

PARENT NEWSLETTER

Issue 10 Friday 17 July 2020

Headteacher Update

We have arrived at the end of a busy and challenging year!

These last few months of school closures have been particularly challenging for our students and, I imagine, many parents too. We have all had to make adjustments and adaptations along the way but I am so proud of the way staff, students, parents and school supporters have pulled together to offer mutual support over the weeks and months.

I have attached a short video message (see link below) for all parents which includes a brief summary of the plans we are putting in place for the September start. The message may include some ambiguity on the start time of school in September; just to confirm, school will be open from 8.20am onwards for students to arrive. School will start at 8.40am.

The video summarises the plans we have made and will be followed up with more detailed written guidance to be published for parents and students mid-August if not before. There will then be a live webinar that will give you an opportunity to ask any questions you may have after reading guidance documents. Details of the webinar will be emailed to all parents.

You will be aware that the school has remained open every day (bar 2 x Bank Holidays) for the students of key workers and a few others. A range of staff across several teams has enabled this to continue. The students have coped extremely well and will forever remember this period of their lives when they attended school non-stop!!

Ms Holland - retirement

Ms Holland, one of our Assistant Headteachers, is stepping down from her Senior Leadership role at the end of this term as part of her semi-retirement. However, I am very pleased that she is going to come back in September as a part time History teacher. We are relieved that we are not losing her completely! Ms Holland has served on the senior team for 14 years and has made a tremendous contribution to the team and the life of the school across many areas. I know that many, many students have benefitted from her teaching, guidance and support. She will continue her role as leading the UCAS process for one more year. I would like to say a public thank you to Ms Holland for all she has given the school in her leadership role and wish her all the best for her semi-retirement!

We continue to live in uncertain times - this uncertainty can bring anxiety and a sense of destabilisation. I think we have all felt this in some ways over the last few months. I am very aware that a range of things may change between now and September for us all. If there are any significant changes for Blue Coat I will continue to keep in touch with you along the way.

It just leaves me to say another thank you for your ongoing support and to wish you and your families a good summer holidays and hope that you remain well and safe.

Best wishes

<https://vimeo.com/438821052/306c185f9e>

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Deputy Headteachers' Teaching and Learning Update:

It is now the end of the fifth and final week that the Y10's and Y12's have attended school for their guidance and support in Latin, Art, Music, Religious Studies, Extended Project Qualification and Physical Education. As ever the attendance was excellent, with those students who were unable to attend for various reasons given a follow up communication by teachers so that they would not miss out on the information that was shared in the sessions. I am sure that both the students and the teachers gained equally throughout the five weeks, and hopefully now all students feel confident in knowing what they have to do in every subject before we return in September.

It has for all of us been a completely new and challenging time; and with all that we do we try to reflect on the areas that went well and indeed the areas that we think we could improve upon in the future. We are under no illusion that this has been a very challenging time especially for our students, and it is clearly with all these in mind, that as staff, we are already thinking about the practices that must be introduced in September to make school provision take place smoothly and effectively.

We also thoroughly acknowledge the time and effort that has been put in by all parents to keep the students on track and motivated at home. A task that we are sure at times really did demonstrate effort and the need for much patience. Clearly it is a combination of all of these things that enabled The Blue Coat School to be named as the top school in Merseyside, Halton and Warrington by the 'Real School Guide 2020' last week. But, we must never forget that the school is not about bricks and mortar, but it is about the students and staff that work there, and so this award is really a reflection on all of their hard work and dedication.

Thank you for working with us so closely this year. Have a wonderful summer and we look forward to receiving your child again, face to face, in September.

Deputy Headteachers' Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare Update

For some families the summer holidays can be a challenging time and in order to support anyone who experiences this, we have sent out a useful support guide via parentmail. This guide provides hints and tips to support well-being, as well as including useful signposting to other services that are available. We would encourage students and families to access this support if they need to and we will also be monitoring our welfare email over the summer holidays, welfare@bluecoatschool.org.uk.

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Due to Covid-19 and the restrictions that have been in place, we have been unable to hold any of our induction events for the students starting Year 7 and Year 12 in September. As an alternative, we have adopted a number of creative alternatives to support the transition into these year groups and offer support and guidance to students. This has included two Year 7 Welcome videos and a Year 12 video is planned for release on Results' Day. A handy Year 12 transition guide created by current sixth form students has also been sent to students today and we hope that this offers an insight into life in the Sixth Form.