



Waddesdon C of E School | Coronavirus Newsletter 16 – 07/01/21

‘They say it’s always darkest before the dawn.’

One morning during the Christmas break I listened to the poet, Roy McFarlane, reading his new poem ‘Dreaming of a New Dawn’ on the radio. It struck a chord with me as I had been thinking about the hope and promise of the vaccine, weighed against the many challenges still facing us.

The first half of the poem lists the difficulties and personal tragedies associated with the past year, including the racial division that we saw in the news. The last few lines remind us of life beyond these times and the hope for the future:

“They say it’s always darkest before the dawn.

But let our bodies sing and dance across new horizons.
Let our arms be the new brushstroke of glee for better days;
Let us be the books of faith and healing that we should read,
the voices against division, versed with victory,
the collective hearts beating a drum of harmony
and like a river flowing, roaring, with love into the new year.”

I am not naïve enough to think that we will feel like this most days, but my sincere hope is that – deep down – we all have a sense of that “drum of harmony” that will sustain us as we journey on to the new dawn.

This newsletter gives you an overview of a number of areas. As always, we are here to respond to your questions and to help support you and your family and will do so as quickly as we are able.

Mr Abbott





Sources of Support

The website below provides a range of support for families on a number of issues.

<https://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/kb5/buckinghamshire/fsd/parent.page?parentchannel=32>



Kooth is a web based confidential support service available to young people. Kooth provides a safe and secure means of accessing mental health and well-being support designed specifically for young people.

Kooth offers young people the opportunity to have a text-based conversation with a qualified counsellor. Counsellors are available from 12noon to 10pm on weekdays and 6pm to 10 pm at weekends, every day of the year on a drop-in basis. Young people can access regular booked online counselling sessions as needed. Outside counselling hours' young people can message our team and get support by the next day.

When students register with Kooth they will have support available to them now and in the future. Support can be gained not only through counselling but articles, forums and discussion boards. All content is age appropriate, clinically approved and fully moderated.

To find out more visit www.Kooth.com where young people can register and others can find out more about the service.

You can also view a short video about the service at: <https://vimeo.com/318731977/a9f32c87de>.

Live forums can be found in the discussion boards and go online at 7.30pm on the evening they are planned. They are moderated in real time until 9.00pm.

Wednesday 6th January – *New Year, New Opportunities... To Build and Develop Resilience*

We'll be focusing on what we have learnt in the last 12 months and how we can build on this shared knowledge to help develop our resilience.

Friday 15th January – *ADHD & Me: Symptoms, Emotions and Coping Skills*

If you are living with ADHD, know someone with it, or would just like to know more about ADHD then please come along to join us tonight!

Monday 18th January – *Supporting a Friend After a Crime*

Whether they were a victim or a perpetrator sometimes it can be hard to know what to say or do to support our friend whilst also keeping ourselves safe.

Friday 29th January – *Learning to Be and Showing Your True Self*

What is your true self? How do you know what it is? And, how do you show it?

This information has been shared with your son or daughter via Show My Homework.



Examination Information and Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs)

As most of you will know by now, the Government has now announced that GCSE and A Level examinations will not go ahead this summer.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-55561838>

We will update parents with any additional information that we receive regarding other qualifications. Those students in Year 12 and 13 who are sitting the Finance qualification are being contacted about their scheduled examination next week.

Once we have received clear guidance from Ofqual we will share with you and the students how we are expected to decide on the Centre Assessed Grades. The Year 11 Parents' Evening on Thursday, 28th January will be an opportunity for Year 11 parents and their children to discuss with their teachers what they need to do in order to achieve the grades that they aspire to.

I recognise that this may create worry, or even tension. Please encourage your son/daughter to work hard so that they can achieve the grades they want. Teachers will make their judgements based on evidence from assessments and submitted work during the lockdown period, as well as assessments carried out after the return to school.



Home Learning

Your son or daughter should expect to complete between 3 to 5 hours of work each day, as per the Government guidance.

We will continue to deliver a blend of learning to support your son or daughter's learning at home. The research carried out by the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) after the first long lockdown concluded that the content and coverage, rather than the medium for learning, was more effective in supporting remote learning.

Interestingly, this national research supports the results of the parent survey which we sent out in July and where parents indicated the following preferences:

- Direct teaching through some 'live' lessons, with independent practice to consolidate learning afterwards
- A mix of approaches (as judged by the subject specialist) most likely to improve knowledge and skills
- As currently (i.e. through Show My Homework)
- A stronger emphasis on individual practice and feedback

The graphic on the next page shows the range of parental preference. In addition to this, it is important to re-emphasize that teachers are also supporting students in school. If numbers rise in school, the proportion of lessons which can be conducted via Microsoft Teams will inevitably lessen.

