



1 February 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Remote Pastoral Care Update

I am writing to give a further update regarding our ongoing pastoral care, to highlight children's mental health week and share further guidance around our behaviour addendum and synchronous (live) lessons.

Children's Mental Health Week 1-7 February 2021

This week we want students to express themselves and take on the challenge of doing something every day to support their mental health. Today we have launched the MER mental health challenge, please see [here](#) or the attachment to this letter for further information. Please support your child in having go at one of these activities each day.

Students' Wellbeing

As well as the focus on mental health this week, we want students to continue looking after themselves all the time, which I'm sure you will agree is of vital importance at this current time. Here are some suggested ways students can support their wellbeing every day, week on week:

Take notice

Take a break from screens to reflect on how they are feeling, allowing you and them to monitor and talk about wellbeing each day, encouraging students to open up about how they are feeling. Students can also track how they are feeling each day through the wellbeing function on Class Charts, this helps them to see their wellbeing entries over a period of time and reflect on this, whilst letting the school know how they are doing.

Connect

Stay connected - check in with people throughout the day: talk to teachers when in tutor or during lessons; catch up with friends before and after school hours; speak to parents/guardians throughout the day and let us know how you are feeling through wellbeing on Class Charts.

Be Active

Get active - getting up and moving away from the screen every hour is good to help them reset, but also students should be encouraged to get some exercise outside, ensuring that they adhere to government guidelines at all times.

Keep learning

Learning something new or honing existing knowledge gives us a sense of purpose and achievement. Whilst we're busy learning, we're less likely to experience anxious thoughts and worries.

Give

Give your time to people, make a cup of tea for someone in your family, give someone some positive words to support them, give time to you and take some time to do something you like.

Behaviour in online lessons

All students are expected to conduct themselves online and in virtual learning spaces in the same way that they are expected to do in school. The school's relevant policies e.g. Code of Conduct, Behaviour and Exclusion, Acceptable Use Agreement etc. will remain in force.

As far as possible, student behaviour concerns will be dealt with in the same way as usual and exclusions may be imposed. The exception to this will be detentions but parents/guardians will be informed of unacceptable conduct. We reserve the right to mute or remove a student from an online session if their language and conduct is unacceptable. We expect parents/guardians to support their child's school where disciplinary responses are required.

Students are not required to wear school uniform but, for both staff and students, an appropriate standard of attire is required, avoiding (for example) revealing clothing or unacceptable slogans and logos.

Tutor Time/Assembly – the start of each day

Tutor time has been a real joy for staff to ensure they are keeping in touch with students each day, but it has also provided, and will continue to give, students a pastoral support link with school on a daily basis. We have also seen that tutor time at 8:45am serves as a great way to get students ready for the day ahead. Please could I ask you to continue supporting us in ensuring that students make live tutor time each day.

Assemblies

We will continue to have our weekly assemblies via the Google Meet link in the relevant year group's Google Classroom. This is an opportunity for us as pastoral leaders to check in with you all, and to share "student shout outs" that have been completed by the teaching staff and highlight the brilliant effort you have been putting in during this challenging time. We are also celebrating your success through the Hot Chocolate Fridays with the Headteacher. This is a virtual celebration with Mr Johnson and you will receive a hot chocolate in the post. We will share the weekly winner during the year group assemblies.

Seeking support virtually

Just a reminder that students should seek support from school in the following ways:

- Speaking to their tutor in morning check ins;
- With their subject teacher in their Google Classroom or Gmail;
- With their HoY through the Google Classroom support page;
- By using the Class Charts wellbeing section to express concerns or worries.

Alternatively, parents and/or students can get in contact with the school via the school office at MERoffice@maidenerleghtrust.org. Typical reasons for seeking support would be if you are unable to log onto synchronous lessons, access the right IT equipment, unable to upload work and for wellbeing issues or concerns.

Enrichment Activities

Traditional extra-curricular clubs have not been possible at all during this school year, even when the school was open. Nevertheless, there are a range of opportunities being made available to students every week. The best place to find these is in the House Google Classrooms. Largely the emphasis for these activities involves getting away from online calls and screen-based activities. There are regular challenges open to all students ranging from building scientific models with lollipop sticks, through to making a lemon & lime cheesecake – this week's culinary challenge!

Engagement in Learning

We continue to monitor students' engagement in learning and we are doing this by taking a register for each synchronous (live lesson) and logging house points where students hand work in set during asynchronous lessons. We will continue to contact parents/guardians and offer support where we feel a student's engagement isn't quite up to the expected standards.

Parents/guardians can keep track of the work their child is being set, as well as their attendance to lesson through Class Charts for parents. Please log in to the app and/or via a web browser to see how your child is getting on. If you do not have your login for Class Charts, please contact the school office and we can help you.

For more information on the school timetable and on differing ways to support your child to learn remotely, please see the school website and our COVID response page [here](#).

Finally, thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Hood', written in a cursive style.

Mr D Hood
Assistant Headteacher