



NEWSLETTER

No. 674
w/c Mon 22 June
Week B

SONG TITLE OF THE WEEK

“Double Bubble Trouble” [M.I.A.]

Dear Parents/Carers,

Another Week

I'm sorry, but unusually for me I'm getting ever so slightly mildly irritated. Another week of teacher and Headteacher-bashing for supposedly undermining the government's plan to open schools more widely. Nothing about the remote learning, welfare, childcare provision, support for families, coping calmly with endless chopping and changing with new contradictory guidance, and managing to implement policies announced at the 5pm briefing for the next day. Although in fairness Boris did thank teachers in a press release yesterday. I'm beginning to think it's all a smoke screen because there is no national strategy for bringing children and young people back into schools. And to what sort of schools will we be bringing them back?

- When will the disadvantaged students in Year 10 receive their laptops?
- What about plans to ensure all students have adequate ICT and connectivity?
- Next week we welcome some Year 10 and 12 back to help prepare them for next year. What exactly are we preparing them for? When will we know how next summer's exams will be adjusted to reflect these exceptional circumstances? I've had a few e-mails from Clyst Vale students anxious about this, and I have nothing firm to tell them.
- News is breaking of the latest big announcement of an eye-watering £1bn for education catch-up. This has to be good news and will undoubtedly have a positive effect, although the jury is still out on how positive, and whether it will represent good value for money. The devil will be in the detail. Schools seem to be being given the responsibility for coordinating all this, which is fine because we're getting very good at implementing all schemes good, bad and mad, but how much will the government guidance (to follow...) help or hinder? Are there enough private tutors out there? Will we be allowed to use our own colleagues and pay them, or will we be obliged to use reputable and recognised private tutoring companies (putting public money into private What's the safeguarding and quality control? How will it link with children's progress in school? How will "disadvantaged" be defined, and what sort of accountability structures will be put in place? How can schools coordinate summer schools on their premises without being open to some extent? On the tutoring element, some estimates suggest an individual school could receive £20k. We have about 160 disadvantaged students, so £125 per head. At £20 per hour (which is cheap), maybe six or seven hours tutoring across the year, more if we are allowed to use the funding for small groups rather than one-to one. Other estimates are less optimistic, at £55 per head. Some sources report that schools will be expected to fund the first 25% of the costs from existing budgets. Which is correct? Which is fake news? Wait for next week's exciting instalment.....

- The real “biggie” for me is how do we plan for September –will guidelines on social distancing, class sizes and rotas change? We have four weeks to plan for this. I would imagine that most parents would like to know what’s going on, too. You have lives, work, family routines and plans, and take your children’s education very seriously. It doesn’t matter what household configuration your family is in, how many children or which years, you need to know just as much as we do. Should you prepare to be returning to full-time work in September? Should you be preparing to need a day or two off per week, or a week-by-week rota? I expect your employers or customers would like to know, too. Or will all this be left to schools to sort out? I know of one Devon school which is asking parents to write to their MP to point out that they need to know what the plan is for schools in September; I think it’s a great idea. There is nothing stopping any private citizen, whether parent or member of staff from e-mailing their MP to ask this very question. If our national leaders believe their own rhetoric about the return of schools being absolutely fundamental to the country’s recovery, then what’s the plan? And will it be safe? [In the meantime, we continue to plan loosely for several scenarios. I described this in last week’s Newsletter. We want to sustain our remote learning and welfare support, while developing our repertoire in remote learning in the anticipation that we might still be doing it to some extent or other in September.]

“Face-to-face meeting for pupils not returning this term”

This was another headline-grabbing announcement. It was clarified a day or two later. The meetings are entirely optional. They cannot happen if the maximum number of pupils permitted on site at any one time is exceeded. The general expectation is still that people should stay at home as much as possible, except to go shopping or to safari parks. Or Durdle Door or Barnard Castle. The meetings could be held virtually instead (which rather defeats the concept of a face-to-face meeting). We won’t be offering them, I’m afraid; there is only so much we can do, even though it is an idea with merit. I really hope that parents and children who have concerns about returning or their progress feel able to contact us anyway, as many of you have already done and continue to do. We work hard to make sure we have people on the end of a phone, and also to put parents or students through to the right members of staff to help, or for a chat.

