



Mr Russell Slatford MA (Cantab)
Headmaster

26th February 2021

Dear Parents

Update

I hope you managed a good half term break; screen free, and plenty of fresh air, despite the somewhat inclement weather.

We have now had the long-awaited update from the Prime Minister and have had a chance to digest his comments and plan accordingly.

Return to School

The government have stated that all pupils can return from 8th March, and whilst I know there remains some anxiety about a return to face to face; I am delighted that we can get all your children back into school.

Each school will write separately in due course about those details as the reopening for all pupils will be slightly different for each site. Miss Smith has written today to Prep School parents outlining the details. Mrs Coulter has written about the Senior School where the requirement for pupil teasing makes it much more complicated. Please read both letters carefully.

Safety will continue to be a priority and ensuring we are doing everything we reasonably can to keep pupils and their teachers, support staff and as such you at home safe, remains paramount. We invested last term into a wide range of additional safety measures from PPE, additional cleaners, and more staff (to avoid having to use supply for absent colleagues), and I think we have much to be proud of. Other than one year group, following half term, we managed to keep all pupils in school. I am sure this is also a reflection of the support you have given, by following the rules and expectations at home. Whilst it seems like the light at the end of this long dark tunnel is getting closer, please can I remind you of the importance of following the government guidelines and expectations; particularly as we start to unlock the country.

Fees

The decision to hold fee levels the same as last year was made in April, and to not make any fee increases and I hope has provided some level of support in these challenging times. We have also established a Continuity of Education Fund; the details were sent out two weeks before half

Curiosity

Commitment

Creativity

Community

BCS Prep, 40 St Osmund's Road, Lower Parkstone, Poole, Dorset BH14 9JY
+44 (0)1202 714110 | prep-admin@bcschool.co.uk
Miss Kay Smith Headteacher

bournemouthcollegiateschool.co.uk

BCS Senior, College Road, Southbourne, Bournemouth, Dorset BH5 2DY
+44 (0)1202 436550 | senior-admin@bcschool.co.uk
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College Road, Bournemouth Dorset BH5 2DY. Registered in England No: 11494533
VAT number 310 8161 44





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term. We have also decided that the following fee adjustments will be applied to the Summer term invoices.

- A pro rata refund on school transport this term
- A refund for the Sport Academies for the Spring Term
- Boarding fee will be refunded based on a pro rata amount this term.
- Senior fees refund of 10% pro rata for this term
- Prep School fees, not Kindergarten and Nursery, refund 15%, pro rata on the Spring term

These amounts will be deducted on the Summer Term invoice.

Priorities and next steps

We have been discussing the matter of educational catch up across the school in the last few weeks. I think we have to be both careful and sensitive as to how this pandemic has affected young people. Lockdown has certainly reduced the personal development opportunities for many, and the effect of this is hard to judge.

It is paramount that we do not academically overload the pupils on their return to school and present an outlook where they think they are behind. This can be very stressful and increasingly the suggestion is that we should all focus on emotional support and reassurance for our children as we unlock. The small classes and individual attention provided at BCS will compensate for any gaps, and we must allow for 'normal' education to do its job. I think it is also helpful to remind ourselves that every pupil in the country to some degree is in this position; but due to your support and the hard work of the pupils and their teachers, that degree is very small.

I will write separately to Year 11 and 13 parents following the conclusion of the Ofqual consultation. Again, I am confident that our pupils will be fully supported in the coming weeks and months, to achieve their academic potential.

I think the vast majority of pupils will revert to 'normal' quickly and seamlessly once they see their friends and teachers in school. Others may take a bit more time to emerge; quite understandably, and this is where our support, reassurance and encouragement is most needed.

I hope we are finally seeing the back of this extraordinary 12 months; and I hope we can reflect on the successes and achievements, even if they are more modest than we might be used to.



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Thank you for your support, it is my sincerest hope that later in the year, when the sun is shining, that I will be able to catch up with all of you face to face.

Finally, if you have not done so already, please let your child's form teacher know how many steps they walked on our 4 week, 50 million step challenge.

I look forward to seeing your son or daughter back in school in just over a week.

Regards

Russell Slatford
Headmaster