

LeAF Studio

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Principal: Mrs N Lapskas

10 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Apologies for what is a very long letter, but as we welcome students back to school after a very challenging and difficult few months I wanted to introduce some very important new initiatives that we are launching this year to support our young people.

The last few months have been some of the most challenging ever experienced in the education sector and we as a school have to adapt and improve so that none of our young people are disadvantaged. As a Senior Leadership Team, we have spent a long time over the summer reflecting on what we need to introduce this year in order to ensure that we are providing both a safe environment for staff and students but also ensuring all students, particularly those in Years 11 and 13, are given every opportunity to succeed in their time here with us, both academically and in their specialisms.

1. Covid Catch Up

Our students have made a very positive start back to school this week. However, we recognise that an enormous amount of learning time has been lost for students in the previous six months. With this in mind, we have put in place a range of measures designed to ensure that all students are fully supported in catching up on this missed learning. We will be prioritising Years 11 and 13 in order to ensure that they are fully prepared for their final exams in the summer. In order to facilitate this, we have done or will be doing the following:

- All subjects have reviewed their curriculum planning to ensure they revise topics covered during lockdown and to factor in the reductions in content made by many exam boards
- All students will be assessed in each subject during the first half term in order to measure their progress and identify areas for development
- For Years 11 and 13, target groups will be identified for each subject and additional extra-curricular lessons will be offered – this could be after school or in place of training sessions
- A comprehensive Year 11 programme of intervention sessions is in place for every subject area to support all students
- Dedicated tutor groups for Maths and English support will be created after the first round of assessments to support those Year 11 students who need it
- **All lessons for all year groups will be put online via Microsoft Teams** in case of any absence or partial closures and all students will have training on how to access this in the first two weeks back
- Any staff needing to self-isolate will continue to teach lessons via video conferencing where possible
- The government have announced a new Catch Up Premium which will provide us with some additional funds to support small group tuition as well as the National Tutoring Programme – once further details of this are available we will use this to support our targeted Year 11 and 13 students in whichever way we can.

Obviously, all of this is dependent on the ever-changing guidance we are being given, however our priority will always be on ensuring we support our students academically - particularly for those who are sitting exams in the coming year. Further information will be sent out to parents as these initiatives are introduced over the next few weeks.

In addition, **the new Year 9 Parent Information evening** due to be held next week has been cancelled as we are unable to have meetings on site. Instead, I will be sending out all of the relevant information to

Year 9 parents before the baseline assessments start next week so that parents have the opportunity to discuss this with their children.

2. Canteen

As you will be aware, we are not currently running a canteen service at break or lunch while we adjust to the new restrictions caused by Covid. This will continue until Friday 18th September and students will be required to bring their own packed lunches until then.

We are looking to introduce a limited menu from the canteen that students will be able to pre-order a week in advance, with payment being made online via ParentPay. This will then be delivered to their year group zones to prevent "bubbles" from mixing in the canteen. Again, further information regarding this will be sent out once this is confirmed.

3. Knowledge Organisers

As part of our curriculum provision, the use of Knowledge Organisers is an integral part of our students' learning in both the classroom and home learning tasks. Knowledge Organisers are printed resources that aid students in learning and retaining all key principles and vocabulary for the subjects they are studying. They are used in class to support and assist students in new ideas and concepts, which work alongside the idea of pre-learning, consolidation and vocabulary testing. As **these resources will be used in all lessons**, they will be **classed as part of the mandatory uniform and equipment checks** carried out by Form Tutors.

To ensure that students are able to access these Knowledge Organisers easily, we are producing printed volumes for each year group in Key Stage 4 that includes all the subjects offered at LeAF Studio School. These are presented as a bound A4 textbook individual to each year group and cost £10 each (paid via ParentPay), giving your son/daughter a professionally-presented aid for the year which will become an invaluable revision resource. If a student is registered as Pupil Premium or qualifies for Free School Meals, a printed copy will be supplied free of charge. If you do not wish to purchase a physical version, we can provide PDF versions of the Knowledge Organiser volumes via our website which you could print independently.

