

2 July 2020

Dear Brightstowe Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you and your families safe and well.

### **Free School Meals**

Following the announcement from the Government students in receipt of free school meals will continue to get vouchers throughout the summer. We are able to confirm that vouchers will be sent to parents from Eden Red on the following dates:

- £15 on Monday 20 July
- £15 on Monday 27 July
- £15 on Monday 3 August
- £15 on Monday 10 August
- £45 on Friday 14 August

The final voucher is for the last three weeks of the school holidays. If we are currently posting the vouchers to you, this will continue during the summer break.

**Important:** Once we have placed the orders for these vouchers we will be **unable** to amend the email address that they are sent to. If you have changed your email address you must notify [hello@oasisbrightstowe](mailto:hello@oasisbrightstowe) no later than **Wednesday 8th July**; no amendments can be made after this date and could result in the vouchers being lost.

### **Parent and Carer Survey**

I would like to personally thank you for the hundreds of responses to last week's survey. I greatly appreciate you taking the time to share your reflections with me.

It was really rewarding to read the numerous positive comments about our support for your children during lockdown.

Education is a partnership between us and you. Like any successful relationship, we know that this one will only work if we are honest with each other. You deserve honesty from us about your child's learning and we deserve honesty from you about our teachers' teaching. It was therefore very pleasing to read your thoughtful suggestions about how we could do better. Like lots of you, many of our staff have faced childcare, health and other difficulties over the past few months, but every one of them is keen to do the best they can for your children as we move forward together.

Your suggestions are being incorporated into our planning for September, details of which I hope to be able to share with you by mid-July, depending on when and what the Government announces in the coming days.

I thought you would appreciate some broad responses from me in the meantime:

- As the parent of two children, I do not underestimate the challenge of home schooling. I am in awe of the degree to which so many of you have embraced this challenge. Thank you.
- The systems for online learning and communication with us that we put in place back in March were the best we could achieve at that time. I am clear, though, that we need to improve on this if we have any further lockdowns over the coming year.
- I am working with Oasis Community Learning to see how we can best provide a suitable laptop or device and guaranteed internet access for all Brightstowe students when they need to work at home, with the intention of Microsoft Teams replacing Show My Homework for all online learning.
- Staff are planning lessons for next year that can be delivered either in school or online. We have learned a lot from our experience of using Teams with Year 10 students this term, including the need to fully train staff, students and families, as well as having a small number of timetabled subjects to focus on each day.
- Teams will more readily allow tutors and teachers to keep in touch with you and your children, including through safe and secure video calls.

## **Our Vision**

As we head towards a new academic year, and regardless of the course taken by the pandemic, I believe it is important that all of us – students, staff and families – are clear about the kind of school we want Brightstowe to be, in good times and bad.

To that end, we have updated our vision statement, as follows:

*We believe that any child can learn anything, if they are taught well, work hard and feel loved.*

*Our staff excel. Our students aim high. Our community works as one.*

*We are Team Brightstowe.*

And we have a new motto, encouraging our students to become the very best version of themselves:

*Be brave. Be kind. Shine bright.*

Despite all the many hurdles in front of all of us at the moment, I am very excited to be working with you to help your children shine bright for the rest of their lives.

Yours,



Alan Dane  
Principal

Principal – Mr A Dane  
Penpole Lane, Shirehampton, Bristol, BS11 0EB  
Tel: 0117 3167330. [www.oasisacademybrightstowe.org](http://www.oasisacademybrightstowe.org)

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