, of course, the risk already seen in care homes and hospitals that more cases will be identified and staffing could be adversely affected, but as the aim is to reduce transmission we'll have to cross that bridge if we come to it.

Public Exams, Summer 2021

The cancellation of GCSEs and A-levels was a significant announcement on Wednesday, and students, parents and school staff are still coming to terms with it. This is what we know:

- GCSEs (and A-levels) have been cancelled in the summer.
- The government has instructed Ofqual (which runs exams) to run a consultation on how grades should be awarded, and to report by the end of February.

- So, we do not know yet exactly how grades will be assessed.
- We're not sure yet how vocational courses (BTec, Cambridge Nationals) will be graded.
- Because we do not know yet exactly how grades will be assessed, there is EVERY point in students in exam years studying and trying to impress us. Teachers will be deciding on grades somehow, based on **all** work done so far and from now on.
- Mock exams will not be used as the sole predictor of grades; it will come from the totality of a student's work over two years, a range of assessments. We know if a student has had a bad day in the mock and will adjust accordingly.
- Also, learning at GCSE (even without exams) provides a foundation for further study
- So, students will carry on through the syllabus, building up knowledge; there will be less focus on exam preparation and hopefully a chance to look at things of interest which normally there wouldn't be time for.

Understandably, students will look at last summer's exams fiasco and be worried. Last summer will not happen again, it can't happen again. There will be no algorithms; there is longer to prepare for it; the government and Ofqual have learned lessons. I'm not underestimating how unsettling this decision will be for students; they're on a two-year trajectory which has been stopped with five months to go. Easy to say, but students should focus on what they can control, which is working hard; the things outside their control will be clearer at the end of next month.

Also in the News

- The national controversy at the moment is the clash between "Stay at Home" to reduce the spread of the variant virus, and the hugely increased numbers of KWV students in schools; some schools have 50% or even 70% attendance, which means they would need almost the whole of their staff in school. The situation here is that we have just under 100 KWV students on site, roughly 12%. This number is rising gradually every day. We will, of course, do our absolute best to accommodate every request which meets the criteria.
- Free School Meals. The government has said that it will establish a voucher scheme for families where children receive free school meals, and that delivery/collection of food parcels is impractical. No news of this has reached us, and families have had a week without meals; we will re-activate the scheme we used during the first lockdown and support families until we can join a better scheme. This will include paying for this week retrospectively. We will contact families early next week.

Clyst Vale Public Library

The Devon Library Service has decided to close all public libraries for the time being during the national lockdown.

Reminders for KWV Provision Parents

These will also be sent directly.

- If you give your child a lift to school in the morning, and s/he would be the only passenger, the school transport will not run at 3.20 and you will need to make arrangements to do the pick-up. Unless you tell us you're giving a lift but need transport at 15.20, then we can phone the bus company and it will run !
- The timings for KWV are not quite as generous and flexible as ECP. We would like students dropped no earlier than 08.30, and collected no later than 15.45. If students arrive earlier than 08.30 they will be largely on their own, and we cannot guarantee supervision, although we will do our best. Also, this is Clyst Vale, so we will try to help out families where there is a particular problem.
- We will be starting LFT for students on Monday, so it would be massively appreciated if "KWV parents" could return the permission slips as soon as possible !
- Because very few students are using the food service, we will make some changes from Wednesday; this also reduces risk for our canteen colleagues, and reduce wasted food. Basically, the food service will be available at breaktimes, and students can "load up" for lunch; free school meals will be given at break as well. In reality, most students are bringing their own food, and top up with drinks and snacks. Clearly, we will have this under constant review and can change back if numbers increase.

Covid-Related Scams

- I have been asked by the Police to alert parents and carers to covid-related scams in general, and one current one in particular.
- It starts with a realistic-looking text and advises the user that they are eligible to apply for the vaccine; users click on a link and are taken to a web page, which again seems genuine. It goes on to ask for some personal information, for them to be able to apply for the vaccine. This includes Name, Address, Date of birth, Address, and Card Payment Details.
- *You will **never** be asked for personal financial information in relation to covid health matters including vaccination.*

A Personal Milestone

Clearly, I was hoping for a series of huge gatherings and a presentation, maybe a fete of some description now we have marquees, possibly a statue, but this has been rendered impossible by covid restrictions. On 1st January I clocked up TWENTY YEARS as Principal of Clyst Vale. Mind, there are plenty of former and present colleagues who have worked here for a lot longer than that. Hard to imagine, but when I was appointed I was regarded as a bit of a whizz-kid, and the Governors were worried I'd be off after three years or so. But there is something wonderfully unique and quirky about Clyst Vale, and the people here are amazing, especially the students, so here I am still!

Best wishes,



Kevin Bawn
Principal

Using Xbox or Play Station to access Microsoft Teams

Accessing your remote learning. An alternative method of accessing remote learning during times of lockdown. This allows you access; to type, you would also need a USB keyboard.

