

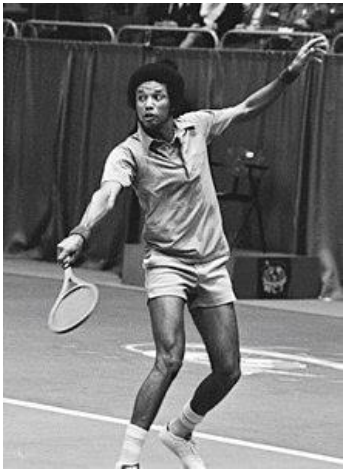


Waddesdon C of E School | Coronavirus Newsletter 17 – 25/01/21

'Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.'

The words which head up this edition of the Coronavirus Newsletter are from Arthur Ashe, the first black tennis player to represent the US in the Davis Cup, and the only black man ever to win Wimbledon, the US Open and the Australian Open. He retired in 1980 when he was ranked world no. 1.

For many of us (parents, students, teachers), this third lockdown feels harder than previous ones. Despite the promise that increases daily with the vaccination roll-out, we continue to face many challenges: cooped up teenagers, cooped up emotions and a sense of powerlessness at times. In recognition of this, Ashe's words offer me (and I hope you, too) a helpful balance of pragmatism and principle.



Of course, we continue to strive to do what we can, but we also acknowledge those aspects which are beyond our control.

Research from the University of Oxford on the impact of parents' and carers' mental health while supporting children with home learning has identified that levels of stress, depression and anxiety have increased with the pressures of providing support to children during the national lockdown. For this reason, in this edition of the newsletter, I include links and information to support you in all that you are trying to do, as well as the usual information and guidance which I hope continues to be useful.

Start where you are. Keep using what you have. Keep doing what you can. And keep contacting us.

Mr Abbott





Sources of Support

If you are interested in reading more about the research from the University of Oxford on parent and carer pressures, the [link](#) here takes you to more information courtesy of the BBC.

Amongst the concerns that parents have are their worries about their children's future, particularly those of secondary- age. Higher levels of stress were detected in low-income families, single-parent households, and those with children with special educational needs. Research also found that levels of stress and anxiety fluctuated throughout the year, stress being at its highest before the Christmas break.

As advertised in the last newsletter, the [Bucks Family Info](#) website provides a range of support for families on a number of issues.

Elevate Webinars for Parents and Carers to support home learning

Thank you for the positive feedback about Elevate's webinar which focused on sustaining children's motivation during home learning. We are pleased it was useful and that there were lots of practical tips. Elevate are offering the following free webinars in the coming weeks, with the link to register for the next webinar included below:

- Tuesday 9th February: Stress & Wellbeing: [register by clicking here.](#)
- Tuesday 2nd March: Preparing for Assessments
- Tuesday 23rd March: Managing Technology and Distractions

If you missed the webinar on motivation, you can watch the recording, [by clicking here.](#) There is also a two-page summary of the webinar with practical tips: [click here.](#)

A Healthy Mind in a Healthy Body

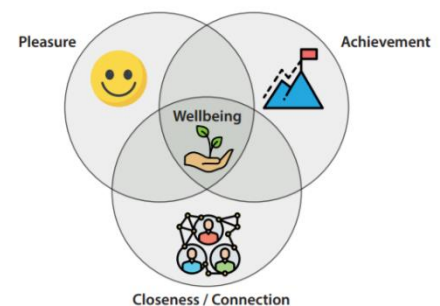
Produced during the first lockdown, Psychology Tools' [Guide to living with worry](#) provides helpful and sensible advice about addressing anxiety and well-being:

"Our world is changing rapidly at the moment. Given some of the news coverage, it would be hard not to worry about what it all means for yourself, and for those you love.

Worry and anxiety are common problems at the best of times, and when it takes over it can become all-encompassing. At Psychology Tools we have put together this free guide to help you to manage your worry and anxiety in these uncertain times.

Once you have read the information, feel free to try the exercises if you think they might be helpful to you. It's natural to struggle when times are uncertain, so remember to offer care and compassion to yourself, and to those around you."

You may find the activity menu a useful reminder of ways that you can reduce stress at home.



Ideas for staying active at home for children and young people with SEND

[Sensory circuits with Iain Mills](#)

Sensory circuits are designed to work on the fundamentals of learning and senses. By doing these regularly you should build up your strength and proprioceptive, vestibular and tactile senses. They also get you ready for learning.



[Special Olympics - school of strength](#)



Introducing a whole new way to exercise, featuring WWE Superstar Becky Lynch. Work out with these videos five times per week to help you stay fit. Watch them in order starting with video 1. Once you can do the exercise correctly, it is time to move on.

[Panathlon](#)

Panathlon have set students multi-skills challenges to do in their homes and gardens using everyday household items such as jam jars, rolled-up socks, tin cans, buckets and plant pots.



Applications for Waddesdon Sixth Form



Our option blocks for Year 12 2021/22 and our e-application form are available on the school [website](#).

The deadline for students to apply is 12th February 2021. Year 11 Parents' Consultation Evening is an excellent opportunity to talk to your son/daughter's teachers about their subject(s) in Sixth Form to inform his/her subject choices.

Once school re-opens, we will organise and hold each student's consultation in school, usually during CP lessons, when we can offer students further advice and guidance about their options.