Remote Learning: Live Lessons

These are increasing as colleagues and students gain in confidence, and are undoubtedly good for engagement. There are issues: rarely more than 75% of students are present, and usually it’s nearer half; however, the sessions can be recorded. As with anything on-line there are risks, and we need to safeguard both young people and school staff. The first thing is that unless you are one of a very small number of parents who specifically know about it and have agreed, none of my colleagues will ask for a one-to-one meeting via Teams; it will always be in groups. Teams is a safe platform, unlike for example Zoom. All the Teams are closed to the team members and administrators, although everything is recorded and retrievable. We are reminding students to use blurred or fake backgrounds; and we recommend cameras are off – both of these measures enhance safety. As a belt and braces move, we will shortly be issuing additional parental consent for live lessons. If you are uneasy about your child joining a live lesson, that’s absolutely fine. We will not be giving anyone, especially students, a hard time about it.

Next Week

I am really looking forward to next week. A school without students is a building, and it needs the energy young people bring. So, it’s been great to have the thirty or so ECP students around, and this will continue; the four bubbles are almost full, but we have planned for a fifth. From Monday, they will be joined by two different groups of Year 10 students and a number of Year 12 students each day. I have maintained our very safe approach, and all of the groups will be kept separate from one another to prevent mixing and reduce the risk of transmission. Who knows how long 2m social distancing will last, but we’re enforcing it for the time being as required. The numbers of students per toilet and sink has also been kept low, so there is plenty of opportunity for hand-washing and there are hand sanitising stations in all rooms and at other key points; plus, we have installed several wall-mounted hand-sanitisers with more on order.

The £1bn injection does not include Sixth Form students or those in FE. So we have been pleased that almost 80% of Sixth Formers have opted to come back for 2 hour sessions in their subjects on a rota basis for the next three weeks. This is better than we'd like, but Year 12 really do need subject-specific contact with their regular teacher, and we have to limit numbers on site at any one time. Each Year 12 tutor group will have a "UCAS Day" in the last week of term; this is something Miss Haynes and the tutors have managed to maintain from our normal programme.

Poor Year 10 parents. As well as all the Newsletters and updates every parent receives, they have had an extra four or five communications from me in a week. Still, lockdown is a great opportunity to read more.... Year 10 students are coming in two groups a day on a four-day rotation. The groups are constructed from tutor groups. In week one, they will have a session on Maths, and a session we're calling "Recovery" which includes a mix of inputs and activities to address some of the psychological and practical aspects of ten weeks in lockdown, study skills, and preparing for the return in September. In week two, there will be sessions from English and Science, and then the rota starts up again. Students will probably not have their regular teacher, but they will have a subject specialist who can help and advise. Our prime aim is to help students re-enter or re-acclimatise, to just be back in the school environment. Of course this experience has to be educationally meaningful, but we have to be realistic. The soundbites are about students needing to catch-up; true, but my holy trinity of safe, happy and successful still applies. Students won't catch-up or learn if they're scared or anxious, which has to be addressed first. This is quite a challenge for my colleagues running the sessions. They're here to teach, which requires structure and some discipline, but students probably just want and in some cases need to offload and simply "be" in school. Desks two metres apart and only eleven students to supervise cuts out a large amount of poor behaviour opportunities, of course.

CV&CC Updates

The "Tuesday and Thursday" model of updates on the website is currently overkill, and no-one has complained that last Thursday's wasn't even there (I conducted a sneaky experiment). Thursday is also very adjacent to Friday's Newsletter. So, unless things get exciting again, or something major happens requiring a one-off, I propose to discontinue the Thursday one. I am prepared to run the risk of being likened to very senior politician although my hair is not blond and not in sufficient quantity (even after 3 months of lockdown) to be tousled, for avoiding contact with his public,

Letter from Dawn Stabb, Head of Education & Learning, Devon County Council

I have been asked to send to you a letter from Dawn Stabb. You will find it attached as a pdf. It's not fair. She never sends out my Newsletters.

