



April 3rd 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I very much hope this email finds you safe and well. It is incredible to think back to how different things were for us all a month ago and how rapidly everything has changed. Thank you to all of you who have given us such positive feedback about the work our staff team have done to stay connected and support your children's education and well-being. The connections we have with you all mean a great deal to every one of us working at Colmers.

To update you as we go into the Easter Break:

We will **not be setting new work** for students during the Easter Break. We have gathered together some **great ideas** for on-line learning and different activities to keep mentally active and well during the school holidays. You can access these from our website <http://www.colmers.bham.sch.uk/easter/> and we will also keep you posted via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

School does remain open for **emergency provision only** over the Easter Break, excluding the 4 days of the Bank Holiday weekend, Friday April 10th – Monday April 13th. We will have a small number of staff in school and this means there will be someone available to take calls in reception if you have any urgent queries; please bear with us if we do not pick up immediately and in the event you cannot get through to us, do please email enquiries@colmers.school.

Well-Being and Safeguarding

Staying physically and mentally well is going to be a big challenge for us all during the coming weeks. As ever, we will do all we can to help you during this time. If you are concerned or worried about yourself or a loved one over the Easter period, we have also provided a comprehensive list of support services at the end of this letter, along with another copy of the well-being advice we sent out last week.

Contact Details

I hope by now that the majority of you have been in touch directly with either your child's form tutor or one of our pastoral team – it is really important with us we manage a check-in with you every couple of weeks to see how you all are and to find out if there is anything more we can do to help and support you and your children.

Our school closure has made it clear just how important it is we have the right contact details for you. Please do keep us informed straight away if you have a change of phone number or email address as it is absolutely vital we can keep in touch with you.

Free School Meals

Our final home delivery took place yesterday, with huge thanks to Jo Tuck and her catering team. Yesterday we received details of the voucher scheme that has been set up. These should reach you via email by the end of today or, if we do not have an email address for you, will be sent via the post to reach you early next week.

If during this time your circumstances change and you think you may be eligible for Free School Meals, **you can make a new claim for free school meals online**. Please review the eligibility guidance on our website <http://www.colmers.bham.sch.uk/free-school-meals/> and then make an application using the link at the bottom of the page, or using this address <https://tinyurl.com/uthyc7e>. If you need assistance with this, please contact main reception on 0121 453 1778.

Colmers Virtual School

By now, I hope you have either navigated our school portal with your child so they can find their daily work or else have received one of the work packs we are sending out. Now we have settled into the routines of our “Colmers Virtual School”, we are keen to find ways to make sure your child stays on track with their learning.

After the Easter break we will continue with our daily lesson structure, which is intended to help you and your child organise their day – we know how much a routine can help while lockdown is in place. It is also important we recognise there may be times and even whole days where it is difficult to stay focused: taking breaks and allowing for those dips is going to be important for everyone’s well-being. It might be that over the break, there is work your child have missed that they can catch up on, or alternatively we have provided lots of other ideas for wider learning that you might find helpful while we are on the school break. Below is a list of just some of the sites you and your family might find helpful. There are more ideas on our website for you to tap into.

Resources for home education

Resource	Website
BBC Learning	http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/coursesearch/
Futurelearn – free access to 100s of courses.	https://www.futurelearn.com
Seneca – Revision for GCSE and A’Level	https://www.senecalearning.com
Openlearn – Free taster courses aimed at those considering University (Year 11 / 12 / 13s)	https://www.open.edu/openlearn/
Blockly – learn computer programming skills	https://blockly.games
Scratch – Creative computer programming	https://scratch.mit.edu/explore/projects/games/
Ted Ed – engaging educational visits	Ted Ed https://ed.ted.com
Duolingo – learn languages for free.	https://www.duolingo.com
Free science lessons	https://mysteryscience.com
Eide range of educational videos	https://thekidshouldseethis.com https://thecrashcourse.com
Science awards to complete from home	https://www.crestawards.org
Digital enterprise award scheme you complete online	https://idea.org.uk
Tinkercad	https://www.tinkercad.com
Prodigy Maths activities	https://www.prodigygame.com
Twinkl interactive activities and lesson resources	https://www.twinkl.co.uk

Stay safe and well over the Easter Break and, as ever, if you need to get in touch, please do not hesitate to email me, eleaman@colmers.school.

Best wishes,



Emma Leaman
Headteacher



Worried or concerned about yourself or a loved on?

Whether you're concerned about yourself or a loved one, these helplines and support groups can offer expert advice.

Mental Health Support

Anxiety UK

Charity providing support if you have been diagnosed with an anxiety condition.

Phone: 03444 775 774 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 10pm; Saturday to Sunday, 10am to 8pm)

Website: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Bipolar UK

A charity helping people living with manic depression or bipolar disorder.

Website: www.bipolaruk.org.uk

CALM

CALM is the Campaign Against Living Miserably, for men aged 15 to 35.

