



## Issue 3 (wk 6/4/2020)

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

As we enter the third week of this unprecedented national lockdown we are all beginning to get used to a 'new normal'. The role of schools and teachers as 'key workers' in allowing other key workers to operate has reinforced the positive and far reaching role that schools have within their local communities.

As in previous editions we hope that this newsletter can help provide useful links and advice, particularly to help with the new focus on home learning and how school and home can work remotely to support our students' education. At the end of this edition I have also included a 'year in review' page which will become a regular feature reminding us all of the fantastic events and achievements our students have been involved in over the course of the academic year.

As previously communicated to you, Tavistock College will be closed for the duration of the Easter weekend, from Friday 10th until Monday 13th April inclusive. Even given the current challenging and unpredictable circumstances I hope you and your children can all enjoy a relaxing and family orientated Easter break.

Take care and stay safe.

Mr Phil Ruse  
Assistant Principal

## **Free School Meals Information - Please be aware of scammers.**

*Please be aware that a number of parents across the country have been targeted by unscrupulous scammers.*

They are focusing on the parents of children who are eligible for Free School Meals. Any correspondence about Free School Meals will come from Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust, so please do not reply or respond to any approaches made to you asking for bank details etc.

*Dartmoor MAT*

## **Online support**

After the Easter holidays your children will continue to be supported by their class teachers to maintain their learning in this final term of the academic year. Class charts will remain the main tool for alerting students that work has been set, whilst many subjects will utilise google classroom to develop students' independence.

The government has released an updated document that collates a range of freely available online resources. This can be accessed via the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-online-education-resources-for-home-education>



## **How to protect your mental health During COVID-19- Source BBC NEWS**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51873799>

Coronavirus has plunged the world into uncertainty and the constant news about the pandemic can feel relentless. All of this is taking its toll on people's mental health, particularly those already living with conditions like anxiety and OCD. So how can we protect our mental health?

### **Limit the news and be careful what you read:**

- Limit the amount of time you spend reading or watching things which aren't making you feel better. Perhaps decide on a specific time to check in with the news
- There is a lot of misinformation swirling around - stay informed by sticking to trusted sources of information such as government and NHS websites

### **Have breaks from social media and mute things which are triggering your mental health.**

- Mute key words which might be triggering on Twitter and unfollow or mute accounts.
- Mute WhatsApp groups and hide Facebook posts and feeds if you find them too overwhelming.

### **Wash your hands - but not excessively**

- OCD Action has seen an increase in support requests from people whose fears have become focused on the coronavirus pandemic.
- For people with OCD and some types of anxiety, being constantly told to wash your hands can be especially difficult to hear.

### **Avoid burnout**

With weeks and months of the coronavirus pandemic ahead, it is important to have down time. Mind recommends continuing to access nature and sunlight wherever possible. Do exercise, eat well and stay hydrated.

### **Stay connected with people**

Increasing numbers will join those already in self-isolation so now might be a good time to make sure you have the right phone numbers and email addresses of the people you care about. There is lots of excellent technology out there to facilitate connecting to your family and friends.



## Children and online safety away from college

Tavistock College is doing all that we can to keep our learners safe. In most cases, the majority of children will not be physically attending college. All staff who interact with children, including online, will continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns will be dealt with as per the child protection policy and where appropriate referrals will still be made to children's social care and as required, to police.

We will maintain regular contact with parents and carers. Those communications should be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. It will be especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the college (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

Parents and carers may choose to supplement the colleges online offer with support from online companies and in some cases individual tutors. In their communications with parents and carers, Tavistock College will emphasise the importance of securing online support from a reputable organisation/individual who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children. Support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online includes:

- 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 carers 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

## Devon Coronavirus Advice from Devon County Council

Devon County Council has a section on its website where schools can:

- View the latest guidance about schools and school closures

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/document/schools-and-families/>

- Where to find other information and advice

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/>

CAHMS Mental Health Resources

Message from Sarah Lewis, Senior CAMHS Manager



- Window walk of Solidarity

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sEUFTSXZJ7cQ8hHGQKcEUKV6CUfErBop/view>

- Teens and Parents Pack

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Lt2V3v\\_ZC1d3fjqgYJ-euIgdAHNeK3pm/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Lt2V3v_ZC1d3fjqgYJ-euIgdAHNeK3pm/view)

- Anna Freud Supporting Schools and Colleges

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cvRNYGHAE51irxq5K8XWf34-lo04rSTJ/view>

We hope this will begin to be useful over the challenging months ahead.

