

# Weekly FOCUS

18-12-2020

For Students & Parents

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Welcome to the latest issue of the weekly newsletter that aims to keep our communication lines open between home and college.

This term has been like no other. We have faced many challenges but we have been flexible and innovative in finding solutions that benefit all stakeholders, whilst keeping children safe and following a broad and challenging curriculum. I always like to reflect how far the school and students have come this term and how the community has pulled together.



**Dartmoor**  
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Before the summer holidays we were teaching students of key workers and all learning was remote. Staff attending school were on a rotation, teaching students, setting and marking online work, cleaning buildings and even delivering free school meals. It was challenging for parents of key workers even getting their child to school due to the disruption in transport links. Although our online systems were good they are light years ahead now in terms of impact on learning.

In September all students and staff returned to the college, some very anxious about returning. We had expected this rise in anxiety and provided additional support to students to get them back into the classroom and following a structured routine. There was, and still is a robust risk assessment in place. This is based upon latest Government guidance, to reduce the transmission of COVID 19 students were kept in communities (for lesson and recess times) and teachers rotated around the college. This meant that Year 7s had no transition time and effectively had all their lessons in the language faculty.

All meetings were remote including assemblies where important information is given, and meetings with external services as no visitors were allowed on site. However, each class now has a Google classroom where work is accessed and completed to support learning inside and outside of the classroom. We were proactive and were fully prepared with our systems to support our students working from home. With these systems in place, (Google Classroom, ClassCharts and various other platforms) we can continue the learning and keep the communication channels open with our students and parents/carers.

The advice and guidance kept changing during the term so flexibility was paramount. There was a problem with uniform as our main supplier was having difficulty with orders, but as always the community pulled together with donations and outstanding support to provide for our most vulnerable students. This generosity was extended and we received donations from Ms Dalton, Mrs Barbara Barker and Dr Alexander to support our aging IT stock and to help disadvantaged children. We also had our lovely Christmas tree donated from Mill Hill.



After half term we launched a tour of the college for prospective new students during a training day, and virtual events such as options and sixth form recruitment with a live Q&A. As the guidance and understanding about COVID 19 developed we could adjust our risk assessment. We know that ventilation and hand sanitising are the greatest mitigating factors against the spread of the virus. This is why we have to fully ventilate the buildings (even though it is cold), and ask students and staff to continue to use the hand sanitiser provided. This ultimately benefited the students by allowing them to be taught in specialist classrooms. To meet this RA, a strict one way system around each building was in place. It allows more movement between lessons in order to prevent groups congregating. Each year group had separate entrances, eating areas and must maintain the use of face coverings in the circulation spaces. Staff, students and parents and carers were exceptional in their support of the college.



With all this going on our attendance as a college is at 94% with Devon at 90% and National at 81%. This benefits everyone and another reason why the Tavistock community is one of the best! High quality teaching and learning is at our heart and we have not wavered leading up to Christmas Holidays as students have missed so much already. As a little thank you, we are providing all staff and students a free Christmas meal on Friday to enjoy whilst wearing their Christmas jumpers.

The Government announced yesterday that the first week of term will now be a staggered start for students. In January Year 11, Year 12 (with exams this year) and Year 13, should attend from Tuesday January 5. Children of critical workers, and vulnerable students may also attend. The first day of term for all students is Monday January 11.

There will be an asymptomatic testing service introduced for children identified as close contacts in January, but we are waiting on advice from the Government before we can send details.





## COVID 19

If your son/ daughter were to test positive for COVID 19 it is essential that you contact the school immediately to allow us to follow public Health England advice. If this test was to happen outside of term time please email, a member of the senior leadership team will be on duty checking these emails.

Office@tavistockcollege.org

In the rare case of this happening you will be notified via school communication. It will either be one of two different emails in line with guidance from PHE: A general email telling you we have had a confirmed case. Or, an email telling you that your child needs to self isolate for 10 days because they were in direct contact.

