

Week ending: 22nd May 2020

Welcome to this week's parent and student weekly bulletin at the end of term 5 and a week's half term ahead. On the last day of a term I generally like to wish everyone an enjoyable half term break and thank them for all their hard-work over the past weeks. In some ways such sentiments are even more relevant in these current times, but it also doesn't seem very much like a 'holiday' is approaching, for all sorts of reasons.

At this time of the school year we would be at the start of the exam season with many of our Year 11s and 13s having already completed some key exams, however I find myself planning for a final term of the year with different focuses. The landscape for the remaining school year is still a little 'sketchy' from a national perspective with the advice and guidance that we are receiving from the Government still being quite vague in a secondary setting. However, I would like to reassure parents that whatever year group their child is in we have a clear and definitive route through the coming term which we are sure will meet any staying safe guidance whilst evolving into what will be our 'new normal' to coin an increasingly popular phrase. Bespoke communication to parents and carers in year groups will be forthcoming over this coming week through direct Groupcall contact.

I would like to end by thanking the many parents and carers who send in emails and comments on other social media outlets of thanks to me and many of the Bilton staff team, and to the vast array of amazing work from students that we receive, much of which is truly outstanding. We really do appreciate your understanding, patience support and hard work. As a learning community we will all come out of this better and stronger, because we are Bilton ... we are awesome!

Tim Chambers, Headteacher Bilton School

Reflections on your feedback from the questionnaire out to parents

A big 'Thank You' to those parents and carers who completed the recent on-line survey. It has helped us gather some general feedback about how we are doing in respect of the Home Learning that we are providing and the methods of communication that we are using.

Over the final term you will see some subtle changes based on your feedback, which will hopefully help to support everyone more.

How Term 6 will evolve in light of the changing national picture

The Government and the various professional teaching bodies are currently working out the finer details of what education will look like after June 1st. The announcement from the PM a couple of weeks ago that Year 10 and Year 12 students should, in the period from June 1st until the end of the academic year receive some 'face-to-face' contact has been our focus this week. Year 10 students and parents will have the opportunity to have a 1:1 meeting with their tutor and a member of the senior team to review their lock-down progress to date, as well as a general welfare check and a 'how are you coping' type of conversation. A kind of 'parents evening' format that is led by their tutor who will have feedback from each student's subject teacher. Clearly all social distancing guidance will be observed when on site, as well as the provision of sanitisers in all areas. With Year 12 we will be looking at providing virtual lessons via Microsoft Teams to allow each Year 12 class to have at least 1 hour of virtual lesson contact time a week. We are currently working through the logistics and the appropriate Safeguarding protocols. Parents and students in both year groups will have more details fed through to them over the coming week.

Great news about our increasing school population: Year 7s and Year 12s from September Year 12s

Around this time in the academic year we begin to receive the confirmed number of students that have chosen to attend the school for our new Year 7 cohort. We are really please to announce that we have our highest intake for many years, making our new Year 7s from September the largest year group in the school. A great indicator of parent confidence which reflects the improving reputation of Bilton school in the local community.

We are also really looking forward to welcoming the highest number of our current Year 11 cohort into Year 12 and our 6th Form in September. As well as the highest number of students that we have had from other local schools who have chosen Bilton as their post 16 preference. We are confident that this will swell our total 6th form population to over 150.