



Dear Parents and Carers

Since the end of Term 5, the situation for the response of schools to the pandemic has continued to change. The government has made a number of changes to its advice to Secondary Schools. Notably, they pushed back plans for 'face-to-face contact' for Year 10 and 12 students from June 1 to June 15, contingent on it being deemed safe to do so. Many of you will be aware that there have been local concerns about the trajectory of the infection in the South West in general and North Somerset in particular. As a result of these concerns, including the well-publicised situation at Weston Hospital, North Somerset advised Primary Schools to delay their 're-opening' for a week. However, they have now advised, following guidance from Public Health England, that Primary Schools will be safe to open to more students from June 8. Consequently, at Backwell we are still planning the beginning of some in-school contact for Year 10 and 12 students: this will, of course, remain dependent on public health advice.

From Monday 15 June there will, in fact, be two significant changes to the learning programme at Backwell, because, as I have already indicated, we will also be introducing 'Live learning' for all students, using the platform of Microsoft TEAMS. Please read below to see how this will affect your child and what you can do to prepare.

Live Learning

This table sets out our expectations in different year groups and subjects:

Years 7, 8 and 9	Year 10	Year 12
<p>Maths, English and Science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one session per fortnight per class <p>Humanities, MFL, Art and DT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least two sessions per term per class <p>Music and Drama</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One session per term per class 	<p>Every subject</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One session per week <p>(One session for English Literature and one session for English Language. Two sessions in Science: one from each teacher)</p>	<p>Every subject</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two sessions per subject per week EPQ: students will carry out their formal presentations via a live TEAMS session

Live sessions will be scheduled at a time when your child would normally have that lesson on their timetable. Pupils will be contacted on FROG (in the same way that work is set) by their teachers to arrange the live sessions with one week's notice usually being given. Parents can keep track of live sessions by using the FROG assignments app and looking for assignments with "**Live Lesson**" in the title.

All live sessions will last approximately 30 minutes, although some might be longer depending on the work being completed.

Before taking part, please make sure you and your child understand the expectations of these sessions. We have created a site including clear video tutorials to prepare for live learning. Please familiarise yourself with the contents of this site in preparation for the commencement of live sessions from the 15 June. Thank you for your support. <https://frog.backwellschool.net/teams-forhome>

Face-to-Face contact for Years 10 and 12

One reason it is so positive that we are able to introduce the live learning sessions is that this will allow regular subject-specific teaching by the students' own teachers - this would not be possible in school under the guidance the government has shared for 'face-to-face contact'. However, we believe it will still be valuable for students in these year groups to accept our invitation to attend school for a number of reasons. They will meet their tutor and/or their pastoral leaders, who will be looking to support both their wellbeing and their successful participation in our remote learning programme. They will be able to speak to subject specialists who can guide them in particular areas they might be finding difficult. We also feel that being in school can offer familiarity and reassurance as they embark on the next stage in their learning, much of which will again be 'remote'.

From Monday June 15, as long as government guidance allows, we will be inviting groups of Year 10 and Year 12 students into school every day. The sessions will take place in the mornings for Year 10 from Monday 15 June and in the afternoons for Year 12, starting on Thursday 18 June. We will publish a schedule next week which will outline full details of times and locations as well as setting out the arrangements regarding travel, arrival, food, hygiene and social distancing. In the meantime, here is a brief outline of what 'face-to-face contact will mean for each year group:

Year 10

Year 10 students will come into school on a specified day, according to their tutor group. Each group will be divided into three classes to ensure social distancing is maintained. The schedule of the day will comprise a pastoral meeting with Tutor, Head of House or Deputy Head of House, plus core subject sessions in each of Maths, English and Science. Following this day, certain students will have been identified as requiring more support in successfully engaging with the remote learning programme and they will be invited in on a regular basis to continue face-to-face support.

Year 12

As you know, Future Plans Week for Year 12 is no longer able to take place as planned in the week commencing 15 June. Therefore, the materials and advice for this week will now be delivered via a mixture of online tasks and time in school from 17- 26 June. All students in Year 12 will be asked to attend school for one afternoon during the period of 18 – 26 June from 1.00 pm to 3.30 pm. During this session, a member of the Sixth Form Team will deliver key guidance on Future Plans and all students will be given their UCAS booklets and the time to start their applications and research for university, apprenticeships and gap years.

