

## Biggleswade Academy - Parent Forum - 13/10/21

<b>Questions / Concerns / Issues / Suggestions</b>	<b>Academy Response</b>
<p>Planning - there was a Year 8 sports event organised for Thursday 7th October. A big thumbs up to the school for actually organising some inter-school events however please consider that this was the date for the Stratton Upper School opening evening and the boys were late to that event. I would expect that as BA feed into Stratton they would have knowledge of the date of the opening evening.</p>	<p>Unfortunately, away fixtures are dictated by the home school, so we apologise for any clash with other events.</p>
<p>Positive Sibling Covid Cases - the letter sent home last week regarding positive sibling cases is unclear. It states that siblings of a positive case may be asked to stay off school. This is apparently not the case and they do actually have to stay off until they have a negative PCR. If this is the case the letter should state that. Also please explain why if parents of a child have Covid the same principles do not apply; a parent (vaccinated or not) can apparently still pass on Covid to their child so what is the difference?</p>	<p>The Guidance the school receives is regularly updated, and we are required to pass this on to parents. Unfortunately we have no control over the guidance.</p>
<p>Home Learning for Covid - the home learning for the</p>	<p>Lockdown learning has differed depending on the open status of the</p>

<p>term from January was much improved from that in the first lockdown however the home learning sent home for pupils currently required to be at home has lapsed back into the old format. This was received today at 10.30am, not all of the links work, it is not class specific and only consists of 4 days. Also it is sent out on parentmail. Why is it not on google classroom and/or why is it not emailed to the child so that they can do the work? Why do the parents need to forward it to the child? The school should be providing it to the child directly. I also consider for Year 7 &amp; 8 students that it should actually be live lessons and not Oak Academy; these are not the lessons that are taught in class.</p>	<p>school, i.e. when the school was only open to children of Key Workers, teachers were able to spend more time making videos for pupils who remained at home.</p> <p>With the school being open to all children, teaching has reverted back to normal classroom teaching but we do have a duty to set work for pupils who are isolating. Unfortunately, live lessons are not possible and resources like Oak Academy are sometimes used, as they best mirror the learning of what is being taught in class.</p> <p>We are only sending the overviews to pupils that are isolating, we do this through parent mail, as all children have access to Google Classroom.</p>
<p>Confirmation of procedures for consent from parents for children wishing to stay behind after school to participate in activities that are not on the activity timetable; this seems to be flawed.</p>	<p>There was an issue with children expressing an interest in watching their friends play a school fixture, and watching the match without informing their parents.</p> <p>We would like to have spectators for such events, but as we are unable to guarantee the level of supervision at such after school events, children will only be allowed to stay for an after school activity if they have permission from their parents.</p>
<p>Why the school thinks it is good Covid (and allergy) practice for children to share cooking ingredients in food technology.</p>	<p>For some recipes, and with the need for washing up, pupils are bringing in half quantities and combining them with a partner. They cook the product and take half home each. It's been cooked and so</p>

	<p>any bacteria is destroyed, pupils then only handle their half in their take home dish. Once cooked, the final products are taken out of ovens and handled only by technicians. Food that does not require cooking is not shared. We are no longer required to quarantine items (at this time). After half term, due to a reorganisation of lessons in Food and STEM classes, ingredients will no longer need to be shared.</p>
<p>Are there no lockers for year 8 this year?</p>	<p>We are not using lockers as we are still working to a number of Covid related measures, ie pupils are being collected from the playground at the start of the day, after break and lunchtimes and being taken straight into class, and likewise as they leave classrooms at the start of break and lunch times. We aim to reduce pupil traffic around the school and large numbers of pupils congregating within school blocks.</p>
<p>Why parents haven't been advised that their child has received a place on the Year 8 Bruges Trip; just the payment request. Asking for payment before confirming the trip will go ahead.</p>	<p>Confirmation letter sent 15 September via parent mail</p>
<p>I would like to know why there is a need to move the June bank holiday to a school attendance day especially when the children have lost so much schooling anyway??</p>	<p>The June Bank holiday is not a move, but an extra bank holiday due to the Jubilee celebrations. As per the letter confirming the announcements, the government has asked schools to identify a date in the calendar which was not already a school holiday.</p>