## A Message for Y11 Parents, Carers & Students

*From Mrs Greener, Head of Year 11*

*Firstly I want to say how lovely it was to have a large number of year 11 students who attended school right up to the last minute that was available, it was heartening to see you smiling and interacting and supporting each other even in the challenging situation we found ourselves in. I completely understand why you couldn't all be there and we really missed all of those who couldn't be there, this infectious disease is affecting so many of us in so many different ways. In the first few days of isolation we were advised to keep to some sort of routine and I hope you are now getting into the swing of that, hopefully it is including some daylight, fresh air and exercise every day, a basic but well proven way of keeping us well. It is important to not become 'nocturnal.' It is tempting for some to stay in bed until late in the day and then stay up late at night. This can be a damaging situation to perpetuate as on return to school or college or apprenticeships you will find it hard to make the change back to a more usual routine. It is important to rest and recuperate from our busy daily lives, however keeping a normality ticking along is essential.*

*The events that have overtaken us are serious and we all need to do what we can. I commend the many of you that I have heard about who are doing all they can to help keep yourselves and siblings happy and occupied during this time. There are a lot of things you can do if you look for them, things that are helpful, constructive and move us forwards. I was delighted, for example, with the number of year 11s who have been in touch with teachers of A level subjects and with the head of 6th form looking to ensure they are ready for the next step. If you haven't done that but want to, feel free to email me your tutors or Mr Galli for advice. Some of you, I know, are not having a relaxing time but are fully occupied in essential ways; working on farms and in horticulture and supporting family members who are frontline workers.*

*For all of us there are aspects of the current situation that lead us to consider our mental and physical health with usual routines and contacts gone. I know you will use social media and other internet technologies to keep in touch with each other, please remember the people who you may not usually be in contact with who may be feeling very isolated, feel confident enough to be in touch and offer some social media friendship, it costs little time and effort to just drop a line and say 'hi.' Equally when in regular contact with a friendship group remember it is easy for people's mood to drop if you don't show a positive response to a post or funny picture, just a smiley face response is often all that is needed.*



The yearbook is being put together - if you have anything you would like put in, a picture of you and friends, a message or photo from a school activity please send it to me by email and I will ensure it goes off with the rest of the photos and things to be included. It would be especially nice to have something for the front cover - I have some ideas, but if you have something that you would like on there please let me know. Also it would be fantastic to have some things from you whilst in isolation, a poem, story, photo? The final thing to say about the book is that the items for your votes will be with you shortly, I am still working out how to get the voting done.

I miss you all so much and hope that you and your families are coping well with the situation. I know you as a year group well enough to know that you will be doing as much as you can to make this time pass positively and that you will support those around you. Remember it is Ok to accept help and support yourself when needed.

Missing you all!

Mrs Greener

[kooth.com](http://kooth.com)

<https://www.youngdevon.org/minds-that-matter-support/young-devon>

<http://www.tavistockcollege.org/parents/mental-health/>

## Mindfulness

Perhaps one of the few positive outcomes from these challenging times is the slower pace of life that a lot of us have been forced to embrace. The website below provides some interesting links and ideas about how we can maintain our own positive mental health in these difficult circumstances. Whether that be the opportunity to read more, increase the amount of exercise we do, or simply eat a healthier breakfast some of the good habits people are now developing can hopefully be maintained once we return to more normal times.

<https://mindfulnessinschools.org/misp-sit-together/>





## 2019-20: The Year in Review

It doesn't seem right to produce a school newsletter without any reports or articles about the very people that make the school what it is, our wonderful students. Clearly there is not much to report at the present time so what better opportunity than to use these weekly editions to reminisce about fantastic trips, sporting events, school productions and student achievements that have taken place during the first two terms this academic year.

First up is a report from September 2019 where our Creative Arts faculty ran a fantastic cultural trip to London, visiting the world renowned Globe theatre. Students completed a workshop and watched a professional performance.

### 'The Globe' London Trip

A large group of year 9-13 students went on a trip to Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London recently. It was an incredible experience where we discovered and experienced lots on a short time; we all found the architecture as well as the history, fascinating. It was interesting to know the different seat placings for the richer and poorer people in Shakespearean times and how that translated into contemporary theatre. We also found out about the different exits and entrances for characters. If, for example, a character were to exit or enter from above they were seen as going to heaven, however, if someone were to enter or exit from the trap door below the stage it would be seen as if they were going to or coming from hell. When we thought about this we could relate this to many moments in Shakespeare's work. We had a useful acting workshop with some professional actors. We focused on one particular



scene we were to see later performed in the theatre and broke down the language, pauses and possible meaning behind the words. The workshop helped us to know what was going on as the Shakespearean language can seem difficult to follow and master. It also helped us in our own attitude to Shakespeare and text work, our acting skills and understanding how we should emphasise certain words. For the GCSE students the experience will be able to be directly referenced in their GCSE Drama written exam.

The performance we saw was 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. We were expecting it to be hard and confusing to understand, however, the actors energy and characterisation helped the words and complicated narrative quickly started to make sense. The play was extremely well done and oddly immersive. Set in a timeless, multi-geographical location and using lots of modern day references (including taking selfies during the show!) it's clever use of regular, but fitting, audience participation constantly kept the audience drawn in and kept us deep in the world of the play, making the overall experience like none other. This audience participation included three of our own students being on stage in the pre show action and another audience member from the pit being used through the whole show to play the part of Starveling! The use of music and song (much of which was contemporary) alongside the brightly coloured costumes all added to the experience. We found the use of an open air theatre very interesting yet effective in making the play



seem realistic and natural - helicopters going by, pigeons in the auditorium and the sound of police sirens all somehow fitted in seamlessly. The experience of just being in Shakespeare's Globe and learning about its history was amazing and is certainly something that we will never forget.....it will also probably make that essay due next week a bit easier!



*Lily Randell and Oliver Crosher  
Year 10*