

Week ending 29 January 2021

BETHS VIP

(Very Important Publication)



Messages from Mr Blyghton, Headteacher

Following the issues that we experienced with the Year 10 Parents Evening on Thursday 14 January, due to School Cloud—the platform which we were using—experiencing a nationwide outage, we were surprised to experience the exact same thing during the Year 12 Parents Evening last Thursday.

We therefore do not feel confident, at this time that School Cloud will be able to provide the system we require without the system going down. We have therefore made the difficult decision to postpone next week's Year 7 Parents Evening until we can either find a system that offers a similar, but more reliable experience than School Cloud, or that School Cloud can assure us that they have done what is necessary for us to feel confident in their system.

We know this may be disappointing for our Year 7 parents, however, please be assured that teachers would have been in touch with you had they had anything that they needed to bring to your attention in advance of the parents evening and you are always welcome to email staff directly—all emails are available under 'school information', 'staffing' on our website, should you have a question for them.

You will no doubt have heard that schools will not be returning before Monday 8 March and, even if they do, whether it will be the whole school or just certain year groups. We will keep you informed as and when we hear anything.

You may also know that the Consultation regarding GCE and GCSE examinations closes today and we would hope for a swift outcome. However, in lieu of this, we would urge all students to continue to work to the best of their ability and, once we know the outcome and have had time to consider it as a school, we will be in touch with parents as to the way forward.

Dates for your diary

[Sunday 31 January](#)

Closing date for Sixth Form Applications

[Wednesday 3 February](#)

Year 12 Parents Evening Appointments (Missed due to system failure)

[Thursday 4 February](#)

Year 7 Parents Evening—Postponed

[Friday 12 February](#)

Year 12 reports issued to parents

Last day of Term

[Monday 22 February](#)

First day back



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Messages from Mr Blyghton, Headteacher—Continued...

I wanted to let you know where we are with respect to laptops. The School, backed by the Governing Body, ordered and paid for a very large number of laptops last summer because we envisaged what might happen which ultimately actually happened. We received two routers and 55 laptops from the DfE and the school purchased extra laptops which have been issued to students in Years 7-10 and 12 who requested them – and parents have signed contracts for these. Vulnerable students in Years 11 and 13 also received laptops and, in total 396 have been issued. We will be looking to issue more laptops to our new Year 7 and 12 students in September 2021.

Details of the Surveys are summarized below and I will publish the responses to comments in next week's VIP.

Parents Evening

84.52% of parents believe the 15.45 start time is just right.

70.78% believe that 19.00 finish is fine.

93.63% of parents found the system okay/easy to use.

It was nearly 50/50 with regards to the appointment length being 5 minutes long. A lot of the comments were to extend it to between 7 and 10 minutes.

92.36% who responded thought that the meeting had some benefit or more.

Regarding what system we should use, 66.03% believe we should stick to School Cloud, 32.05% think we should find an alternative and 1.92% think we should stop using video conferencing altogether.

52.90% believe that using video conferencing, in some form would be best. 36.13% feel that emails or written reports will be better.

27 parents have used the School Cloud system before at a previous school and most believe we that our Parents Evening where either the same, or better than other schools.



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Messages from Mr Blyghton, Headteacher—Continued

January (608) **November (549)** **October (620)**

Do they feel that the measures we have put in place to run the school during this pandemic have been satisfactory?

Very satisfied – 19.90% (121)
Satisfied – 49.67% (302)
Neither – 20.39% (124)
Dissatisfied – 6.74% (41)
Very dissatisfied – 3.29% (20)

Very satisfied – 25.87% (142)
Satisfied – 51.91% (285)
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied – 17.49% (96)
Dissatisfied – 3.83% (21)
Very dissatisfied – 0.91% (5)

Very satisfied – 25.43% (158)
Satisfied – 50.65% (314)
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied – 17.90% (111)
Dissatisfied – 4.52% (28)
Very dissatisfied – 1.29% (8)

Do they feel we are doing everything we can to ensure their safety at school?

Yes - 83.44% (509)
No – 16.56% (101)

Yes – 89.62% (492)
No – 10.38% (57)

Yes – 89.47% (552)
No – 10.53% (65)



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Whilst the school is closed, staff are all still here – albeit virtually – to support students and families at this difficult time. Please do not hesitate to contact form tutors, heads of years, subject teachers, heads of departments or the senior team, if you have any questions or need our support. If you do need to contact any member of staff, all our email addresses can be found on the school's website.

