

PARENT BULLETIN: SUMMER TERM

Welcome to our very first remote summer term. It is not something we ever expected or had prepared for. We find ourselves facing at least two more weeks of lockdown and possibly beyond this. Whilst this is a challenging prospect for many families, we are determined to ensure that we support you by ensuring your son/daughter receives the best possible education whilst they are learning from home. We must remember that, at some point college will resume and life will get back to normal, therefore this time of remote learning is difficult for all but together we can make a difficult situation easier. College will provide lessons and learning materials, we hope parents will support us by ensuring feedback and two-way communication with staff.

We've all had to adapt to new ways of working, so I wanted to take the opportunity to say what an amazing job you're doing supporting your son/daughter's wellbeing and learning during this difficult time.

It's been a strange and challenging time, so it's natural to feel anxious and worried at the moment. We're here for you every step of the way as we figure this all out together. Remember, if you have any concerns about helping your son/daughter learn or you need any other support from the college, please let us know by emailing the helpline, helpline@newfriarscollege.org.uk, ringing 07923 429392 or 07763 260733 or contacting your son/daughter's class teacher directly through Class dojo.

- We miss the students very much, but we must follow the government's guidance to keep everyone in our community safe. But just because we're not all in the same building, doesn't mean we can't have some fun together so, we're carrying on with home learning by putting work daily on our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter page. Teachers will put the work on class dojo or in the dropbox also. Teachers have also put a link to a variety of websites which the students can access. The BBC have put on their biggest range of educational resources ever to support learning. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>

We also love seeing the students fantastic learning at home – please keep sending their work in by email as we would like to showcase it on our social media pages. If you or your son/daughter is having difficulty accessing work online, then please let us know and we will contact you as to how we can get work to you. Please contact the helpline or email us.

Safe & Well Checks

It is vital that we keep in touch with our students over this lockdown period and we have a duty of care to ensure that they are all safe and well. We very much appreciate parents responding promptly to our communications and hope that you are finding this contact helpful and reassuring. Thank you for the lovely feedback our staff have been receiving, we really appreciate it.

We hope you all keep safe and well and we can't wait till we can reopen and get back to our normal lives.

A couple of great news stories have emerged through this crisis. The pictures below celebrate them.

Best wishes, *Rob Millington and All the Staff at Newfriars College*



Mental health and Wellbeing

Public Health England have recently published COVID-19: guidance on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing, some of which may be useful for parents to use.

The guidance goes through the importance of parents looking after their own mental health.

It suggests some key points to consider supporting children and young people:

- Listen and acknowledge. Look out for any changes in their behaviour. Children and young people may feel less anxious if they are able to express and communicate their feelings. We understand that is very difficult for some of our students. Listen to them, acknowledge their concerns, and give them extra love and attention if they need it.
- Provide clear information about the situation: All children and young people want to feel that their parents and caregivers can keep them safe. Provide honest answers to any questions they have. Explain what is being done to keep them and their loved ones safe, such as washing their hands regularly.
- Be aware of your own reactions: It is important to manage your own emotions and remain calm, listen to and acknowledge children and young people's concerns, speak kindly to them, and answer any questions they have honestly.
- Create a new routine: Make a plan for the day or week that includes time for learning, exercising and relaxing; be active for 60 minutes a day; keep to bedtimes etc.
- Limit exposure to media and talk about what they have seen and heard: Try to avoid turning the television off or closing web pages when children come into the room. This can pique their interest to find out what is going on – and their imagination can take over. Try to answer their questions and reassure them in an age-appropriate manner, avoiding too much detail.

Please know that as a college, we will continue to provide as much support as we can. Other activities are just as important - cooking together, playing board games, reading a book together, going for a daily walk, going on a bug hunt, talking, etc. Parenting is not an easy job so please make sure you find time for yourself to relax. A very big thank you to you as parents for your support and to all the teaching staff for their dedication. We also say thank you to all the NHS, carers, fire and police services, shop workers, pharmacists, delivery drivers and all others who are continuing to provide services in these difficult times.

Please follow us on our brilliant social media pages and our website.

<http://www.newfriarscollege.org.uk/>



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twitter.com/Newfriars_Stoke

[instagram.com/newfriars.college/](https://www.instagram.com/newfriars.college/)



Keeping children safe:

Visit the NSPCC website for lots of information on keeping your child safe eg Online Safety, peer-on-peer abuse, parental advice etc.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/>

Think U Know is a good source of online safety advice.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>



You and Your family's mental health:

The Mental Health Foundation and Place 2 Be have lots of good advice to help you in talking to your child about the situation

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/talking-to-children>

<https://www.place2be.org.uk/about-us/news-and-blogs/2020/march/coronavirus-advice-for-families-staying-at-home/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/talking-to-your-child-about-coronavirus/>