Xbox

1. Plug a keyboard in to the Xbox USB slot
2. Go in to my games and apps
3. Find Microsoft Edge and select
4. Type in: Microsoft teams and login to your account using your username and password.
5. You can then access all the online content for home learning and watch live sessions.
6. To move around you use the Xbox controller or plug in a mouse
7. Use a headset to interact if you have one.

PlayStation

1. Identify the PlayStation internet browser icon (it is WWW with dots around it)
2. Press the PlayStation logo on the controller
3. Go to the library and find options for games and applications
4. Go in to applications and you will find the internet browser
5. Type in Microsoft teams into the browser and login to your account using your username and password.
6. You can then access all the online content for home learning and watch live sessions.
7. Use a headset to interact if you have one.

CALENDAR DATES

DATE	EVENT
2021	
w/b Mon 8 February	Y13 Mocks
Fri 12th February	Force Cancer - Non-Uniform Day
Mon 15th - Fri 19th February	Half Term
Thurs 1st April	Last Day of Spring Term
Tues 20th April	Start of Summer Term
Mon 31st May - Fri 4th June	Half Term
Fri 23rd July	LAST DAY OF SUMMER TERM Water Aid - Non-Uniform Day

Online wellbeing support and counselling for farming people



Community Support

Relate and connect with others by sharing similar experiences, and gain valuable self-care tips and tools from our engaged community and professional team.



Professional support

Our team of professionals aim to provide early response to emotional well-being as well as emerging mental health needs via our online site and counselling sessions.



Self-help

Helpful articles, personal experiences and tips from our community and professional team. You can also set personal goals, write in your journal, or start a discussion with the community.

[Visit rabi.org.uk/kooth](http://rabi.org.uk/kooth)





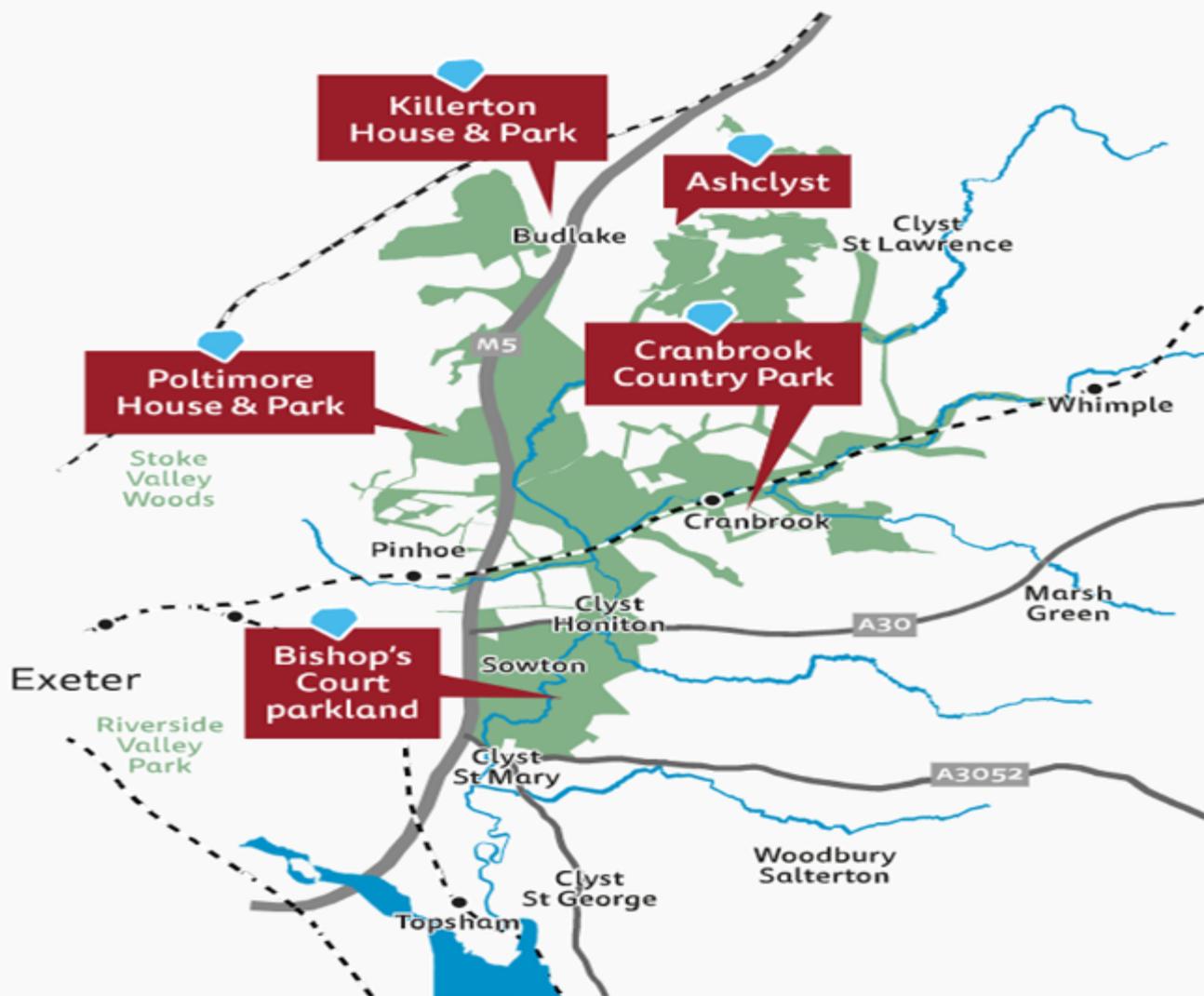

Do you use Twitter? Then why not follow us @clystvale to find out what's going on in the College community.



