

EM WL 4.3.2022

Dear parent/carer,

I hope you are well – we have had a great first week back in school after the half term break. We have had Bikeability in this week doing cycling proficiency and safety courses with some of our younger students so that they feel safe and confident riding to school on their bikes. As part of the course, the importance of wearing a helmet whilst cycling is really highlighted, and this is something that we promote in school all of the time. If your child cycles to school, we would ask if you could please promote the same message – that helmets are a necessity rather than a choice. I am sure the vast majority of you do this already. We are also asking students who cycle to school to make sure that they do not leave their bikes at the front of school. It is not secure, and we have a bike storage area in the middle of the school site for students to use so we can ensure they are secure throughout the day.

We have had a successful first week of mock exams for year 11 – we are very proud of how well they have conducted themselves. We have had to remind a few of them that they must still attend form in the morning even if they do have an exam first thing – if that message could be passed on at home too, then it would be much appreciated. World Book Day was great fun on Thursday – it was fantastic to see so many staff dressed up as literary characters to the amusement of the students, as well as having form time focused on what it means to be a reader and fun quizzes for the students to participate in.

Thank you to everyone who completed our Parent/Carer Voice Survey before half term, your feedback has been really useful. Please see a summary of the results below:

- My child is happy at this school: **96%** strongly agree/agree
- The school has high expectations of my child: **97%** strongly agree/agree
- The school makes sure its students are well-behaved: **97.5%** strongly agree/agree
- The teaching that my child receives is strong: **97.5%** strongly agree/agree
- My child does well at this school: **96%** strongly agree/agree
- The school communicates well with parents/carers: **94%** strongly agree/agree
- My child feels safe at this school: **97%** strongly agree/agree
- I am happy with my child's curriculum: **97.5%** strongly agree/agree
- My child feels well supported by the Polaris team: **97%** strongly agree/agree
- My child feels well supported by their teachers: **98%** strongly agree/agree
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There were lots of lovely comments that I have shared with staff:

- We feel very supported by BCHS and all the staff. We are very grateful for all the support our son has received in the last few months with settling into High school. Thank you for all the hard work.
- The school has good values, and my child strives to do well.
- We are very pleased with the school in all aspects.

- Thank you to all of the teachers, \*\*\*\*\* enjoys all of his lessons and teachers.
- Any questions or problems have been dealt with quickly and I am able to contact the relevant teacher easily.
- \*\*\*\*\* has settled in well since joining Birchwood - \*\*\*\*\* is shy and seems to have some good skills which he's obviously learned at school. I'm grateful for all of the support given.
- \*\*\*\*\* is happy at school.
- My child is happy to be back at Birchwood and & feels better in himself. I'm grateful he got the chance. Thank you.
- Happy with all aspects of the school - Well Done!
- My daughter is very happy at Birchwood school, all the staff are amazing. My son attended Birchwood and when he left, I always intended on my daughter also attending due to the fantastic education it provides.
- The support for children with learning difficulties is fantastic.
- I think \*\*\*\*\* settled well in high school. He is enjoying his Science Lessons most. I'd like to thank the teachers for their support.
- My son has enjoyed his time at Birchwood High and they have afforded him lots of opportunities on top of the curriculum. I would recommend BCHS to anyone.
- \*\*\*\*\* has settled well into high school life even un such challenging times and we feel this is down to the support and consistency that the school has made sure has remained in place.
- Can't fault the school - \*\*\*\*\* is really happy and as a parent I couldn't ask for more from her or the school!! Obviously, the smaller SEN classes are amazing, and I honestly believe \*\*\*\*\* is thriving as a result of them.
- Thanks to all the teachers and staff for your hard work during this difficult time.
- Happy with the school.
- I think school has make efforts in encouraging students to feel school is like a family!
- Thanks for the Birchwood college always giving the chance for students to practice what they have learnt.
- The extra-curricular opportunities on offer are exemplary. My daughter, who is in Y8 now, missed out on many of the normal school rites of passage. For example: no Y6 send off/prom, no Y6 residential, no Y7 residential, few Y7 extra-curricular clubs etc. However now she is making up for lost time and is lucky enough to benefit from a range of clubs, including basketball, netball, engineering and badminton. Thank you to the staff who give up their time!

We had lots of useful feedback for us to reflect on too. We have contacted everyone who got in touch to make sure that everyone was fully heard. From the feedback we received, we have three main areas that we will be focusing on for further improvement:

- 1) Reviewing the catering offer in terms of availability, choice and standard.
  - 2) Reviewing the dates of parents' evenings on the calendar so some year groups are not left until too late in the year.
  - 3) Reviewing the efficiency and effectiveness of the school website in supporting parents/carers.
- Thank you again to everyone who took part.

Finally for this week, I wanted to share the fantastic news that we have been short-listed for School of the Year in the Warrington Guardian's Education Awards 2022. We are also extremely proud that one of our students, Ruby Cox, has been short-listed for the Student of the Year award. You can see the list of other finalists here: <https://www.warringtonguardian.co.uk/news/19950264.warrington-guardian-education-awards-2022-finalists-revealed/>

I hope you all have a lovely weekend.

Best wishes and take care,



Emma Mills

#### Dates for your diary

Thursday 10 March Covid 19 Vaccinations

Thursday 17 March Year 7 & 8 Parens Sermo parents evening (booking opens Monday 7 March)

Thursday 24 March Year 12 /13 Performance review evening

Week of 28 March - rewards trip

Friday 1 April school closes for Easter Holidays

Tuesday 19 April School reopens to all students

Wednesday 20 April to Friday 22 April Year 7 Residential Trip