

5th February 2021
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Dear Parents and Carers

ST JOHN'S MARLBOROUGH – COVID 19

Having managed five weeks of remote learning now I am very aware of the resilience that has been needed to maintain the pace and deal with the demands of such an approach. There does appear to be real hope, and the collective effort from everyone is helping our nation to allow real belief to build that we may be able to plan to safely ease the lockdown. As it stands, we are still all working towards a beacon of hope on March 8th in terms of a change in the current situation with school closures and as soon as we have anything definitive we will be letting you know immediately.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

We want to keep the issues around mental health and wellbeing at the forefront of everything we do, particularly during this time of lock down. This week we have been promoting [Children's Mental Health Week](#) and I would very much like to draw your attention to the advice we have put on the school website. If you would like more information on tips for working from home effectively, please click [here](#) or view our latest news page [here](#). Please remember to reach out if you need support and be assured that all our pastoral teams are working very hard to make sure that we have the right support in place for you or your child as soon as you need it.



8 WAYS TO HELP CHILDREN STRUGGLING DURING LOCKDOWN

- 1 Know how to spot the signs**
If you notice your child is becoming withdrawn, that there's been a change in sleeping or eating habits, if they seem to lack confidence or get upset, it might be a sign they're struggling.
- 2 Talk to your child**
If you spot signs your child might be struggling, it's important to talk to them. Keep talking and trying to communicate in any way you can - hugging, listening to them, texting them.
- 3 Create structure and routine**
Try introducing a rota or loose timetable that includes fun things you're doing during the week. This can help to create a feeling of stability, which can alleviate anxiety.
- 4 Give children a sense of control through information**
Look online with your children to find useful information and resources that help children feel they have control.



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- 5 Keep children learning**
Using fun and creative ways at home to learn alongside continued access to educational opportunities will support your children's development.
- 6 Limit screen time and mix up activities**
As most socialising moves online, it's important to have conversations on how an increase in screen time can have an impact on everyone's mental health and self-esteem.
- 7 Help your child manage stress**
If you spot signs your child might be struggling, it's important to talk to them. Keep talking and trying to communicate in any way you can - hugging, listening to them, texting them, etc.
- 8 Expressing feelings doesn't have to be face-to-face**
Children might find it easier writing their thoughts down, so the whole family could do this and put them in a 'feelings box' and then talk about their good, sad or difficult feelings at the end of the day.

Year 9 Options Event

If your son or daughter is in Year 9, please look out for the link to the option selection process which will go live at midday on Tuesday 9th February. I hope you will have all you need to help with this important step, but please do get in touch if you need support or have any queries. Hopefully the presentations, FAQ area and website links will be self-explanatory as well as the dedicated email address set up for you to use.

Potential Weather disruption

The Met Office are warning us that we may have some very cold weather over the weekend and into next week. We will aim to keep the school open as long as it is safe for our vulnerable and keyworker children but please do check on the school website and local radio stations to see if we have had to close. All learning will take place remotely in the case of a school closure.

Notification of confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases

Despite the lock down, it still remains vital you let the school know through the COVID-19 email - covid-19@stjohns.excalibur.org.uk if you have any pandemic related concerns we need to be aware of. This is particularly important if you need to take a test or have a positive case. We also continue to keep up to date our dedicated area on the school website which can be found at: <https://www.stjohns.excalibur.org.uk/latest-covid-19-information/>.

Communication between home and school remains as important as ever, and I do hope that both you and your children will feel able to contact us at anytime if you need to.

With kind regards



Mr I Tucker
Principal

