



Student Wellbeing during School Closure

You are all important to us and we are aware that for some of you, stepping out of your normal school routine can be unsettling. The constant newsfeeds about COVID-19 and the pandemic can also cause anxiety so we have put this together to remind you that you are not alone and that there are things you can do to protect your mental health and well-being during this difficult time.

How can I keep myself occupied when I have to stay home?

You have been provided with schoolwork from your usual subjects and we have encouraged you to follow a regular pattern of study as following a routine is good for you and will help keep you focussed.

There is also a whole range of other activities that you can do to keep you busy:

- How about playing some games online with your friends. Click here for more information.
- Learn a new skill, how about origami! [Click here](#) for an instructional clip on how to make a dog.
- Do you like writing? [Click here](#) to go to the Young Writer's competition page.
- We cannot visit zoo's or museums at the moment but there are many live cameras to watch if you like animals and most of the museums have interactive sections. Here are some particularly good ones:

Have a look at Paignton Zoo's Webcams:

<https://www.paigntonzoo.org.uk/explore/webcams>

Explore Chester Zoo's Preventing Extinction- What you can do :

<https://www.chesterzoo.org/what-you-can-do/>

Take the online tours at the Louvre: <https://www.louvre.fr/en/visites-en-ligne>

Discovery Videos at the Natural History Museum:

<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/video.html>

Discover the Royal Greenwich Museums: <https://www.rmg.co.uk/discover>

Explore the collections at the Victoria and Albert Museum:

<https://www.vam.ac.uk/collections?type=featured>

Connect with the collections of the National Gallery:

<https://www.vam.ac.uk/collections?type=featured>

Discover the Art at the Tate: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art>

Explore the objects and stories at the Science Museum:

<https://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/objects-and-stories>

Explore the galleries of the British Museum:

<https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/galleries>

Watch the Live Stream from the International Space Station:

https://www.nasa.gov/multimedia/nasatv/iss_ustream.html

How to protect your mental health and well-being during school closure- Five Ways to Wellbeing



Connect

There is strong evidence that indicates that feeling close to, and valued by, other people is a fundamental human need and one that contributes to our sense of balance and wellbeing.

It's clear that relationships are critical for promoting wellbeing and for acting as a cushion against mental ill health for people of all ages.

With the COVID-19 outbreak we need to be inventive when connecting with people – remember its physical distancing that we need to remember!

With this in mind, try to do something different today and make a connection.

- Talk to someone – text, FaceTime, write a good old-fashioned letter or give someone a call!
- Ask how someone's day is going and really listen when they tell you
- Put five minutes aside to find out how someone really is
- Follow a new, positive social media account – one that inspires emotional wellbeing!

Keep connected with your family and friends. We are fortunate that social media and our phones allow us to do this without meeting someone in person.

Be active

Regular physical activity is associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety across all age groups.

Exercise is essential for our emotional and physical health and for promoting well-being and there are lots of free apps and online classes to help you be creative with your exercise.

But it doesn't need to be particularly intense for you to feel good - slower-paced activities, such as walking, can have the benefit of encouraging social interactions as well providing some level of exercise.

Today, why not get up and move around in between school work? Here are a few ideas:

- Take the stairs – set yourself a goal of going up and down a few times?
- Go for a walk
- Have a kick-about in your garden if you have one
- Do some 'easy exercise', like stretching or yoga
- Watch and follow along with some YouTube exercise videos



Take notice

Reminding yourself to 'take notice' can strengthen and broaden awareness.

Studies have shown that being aware of what is taking place in the present directly enhances your well-being and savouring 'the moment' can help to reaffirm your life priorities.

Heightened awareness also enhances your self-understanding and allows you to make positive choices based on your own values and motivations.

Take some time to enjoy the moment and the environment around you. Here are a few ideas:

- Get a plant for your room or plant some seeds in the garden
- Have a 'clear the clutter' day
- Take notice of how your friends and family are feeling or acting
- Make a thankful jar. Write little notes about what you are thankful for and put in the decorated jar. Even during difficult times there are things we are grateful for and it's good to remember them.
- Write a journal. Remember to include how you are feeling and what you are grateful for (however small those things might seem).

Keep Learning

Now is the perfect time to learn a new skill! There are many online tutorials in a whole range of subjects so get searching for something that interest you. Maybe you have an instrument at home that you never quite mastered? Or that football lurking in the cupboard that you could kick around?

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the opportunity to engage in work or educational activities particularly helps to lift people out of depression.

The practice of setting goals, which is related to learning in particular, has been strongly associated with higher levels of wellbeing.

Why not learn something new today? Here are a few more ideas:

- Read a book or even set up an online book club with your friends
- Do a crossword or Sudoku
- Research something you've always wondered about
- Refresh or learn a few words in a new language

Give

You may not be able to visit elderly relatives at the moment but you can still give your time to them by giving them a call or writing them a letter, showing them you are thinking of them and that you care will mean so much.

Individuals who report a greater interest in helping others are more likely to rate themselves as happy.

Research into actions for promoting happiness has shown that committing an act of kindness once a week over a six-week period is associated with an increase in wellbeing.

Don't forget that you can help out at home too – offer to cook, or wash up, mow the lawn or maybe just tidy your room.



If you are feeling anxious about COVID-19, here is some good advice you may find helpful:

- **Avoid health-related news** – everyone wants to keep up to date but try having a news detox or allocating yourself a time limit for watching or reading the news
- **Try not to seek constant reassurance** – it can make you feel calmer for a while but it is always temporary.
- **Dr Google is not, and never will be, your friend!** Especially when you are suffering with health anxiety. Stay away from carrying out health related internet searches.
- **Try a calming technique such as mindful breathing**
 - *Breathe in through your nose for a count of four, pause for a second and then blow out through your mouth for a count of four.*
 - Try a grounding exercise. Square Breathing is a good example. [Click here](#) for a link to this.
- **Allocate yourself a daily “worry period”** – give yourself a short period of time to worry about this and then go and do something else.
- **Treat yourself** – it does not need to involve spending money! Anything to give yourself a little boost can help. A pamper afternoon, watching your favourite Netflix show after studying, a chocolate biscuit or two or an online chat with friends where you make sure you make each other laugh!
- **Remember that your anxious state will pass in time.** Anxiety always feels like it will never end but it will.

If you are worried talk to someone you trust.

Focus on things that you can control rather than those that you cannot.

Keep yourself busy but allow yourself some rest and relaxation time as well.

Ribston Hall High School



Whilst CAMHS services are scaled back dramatically at this time due to the COVID-19 outbreak here are some useful helplines should you need mental health support:

CAMHS helpline available for children, young people and families who may require support and advice: Telephone 01452 894300 (9-5pm Monday to Friday)

Websites:

Winston's Wish - www.winstonswish.org

Young Minds - youngminds.org.uk

TIC + - ticplus.org.uk

Rethink self-harm - www.rethink.org

Family lives - www.familylives.org.uk

Mood juice - www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk

Life Signs - www.lifesigns.org.uk



TALK & LISTEN,
BE THERE,
FEEL CONNECTED



DO WHAT YOU CAN,
ENJOY WHAT YOU DO,
MOVE YOUR MOOD



REMEMBER
THE SIMPLE
THINGS THAT
GIVE YOU JOY



EMBRACE NEW
EXPERIENCES,
SEE OPPORTUNITIES,
SURPRISE YOURSELF



Your time,
your words,
your presence