### Below is the government advice

We recommend all schools ensure staff, parents and carers are aware of the following information and relevant arrangements regarding positive cases in the holidays:

- Where a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school, the school should not be contacted. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.
- For the first 6 days after teaching ends, if a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, the school is asked to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school.
- School staff are not asked to remain on-call or conduct any contact tracing more than 6 days after the final day of teaching. Where a school's last teaching day is on Friday 18 December, there should be no pupil contact tracing asks beyond Wednesday 23 December.



Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

Sincerely, James Stroud

## Community spirit this Christmas

After an incredibly challenging year for everyone, many families will face hardship this Christmas. Tavistock College prefect team were determined to help support families in any way possible. They partnered with Tavistock Foodbank to create a donation appeal for those most in need.

*"From personal experience, I know how valuable the Foodbank is. I really wanted to do something for those who have nowhere else to turn this Christmas. We are over the moon with how it is gone."* Keely Andrew (Foodbank Project Manager)

*"We have been so delighted with the thoughtful, conscientious students that have been determined to do their bit to help the community. As a College, we are very proud of the sixth form prefects and all their successful campaigning and fundraising this term."*

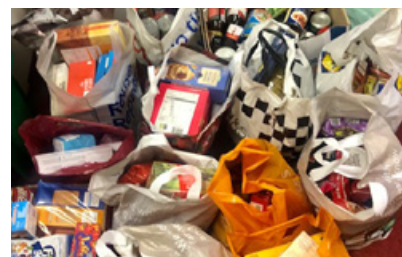


Left to right: Jenny Green (Head Student), Keely Andrew (Prefect), Phil (Tavistock Foodbank)

Sarah Jones (Principal)  
We have been truly overwhelmed with the response from Tavistock College parents, students and staff. Thank you to everyone that donated to this appeal, you have made a big difference to families in need. Wishing everyone in Tavistock a well-fed Christmas this year!



Left to right:  
Keely Andrew (Prefect) Tracey Allen (Sixth Form Administrator)  
Jenny Green (Head Student)

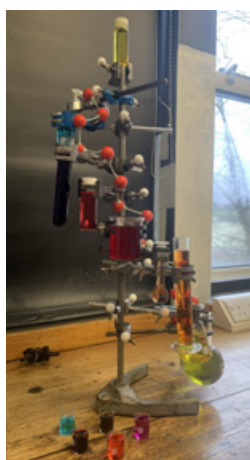




# A level 'Chemistree' work



"Year 12 and 13 chemistry students practised their fine practical skills by making solutions that would demonstrate the full colour spectrum. It is a very hard skill to be able to make solutions that react to create this full range using only 2 reactants and an indicator".  
*Mr Williams*



# Christmas competition

In a year that has sprung multiple, unprecedented challenges on families and the school community, the sixth form prefect team have been determined to create some festive cheer. They organised a tutor group competition in which tutors were asked to 'Decorate your Door' in the theme of Reflection and lessons learnt in 2020 and the promise of 2021. We were absolutely delighted to see the response from the tutor groups, it was truly uplifting to see all the efforts students went to with their doors. A huge well done to all those students and their tutors that took part. It was extremely tough to judge and after much consideration the principal Sarah Jones and organisers Heidi Turnock and Lily Walke decided upon the winner. Drum roll please.....

1st place: Mrs K Wyatt tutor group 8T



Featuring in the Top 5, were also:



8G - Mr Brockenshire



7G - Mrs Young



8FA - Mrs Neill

8DA - Miss Solman & Miss Hodge





# Family Support

## Grants and funding

Financial support through West Devon Council welfare support fund. [https://www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/document/grant-and-funding-support/#indiv\\_fam](https://www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/document/grant-and-funding-support/#indiv_fam)

## Back To School After Lockdown

Tips From An NHS Psychologist  
<https://www.mytutor.co.uk/blog/back-to-school-after-lockdown-tips-from-an-nhs-psychologist/>

## Barnados

See Hear Respond by Barnados.  
[www.barnados.org.uk/see-hear-respond](http://www.barnados.org.uk/see-hear-respond)  
A partnership to help children, young people and families cope with the Covid-19 crisis.

