

Dear Parents / Carers,

Please find attached our updated guidance on independent home-based learning for all students as a result of our school closure. Students in school were given this information during Assemblies on Thursday 19th March 2020 (and is available for them on ePraise).

In addition, the Government have just released their plans for awarding student grades as a result of the cancellation of the GCSE and A' Level examinations. This information can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/further-details-on-exams-and-grades-announced>. As previously, this information will generate many questions that we are currently not in a position to answer without further guidance. We will update you as and when we have further information.

Rightly, the focus of our efforts in recent days has been on preventing the spread of the virus and putting plans in place to ensure appropriate educational provision. However, the mental health and ongoing well-being of the young people in our care is of equal concern.

To differing degrees, your children have experienced hugely unsettling disruption to their expected routines, without both warning and an end in sight. In addition, many will be extremely concerned about family and friends, hearing everything going on around them and feeling our anxieties and tensions. Whilst being away from school may seem exciting at first, this is likely to change over the coming weeks given the nature of their circumstances and potential social isolation; all aspects of their lives and sense of belonging to a community separate from their immediate family will be affected. Please give your children the reassurance they need at this time even though they might not be outwardly presenting as anxious or even scared.

Whilst we would all like your children to continue to develop academically during the period of school closure, the most important issue is their health and well-being.

Learning does not have to be just curriculum-based. Many organisations are giving very creative suggestions as to how young people can look after their health and well-being and we shall be suggesting these on a regular basis over the coming weeks. Whilst it is appropriate to build in specific learning time to a school day, their day should also include exercise, a sensible amount of socialising with others e.g. online gaming & social media, and time outside, even if this is within the confines of the garden at home, amongst other opportunities. Time you can spend with your children is the most valuable time of all.

At the end of this uncertain period, your child's health and well-being will be more important than their academic progress. How they felt during this period will stay with them well after the memory of what they actually did during the period to come.

Students were given the following information in Assemblies by way of support and this is also on the school website:

Other support:

- Police – 999 in an emergency/101 for other calls
- T4U (Sexual Health Nurse) Abigail: 07714 846 458
- School Health Nurse: 07507 331 750
- Family Front Door – 01905 822666
- Emergency Duty Team – Children's social care 01905 768202
- Childline – 0800 1111
- Your GP

Useful websites:

- Kooth.com
- Youngminds.org.uk
- Childline.org.uk
- Mind.org.uk

I wish you well in these difficult times; please be assured that we are here to support those young people in our care in any way we can.

Yours faithfully,

Phil Hanson