

Headteacher:
Mrs A. Chapman, MA, SFHEA, NPQH



Founded in 1717

BAINES SCHOOL

Highcross Road, Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire FY6 8BE
Telephone: (01253) 883019 Facsimile: (01253) 892179
Email: info@baines.lancs.sch.uk
Web site: www.baines.lancs.sch.uk

Ref: ACh/cpo

11th November 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to keep in communication with you regarding the Covid-19 pandemic. I am so pleased and grateful with the way our whole community is working together, being understanding about requests to self-isolate and that we have a number of supply teachers in school. We all recognise that every day is different and we are having to be flexible to respond to the changing circumstances. I also understand that there are many pressures on families at the moment and that in working together we can hopefully keep a sense of normality and positivity in everyone's lives.

There are four main points I would like to communicate with you in this letter:

1. If students are required to self-isolate at home, then they are expected to be working. Work is set on Google Classroom and Class Charts. The government is very clear that education must continue. As a school there is a lot of work available online for every child but as a school we cannot force students to engage in that learning. As parents/carers, I need you to support us in ensuring that your child gets up and completes their school work. Teachers are working extremely hard in teaching their daily classes in school but also in putting up work on Google Classroom and Class Charts. Google Classroom has the facility for students to upload their work so that the teacher can view it and give feedback. Those who are engaging are doing well, but unfortunately not all students are doing the work.
If your child does not work while at home, then they lose the learning time and will struggle to catch up. We cannot expect teachers to provide additional work at a later date for those who have not tried to work while at home. If your child does not have online access while they are at home, then they can complete hard copy work packs that we have prepared. If your child is struggling to access their Google Classroom, then please email the helpdesk for support at Thelpdesk@baines.lancs.sch.uk or telephone school.
Please encourage your child to read (not on their phone) while at home, ideally a minimum of an hour per week. We have identified a dip in reading abilities and this leads to a lack of understanding of vocabulary. We will be having a major focus on reading in the next few weeks.
2. You must not send your child to school if they have any of the following symptoms:
 - a raised temperature
 - a new persistent dry cough
 - loss of taste or loss of smell



This would put our community at risk of spreading the virus and would cause far more students to be sent home to self-isolate. We all must take responsibility to keep ourselves and each other safe both in school and at home in our families. Please recognise that we have staff, students and families with health conditions and this makes them more susceptible to serious effects of the virus.

3. You may have heard of other schools who have had to move to a rota system as they have not been able to fully staff their school. We have had some major staffing challenges this week and have only just managed to keep school fully open to all year groups because of staff absence. It is likely with the rise in cases and self-isolation requirements that we may need to move to a rota in the near future. This would mean that one or more year groups having to work from home for a period of one or two weeks. This will be a last resort but all schools are utilising the available supply staff from agencies and I thought it only best to forewarn you of this possibility.
4. As you will be aware, Wales have made a decision to cancel the sitting of GCSE examinations next summer. They will be putting in place an alternative assessment approach. We will need to wait for the government to decide if they are amending their plans for England. Year 11's have approached their prelim's in a very sensible and mature manner and we are planning for full mock examinations after Christmas. Please be assured that we are working hard so that Baines students will receive the grades they deserve and they will not be disadvantaged in any way. We collect a plethora of information about every child in our school and will support them to achieve their very best. While the prelim's are important, they are the first rehearsal our students have at the GCSE examinations, so they will learn a lot from the process, including making mistakes or having weak exam technique as well as needing to learn more knowledge and the application of that knowledge. These experiences will help them to develop so that they are at their very best when they have to complete their mock examinations and final assessments.

I will continue to keep you updated about all aspects of our school. Our consultation and information evenings will all be online this year, so please do engage with those so that you keep up to date about your child's education.

Thank you again for all of your support.

With kind regards



Mrs Alison Chapman
Headteacher

