

**Bohunt Horsham**

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Bohunt Horsham Headteacher: Ms G Ayling BA (Hons)

Dear Families

I am sorry to write to you all during the national period of mourning but, as is often the case at the start of term, it is necessary in order to address some issues and related updates that have arisen as an inevitable consequence of our growth. This year, as you will know, we have increased our student numbers by another 240 and our staff is now over 60 members strong; the school is building towards its capacity and so the way in which we use our building and surrounding areas must be monitored so any issues can be addressed.

Before I address the issues, I will sneak in a celebration of our amazing Year 10 Drama students whose GCSE 'Work in Progress' performance of Blood Brothers last week was absolutely brilliant and such a lovely way to start the term as we mean to go on, showcasing the results of hard work, progress and creativity.

I would also like to celebrate the Year 9 students who have started their GCSE courses this term and are already demonstrating brilliant engagement in their new courses. Our Year 9 students have stepped up and are proving to be excellent role models for the school and Year 7 arrived with what we all felt was the smoothest transition to secondary we've experienced yet. Our students continue to make us proud on a regular basis and the following issues are teething problems and exceptions rather than any change to the terrific conduct we expect and is commonly expected of us.

1. **Issue identified – behaviour of students leaving school:** we are aware of a couple of incidents since the start of term in which students' behaviour, on leaving school and travelling home on foot, have been unacceptable. Any incident reported to us has been picked up and dealt with but the sheer volume of students leaving school and travelling in the same direction is in itself causing an issue. Usually, students leaving a school on foot or by bicycle would travel in a range of directions but, because of our location, all of our students travel in the same direction.

Action taken: we already have staff members on duty outside school to monitor students crossing the road and have increased the number of additional duties over on the far side of the bridge. These members of staff are all members of our leadership team as other staff members are running clubs or activities in school. These duties will be periodical rather than permanent but the increased school presence will help us to reinforce the expectations of conduct we have of our students.

Action taken: in addition to the above, as a temporary measure, we will dismiss Year 7 students five minutes early. From Thursday 15 September, Year 7 students will leave school at 3.15 so that they may walk out of school and over the bridge with less congestion around them. We will monitor the need for this additional measure over the next couple of weeks.

2. **Issue identified – traffic on Lemmington Way:** we have received concerns from our neighbours living in the Lemmington Way area about the volume and associated risks of traffic from Bohunt Horsham families parking here rather than travelling across the roundabout to pick up and drop off for school.

Action taken: as well as reminding families in our bulletin that there is sufficient pick up and drop off facility on site we are also talking with Horsham District council about the possibility of adding support from traffic enforcement and going back to public bus companies again with our updated travel survey results.

3. **Issue identified – congested corridors:** we are noticing that the increased numbers of students in corridors this year is sometimes leading to bottlenecks in certain areas. You may have talked to your child at home about this. We have monitored this situation and realised that rather than this being an issue of the size of the school, it is caused by the fact that the vast majority of students, when travelling up or down stairs, all use the central, blue staircase rather than either of the two berry coloured staircases.

Action Taken: to address this, we are adding directions in each teaching space, identifying the nearest staircase and staff will direct students to use this staircase from this point on. We are confident that this will change the way that students move around the building and will reduce any congestion.

4. **Issue identified – busy lunchtimes:** our dining facilities are designed for use by 1200 students so we know we have ample space to provide for the 720 we have here this year but it is certainly true that the seating area is very busy at the start of term.

Action Taken: to address this, as well as adding the cold grab and go station this term, we have purchased 12 additional picnic benches for our outside areas and will be adding those next week. We are also starting to use the Main Hall as additional seating space on wet break days so we have contingencies in place as the weather starts to turn colder and wetter. If, in the future, we need to consider split lunches then we will certainly do so but that would be a last resort as it has a big impact on the timetable and eradicates the ability to run lunchtime clubs and support groups, or to use the library at lunchtime etc.

Finally, if you'd like to get more involved in school life and have more of a voice in school decisions, we will be advertising opportunities to join either our [Parent Reference Group](#) or our [Local Governing Body](#) this term and we would very much welcome interest in either.

With best wishes

Ms Ayling
Headteacher