Clyst Valley Regional Park - Consultation

East Devon District Council would like to encourage local residents to contribute to their masterplan consultation, regarding the proposed **Clyst Valley Regional Park**, which is a new public green space in East Devon's Clyst Valley.

Where is the Clyst Valley Regional Park?



To view a copy of the draft masterplan, and to take the opportunity to make your views known about the plan's priorities, please look online at the links below.

[Clyst Valley Regional Park Masterplan](#)

The Clyst Valley National Park has its own website, here:

[Clyst Valley Park](#)

East Devon District Council have also produced a short film about it, which can be found on YouTube, here:

[Clyst Valley Park - short film](#)

You have until **midday on Thursday 7th January 2021** to comment.

Having taken feedback into account, the finalised masterplan will be submitted for approval by the District Council at a public meeting, next spring.

Attendance, Absence and Requests for Absence

Please let the College know of any absence on the first day it occurs.

If the absence continues beyond the first day, please contact the College on each subsequent day of absence, too. To comply with safeguarding obligations, we cannot simply assume a student's sickness absence is ongoing; we need to be certain that the reason for absence is due to continuing illness.

If you do not notify the College, then we will make contact with you to identify the reason for absence. This is important as it helps to reduce unauthorised absences and truancy.

Please note, the College may ask you to provide medical proof if a student is absent from College due to illness.

Medical Appointments

We encourage students to maximise their levels of attendance; research indicates a direct link between attendance and examination performance. The timing of many medical appointments means that often students can attend school first, and return afterwards. By doing so, students minimise missed learning whilst keeping their attendance levels as high as possible. Therefore, we ask that parents/carers send their child into school for morning registration, even when a medical appointment takes place in the middle of the morning. Similarly, appointments scheduled for the afternoon should, where possible, be arranged after Period 4 - during lunchtime. Students are encouraged to return to school after a lunchtime appointment, if they can.

Thank you for your support in helping your child maximise their attendance and learning.

For Years 7 - 11 Absences

Please ring:

Penni Ball/Sharon Leaman (Attendance Officers)

Direct line: 01392 463911

Email: studentabsence@clystvaled.org

For Year 12 - 13 Absences

Please ring:

Jassy Barrington (Post-16 PA)

Direct line: 01392 462697

Email: barringtonj@clystvaled.org

CONTACT INFORMATION

Principal: Kevin Bawn, BA PhD

Address: Clyst Vale Community College, Station Road, Broadclyst, Exeter, Devon EX5

3AJ **Tel:** 01392 461407 **Email:** admin@clystvaled.org **Web:** www.clystvaled.org

Library: 01392 464010



COLLEGE DRESS

Clyst Vale aims to maintain a simple pattern of College dress to promote a clear sense of identity and enable students to come sensibly dressed, at reasonable cost, for a range of learning activities. If a student is improperly dressed, correct uniform will be provided for that day or the student may be sent home to change his/her clothing, at the discretion of the Principal. **If parents are in any doubt about the suitability of an item of uniform they should check with the College before buying it.**

Uniform for all students in Years 7 to 11

- White collared shirt
- School colour tie
- Clyst Vale V-neck jumper with College logo
- Boys' trousers - Banner Slimbridge (black)/Banner Falmouth (black)
- Girls' trousers - Trutex GTN (2 pocket black)/David Luke DL965 (black)
- All trousers must have Clyst Vale logo rivet on waistband
- Skirts - Trutex Senior stitched down/Taylor Tartan (blue) skirt worn no more than 2" above the knee
- Knee length black tailored shorts may be worn
- Black sturdy shoes or **all black** trainers
- White socks or black tights with skirts
- Clyst Vale reversible jacket or other outdoor coat

All uniform and PE Kit can be purchased from Thomas Moore, Exeter. Thomas Moore offers both a personal service in their shop and also the opportunity to order on line at www.thomasmooretoymaster.co.uk

- Eyebrow jewellery, facial, tongue, nose and lip studs are not permitted.
- Leather jackets, all denim garments and all hoodies are not permitted.
- Hats should not be worn indoors.
- Outer coats should be predominantly plain in colour and without large logos.
- A plain white t-shirt or vest may be worn under the shirt.
- On health and safety grounds, shoes should be appropriate for a work place. Flipflops, open toes, Uggs, Dr Martens (or equivalent) are not permitted.
- Jewellery may be worn, providing it is not excessive or potentially hazardous. However, it is a legal requirement that all jewellery must be removed before undertaking sporting activities. It is the responsibility of the wearer to do this.

The Principal, in consultation with the Governors of the College, will decide on the suitability of the appearance of a student attending the College - extreme hair styles, of either cut or colour, are not permitted.