Home Learning

EtonX Online Courses

It is fantastic that so many students have signed up for Eton College's prestigious online self-study courses, which we have secured free of charge for our students as follows:

Year 10: Creative Problem Solving

Year 11: Resilience

Year 12: Making an Impact

Year 13: Interview Skills

If your son/daughter would like to sign up, further details are on Show My Homework and also in a letter sent home last week. These courses are an excellent way for students to extend their learning at home and each student receives a certificate from Eton on completion of the course.

Sixth Form Home Learning

We've been impressed with how well the vast majority of students have risen to the challenges of home learning. Form tutors are meeting with students in registration daily via Teams and are feeding back to us about the positives as well as any issues and challenges as they are arising for students. There is a daily form focus on student well-being, home learning and all of the virtual career and super-curricular opportunities which are on offer, as well as our daily assembly.

Depending on their subject choices, some students are reporting having to work long hours well into the evening. What we've advised students is that they should use their designated lesson time to complete work as well as then using a/some study period(s), with a reasonable amount of time after school hours, just as is usual for Sixth Formers when they are in school. If working productively and work is still taking well into the evening to complete, the student should submit what they have completed to the teacher and ask for advice about how to make work more manageable.

On the other hand, if there is a day when students haven't as many lessons, Year 12s have access to the MOOC Challenge and the EtonX course; Year 13s know to use the time to carry on with their revision for mocks. If your son/daughter is struggling with home learning, please get in contact with the relevant Head of Year or Ms McIver.



Ofsted advice on home learning

For parents and carers who want to know more about the research behind effective home learning, Ofsted's [report](#) into the myths and advice to schools about what works is an interesting resource. It forms the basis of our approach during this period of lockdown and supports a blended approach.



Examination Information and Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs)



Department
for Education

The Department for Education (DfE) and Ofqual have launched a **consultation** for the summer 2021 exam series for [GCSEs, AS and A-levels](#).

This follows on from the Secretary of State's announcement that exams won't go ahead as normal this summer – and that the Government will work with Ofqual and exam boards on alternative arrangements.

Here are some of the proposals:

- A student's grade in each subject will be based on their teachers' assessment of the standard at which the student is performing, using a combination of evidence **that may include**:
 - results from papers provided by exam boards, but set by teachers to take account of differential learning. This will be supported by mark schemes, exemplar papers, other guidance on standardisation, and training from exam boards
 - non-exam assessment (NEA) in subjects where it applies
 - other performance evidence such formal tests, mock exam results and any substantial work completed by students.

In terms of timing, the DfE and Ofqual are proposing that:

- students are assessed by their teachers in a period beginning in May into early June
- teachers submit grades to exam boards by mid-June
- external quality assurance is carried out by exam boards throughout June
- results are issued to students after the quality assurance, most likely in early July.

The DfE and Ofqual say that students should be given time to complete their non-exam assessments (NEA), as this will contribute to the evidence teachers use to determine their grades. They are proposing that the exam boards should give guidance on adjustments that could be made to the way non-exam assessments are completed, to account for current circumstances.

The DfE and Ofqual have also [launched a consultation](#) to look at which Vocational, Technical, and other Qualifications will need alternative arrangements and how those arrangements should work.

The key issues for schools will be ensuring the application of a transparent process so that all students have an equal chance to succeed.

The work of the students and achievement in any assessments is therefore likely to be the best measure of how students may have done in the final GCSEs. This is why the work that students continue to do at home will benefit them in these examinations and beyond.

Schools will need to be mindful of quality assurance processes as advised by Ofqual and the DfE. The final Centre Assessed Grades will be based on evidence, rather than aspiration.



Hazard Alley, on behalf of Parentzone, is running a brand-new FREE quiz that explores the different things that families enjoy doing online.

Please join us for an hour filled with interesting questions and engaging interaction, all to test your knowledge about the digital world. There will be three rounds of questions. Some might be more challenging than others, but they may help to inspire new ideas for family conversations about tech, and what can be achieved together online and offline, as well as helping to close the digital gap between young people and their parents.

Who can take part? Your Digital Family quiz events are suitable for parents and young people in secondary school.

What do you need to take part? Just paper, a pen and a connected device – like a smartphone, tablet or laptop. Plus, an hour to take part as a family!

When is it? Monday 25th January 2021 at 7.00pm via a password protected Zoom link.

How do you take part? If you are interested in joining the Your Digital Family quiz, please contact katherine@safetycentre.co.uk for more details or to book a place.



Safeguarding contacts/ guidance

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

- 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). For further information or to report your concerns online visit: www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/



[Beat](#) provides advice and guidance relating to eating disorders, especially those which may be connected to the current situation.

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:

- [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

Share a good read!

Is your son or daughter an enthusiastic reader? If so, our librarian, Mrs Armstrong, is asking students to write recommendations and reviews of books. Please send submissions to library@waddesdonschool.com. Here's one of her own...

Jake and the other finalists in a story writing competition have been invited to a stately home for a tour like no other. As their guide leads them through grand rooms, hidden nooks and magnificent grounds, they are about to hear the stories of seven ghosts who haunt these walls.

But strange shapes and shadows follow Jake as he journeys through the house and the tour guide's behaviour becomes ever more suspicious. With each tale that he hears, Jake begins to feel more uneasy, and soon he will discover that something is very, very wrong...

A dyslexia friendly, short book which includes six very short ghost stories, this is a brilliant read if you like something a bit spooky with twists and turns. I couldn't put it down and even continued to read it whilst cooking dinner for my family! Recommended for Years 7, 8 and anyone who likes a classic ghost story.



Covid Testing and Lateral Flow tests in school.

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

Thank you.



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www.waddesdonschool.com



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