During this time, the Sixth Form team will also check on the wellbeing and progress of each student and, as a result of this, certain students may be asked to attend school on further specified days. The Sixth Form Team will also be able to liaise with subject specialists on site or other staff via email where students feel they need further support to help them make progress during this ongoing period of remote learning.

Careers

As you know, work experience for Year 10 was unfortunately unable to go ahead this year. However, the Oak Academy Trust in conjunction with the Careers and Enterprise Company have put together a week of work experience related activities for students from 8 – 12 June. Mrs Ball has set a series of tasks on FROG for students in Year 10 to complete, ideally next week, as some sessions are live webinars although a lot of material will be available afterwards also. This work is optional, but we believe all students could learn a lot from it, even if they think they have clear future plans. We would be grateful if parents could encourage students to complete as many of these activities as possible and to submit the final task.

As always, you can view details of other careers events and opportunities in our latest Careers Bulletin, by clicking on the following link:

[Careers Bulletin \(5 June 2020\)](#)

Year 11 into Year 12 Backwell Sixth Form

We are now able to confirm that the Induction day on 26 June will not take place. As such, we will continue to review and update the online transition material that we are providing for students, including more detail on “life in the Sixth Form”. If it is at all safe and feasible to bring students into school for an induction session later in July, then we will aim to do this and will update you as necessary. In the meantime, we hope that students are accessing the materials on FROG entitled “Year 11 into Year 12 Remote Learning” (also available to parents in the parent portal under the resources tab).

We’d like to remind students and parents that whilst their place in Sixth Form is guaranteed, the normal subject requirements remain in place so students may need to be looking at the transition materials for more than three subjects. If students do not make the entry requirements for a subject, we will work with them on an individual basis to ensure they start courses which suit their Post-18 plans, and that they will enjoy and be able to make progress in.

In light of the current situation and as part of our ongoing review of our curriculum offer to Backwell Sixth Form students, we have designed a further “Fourth” option for students. As such, further to their chosen three A Levels, students will now be able to opt for either an AS Level, the Extended Project Qualification or the Backwell Employability Award. There will be more details on this to follow and we will work with students to ensure that they choose the most appropriate course

Pastoral Support

We know that parents and carers valued the ‘phone calls they received from tutors and pastoral leaders last term. We are starting the next round of these now - every family will receive a call in the next two weeks to check on pupils’ wellbeing and their progress with remote learning. We will be particularly keen to learn how students respond to the live learning after 15 June.

We are starting a Term 6 that will not have an Enrichment Week or a Sports Day or many other events that we enjoy together in school. Our Pastoral Leaders are working on various projects that will allow students to celebrate being a member of Cotswold, Mendip, Quantock, Sedgemoor, Year 7 or Year 12 in a different way this year: watch this space.

Black Lives Matter

I know that the whole Backwell School community will have been shocked by the horrific images of the death of George Floyd. We are all also aware that this one shocking event has to be seen in the wider context of a history of racism and oppression - and not just in one country. The staff at Backwell School have responded by producing a number of resources for students to use to learn more and explore the vital issues raised. These include a tutorial lesson for use by every year group - which appropriately has links to the voices and ideas of black writers, leaders and thinkers, whose words will be far more appropriate than mine on this topic. I encourage all our students to go to the ‘Black Lives Matter’ link on FROG and explore all the resources there.

Library News

Our latest newsletter is available on the Library FROG homepage, with links to Bristol Old Vic's *A Monster Calls* production online, *Kick Off*, a free football ebook by the fantastic Dan Freedman and our new booklist, Black Lives, Important Voices. Our other booklists are all available under the KS3 Genre Reading Lists tab. Take a look if you need some suggestions to keep your children reading for pleasure. Stay safe and carry on Reading!

And finally

Our Music Department have recorded a lovely video of 'Lean on Me' whilst we have all been in lockdown. If you missed it, you can find it via the link below:

<https://youtu.be/IWjKcbHU9k>



Jon Nunes
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Emailed to parents 05.06 .20