In March 2020 and the Coronavirus Pandemic hit hard in Massachusetts, Governor Charlie Baker ordered both private schools and public schools to close in the state. This affected the ability to run the lessons and school teachers had to reorganize their lesson plans for the year.

Now that BISB is back in person, for the majority of the school, we interviewed Oliver Smith, head of science at BISB on how he has adapted the educational lessons in the sciences to fit COVID safety and regulations.

*How have you adapted the science department and your own classes to the new pandemic environment?*

“At the start of the pandemic we handed out science kits to middle school students. With the equipment sent home it allowed students to do practical work.”

The first thing Mr. Smith initially addressed was the situations with science practical’s in a COVID safe environment. Last year the science department had organized a resolution to the changes in ability since the students were at home.

This worked well and effectively, by May students in Year 9 were able to conduct temperature loss experiments in Physics and fun practical methods such as Lava Lamps in chemistry. It was clear that in 2020 the approach to combat the situation which unfolded was a well thought out and beneficial thing to do.

However, now that BISB is largely safe in person learning Mr. Smith outlined the amendments he made towards the ability to do practical’s:

“To ensure the safety of those in the classroom setting we reduced the number of practicals. And depending on the size of the group had to adapt to fit numbers. This can be by switching classrooms for lessons and ensuring that in all activities we do in class we remain socially distanced and wearing masks as well as following CDC guidelines. ”

This of course precautionary measures that Mr. Smith enacted to ensure the safety of his students and others in the community as some science practicals have been known to be very ‘hands on’ and hence they had to be amended, this resulted in the decrease in practical amounts for the year.

*How have you ensured that you and the students you teach remain safe during in person school?*

“By following state guidelines, social distancing, protective face masks to fit with CDC guidelines, reducing the amount of contact by passing materials and ensuring the washing hands.”

These ensure safety during the pandemic environment and also maximizing the quality of education to the highest standard. I speak from a personal opinion, yet one I know that is shared by many that the safety and education of science classes are of a great quality.

After we discussed the personal ways Mr. Smith has dealt with the coronavirus pandemic.

*How have you personally dealt with the pandemi*c?

“The pandemic has been hard for everyone to some degree… I have coped by regularly speaking to family via zoom calls and have become invested in cooking.”

*What have you cooked?*

“Honestly Harry, you name it, I’ve cooked it”

It seems apparent that Mr. Smith has adapted his personal and professional life in order to adapt to the new situation of the pandemic. Ensuring that both the students and himself are safe and healthy. On behalf of students at BISB, we thank Mr. Smith for the hard work he has put in to ensure a safer environment for the students and teachers at BISB whilst maintaining the high quality of lessons.