



22nd October 2021

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Dear Parents/Carers

We've made it to half-term! It has been a challenging 7 weeks, but students and staff have been fantastic and whilst Coronavirus still dominates my inbox, we have been able to make progress in lots of other areas and have enjoyed a fuller educational experience.

Coronavirus

Inevitably I must update you on our latest position and action with regard to Coronavirus. At time of writing (up to and including 22nd October, 10am) we have 24 'active' cases where a student has tested positive via a PCR in the last 10 days representing 1.6% of the student population. The current breakdown is as follows:

Year	Active cases
7	1
8	1
9	12
10	1
11	4
12	3
13	2

Year 9 remains a concern; I am grateful for your support in daily testing, this additional testing inevitably leads to more reported cases, but it is vital in helping us to stop the asymptomatic cases coming in to school.

All year groups have been issued with test kits this week and an additional batch is being issued to Year 9 today. We ask that you continue to test over half-term, logging results in the normal way. Should you receive a positive result on a lateral flow device, please book a PCR test and report information to absence@edgbarrowschool.co.uk. We will monitor this address over half-term and this information will support our decision making. In my letter on Monday I gave fuller details regarding testing and isolation following advice from the local health board. All Coronavirus related info can be found [here](#). Again, thank you for your support with this.

With half-term providing a natural break in mixing, along with the vaccinations having taken place we are hopeful that we may be able to start the next half-term in a good position and continue to minimise disruption as best we can. In previous letters I have outlined school actions to minimise risks and deal with an outbreak, all these measures will remain in place for the next half-term.

School trips

In line with guidance, we are continuing to offer school trips and fixtures. These form a fundamental part of the school experience and are often cited by students as forming some of their best memories. Therefore, I am keen that we do everything we can to offer the students a full range of opportunities. Trips are normally fairly complicated to organise and this is being significantly exacerbated by the pandemic. Each visit has an additional risk assessment as well as insurance requirements, overseas trips present even greater challenges. This means we are later in issuing information than normal, and when we do issue information it is often complicated, I am grateful for your patience and understanding in this regard.

Co-Curricular activities

A huge thank you to staff and students for their participation in activities outside of lesson time. Whether it's sport or drama or any of a range of options, it is great to see so many students grasping opportunities. This forms a significant part of our work around personal development, alongside the many clubs and groups students attend outside of school. The Education Endowment Foundation has completed research showing that engagement with co-curricular activities in or out of school also has a positive impact on educational outcomes.

School development plan

A summary of the plan is available on the school website but I wanted to highlight a couple of areas. Firstly, our Covid recovery plan is under way, this has several elements including co-curricular, tutoring, well-being and curriculum adjustments. Tutoring is beginning for those identified as being disadvantaged and will shortly be extended to those in Year 11 where a specific gap has been identified. We have put extra resources into maths and English with Higher Level Teaching Assistants working with individuals and supporting in class. We have also undertaken some staff training and development around literacy so that this can be better supported in all departments and have launched an accelerated reading programme in KS3 that helps us to support students to be reading at an appropriate level.

School environment

The new build and improved outdoor spaces are having a positive impact and students are enjoying access to these. We are also keen to improve our 'green' credentials. The new build has allowed us to add an additional space that has been planted with wild flowers (not to be mistaken for weeds!). We are also due to receive 200 saplings after half-term and we'll be working with volunteers from all year groups to get them planted – Mrs Cooper and Mr Russell-Smith have a master plan! We have increased the number of bins on site and are working on a plan to increase recycling.

We have also begun work on improving site security with new fencing which should be completed in the next few weeks. As part of this project, new gates will be erected at our two main entrances, this will be a significant change, and once gates are in place, only parents with a permit will be able to access the site at the end of the school day once gates are in place.

School uniform

Thank you for your support with uniform. As we experience autumnal weather, please can we ensure students wear coats, not sports tops or hoodies. We are also due to complete a full review of school uniform following new legislation and additional guidance that is due out this term.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you again for your continued support of the school. Whilst I know it has been challenging, I appreciate that our parents and carers are working hard to support us and our students. I hope you have an enjoyable, restful and safe half-term break.

Kind regards



Mr S Matthews
Headteacher