

Bishop Barrington School



Dear Parent Carer,

I wanted to write to you to provide a little update to the start of term so far.

It has been lovely to welcome back our pupils, to hear the buzz and engagement of young people in our corridors and classrooms again; it has been sorely missed these past few months!

Pupils have settled well and we have had lovely feedback from parents stating how thrilled they are that their child has returned to the routine of formal education and back with their peers; making new friends and being reacquainted with old friends.

School is still not quite the normal experience it should be, with zoned learning in place, face coverings in communal areas and staggered starts and lunches etc. Safety of all pupils is vital and our approach to ensuring this is under constant review. Part of this approach is to also ensure stability and positivity as pupils reconnect with their learning. Our new school building will facilitate this fantastically well!

One element of our new school building, a common feature of all new school buildings, is our pupil toilets, which are designed not to be designated to a specific gender (gender-neutral). In normal circumstances, many schools adopt this feature and it is well received. During our induction days we have received feedback from parents about our pupil toilets, much of which has been constructive and insightful. Responses to feedback have been to confirm our stance that the pupil toilet feature was agreed with the Local Authority and Department for Education and shared in public consultation evenings held in school. The purpose of the pupils toilet design was to ensure inclusivity of all pupils.

Over the past 24 hours, the leadership team and I have discussed at length what is best for our school community right now, amidst the unprecedented circumstances which schools find themselves in. Again, the safety of all pupils is vital, as is stability and positivity; rebuilding confidence in reconnecting with learning. To this end, the leadership team and I have decided to amend the pupil toilet design and designate pupil toilets to male and female with immediate effect. So as to maintain our inclusivity, pupils who do not identify as either gender will have access to 'accessible toilets'. Once COVID measures are no longer required in schools in England, then we intend to review this decision and will seek opinions from our school community.

Can I assure you again, that, at Bishop Barrington School, we aim for the best for all of our pupils, but we recognise that on some occasions there is room for improvement. Parents are encouraged to contact school to discuss concerns by email or telephone or make an appointment. We would be grateful if complaints about the school are not raised on social media, but that contact is made with school so that we can further understand concerns and help come to a resolution, if possible. Complaints on social media can be damaging for the school, its staff and most importantly the pupils.

Thank you again for your ongoing support. Please continue to check our website and Facebook page for any further updates and key information.

Take care.

Yours sincerely,

Nathan Powell

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