Grades and Rank Orders

Today's gloom and doom on grades is provided by the newspaper, reporting that "millions" of grades will be lowered. Last Friday we pressed the button and sent off all the grades and rank orders for GCSE, AS, A-Level and vocational qualifications. This has been an incredibly challenging task for my colleagues to predict students' grades at such a difficult time. An education data analysis charity called The Fischer Family Trust has crunched the numbers from 1900 schools, roughly half of the schools in England. These show that when aggregated together, schools' predictions are a bit high, in some cases very high. This is no big surprise. For a student on a borderline (say the grade 5/4 boundary), you'd expect a teacher to go for grade 5; it's in our DNA to be optimistic and positive about a child's chances within reason. Normally, the exam itself would decide which side of the boundary the student would fall. However, this year, it is up to Ofqual to decide how much they want to bring the results in line with 2019's results; the logic here is that with a national population you wouldn't expect significant differences year on year. Or, maybe, Ofqual will allow a bit more flexibility because of the unprecedented situation, and accept a small increase in national results in 2020. This is now an incredibly challenging task for Ofqual. National populations are all very well, but what about individual students and schools? Could there be surprising fluctuations? The Ofqual algorithm addresses this to an extent by keeping everything in line with a risk of some subjects, especially smaller ones, being pulled towards the middle (some lowering of top grades, possibly some upgrading of low ones).

Also algorithms don't cope well with those fascinating, random things called teenagers: every year, there are results which are statistical outliers, but there won't be as many of those this year. The worry is that both students and schools "on the up" may not see this fully recognised. The i predicts "student and school backlash on results day". I really hope not: it could be another challenging or even damaging situation in which everyone blames everyone else while the real villains of the piece are a tiny virus and an enormously complex mathematical formula.

Test and Trace Scam

I have been asked to bring this to parents and carers' attention!

Scammers are texting people who have recently had a coronavirus test to say that they had tested positive, and that they need another test. Phoning the number in the text states that the test must be paid for and requests bank details. Please be aware that:

NHS Test and Trace text messages come from NHStracing on 0300 0135000, nowhere else. The NHStracing service will absolutely not ask for bank details or payments; any other account information; to set up passwords or a PIN; or to phone a premium rate number (09 or 087).

As ever, very best wishes to you and your families in these strange times.



Dr Bawn

Safeguarding

During the closure, we encourage all parents to be responsible for safeguarding children in our communities. If you have any concerns, please contact the school and ask to speak to a **Designated Safeguarding Lead** (Mr Sutton, Mrs Albutt, Miss McConnachie, Mr A Pearce).

If this is not possible please contact MASH, The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub: 0345 155 1071. Further information on safeguarding children can be found by visiting www.devon.gov.uk/childprotection



Kooth, Your online **mental wellbeing community**

- Discussion Boards
- Kooth Magazine & Help Articles
- Free Counselling
- Journal & Self-Help Tools



Sign up for free at **Kooth.com**

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



Call Back Offer

Chat with a Youth Worker by phone or text

Are you 13 or over?
Would you like to speak to one of our youth workers via text or a call-back?

All you have to do is fill in this form
Which is also available on our website:
<https://spacepsm.org/>



Attendance, Absence and Requests for Absence

DURING THE COLLEGE CLOSURE FOR COVID-19, PLEASE CONTACT THE COLLEGE ON THE CONTACT INFORMATION BELOW IF YOUR CHILD HAS COVID-19 SYMPTOMS OR HAS ANY OTHER SIGNIFICANT ILLNESS WHICH HAS AN IMPACT ON THEIR ABILITY TO LEARN EFFECTIVELY WHILE AT HOME.

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 (Attendance Officer)

Direct line: 01392 463911

Email: studentabsence@clystvale.org

For Year 12 - 13 Absences

Please ring:

Jassy Barrington (Post-16 PA)

Direct line: 01392 462697

Email: barringtonj@clystvale.org

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



COLLEGE DRESS: WE WILL BE BACK EVENTUALLY !!!

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 - Blue Tartan and knee length
- Trutex Senior stitched down/Taylor Tartan (blue) skirt and may be 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.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Address: Clyst Vale Community College, Station Road, Broadclyst, Exeter, Devon EX5 3AJ

Tel: 01392 461407 **Library:** 01392 464010

Email: admin@clystvale.org **Web:** www.clystvale.org

Principal: Kevin Bawn, BA PhD

