



NEWSLETTER

No. 680
w/c Mon 31 August

THOUGHT OF THE FORTNIGHT

“Take rest; a field that has rested gives a bountiful crop”
[Ovid]

Dear Parents and Carers,

All Systems Go

One of the basic mantras of stress management experts is that you shouldn't get anxious about things outside your control. On the other hand, if that was an easy thing to do, we wouldn't need stress management experts in the first place. As far as I'm concerned, we will be ready for students' return a week on Monday. Several of my colleagues have been working incredibly hard to prepare the site and signage, buying in loads of hand sanitiser, booking in much more cleaning time, and preparing any amount of guidance and instruction. Every teacher is also working hard on adapting teaching approaches to compensate for those 14 weeks away from school (as well as making sure their areas are as safe as possible). I am using the Student Bulletin to drip-feed students with some of the key information in advance, and there will be more of this next week. We have a Plan, I think it's a good one, but we'll find out on 7th September !

However, I can't control R rates, hospital admission rates, lack of social distancing in society, and frequently changing guidance. And I can't control what will happen nationally in a month's time. Hopefully, nothing. Most Scottish schools have managed just fine since fully reopening, but we are bound to hear about the exceptions like the school in Dundee with twenty teachers testing positive causing it to close. So, we have to be realistic, and like the old saying, hope for the best but prepare for the worst. With all the information at the current time, I am very positive that we will be opening to all students on 7th September. We will run a fairly normal timetable similar to the normal school day, and in most lessons the learning experience will also be close to normal. There will be some students (and staff)

who will find returning extremely challenging, and I would imagine the majority are a bit nervous, but all children need to be back in College and we will do our best to get them here.

Coming soon: The Handbook

I am producing something called “The Handbook” (for returning to College in September). It will have two versions, one for parents and students, and one for staff. The structure will be identical, and quite a lot of the information will be the same in both, although there will be more specific information as well. I fully expect to be tweaking The Handbook on a weekly basis or even more frequently as we implement all the new routines. The latest edition will be available at any time on the website, and I will be using the Newsletter, Staff and Student Bulletins, and In Touch to flag any significant changes or developments. I am actually a long way through writing The Handbook, and hope to get it finished and uploaded this weekend.

Some Riveting News: Important

You’ll remember that trousers which pass the CVCC standards assurance test receive an official rivet. However, we have decided against riveting this year. It’s quite a complex process involving parental trips to the College, or students coming along and needing to change. All in all, the levels of complexity and increased health risks mean that we will keep the rivet gun locked away. This does not mean that we are accepting a decline in standards, though, and students should not try to push the boundaries with skinny, stretchy or flared varieties. Uniform last year was absolutely brilliant, and I hope that this can continue; every student wearing trousers conformed. So, if you are trouser shopping as a result of lockdown growth spurts, please make sure that the trousers conform to the standard.

Face Coverings

I have had a few parental e-mails this week, which divide equally between “you must introduce compulsory face coverings in school”, and “whatever you do, you must never introduce compulsory face coverings in school”. Government guidance was perfectly clear on Sunday, and completely different by Tuesday; further, the decision on face coverings had been neatly passed to schools from government. I have a new “F” word. Despite all the hours of media argument between medical experts and politicians, it strikes me that whatever this week’s The Science, face coverings will have some benefit, even if small. However, in a teaching situation face coverings are problematic: students and teachers talk (too much, sometimes), their faces need to be visible for non-verbal expressions and to enable better voice projection and lip-reading. But there are communal areas where students will encounter a range of teachers (and vice-versa), bus travel which cannot be in strict, segregated bubbles other than designated seating, and lesson changeovers when students in different year groups may pass each other. We are fortunate that almost every lesson change-over at Clyst Vale happens outdoors, and a lot of lining-up before lessons is also outdoors, which mitigates risk even further. So, there are some minor benefits, depending on a person’s individual level of risk; there are undoubtedly benefits in terms of people’s confidence and reassurance through wearing a face-covering themselves, and seeing others do so. Government guidance is that for schools not in lockdown areas, face coverings may now be permitted. We will go one step further: face coverings are recommended and strongly encouraged for all times other than lessons (this applies to school transport, too; face covering is mandatory on public transport). Face coverings are not compulsory, which will please some people, and help students who for a variety of reasons cannot wear a mask. It gives some flexibility: if I was playing “it” within my bubble (of course) at lunchtime on my third of the field, I would almost certainly want to take my face covering off. Like almost everything, we have to start somewhere: if this