<p>Why does the school only give you, as parents, a few days to reply to events or extra activities? Perhaps more notice would be beneficial.</p>	<p>We try to give parents as much notice as possible, but if too much notice is given, a series of reminders then have to be sent as deadlines approach and there are still a number of responses outstanding. For some events we have to make a decision based on local COVID information. This can change on a day by day basis, and therefore means information to parents may be quite last minute.</p>
<p>Why are you letting children year 5/6; primary school age, leave school/walk home without a parent without written consent? It is ridiculous. How do you know the child is safe? You are forcing children to grow up too quickly and encourage the use of mobile phones adding peer pressure to kids at such a young age.</p>	<p>Traditionally, pupils from Years 5 have walked home from school. Parents are still more than welcome to collect their children from outside the school if they feel this is more appropriate for their child.</p>
<p>Would it be possible to add a virtual session for those who cannot make it in person?</p>	<p>We are aware that not all parents can attend the Forum, so we do accept any questions or issues to be posted in advance and ensure that all issues are responded to within a week. Currently virtual sessions are not something we are considering at this time.</p>
<p>I would like to see more communication from the teachers, as this year there is an absence of the planners. This is so us parents can track progress of our children and not rely on the end of term report to take any action.</p>	<p>Throughout the school, we aim to keep parents up-to-date with how their children are progressing. Under the current circumstances, we are unable to go ahead with our termly Celebrations of Work but do look to communicate with parents via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An initial call at the start of the term</li> <li>A parents evening (to be held virtually) in November</li> </ul>

	<p>A school report at the end of the Winter term  A parents evening in March  An end of year report  Parents can also contact their child's class teacher at any time throughout the year</p>
<p>Also the dojo system to see what Merits our children have earned is ok however would be better if it wasn't chargeable also had more information on what our children have done or any rewards day to day.</p>	<p>There are some chargeable aspects to ClassDojo, but all the information we use it for (Positive and Requires improvement Dojos, and direct messages) are free to use.  Unfortunately, due to the time it would require, we are not able to post updates on what the children have been doing throughout the day.</p>
<p>Good choices of option subjects available for Year 7</p>	<p>Thank you</p>
<p>New netball posts/ hoops needed - current ones, some don't have a hoop, some are rusty, some are loose.</p>	<p>We will ask the PE department to look into this.</p>
<p>The regular letters that the school have sent out about covid changes and what the school is doing, have been very much appreciated</p>	<p>Thank you</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Further Questions/comments raised during the forum</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Academy Response</b></p>
<p>The information about Samuel Whitbread and Sandy open evenings was sent out too late - resulting in some families not being informed in time to attend.</p>	<p>We sent out the information as soon as we received it from the Upper Schools.</p>
<p>Can the school please have a think about the logistics of pupils bringing in spare clothes and/or cookery ingredients and containers etc when pupils are having to travel a distance on foot/scooters and bikes?</p>	<p>We have looked to reduce the amount of items pupils need to bring into school but children may have to make alternative arrangements on days if they are unable to bike or scoot in safely whilst carrying some additional items.</p>
<p>Is there any consideration being given to moving KS3 pupils onto Office 365 rather than Google Classroom?</p>	<p>Currently no. Google Classroom is now a familiar platform that the children can access.</p>
<p>Is there anyway that more daily contact and updates can be given other than on Tapestry at the early end of the Academy?</p>	<p>Parents can contact the school at any time via the offices or email.</p>
<p>The virtual parents evening were a step in the right direction and worked really well, especially for KS3 subject appointments.</p>	<p>Thank you</p>