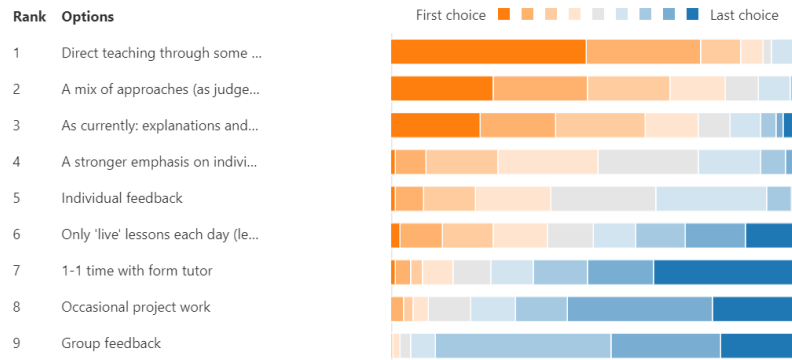
Please remember that many teachers are also supporting their own children at home.

If your son or daughter is becoming overwhelmed with the work, we suggest that you encourage their child to spend no more than 3 to 4 hours daily on work. If they need to prioritise work, they should work on English, Maths and Science first.

If they are unable to complete some work, they

should message their teacher to explain their situation. There will be sympathy for your individual circumstances and your Head of Year can alert teachers to any issues that you have at home. We know it isn't easy.

If there are on-going difficulties, please do contact your child's Head of Year via the school office email.



In his assembly on Tuesday, Mr Jones shared a **Checklist for Successful Home Learning**:

- Set an alarm and get up early. 8am at the latest!
- Get dressed
- Eat breakfast (most important meal of the day)
- Work to the times of your normal school timetable
- Log on by 8:30am for registration
- Complete the lessons you believe you will find hardest first
- If you have access to a tablet or computer use that for home learning instead of your phone (give your phone to a parent)
- Work in a well-ventilated space (ideally a social space). Have a drink and snack at your side
- Take regular breaks and take an hour off for lunch. Reward yourself for your hard work!
- Get some fresh air and some exercise – a walk will do
- Avoid playing music
- If you don't know what to do, send your teacher a quick message
- Submit your lessons immediately after you complete them or submit them all at the end of the day (have a clear routine)
- Aim to finish work by 3pm
- Get plenty of sleep (8 hours minimum)

Mrs Lenander's assembly on Wednesday also provided suggestions about how to work in a healthy manner.



For those families who are struggling in terms of access to devices, but have consoles, the "How to use TEAMS on xbox or PlayStation" link may be of interest. <https://youtu.be/mfrSceedsmE>



Additional resources to support parents and carers with online safety

#DITTO is a free online (e-safety) magazine in PDF format for schools, organisations and parents to keep them up to date with risks, issues, advice and guidance related to keeping children safe online, with a view to enjoying and learning about technology. A new edition is released approximately every 6 weeks. To subscribe, go to <https://www.esafety-adviser.com/latest-newsletter/> for further details.



TikTok is a social video app that allows users to share short videos. There is a family safety mode designed to give parents tighter control over how their children use the app. The safety feature will allow parents and carers to link their account to their child's and have direct control over the safety settings. Read the news story: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-51561050>



Safeguarding contacts/ guidance

Mr Sturla is our Designated Safeguarding Lead, supported by Miss McIver and Mrs Branton as Additional Safeguarding Leads.

Don't ignore your concerns or delay taking action.

- If there is immediate risk of harm to a child, call the Police on 999
- You can call Buckinghamshire County Council's First Response Team on 01296 383962 (out of hours: 0800 999 7677). They will listen to your concerns and decide on the appropriate course of action.

You can contact the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 (free service, lines open 24 hours a day). They will listen to your concerns, offer advice and support and can take action on your behalf if a child is in danger. You can also report concerns anonymously. For further information or to report your concerns online visit:

www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/

Support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

educate.against.hate

There has been a rise in student exposure to extremist ideas in 2020 partly as a result of increased time on the Internet, and also due to some high profile news stories. We would recommend all parents to view the link:

<https://educateagainsthate.com/parents/>

The following links will provide you further support at home:

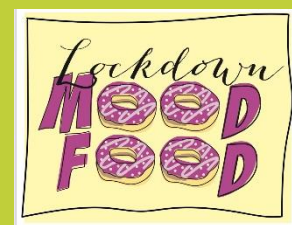
- [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [London Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
- [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers

The Daily Doodle Challenge

We know that Art and creativity can be a great outlet for stress and worry. With this in mind, the Art Team have launched a Daily Doodle Challenge – for entrants of all ages...

<https://www.instagram.com/waddesdonart/?hl=en>

Some early entries below:



Covid Testing

If you or your household feel unwell and/or have any symptoms, please do not come into school, or send your child until you have spoken to our Office Team.

In school our focus is on using LFD testing for asymptomatic carriers of the virus.

We ask that you continue to let us know if your son or daughter has had a positive test for Covid-19 so that we can keep track of contacts – some of whom may be in school – and also so that our teachers are more attuned to situations at home.

Please use the absence@waddesdonschool.com email address to inform us.

Thank you.



Website:
www.waddesdonschool.com



Contact:
01296 651382



Email:
office@waddesdonschool.com