The following link will take you to way these can be found: <https://www.beths.bexley.sch.uk/page/?title=Staffing&pid=30>

As we only have a skeleton staff in school, we would ask that parents and carers do not turn up at the school unannounced, as there is unlikely to be anyone available to help them. Likewise, **we would urge all parents to contact us by email as this is currently our prime means of communication.**

EMAILING STAFF

If your email to staff is to multiple members of staff, please can we ask that you cc everyone in. We have had occasions where emails have been sent to multiple staff members, separately, resulting in issues either being missed or duplicated.

Our revised timetable during this period of lockdown:

8.45am	Morning Registration for all students in Years 7-11; Year 12 and 13 students will continue to register in the small groups as they have been doing in school
9.10am	Session One for all Students (one hour 40 minutes in length)
10.50am	20 minute break
11.10am	Session Two for all Students (one hour 40 minutes in length)
12.50am	Lunch
1.50pm	Session Three for all students (one hour 40 minutes in length)
3.30pm	End of the school day

Key Stage 3 sessions should continue to have a short break in the middle of each one.

Musician of the Week

Congratulations to Keo, this week's Musician of the Week. Check out the video on our social media pages, or on our website:

[Beths Grammar School - Music & Performing Arts](#)

If you would like to be considered for Musician of the Week, please email mymarriott@beths.bexley.sch.uk. We have some wonderfully talented students!

The Sixth Form Roundup is now available to read on our website

[Beths Grammar School - Sixth Form Roundup](#)

Beths 100km Run to Brighton!

Only a few weeks left to go to get to the ultimate goal of 100km! Some of you have already made it to 'Brighton', others are making their way up that leaderboard.

Well done to everyone who is participating. Sport and exercise is such a great thing for everyone—mentally and physically.

What other sporting/exercise challenges would you like to see us do in the future?

Head to our sports Twitter page @BethsGspe to see the Year group results!

Send your photos of you on your run to
mrwebb@beths.bexley.sch.uk

BETHS ALUMNI

We love to hear from any of our ex-students as to what they have achieved since leaving Beths so, please do keep us updated!

Contact us at headsoffice@beths.bexley.sch.uk with any career updates and also photos, videos or even articles you have written about your memories of the school—we would love to share them with current staff and students.

PARENTS ASSOCIATION

To be part of this amazing fundraising option, please follow the steps below:



Please go to smile.amazon.co.uk and search for Beths Parents Association. You need to start each shopping session at the URL smile.amazon.co.uk. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the net purchase price (excluding VAT, returns and shipping fees) of your eligible purchases. It doesn't cost anything.



If you shop elsewhere online, please join Easyfundraising. Again, it costs nothing and Beths PA will automatically receive a donation. You can sign up at www.easyfundraising.org.uk/BethsPA and we will automatically receive a donation anytime you shop. If you are eligible, please also give gift aid to maximise the donation.

Thank you for your continued support. Please don't hesitate to contact us at beths.parents.association@gmail.com if you have any queries or ideas about how we can raise funds and support our children through this challenging time.

Careers

Mrs Austen from 'Prospects', is keen to still give Careers and Post-18 advice and guidance to students, despite her not being in school. Instead, she has been either conducting meetings over the phone or via Zoom or Teams with students at other schools and is happy to continue her work with Beths in the same way. To this end, would any students in Years 11, 12 and 13, initially, that feel they would benefit from independent advice and are happy to talk on a phone or talk on-line, please email me, so this can be arranged (mssangster@beths.bexley.sch.uk). The meeting/call will be on a Thursday (her 'Beths'day) and would necessitate my passing on to her a preferred phone number or email address, so I would need your consent included in an email to me, so I can pass this on, along with your confirmation as to which method you wish to use. Prospects are fully aware of rules concerning GDPR and the safe handling of such information. The time slot will be when you would usually have either a Games lesson or study period, according to your timetable, and I will look at this before setting a 50 minute time slot. Unfortunately, some students have a full day of lessons on a Thursday, so I would ask that if you wish to see/talk to her, please let me know a time during the school day that you feel would have the least impact on your learning.

