

23 October 2020

Dear Parents,

As we near the end of the first half of the autumn term I wanted to take the opportunity to write to you to say thank you for all your support this half term. This thank you also extends to our young people for the way in which they have handled the changes to the school site and our daily routines.

We have maintained very tight restrictions on visitors to site and cancelled all community bookings for the foreseeable future. Although this is a cost both to community users and to the school in terms of additional income, we are convinced that this has made a significant, positive impact on our response to Covid-19. The DFES have published attendance figures for all secondary schools nationally. For the first half of the autumn term this stands at 87% nationally. Our attendance figure for the Henry Beaufort School is 94%. A figure that is 7% above the national average is in no small part down to the work being undertaken by my colleagues.

I would like to thank our site and cleaning team for their hard work and commitment to keeping the site clean and hygienic. Three hours of deep cleaning takes place every night of the school week as well as additional cleaning throughout the day. I would also like to thank all my colleagues, who are required to leave the school site at 4.15 to enable all team areas to benefit from this deep clean during the working hours of the cleaning team. None of us like to have to leave at a specified time but the sacrifices they are making are also a significant contributory factor to keeping our community and our families safe.

Face masks have become a part of our daily routine but we have found in the last few weeks that a growing number of students are forgetting to bring these and this is becoming a financial burden for the school as we are handing out disposable masks on a daily basis. With half term looming this would be a good time for students to check their bags and make sure they have a mask ready and packed for the school day.

As of the 2nd of November we will be charging 50p for each disposable mask that is requested.

Lunchtime

The school has ordered additional outdoor seating for students and we hope that this will arrive shortly. In wet weather indoor areas or classrooms are available for all year groups. We are also making a few changes to lunchtime provision. After half term Year 9 will have access to the Bistro and the Tardis at the start of their lunchtime and Year 8 will go to lunch in the second half of the 30 minute break. This is a direct swap so that each of these year groups who are on the second half of lunch have the opportunity to benefit from a slightly earlier lunch over the course of a half term. We have also asked the Bistro to put aside food items that are popular so that all year groups have the opportunity to purchase a favourite snack.

This will be reviewed again at the end of this term.

An additional water fountain for bottles will be installed over the half term. Details will be published to students after half term.

I am delighted to inform you that the contract work to build an additional food technology room is on target to be completed over the half term. The food technology room is being built to the standard and look of a professional kitchen. We will be sharing with you pictures of the new room on our website and Facebook page after half term.

We look forward to giving our young people the opportunity to experience a professional food preparation environment. Thank you to our contracted builder, T Coleborn and Son who have been fantastic throughout the build.

Although we have not been able to run our usual on site events this term, we are where possible putting together virtual presentations on the school website. We will let you know if this applies to your child.

Last week the Senior Leadership team took part in a live Q and A event with prospective parents. A recording of this event is now available on our website and Facebook page. If you know of anyone who is looking for a secondary school placement for Year 7 2021 please do mention this to them.

I do hope that you are able to enjoy some time as a family over the half term despite the restrictions on our daily lives.

I am ridiculously excited because I have managed to book a slot at my local recycling centre. Some extreme garden pruning has been diarised for the weekend!

I look forward to being in contact with you again after the half term break.

With my best wishes,

Miss Hearle
Headteacher