Should you have any questions regarding Knowledge Organisers or if your child is unable to access their homework online, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Hayman (khayman@leaf.bournemouth.sch.uk) or Mrs Percival (cpercival@leaf.bournemouth.sch.uk).

4. Parent Forum

For a while now, we have wanted to involve parents more in the life of our school community. We are aware that there is a wealth of expertise and enthusiasm amongst our parents and this would be a powerful tool in supporting the work we do here at LeAF Studio. As such, we are looking to set up a parent group that will help to make decisions about how the school develops in the future. We are always looking at ways that we can improve our offer to all of our stakeholders and this seems like the perfect vehicle to do this in order to benefit from the tremendous support we receive from the majority of our parents.

Initially, we would be looking at getting a small group of parents together to meet three times over the course of this academic year, with the intention of developing this further the following year, obviously dependent on the latest Covid guidance. If you are interested in getting involved in this and supporting the work we do here, then please email me at tclark@leaf.bournemouth.sch.uk and I will be able to send you more information. We really do believe that our parents have a lot to offer and would love the opportunity to involve you in supporting the development of the school.

5. Training Fund

As I am sure you will be aware, education budgets have been severely impacted by the coronavirus crisis. There has been no additional funding to support all of the changes we have had to introduce since the pandemic started and this follows on top of years of dwindling school budgets from central government. Total school spending per pupil in England has fallen by 8% in real terms between 2009–10 and 2019–20 and even though we are now full as a school, we are still facing some difficult decisions regarding how we support our students in the coming year. In addition, as a specialist Sport and Performing Arts centre we have a significantly higher outlay than most schools on equipment, professional coaches and training; all opportunities that would normally only be available in fee paying schools.

With this in mind, we are launching a **Training Fund** to enable us to ensure that we can continue to provide the very best specialist equipment, training, coaches and experiences that our students deserve. Many schools are now, unfortunately, heavily reliant on parental support and we are no different in this instance. Where we are different is that this Training Fund will be reserved exclusively for supporting the Specialisms with whatever costs or resources they need. This would then free up the rest of the school budget to support the academic side of the school and other associated costs. This replaces the voluntary contribution scheme that we have previously run for parents. Thank you to all of the parents who have supported us through this in the past, we hope that you will continue to support us.

We are asking that parents support this new Training Fund by committing to a small, regular donation to the school. All monies received will be ring-fenced exclusively for the Specialisms and split equally between Sport and Performing Arts. The Specialisms will then be able to provide termly updates on what equipment and resources have been purchased to support the students, so parents will be able to clearly see the impact their contributions are having.

All we ask is that parents commit to a monthly payment of at least £5 – that is just £1.25 per week, which for the level of training students receive in school still represents exceptional value. If every parent was able to commit to at least this amount it would give both Sport and Performing Arts a minimum of £750 each month to support the training they are able to deliver. Examples of planned spending include:

Sport	Performing Arts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New wheeled goalposts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Subsidise trips and performances (eg Move It)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New team kits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional workshops
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updated gym equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summer production costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional training from external coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Black out curtains for the studios
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trips to professional clubs and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acro mats

We hope that you will see both the benefit and value in this new initiative, as we strive to provide the very best resources and experiences for your child. Please log into your ParentPay account in order to set this up and help us support your young people in their Specialisms.

6. Sponsorship opportunities:

We are also launching a new Sponsorship strategy for 2020-21. Every year, we are very fortunate to receive a small amount of sponsorship for some of the teams and events that we facilitate here at LeAF Studio. We would like to expand this in order to raise further funds for the school whilst also supporting and promoting some of the companies who have worked in partnership with us. We have a very strong social media presence both locally and nationally, and would be open to developing an even wider range of mutually beneficial relationships with local companies, clubs and organisations.

If you know of any companies, groups or individuals who would be willing to sponsor an event, team or other aspect of LeAF Studio then please email me at tclark@leaf.bournemouth.sch.uk for more information.

Apologies for the length of this letter right at the start of the year, but these are all critical initiatives that will help us take this school to the next level in terms of what we can offer all of our students. Thank you, once again, for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely



Mr T Clark
Vice Principal

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