Mrs Sangster

LRC Manager and Prospects Co-ordinator

STEM & Medical Sciences Work Experience—Ages 12-18

'Live Online' or In-Person at UCL

***Architecture—Computer Science—Dentistry—Engineering—Investment Banking—Medicine—
Psychology— Veterinary Medicine***

Register now for unique opportunity to work alongside experienced engineers, doctors, psychologists and vets and others this term. Students can choose to attend 'Live Online' before Easter or in-person later in April. Our in-person events have strict COVID measures in place.

[Choose Your STEM Work Experience - InvestIN Education](#)

[Choose Your Work Experience \(Ages 12-14\) - InvestIN Education](#)

Big Voice London, are currently taking applications from A-Level students for a virtual work experience programme with [Schillings International LLP](#).

Schillings is a law firm with a difference, which specialises in protecting its clients' privacy, data rights, security and reputations. Entirely unique, Schillings deploys under one roof lawyers, intelligence experts, investigators, cyber specialists, risk consultants and top people from the military, banking and government. If your students are interested in any of these career routes – this is the perfect opportunity for them!

The programme aims to provide young people with an insight into the work of Schillings' various departments and will include workshops on:

1. the work of the legal team;
2. the intelligence team;
3. the critical risk and cyber team;
4. the clients and markets team;
5. plus a careers workshop on CV writing, interview skills and personal branding.

The programme will run online across multiple evenings, between 5:30 and 7:30pm, during the weeks commencing 1 and 8 March 2021. Applications are open to Year 12 and 13 students from non-fee paying schools. In 2021, due to coronavirus, we are taking applications from students outside of London and welcome applications from students at schools across England and Wales.

The deadline for applications is **7pm on Friday 5 February 2021**. To apply your students will need to complete a brief application form by clicking [here](#).

All projects are completely free of charge.

Students are welcome to apply for more than one of Big Voice London's opportunities and subject to demand and the quality of a student's applications they may be accepted on to multiple projects.

For more details, including in relation to our other upcoming projects, see here: <https://www.bigvoicelondon.co.uk/studentrecruitmentbigvoicelondon>.

For more information on careers and apprenticeships, please head over to our website.

[Beths Grammar School - Career and Apprenticeship Information](#)

There is now information on Summer Schools 2021 on our Super Curriculum page. Please take a look to see if there is anything there that interests you.

[Beths Grammar School - Super Curriculum](#)

National Apprenticeship Week takes place from 8 to 14 February 2021 and, to coincide with this week-long celebration of apprenticeships, Bexley is holding an online Apprenticeship Information Event on the evening of Monday 8 February.

The webpage for the event will go-live on Monday 1 February, and give visitors access to:

- A short video providing an introduction to apprenticeships in Bexley
- One-click access to information on being an apprentice, how to recruit an apprentice, apprenticeship qualifications available to study and local opportunities being advertised through the Find Apprenticeship Service
- Information on the local apprenticeship training providers who have supported previous events
- Apprenticeship opportunities through organisations that have supported our previous events, and which will close for application before our follow-on Apprenticeship Opportunities Event in April

In addition, visitors will be able to book onto live workshops taking place on the evening of Monday 8 February:

- Young people can find out what apprenticeships are, what they can study, how to find and apply for apprenticeships and more from one of the workshops delivered by Amazing Apprenticeships
- Parents and carers can find out the same, but in a workshop tailored to their position and also delivered by Amazing Apprenticeships
- And employers can find out how an apprentice could benefit their business, how to recruit an apprentice, find a suitable training provider and more, in the workshop delivered by Cheryl Jones, Talent Development and Apprenticeship Lead for the London Borough of Bexley

Each workshop will give attendees the opportunity to post their questions to presenters for answers live 'on air'.

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How to support your child's wellbeing during lockdown



We recognise that lockdowns and all they entail are not easy for anyone but there is an added pressure on parents as they find themselves overseeing their child's, or children's, learning at home.

To try and help we've put together the top 10 tips for parents to support their child's wellbeing during this time.

Please remember, however, if you have any concerns at all your child's subject teachers, Form Tutor and Head of Year are all available during school hours via email (click [here](#) to find their email addresses on our website).

Top 10 Tips for supporting your child's wellbeing during lockdown....

