



January 2021

Safeguarding and Wellbeing for parents

Dear Parents and Carers

We have been delivering online live lessons since September to compliment the high quality remote education in place since last year. Staff and students are becoming more familiar and adept with live lessons as each week goes by. Staff have been using new apps and software to improve the learning experience. Following parental feedback to support students and parents we have reduced homework in KS3 and KS4 and are aiming to create opportunities for home learning which are off-screen. I hope this has had a positive impact on you as a family.

As parents and carers, you are having to support your children and help them with their learning while holding down jobs of your own and running your households. On top of that you are dealing with the emotional wellbeing of your children as they possibly become bored, frustrated, and perhaps anxious and confused. Many of us are parents too and we share your challenges; it is not an easy time to be a parent and we fully recognise that. We want to recognise and thank you for the great job you are doing as parents and carers, keeping your children focused and supporting them. We also want to share some tips and thoughts for your own wellbeing.

A few tips:

- There are no expectations for you to be the perfect teacher.
- You are not expected to understand every topic.
- Make sure your child has a good work space, time and routine.
- It is challenging for them and any offering of rewards is not a sign of failure.
- Promote reading away from the computer.
- If you can, walk and exercise together.
- Talk about what they have been learning, get them to explain it to you (even if you know) as that reinforces their learning. Pretend you do not understand and get them to explain it in a different way. This consolidates their understanding.
- Teach them life skills – (cooking, gardening etc)
- Remember to be a parent first and foremost; that is what they need you to be.



It is not going to be perfect; home learning can be difficult for some but as we have said before, trust us to ensure they achieve the best they can under the current circumstances. Please can we remind you to inform your child's Head of Year if your child has experienced a bereavement or experienced a stressful event as it may impact their mood and attitude towards work and life. The information will help us support them and prompt us to make suitable adjustments in their learning.

We will support Years 11 and 13 through their exam year and make sure all the other students will catch up and be ready for their exams in the coming years.

If you have a Year 11 or 13 child, please remind them that:

- * **By continuing to work they are positively influencing their grade.**
- * **By continuing to work they will develop their knowledge and skills for their next steps.**
- * **By continuing to work they are taking ownership of their grades and keeping control of the outcome.**

Online remote teaching and learning is never going to be perfect; school is so much more than just 5 lessons a day. While we are very proud of the lessons we deliver, we all miss the daily interactions that can only occur in person. Sports, music, clubs, competitions and just being with friends are equally important aspects of school.

Below are some resources that parents and carers might find useful:

Children's mental health week - Next week is children's mental health week and the focus this year is 'express yourself'.





There are resources at - [Children's mental health week](#)

Definition: What it means to express yourself?: to say or show one's thoughts and feelings

Many of us are experiencing lots of difficult emotions about the coronavirus pandemic. This may include feelings about getting sick, overwhelmed, isolated, the government restrictions, missing friends and loved ones or struggling to see when the pandemic might end. Remember: things might feel hard right now, but this situation is unusual. It won't last forever. In the meantime, there are lots of ways to help yourself cope including ways to 'express yourself'.

Expressing yourself is about emotional literacy, developing and finding ways to share our feelings, thoughts or ideas, through creativity and other outlets. This could be through art, music, writing and poetry, dance and drama, photography and film, doing activities that make you feel good.

Expressing yourself can be the best way to provide a sense of release and change of mindset. Whether it's expressing how you're dealing with and feeling about the personal challenges you face or focusing on anything but your issues, to find joy in the world happening around you.

Self-expression is a powerful tool when you realise just how important creativity and imagination are, in giving you a new focus and direction in life, or just a simple break from daily work tasks.

But you don't have to be creative to express yourself. In fact, expression can be practical and fun, adding many positive benefits to your daily life. Instead of compartmentalising or dwelling, it can channel your feelings into an expressive outlet daily.

When you were a young child, you likely wanted to be six different things at the same time. Maybe you wanted to be an actor, doctor, singer or Olympic athlete. But convenience, adulthood and pressure can often mean choosing one thing to do with your life, and over time you may feel like you don't know how to express yourself.

This week each day for the 'Thought For The Day' we will be promoting and encouraging students to take some time and find ways to 'Express Yourself'.

***DID YOU KNOW?* The colour blue promotes: calm, peace, relaxation, slowing down, steadying, self-expression, intuition, honesty, truth and creativity**



Keeping children safe online



Online safety at home: For Parents and Carers

With the majority of young people now learning from home, they will be spending more time online doing their school work, playing games or socialising. Technology is hugely valuable for education, as well as a way to keep in touch with friends and family. However it's important we all consider how we can help keep young people to be safer online during this lockdown, and always. Here's some information about what your child may enjoy online and what you can do to help keep them safer:

Sharing images and videos

More information?

Thinkuknow is the education programme from the **National Crime Agency's Child Protection Command CEOP (NCA-CEOP)**. Their aim is to protect children and young people from sexual abuse online.

For more information, advice and guidance, visit their [parents website](#) and download their [home activity worksheets](#) for fun, online safety activities to do with your family.

Online gaming

Online games are social activities, and most have features that allow young people to chat with others whilst they play.

For information about the positives of gaming, the risks of 'in-game chat' and measures you can take to help protect your child, watch this short video:

[In-game chat: a guide for parents and carers.](#)

Young people often share images or 'selfies' and there is potential for some of those to be nude or nearly nude images. Young people share 'nudes' for a number of different reasons, and some



situations are more risky than others.

For information about the contexts in which images are shared and how best to respond, take a look at - [nude selfies: a parents guide](#).

Steps you can take to help keep your child safer online

Have an ongoing conversation: Continue to talk about the apps, games and sites they like to use, and what they like and don't like and any concerns about being online. Discuss with them when to unfollow, block or report. For help starting this conversation, read [having a conversation with your child](#).

Make sure they know where to go for support: Remind your child that they can always speak to you or an adult they trust, if anything happens online that makes them feel worried or upset. Remind them that they won't be in trouble and that you are there to help. For a breakdown of report services, visit:

[Supporting your child with reporting unwanted content online](#)

Make sure they know about NCA CEOP: Young people can report a concern about grooming or sexual abuse to NCA CEOP at <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/> and get support from a specialist Child Protection Advisor.

Yours faithfully

TRACIE PARKER

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Assistant Headteacher