## Free Solihull online courses

- Understanding your baby
- Understanding your child
- Understanding your teenagers' brain

Link to the courses [www.inourplace.co.uk](http://www.inourplace.co.uk)  
access code TAMAR.

## Support for parents

[www.parent-talk.org.uk/devon](http://www.parent-talk.org.uk/devon)

## Free training from DIAS

Aimed at parent/carers supporting their child with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/demystifying-send-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-tickets-127732273669>

If you would like to know more please email:  
[megan.kenneallystone@devon.gov.uk](mailto:megan.kenneallystone@devon.gov.uk)

## Chat Health School Nurse

Text Messaging Service 07520631722  
An anonymous, confidential text messaging advice service for 11-19 year olds that enables them to contact their school nursing team with questions.

## The Alcohol Education Trust

[www.talkaboutalcohol.com](http://www.talkaboutalcohol.com) a range of really fun and engaging games and activities which help students to learn how to make safe choices around alcohol.

## Teen mental health

<https://www.mytutor.co.uk/blog/teen-mental-health-a-guide-for-parents/>

## Police prevent

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N8DPPQUem9A>

The police PREVENT Act Early campaign

## Coronavirus helpline

To answer questions about COVID-19 related to education. 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)  
Phone: 0800 046 8687 Email:  
[DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk](mailto:DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk)

## Kooth online

Mental health and wellbeing support to farming families. Services are anonymous and can be booked ahead of time.  
[www.rabi.org.uk/kooth](http://www.rabi.org.uk/kooth)

# Kooth online

We are delighted to announce that Kooth Plc is working in partnership with the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI) to deliver mental health and wellbeing support to farming families across England and Wales. Kooth and Qwell are available to all farmers and farming family members over the age of 10 with no referrals, waiting lists or thresholds to meet. Services are completely anonymous and can be booked ahead of time.

Kooth (CYP 10-18) and Qwell (18+) can be accessed by visiting [www.rabi.org.uk/kooth](http://www.rabi.org.uk/kooth)



**Online wellbeing support and counselling for farming people**

**Community Support**  
Relate and connect with others by sharing similar experiences, and gain valuable self-care tips and tools from our engaged community and professional team.

**Professional support**  
Our team of professionals aim to provide early response to emotional wellbeing as well as emerging mental health needs via our online site and counselling sessions.

**Self-help**  
Helpful articles, personal experiences and tips from our community and professional team. You can also set personal goals, write in your journal, or start a discussion with the community.

Visit [rabi.org.uk/kooth](http://rabi.org.uk/kooth)

# Free School Meals

May we remind you that if your child/children is/are eligible for Free School Meals you will have had a letter or other communication from Devon County Council asking you to register for vouchers under the COVID Winter Grant Scheme. You have until 18/12/20 to register for your vouchers. I regret that the college is unable to assist with this as we are not directly involved in the provision. There is further advice and signposting though at: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/document/free-school-meals-holiday-voucher-scheme/>

# Devon Early Help Funding

Devon Early Help has hardship funds available to help with food and utility bills over Christmas. We appreciate that some families will wish to keep their personal circumstances private but we encourage any family experiencing difficulties to consider contacting the local Early Help Hub [earlyhelpsouthsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelpsouthsecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk) or one of the locality officers; Locality Officer, Jane McArdle  
phone: 07970 120 791 email: [jane.mcardle@devon.gov.uk](mailto:jane.mcardle@devon.gov.uk)  
Locality Officer, Rebecca Rushton (known as Bexs)  
phone 07976 292 594

# Sweet tub collection

Following the success of your efforts last year, we have again signed up with Devon Contract Waste to raise money for Dartmoor Zoo and Mind. All students have to do is drop off all your clean plastic sweet and biscuit tubs (not takeaway containers!) in the bin in reception or the KS3 Hub, by 31 January. These will be collected by DCW, recycled and the money made donated to the charities. Last year we raised over £1000 so let's see if we can beat that this year.

Happy munching!

Mrs Coe



# Tavistock COLLEGE