Phone: 0800 58 58 58 (daily, 5pm to midnight)

Website: www.thecalmzone.net

Men's Health Forum

24/7 stress support for men by text, chat and email.

Website: www.menshealthforum.org.uk

Mental Health Foundation

Provides information and support for anyone with mental health problems or learning disabilities.

Website: www.mentalhealth.org.uk

Mind

Promotes the views and needs of people with mental health problems.

Phone: 0300 123 3393 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm)

Website: www.mind.org.uk

No Panic

Voluntary charity offering support for sufferers of panic attacks and obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). Offers a course to help overcome your phobia or OCD.

Phone: 0844 967 4848 (daily, 10am to 10pm). Calls cost 5p per minute plus your phone provider's Access Charge

Website: www.nopanic.org.uk

OCD Action

Support for people with OCD. Includes information on treatment and online resources.

Phone: 0845 390 6232 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5pm). Calls cost 5p per minute plus your phone provider's Access Charge

Website: www.ocdaction.org.uk

OCD UK

A charity run by people with OCD, for people with OCD. Includes facts, news and treatments.

Phone: 0333 212 7890 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

Website: www.ocduk.org

PAPYRUS

Young suicide prevention society.

Phone: HOPELINEUK 0800 068 4141 (Monday to Friday, 10am to 10pm, and 2pm to 10pm on weekends and bank holidays)

Website: www.papyrus-uk.org

Rethink Mental Illness

Support and advice for people living with mental illness.

Phone: 0300 5000 927 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4pm)

Website: www.rethink.org

Samaritans

Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

Phone: 116 123 (free 24-hour helpline)

Website: www.samaritans.org.uk

SANE

Emotional support, information and guidance for people affected by mental illness, their families and carers.

SANEline: 0300 304 7000 (daily, 4.30pm to 10.30pm)

Textcare: comfort and care via text message, sent when the person needs it

most: www.sane.org.uk/textcare

Peer support forum: www.sane.org.uk/supportforum Website: www.sane.org.uk/support

YoungMinds

Information on child and adolescent mental health. Services for parents and professionals.

Phone: Parents' helpline 0808 802 5544 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4pm)

Website: www.youngminds.org.uk

Abuse (child, sexual, domestic violence)

NSPCC

Children's charity dedicated to ending child abuse and child cruelty.

Phone: 0800 1111 for Childline for children (24-hour helpline)

0808 800 5000 for adults concerned about a child (24-hour helpline)

Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

Refuge

Advice on dealing with domestic violence.

Phone: 0808 2000 247 (24-hour helpline)

Website: www.refuge.org.uk

Addiction (drugs, alcohol, gambling)

Alcoholics Anonymous

Phone: 0800 917 7650 (24-hour helpline)

Website: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

National Gambling Helpline

Phone: 0808 8020 133 (daily, 8am to midnight)

Website: www.begambleaware.org

Narcotics Anonymous

Phone: 0300 999 1212 (daily, 10am to midnight)

Website: www.ukna.org

Alzheimer's

Alzheimer's Society

Provides information on dementia, including factsheets and helplines.

Phone: 0333 150 3456 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm and 10am to 4pm on weekends)

Website: www.alzheimers.org.uk

Bereavement

Cruse Bereavement Care

Phone: 0808 808 1677 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

Website: www.cruse.org.uk

Crime victims

Rape Crisis

To find your local services phone: 0808 802 9999 (daily, 12pm to 2.30pm and 7pm to 9.30pm)

Website: www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Victim Support

Phone: 0808 168 9111 (24-hour helpline)

Website: www.victimsupport.org

Eating disorders

Beat

Phone: 0808 801 0677 (adults) or 0808 801 0711 (for under-18s)

Website: www.b-eat.co.uk

Learning disabilities

Mencap

Charity working with people with a learning disability, their families and carers.

Phone: 0808 808 1111 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

Website: www.mencap.org.uk

Parenting

Family Lives

Advice on all aspects of parenting, including dealing with bullying.

Phone: 0808 800 2222 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 9pm and Saturday to Sunday, 10am to 3pm)

