



Bishop Wordsworth's School

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2 September 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians

I hope that this finds you and your son(s) refreshed and raring to go after the (partially) Mediterranean Summer. As usual this letter is to welcome you back to BWS after the long break and to help everyone get acclimatised once again to the routines of school life over the next year.

There will be several ways in which you will be able to find out what is going on in school, in the highly unlikely event that your son is less than forthcoming about the world that lies inside the gates of Exeter Street. As usual the website at www.bws-school.org.uk contains a wealth of information about school routines and also what's on; the calendar at http://www.bws-school.org.uk/Calendar-Events/Whole_School/ is a good starting point and the term dates for the year can be found close by for forward planning. We will be launching a new website very soon which will (hopefully) be fairly intuitive to use. The other essential online source of information is Insight, our parent portal, which can also be accessed via the website at <http://www.bws-school.org.uk/insight/>. This gives real time information on attendance and behaviour, as well as reports in due course.

Last year many parents were able to make parents' evening bookings via Insight, and this year all parents should have access to this facility. We are no longer issuing boys with paper planners/homework diaries because all teachers will be setting homework for the boys via Insight. This means that you will also be able to find out what homework he has been set and when it is due for completion and submission – the days of 'none set' and/or scant or completely illegible recording are at an end it would seem. All distinctions (Years 7&8) and commendations (Years 9-13) will also be entered on the portal so that you know when he is doing well – and of course any significant sanctions (detentions etc) will also be there. You should be able to develop a balanced view, but if at any time you want to talk things through then please just contact your son's tutor/mentor.

Can I remind you of a couple of routine but really important things at the start of the new school year? Firstly (and sorry to bang on already!), can you please ensure that you have named all of your son's clothing/kit/personal belongings? We take a fairly strict line with 'lost' items – if they are named then they generally get straight back to their owner (if he can be enticed to collect them from Reception that is...!). If they are un-named then they are retained at School Reception for a couple of weeks and then they are disposed of if they are not collected. I will be displaying all of the lost property items at Wednesday assembly; if you were present you would be utterly dismayed at the amount of material which boys have simply discarded randomly around the school site, and I make a point of mentioning exactly that point! A name attached means that we have a fighting chance of reuniting property with its owner in quick order.

Your first point of contact at the school should be your son's form tutor (Years 7-11) or his mentor (Sixth Form). He or she should be making contact with you early in the academic year to ensure that you are aware of who to talk to and also outline some basic understandings for the year. If, however, you feel that there is a more serious issue then please feel free to contact the appropriate pastoral support officer – you should find all of the details on the website. If you have any concerns relating to child protection then please get in contact with either Mr Jerry Rogers or Mrs Zoe Lambard. If you have a change in personal circumstances (eg contact details, domestic circumstances or medical details) then please make sure that you let us know immediately either via Insight or email Mrs Sarah Hayward at sah@bws.wilts.sch.uk.

Please can I also remind you about the school rules regarding mobile phones and other electronic devices, which include games consoles and any other mobile device other than a laptop or tablet under direct staff supervision. These are brought in at their owners own risk and must be switched off entirely on the school site **at all times** ie they cannot be switched to silent or 'vibrate only' mode. The device must be stored out of sight so that there is no room for misinterpretation. Smart Watches with a camera are prohibited but other Smart Watches are permitted provided the associated device remains switched off. If there is a need for communication between home and school then your son can easily do this via School Reception.

Lastly, I have one very specific request relating to dietary matters. We now have a small number of boys at Bishop's who have severe nut allergies. It is, of course, impractical to make a school the size of BWS a nut-free zone, but it would be very helpful if you could avoid nuts as much as possible if you prepare food for your son to bring to school. We will be reminding both boys and staff about washing their hands regularly and (especially) before and after eating so as to minimise the environmental risks, and a message to this effect will be issued on twitter shortly. This is potentially a life-threatening issue, so please do everything that you can to help us mitigate the risks.

We begin this school year with the school in a very good place. Very strong results at both GCSE and A level, super university progression for our Year 13 boys (including a record number to Oxford and Cambridge) and another large intake at Year 7 joining a school that is already very strong. These are exciting times as we move to recruit our first co-educational sixth form for over 90 years, our programmes in sport, music and the arts strengthen still further and Bishop's students continue to achieve wonderful things day in, day out. I hope that your boy finds his niche during the year and, if you are the parent of a Year 11 girl I really hope that your daughter applies to join our Year 12 in September 2020.

Have a great year everyone!

Best wishes



S D Smallwood
Head Master