

Stour Valley Community School

27 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

We come to the end of week 1 of school closure due to COVID-19, a week of glorious spring sunshine, which has seen much stricter social distancing measures introduced. We are living through unprecedented times that will be a topic of study for its impact on the world in the future. Some students and staff are keeping diaries; if enough of us are doing that, we may look to publish a Stour Valley account of this period. I would encourage and recommend this as a reflective activity to all our students.

The first week of home-learning seems to be going well and students are engaging with their teachers via email when they need support. We hope that everyone is adapting to a new routine that involves some fresh air and exercise as well as keeping in touch with friends through social media. Joe Wicks seems to have become a part of many students' daily routine – staff supervising the children of key workers in school have been joining in too.

Miss Howard is our Mental Health lead in school and she has produced a support sheet which we will email to you today. If you follow us on Facebook we will post tips for keeping active, positive emotional well-being and e-safety. Mr Nunn shared this on Facebook yesterday:

Kooth.com is a free online counselling and wellbeing service. It is recommended by schools across the country, but has only recently become available in Suffolk. The increased levels of isolation we are faced with will affect us all in different ways. The availability of the Kooth service means that there will always be somebody on hand to listen to and advise young people.

<https://www.kooth.com/>

I would also remind you of our safeguarding email, which our safeguarding officers check regularly: safe@stourvalley.org Mr Nunn is our safeguarding officer and Mr Lee has responsibility for E-Safety.

There has been a lot on the news about 'home-schooling' – we are deliberately setting activities which students can get on with independently. Students should save any electronic completed work into their documents area on the school drive and keep any paper copies of work in a folder to bring into school with them when we return. We will set a new batch of school work every two weeks, including through the period that is on the calendar as the Easter holidays. What we set is about keeping the mind active and continuing with activities to support the school's learning programme whether this be at Key Stage 3 or GCSE. We do not intend that school work creates any stress at home.

If there are any IT issues, please contact itsupport@stourvalley.org

Year 11 update

Following the announcement regarding the cancellation of this summer's GCSE exams, can I firstly thank you for your patience whilst we, like all of you, have been coming to terms with this news.

It has been incredibly hard to provide reassurance to students in the absence of much information about how qualifications are going to be awarded. The Government has issued some greater clarity and we wanted to ensure a transparency with the community about information that we have received centrally. This can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/further-details-on-exams-and-grades-announced>.

In summary, schools will be asked to provide a calculated grade for each student that reflects their performance, taking into account a range of evidence such as mock exams and other non-exam assessment. Teachers will draw upon a wealth of information in making professional predictions, not just mock examination outcomes. This will be combined with other data about the students, including their prior attainment, to produce a final grade. The aim is that these will be issued to students by the end of July. If a student feels that their calculated grade does not reflect their performance, they will have the ability to sit an exam in the subject once schools are open again.

Rest assured, we will endeavour to ensure that students receive the credit that they deserve for all the hard work and effort they have put in. We can offer little further clarity at this time. As and when information filters through, we will update you as soon as possible.

We did tell Year 11 that we would deliver their leavers hoodies this week. However, following the new stricter social distancing measures announced on Monday, we did not feel this was appropriate. The hoodies (and the Y11 photos that were not collected) are all in school and we will organise for collection or delivery at a point when the restrictions are lifted.

We hope that you are all keeping safe and well.

Kind regards



STOUR VALLEY
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

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