

23rd April 2021

HEAD OF SCHOOL: Mr I Bacon

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is hard to believe that two whole weeks have flown by since we returned after Easter. The students have settled back well into Watling routines and expectations and it was an absolute delight to welcome them to the new build this week for their first tours around. I hope that they were able to come home and tell you their favourite parts and you had the chance to talk about their excitement but also any worries they may have.

Future Visits to the New Build

1. We have arranged for Drama lessons to take place at the new build for the next two Fridays using the dedicated Drama and performance spaces we have.

This will mean that on Friday 30th April 7CBL, 7FWL and 7BPR will have their Drama lesson at Barrosa Way and on Friday 7th May 7GHN, 7JCY and 7RST will be there for Drama.

We will take the students to the new build on the minibus and return them to Fairfields at the end of their lesson.

Please could I ask that you fill out and submit the Microsoft Form using the link below by Monday 26th April to indicate that you give permission for your son or daughter to attend on the relevant day.

<http://bit.ly/BarrosaWayDramaLessons>

If you experience any difficulties with the above link, please contact the Admin Team on 01908 794094.

2. In order to support students with the transfer to their new building, we will be having two acclimatisation days at the new build on Wednesday 12th May and Monday 17th May. These days will involve students undertaking a full day of lessons using the facilities Barrosa Way offers. They will be following a different timetable to their normal one on those days.

On both days we will ask students to go straight to Barrosa Way and arrive for a normal start time of 8:40am. Students will spend both full days there and **we will then need them to make their way home from the new build at 3:15pm, just as they normally would from Fairfields.**

Respect / Responsibility / Kindness

Breakfast club and After School club will still be available for students but will be held at the new build on those days. The timings will remain the same.

Students will take part in PE on at least one of these days. We shall let students know which day they will need to wear their PE kits.

PE venue is moving from SMSG to Denbigh for this half term

I am very grateful to the Headteacher and Governors at St. Mary and St. Giles C of E Primary who have given us the use of the field on their Galley Hill site so that our students can follow a safe, secondary PE curriculum.

As we move into the summer, we plan to make some changes to PE to give our students some more variety and therefore we will now be taking students to Denbigh School to do their PE for the rest of this half term (still on their current PE day of Tuesday and Thursday).

The arrangements for students getting to and from Denbigh will be the same as they currently are for SMSG.

We will start going to Denbigh on Tuesday 27th April and their final session will be on Thursday 27th May – this will be a total of five sessions at Denbigh. After half term, all PE will be done at Barrosa Way.

If you do have any questions or concerns, then please do email Mr Gibbs gibbsm@watling.academy or telephone us on 01908 794094.

Buses

I spoke to a number of you before Easter about the changes to bus services to Fairfields and the withdrawal of the 301 service. The 301 service also stopped in Whitehouse outside the new build so ending this service has a significant impact on us at both sites.

I have raised the matter with the Council at our monthly Project Board meeting, they are looking into the situation and I am still waiting for a final response.

In the meantime, I do have the following information...

- Service 1 goes from the City Centre (and Rail Station) and stops in Whitehouse near the Primary School, which is then a couple of minutes' walk to the new site
- Service X60 travels from Stony Stratford along the V4 and stops at the Crownhill roundabout, which is then a 5–10-minute walk under the underpass and down Barrosa Way to the new site. The X60 then carries on into Central MK.

The X60 timetable can be found at :-

<https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/find-a-service/x60-from-aylesbury-bus-stn-to-central-milton-keynes-the-point>

Milton Keynes have also launched a new Demand Responsive Service called MK Connect, which allows you to book a journey by minibus. There are certain conditions that need to be met and this can only be used within the MK boundaries – so not in Old Stratford or other areas of Northants.

- More information can be found about the MK Connect service at <https://ridewithvia.com/mk-connect/> or email support-mkn@ridewithvia.com or telephone 01908 252526

I will continue to follow up with the Council and let you know of any developments as soon as I can.

Finally, we are still planning on arranging tours of the new build for Watling parents. As soon as the Government announce the next set of changes to COVID measures on 17th May, I will finalise details for these tours. I know how important it is to you all as parents and carers that you see our new facilities so I give you my guarantee that as soon as we can take you round, we will!

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Mr I Bacon', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mr I Bacon
Head of School