Website: www.familylives.org.uk

Relationships

Relate

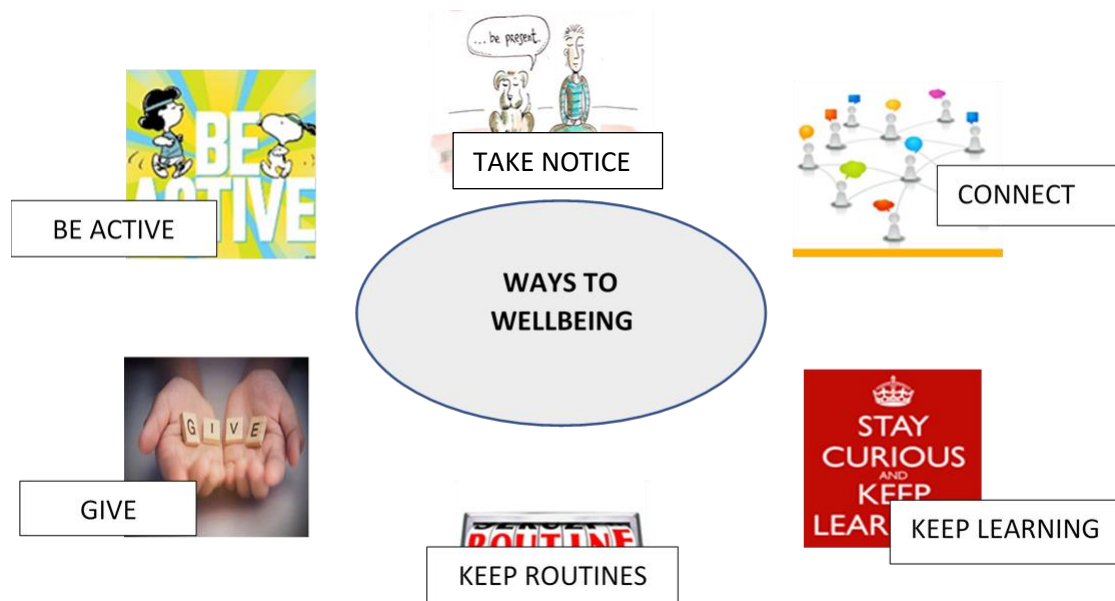
The UK's largest provider of relationship support.

Website: www.relate.org.uk

Looking after our Mental Health

There is a lot of uncertainty around the current COVID-19 outbreak. Understandably, this is causing a lot of worry and anxiety for people. It is really important to not only consider our physical health but also to pay attention to our mental health.

It is normal to feel worried, stressed and anxious when we are faced with uncertain situations. Here are a few tips to help you look after your emotional wellbeing.



1. BE ACTIVE

Try to ensure that you get exercise every day. You Tube has lots of exercise videos for kids and adults. If current government advice allows, try to get outside once a day. If you can't go out, open the windows for some fresh air and take some time to look at the world outside.

2. TAKE NOTICE

Take a break from the news and social media and concentrate on what's happening in the here and now with your family. There's lots of good mindfulness apps you could try alternatively just getting into something you enjoy e.g. cooking, drawing etc can be just as beneficial.

3. CONNECT

Social connection is one of the most important ways that we can look after our mental wellbeing. We're lucky enough to have technology to help us out. Social media is great, but if you can, try to have phone calls or even video calls. Arrange to Facetime/Skype a friend, phone relatives.

4. GIVE

Giving back to our community helps people to feel valuable and makes us happier. You may not be in a position to offer practical support but we can offer mutual support to friends and family by checking in with them regularly.

5. KEEP LEARNING

Learning a new skill and or improving an existing one gives us a sense of purpose and achievement. Whilst we're busy learning, we're less likely to experience anxious thoughts and worries. Social-

distancing will bring new challenges, but it will also give many of us the time to start a new hobby or learn about an area that we've always been interested in.

6. ROUTINES

Try and keep to a structure and routine that suits you. Keep bedtime and morning routines close to existing ones to promote a sense of normality. Get up and dressed during the week at the same time as it will help maintain some difference between weekdays and weekends.

Other Sources of support

Support	Description of support	Contact Details
Samaritans	Support if you feel you need to talk to someone about your feelings or are worried about someone you know.	Call 116 123 https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/
Mind UK	UK mental health charity	https://www.mind.org.uk/ https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/support-community-elfriends/
Kooth	Online Therapy for anxiety and depression	www.kooth.com
Young Minds	Useful website for young people with regards their wellbeing and mental health	www.youngminds.org.uk

Resources for home education

Remember all work is available on the school portal. Work packs available on request if no internet / IT provision. Send a piece of work into school once a week and enter the competition.



Resource	Website
BBC Learning	http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/coursesearch/
Futurelearn – free access to 100s of courses.	https://www.futurelearn.com
Seneca – Revision for GCSE and A'Level	https://www.senecalearning.com
Openlearn – Free taster courses aimed at those considering University (Year 11 / 12 / 13s)	https://www.open.edu/openlearn/
Blockly – learn computer programming skills	https://blockly.games
Scratch – Creative computer programming	https://scratch.mit.edu/explore/projects/games/
Ted Ed – engaging educational visits	Ted Ed https://ed.ted.com
Duolingo – learn languages for free.	https://www.duolingo.com
Free science lessons	https://mysteryscience.com
Eide range of educational videos	https://thekidshouldseethis.com https://thecrashcourse.com
Science awards to complete from home	https://www.crestawards.org
Digital enterprise award scheme you complete online	https://idea.org.uk
Tinkercad	https://www.tinkercad.com
Prodigy Maths activities	https://www.prodigygame.com
Twinkl interactive activities and lesson resources	https://www.twinkl.co.uk