



### **Mental Well-being guidance and information: COVID 19**

This is some help and guidance to assist you with your Mental Well-being during school closure. We want to make sure that you are in the best physical and mental/emotional place during these times of uncertainty. If you are able to use some of the guidance and strategies during this time you will think, and feel, in the best possible shape on the inside.

There are some of you that may be relishing the time off at the moment, finishing without the stress of exam and there are others that enjoyed school so are missing it. It's only until you are not in school that you miss; certain lessons, teachers, friends, break and lunch time, extracurricular clubs. With the current situation relating to the Corona Virus and the cancellation of exams it has had an impact on your life relating to; school being closed, social distancing from /family friends, being isolated at home and the uncertainty of where your future lies. But as you read on, be rest assured that there are ways to maintain a positive frame of mind and there are people fighting your corner.

To make sure that you are all in a healthy state of mind here are a few hints, tips and tricks to get you thinking and feeling positively;

1. **Ready for anything** – by getting up at a reasonable time, showered/washed and getting dressed, you are instantly in the mindset for an awesome day. If you are lying in bed all day then you will not be productive, feel lethargic and possibly a little smelly. It's about finding the balance where you've had enough sleep but getting up and making sure that the day counts.
2. **Structured plans** – similar to point number 1, if you have a plan for the day you will have purpose and by having purpose you have focus. This drive and focus will not only make your days better but will also keep you in the zone ready to return to school.
3. **Food, Food, Food** – when being off it is extremely easy to eat all kinds of rubbish, the quickest and easiest food seems the best option. But those 'quick and easy' foods are loaded with Carbs and Sugars and this will cause you to crash. By eating appropriate portion sizes (not everything in the cupboard), balancing all the food groups and hydrating yourself you will not only be healthier on the outside but it will help your mental well-being.
4. **Let there be light!** – Vitamin D is the sunshine vitamin and in the UK we tend to lack a bit of this. But wherever possible you should be near a natural source of light. By spending all day in a dark room, curtains drawn, you will end up feeling like a wilted plant. With the current government guidelines you are able to spend time in our garden or exercise alone in an outdoor area once a day. So, wherever possible be outside in the fresh air and soak up the sunshine.
5. **Physical and Mental togetherness** – any form of physical exercise can help with your mental well-being. Even though there are restrictions in place and you are not able to play with a team or friends, there are lots of ways to keep in physical shape. Whether you go out for a run to clear your head, a bike ride to get the adrenalin pumping, walk with the dog or do a Just Dance for a laugh, all physical activity can put you in an excellent frame of mind (and if done outside gets you your Vitamin D fix).
6. **Brain Food** – one of the main contributors to our mental well-being is what we watch, scroll and listen to. If you are watching, viewing or listening to content that is of a negative nature it will directly impact your mental well-being. As much as your parents will screen you from this negativity, you also have a responsibility for what you are accessing. So, check what you are accessing and make sure that it has content that is good for you in every way.



The first thing to ensure is that you keep your brain active because whatever your next step is, you will want to be sharp and focused.

- The first way you can do this is by completing the work that may be set by teachers. Even though you may be attending a new establishment, or returning to a different phase of your education any work you complete will assist your mental capacity.
- Reading is proven to help in so many different ways; imagination, creativity, vocab, grammar, spelling, critical and analytical thinking...the list goes on.
- Get ahead with your next phase. Whether you are attending 6<sup>th</sup> form, college, University or waiting for a place on an apprenticeship you can do some further reading or research to get yourself into the mindset of the phase.
- Keep in touch with people. With the government putting a halt to social gatherings you can find other ways to socialise with family and friends. Phone calls, Facetime, Watch parties, online gaming to name a few. By talking to others you will be able to offload as well as have a laugh.
- Take up a new skill or hobby. With some extra time on your hands you are able to try that skill that you've always wanted. So, dust off the guitar, do 'keepy ups' until your feet ache, pick up a sketch pad and start to master a new skill or hobby.
- All teachers and members of staff are working hard to get you the best outcomes. Any work being set is designed to provide you with the necessary skillset for your future. All teachers will also be working extremely hard to ensure that they are following advice from the Government, Department of Education and Exam Boards to ensure that you receive results that reflect your work ethic and ability. All your teachers are logging on daily to ensure that you have all the relevant tools for success.

By using this advice and guidance we know that you will be in the best mental capacity and will be raring to continue the next phase of your life.

