



Dear Parents/Carers,

We are into our third day of closure and have, in line with the government's announcement yesterday reduced our level of staff cover in school. I am hugely grateful to our staff continuing to teach a small number of students from key worker families.

I have included today some advice to pass on to students about what is happening at the moment. Please take a moment to read this and share with your son/daughter:

We face a period of uncertainty and challenge, one that will have significant implications for our society, economy and families. During the time you will spend away from school, it is crucial that you safeguard both your physical and mental health. You will be set work to complete, reading to engage with and deadlines to meet; self-discipline and focus is going to be a key element of skills you will need, particularly for those returning to Year 11 and Year 13. Year 10 and 12 internal assessments will take place in the Autumn Term, irrespective of announcements regarding external assessments. Please consider your mind-set, think about support and about being a friend to each other in the challenges ahead. I have put in this document some self-help information which you may find useful but also wanted to remind you that support will continue to be available for you, should you need it. The same avenues of support that you could access in school, will still be available to you over the coming weeks: your tutor, Year office and your subject teachers. All of us are contactable by email after which we can liaise on the best way to support you.

The WHO has published a document on dealing with mental health and stress during the outbreak. Some of their suggestions include:

- Avoid watching, reading or listening to news that could make you anxious or distressed
- Seek advice to help you make plans or preparations to protect yourself and loved ones
- Set specific times or occasions when you will seek updates

The length of this unknown period can easily give rise to health issues so make sure you think about, and make plans for how you will do the following:

### **Connect with other people**

How will you maintain relationships with your friends? Don't just rely on text or social media.

Arrange to call, WhatsApp, Skype or FaceTime regularly, and in groups where you can.

Plan activities you can do with other members of your household. Don't hide in your room all the time!

Make the most of meal-times to connect with family members.

### **Be Physically Active**

Make sure you have developed a routine for your days and provide structure to your day. Set a



sensible time to go to bed.

Think about setting yourself a fitness programme that includes daily exercise. If you are not able to leave the house for a run or walk, then check out this link to Joe Wicks, the Body Coach on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/thebodycoach1>

Take a technology break – find time to put down your phone, games console, computer and TV.

### Learn new skills

You will have plenty of school-work to do but why not set a goal to learn a new skill. Mr Stock is learning to play the piano and Mr Palmer is learning Russian!

Could you develop your cooking repertoire or pick up a musical instrument?

Use the time to develop your reading for pleasure.

### Give to others

Is there a way you could help other members of the local community?

Do you have a younger sibling you could support with school-work or play?

Do you have an older relative who would love a daily phone call?

Could you help around the house with cleaning or DIY?

### Pay attention to present moment (mindfulness)

Take time to notice your surroundings and live in the moment.

Remember the simple things that give you pleasure.

You could reorganise the space around you, take notice of how the people around you are feeling, spend some time enjoying being outdoors?

Try downloading a mindfulness app to use each day.

I think it would be a good idea to encourage students to keep a journal, diary or blog about their experiences and feelings over the next few months as this will be a pivotal time in World History. It may also help them work through their thoughts about what is happening. Below include a list of links I have sent out previously to support you as students.

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/ssc@cedarsupper.co.uk>

We have sent a separate email to parents/carers of year 11 and 13 students specifically about the guidance we are being given as regards GCSE and A Levels.

Please take care of yourself and your families and let us know if we can help in any way.

Yours with best wishes,

Mr S Palmer  
Headteacher

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