



BYRCHALL HIGH SCHOOL

LIVE TO LEARN LEARN TO LIVE

14th December, 2021

Dear Parent / Carer,

As the autumn term draws to a close there are many achievements to celebrate, not least a full term that has been reasonably close to normal operation after such a disruptive time since March 2020.

It has been good to get back to a focus on learning in normal lessons and to see our children keen to progress with their education.

One of the main tasks we have been undertaking is to assess where pupils are in their learning and to fill any gaps. We have carefully reviewed and restructured each subject's curriculum accordingly and also have a full time intervention team to give those who need it more personal tuition and support. Our Year 11 have done their first set of mock examinations and will complete a more formal set in February to give them the practice that they need and also to evidence their progress. Such evidence might be required as part of their final GCSE grading procedure.

We have taken the decision to push back the start of Year 10 examinations to Monday 17th January, so that lessons in the week before can focus on preparations. Timetables will be issued before Christmas to help pupils plan their revision accordingly.

Last Day of Term (Friday 17th December 2021)

School is due to finish for Christmas at 12:10pm on Friday. The early finish has, this year, created some additional logistical challenges with transport. This is due to a national shortage of bus drivers and also the fact that more of our bus services are shared with St. Edmund Arrowsmith's.

The 555, 888, 652, 603 buses have been booked for the end of school.

The regular service buses, such as the 320, will operate to their normal timetables.

Additionally, we have booked coaches to run the following routes at 12:10pm

- 950 / 951 / 954
- There will also be one 51-seater 320 coach which will start its drop offs at the far end of Platt Bridge and then onto Lower Ince.

Special numbered tokens are purchasable for £1 each from Student Enquiries. No Standing is allowed as these are coaches. This additional capacity should help relieve some of the pressure on the public buses. As always, please contact your child's Head of Year if you foresee any difficulties with arrangements.

Mr A. R. Birchall Headteacher

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320 capacity / 778 Service

The planning of TfGM and Mersey Travel should have provided sufficient services to get all our children to school on time this year. However, the reality has been that the 320 service has been oversubscribed at peak times.

In order to release some of the pressure of this service, we are re-introducing the 778 service which will be prioritised to those students who have the furthest to travel. In the main, this will be children who live in Ince / Spring View though there may be places available for other students too. The service will cost £1.20 per journey and a weekly pass will need to be purchased for £12 from the school. We apologise for the price increase which is forced on us by higher costs due to inflation.

This service will start to run on Monday 10th January 2022. Should you wish to use this service for your child, please register your interest by emailing us on enquiries@admin.byrchall.wigan.sch.uk, stating clearly their name and form.

The issues with bus services this year have been beyond our control. We are hopeful that the planning authorities are able to come up with comprehensive plans for 2022-23. We extend our apologies to those affected, nonetheless, and are committed to improving the situation, and journey times and waiting.

It is important that children can both get to school on time and get home without lengthy delays. We encourage children to use the services planned for them so there on the 950 / 951 / 954 route should be using those services, not routinely attempting to get the 320s which do not have planned capacity for them.

Covid Testing / Phased Return to School

On students return to school in January we are required to perform one on-site lateral flow test for each student. To facilitate their return as quickly as possible, we will operate testing in both the Gym and the Hall. Logistically, we will still need to stagger the return of pupils between the 5th – 7th January as follows:

	Wednesday 5/1/22		Thursday 6/1/22		Friday 7/1/22	
	Gym	Hall	Gym	Hall	Gym	Hall
08:30	7R1	11R1	8R1	10R1	9R1	9S3
08:50	7R2	11R2	8R2	10R2	9R2	9T1
09:20	7S1	11S1	8S1	10S1	9R3	9T2
09:40	7S2	11S2	8S2	10S2	9S1	9V1
10:10	7T1	11T1	8T1	10T1	9S2	9V2
11:00	7T2	11T2	8T2	10T2		
11:20	7V1	11V1	8V1	10V1		
11:50	7V2	11V2	8V2	10V2		

Most parents have already filled in the relevant consent forms for testing and we will assume that consent remains in place. If you have not already done so, please return the consent forms accompanying the electronic version of this letter.

Work will be set on Edulink accordingly to pupils' timetables, for years 8, 9 and 10 on Wednesday 5th January and for year 9 on Thursday 6th January.

Face Masks

We have received a further letter from the Director of Public Health extending the requirement for face masks until at least February half term. Guidance for household contacts of positive Covid cases to do daily lateral flow tests also remains in place.

Achievements and Events

There have been many notable achievements and events to celebrate this term. These are but a few examples, so please excuse omissions:

- Year 7 Theatre trip to see Gangsta Granny at the Manchester Opera House
- Year 8-11 Theatre trip to Grease at Liverpool Empire
- Christmas Card Competition winner – Lauryn Evans 11S1 and runners-up Ruby Dallimore 11R1 and Isabella Hyde 7V1

- Year 8 Performance Poetry Festival
- Hannah Guerin achieved a silver medal in the British Finals in Gymnastics
- Rock Music Experience play for Year 10
- The year 9 rugby team qualified for the Northwest Counties. The team included Daniel Feresi, year 8
- Jacob Lyons, Connor Oxbury and Tyler Cook from year 9 got through the trials to play for Wigan Town
- The year 8 netball team are undefeated. Their results included a 19-0 victory against Cansfield.
- Leon Beattie from year 11 was selected for the county in basketball
- James Colquitt spent his weekends selling poppies for Remembrance Day

We still have the Carol Service to come, on Wednesday 15th December at 4pm, to which you are all cordially invited and a year 8/9 trip to see Hairspray at the Winter Gardens, Blackpool, on the same day.

As Christmas itself approaches it is good to reflect on the charitable work of our school community such as the large donation of chocolate oranges to Alder Hey Children's Hospital coordinated by Mr Smethurst and the food bank donations from staff and students of all years.

I wish you and your families a relaxing and happy Christmas.

Yours sincerely



Mr A.R. Birchall
Headteacher