1. Establish a realistic routine – following the normal school day is ideal
2. Timetable in regular “brain breaks” using the timer on your child's phone (see overleaf for ideas)
3. Spend part of the day outdoors, if possible
4. Always do some physical activity during the day (try [Joe Wicks](#) or [Sport England](#))
5. Drink plenty of water and eat healthy food
6. Outside of learning time do activities you know your child enjoys (i.e. baking, learning a new skill, board/card games)
7. Don't feel pressurised by us – communicate with us
8. Consider their exposure to “Covid” news and social media
9. Access free home learning resources to supplement what is being sent home by us (i.e. BBC Bitesize etc)
10. Build in achievable and appropriate rewards



How to support your child's wellbeing during lockdown



Conversation starters...

Staying connected to others during a lockdown is very important so it's worth thinking about the right time to start a conversation about feelings or specific worries. It's important for you and your child to feel relaxed so try talking whilst doing an activity together, such as walking or baking

“What makes you feel happy/sad/angry?”

“What sort of things do you worry about?”

“What are the worst/best things about being in lockdown?”

Signs to look out for...

Your child may need extra support if they are:

- Avoiding contacting friends or school work
- Anxious, upset or finding it hard to manage their emotions
- Having increasing trouble sleeping and eating
- Appearing low in mood, withdrawn, irritable or tearful
- Sharing worried or negative thoughts about themselves or their future

If you notice any of the above please contact the school counsellors for further advice at counselling@beths.berley.sch.uk

Don't forget you're important too! This is a tough time for everyone so we all need to prioritise our own needs and wellbeing. You can't expect to support another's wellbeing unless yours is good so please reach out for extra support if needed. Try [Mind](#) or the [NHS](#) for more information.

Ideas for short "brain break" activities:

- Exercise, dance/sing to favourite song, walk, run
- Listen to music, read, colour in, draw
- Try mindfulness ([Headspace](#)) or yoga ([Cosmic Kids Yoga](#))
- Cards, board games, jigsaw puzzles
- Tell jokes, recall favourite memories or plan exciting family outings for after lockdown
- Facetime a friend or family member
- Watch favourite TV shows or film clips – the funnier the better!

Useful links and resources for parents:

Check out the wellbeing pages for both parents and students on our school website:

[Beths Wellbeing pages](#)

The following organisations also have lots of help and advice for parents:

[Partnership for Children](#) [Public Health](#)

[Anna Freud](#)

[BBC Bitesize Parents' Toolkit](#)

[Place to Be](#)

[Youngminds](#)

We are currently living through unusual and exceptional times and it may be that you, or a member of your family, are experiencing difficulties and need some form of support. Below is a list of a variety of helplines, which may be able to help:

Samaritans – 116 123

SANEline – http://www.sane.org.uk/what_we_do/support/helpline or 0300 304 7000.

SANEline is a national out-of-hours mental health helpline offering specialist emotional support, guidance and information to anyone affected by mental illness, including family, friends and carers. We are open every day of the year from 4.30pm to 10.30pm

CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably) – 0800 58 58 58 or <https://www.thecalmzone.net/>

Anyone can hit crisis point. We run a free and confidential helpline and webchat – 7 hours a day, 7 days a week for anyone who needs to talk about life's problems. We support those bereaved by suicide, through the Support After Suicide Partnership (SASP).

Drinkline – The National Alcohol Helpline - 0300 123 1110 or <https://www.wellaware.org.uk/organisation/drinkline-the-national-alcohol-helpline/>

Confidential advice and information on all aspects of alcohol. Calls are free.

Drinkline offers the following services:

- * Information and self-help materials
- * Help to callers worried about their own drinking
- * Support to the family and friends of people who are drinking
- * Advice to callers on where to go for help

Talk to Frank – 0300 1236600 or <https://www.talktofrank.com/>

Targeted confidential advice for young people around all legal and illicit substances.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline – <https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/> or 0808 2000 247

CRUSE Bereavement Care – <https://www.cruse.org.uk/> or 0808 808 1677

Cruse offers telephone, email and website support. We have a Freephone national helpline and local services, and a website (hopeagain.org.uk) specifically for children and young people. Our services are provided by our network of 5,000 trained volunteers and are confidential and free. Cruse also provides training and consultancy for external organisations and for those who may encounter bereaved people in the course of their work.

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