decision works well, we'll keep it. If not, we'll think again. If the government guidance changes to making masks mandatory at some stage in the future, we'll be in a good place to implement it reasonably easily.

Exam Grades Issues Rumble On

We have, today, received the last of the BTec results and these have been sent to students. Cambridge National results went out on Tuesday. The delay was annoying and frustrating, but at least the grades which came through are much fairer and more realistic than they looked last week.

For some Year 11 students, there remains an issue whereby their grades in one or two subjects were lowered by us before submitting centre-assessed grades. This happened at 40% of schools, who were following the DfE guidance at the time to “ensure that the distribution of grades follows a similar pattern to that in other years”. These students, thousands nationally, did not benefit in these subjects when the decision to scrap the algorithm was taken – although they did benefit overall as the algorithm would have lowered far more than one or two grades. Worse, there is no right of appeal (except for technical issues). I have been campaigning hard about this, and although Ofqual have declared that schools were right to apply historical patterns at the time, still have not offered any solution or developed a method of appeal to address this further unfairness.

Staff News

I'll mention this again when term starts, but during lockdown we have recruited very well, and are delighted to have several new colleagues joining us in September. I know students will be interested in this, as they like to know the name behind the initials on the timetable ! I don't want to tempt fate, but we have been very pleased with the quality of candidates available for interview, and therefore with everyone we've appointed. I've said before that the College is definitely “on the up”, and it is a very good thing to have an injection of new ideas and new energy. In alphabetical order, we are welcoming

Liz Collins as Cover Supervisor; Zoe Dunn, Teaching Assistant; Molly Faulkner, Teacher of B&V; Matthew Hawkins, Teacher of Music with Drama; Beth Jones, Teaching Assistant; Sharon Leaman as Attendance and Data Officer, Emily Moore, Teacher of Spanish; Maddie Nash, Head of History; Paul Newell, Teacher of Maths; Henry Pickett, Teacher of Science (Physics); Nathalie Rappaport, Teaching Assistant; Ellie Roberts, Teacher of English; and Helen Spencer, Teacher of Science. We are also delighted to welcome back Becky Craig and Natasha Beer from their respective maternity leaves !

Queries and Questions

Next week, apart from Monday of course, many of my colleagues will be “at work” from home or “in work” on Tuesday and Wednesday, and all will be working on Thursday and Friday as the term will have officially started. So, if you have questions, concerns, change of personal information, other information to give us, then please be in touch !

Best wishes,

Kevin Bawn
Principal

**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 (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

School Transport

1. Clyst Vale supports the (DCC) Devon County Council's "No Pass No Travel Scheme" that operates on transport to and from this College.
2. Only students who show a valid travel pass to the driver **on every journey** will be allowed to travel. Students must travel on the vehicle indicated on their pass.
3. **Please ensure that your child has their travel pass before they leave home every day.**
4. Please ensure that your child knows what to do in the event they are not allowed to travel or the bus does not arrive (e.g. because of breakdown or traffic conditions or severe weather). College attendance is very important and it is best to be prepared for any of these eventualities.
5. DCC will carry out regular pass checks throughout the year.
6. Drivers are not allowed to carry passengers who cannot show a valid pass.
7. If your child loses their pass during the day they should go to the AtHoS offices to ask for a 10 day temporary pass. Replacement passes cost £5 each and can be ordered online, or by sending a cheque with a replacement form.

Further information is available at: http://www.devon.gov.uk/school_transport

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



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 - 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

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Principal: Kevin Bawn, BA PhD

