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 did affect the ability to run the lessons and man teachers had to reorganize their lesson plans for the year.

Now 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?

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. As Mr. Smith said, “[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.”

This worked well and effectively, by May students in Year 9 were able to conduct temperature loss experiments in Physics and fun practical 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 in safe in person learning Mr. Smith outlined the amendments he made towards the ability to do practical’s and I paraphrase from Mr. Smith, “We reduced the number of practicals.” This of course a precautionary measure 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.

In terms of the lesson itself Mr. Smith said during his interview that, “depending on size of group had to adapt to fit numbers.” This can entail switching classrooms for lessons and ensuring that in all activities we do in class we remain socially distanced and wearing masks.

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

Mr. Smith also elaborated on the other precautions he takes during the new situation such followed by BISB as a whole. These included as Mr. Smith exclaimed, “Following state guidelines, social distancing, protective face masks to fit with CDC guidelines, reducing amount of contact by passing materials and ensuring the washing hands.”

These ensure the 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, personal dealt with the pandemic?

Mr. Smith coming from the U.K has many relatives ‘across the pond’ hence he has dealt with the difficulties of the pandemic by regularly, “speaking to family,” via, “zoom calls.” Mr. Smith also said that he had developed/extended a hobby for cooking, coining the term, “you name it I’ve cooked it.”

In conclusion 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.

Thank you for reading,

Best,

Harry