



ST MICHAEL'S CE MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Newsletter No.5

22nd January 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

First of all, can I thank you for the tremendous feedback you have given us in the Trust survey's and directly to staff. We had such an overwhelmingly positive response that it has been a real encouragement. Thank you to everyone who added a comment- I shared these with staff and it was a positive emotional lift after a very challenging start to term. On page 2 I have added some responses to the questionnaire already shared by the Trust.

SAFETY– Clearly the way you operate as a family has to change with the times. If you haven't already significantly increased your ability to protect your child online please think again. As well as scammers trying to take your money, there are several new messaging and social media apps which lack the proper regulation for our age groups meaning that your child is potentially exposed to harm. Someone once said you trust your child but you wouldn't leave them in a jungle overnight so equally don't let them have their phones/ipads in their room at night time. We have more detail on page 3 of this news letter to help you.

COVID TESTING– I am pleased to say that Public Health Dorset have recognised that Government advice did not make sense for Middle Schools and have now approved the use of our Lateral Flow Tests for Year 5 & 6. Those children attending school because their parents are involved in critical work are now eligible for testing so please look out for the details sent today to register and consent for your child to be included.

READING– I always say that reading is the engine oil for your brain; if you are not reading your brain will lose capacity! We have many more resources to help with that and if you haven't been to our reading page on our Website please visit today: <https://www.stmichaelsmiddle.org/page/?title=Reading&pid=170>

As well as answers to lots of questions you will find many free resources including a free newspaper for young people: <https://subscribe.firstnews.co.uk/free-downloadable-issue/>

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP– We continue to provide daily Collective Worship through lockdown and I am grateful to Vicar Suzanne, youth workers Jarred and Skittles and the eternal Stephen Gillham who some of you may remember from your own schooling locally for supporting us with this provision. The videos and other resources are being shared through Google Classroom code: rlcdmvw

Kind regards,

Mr Jenkinson

School Meals

School meals are becoming very popular. A reminder if you would like your child to have a school meal these must be ordered a week in advance using the link sent out. Please ensure your child's account is topped up. A reminder to free school meal pupils to also book in their lunches in advance as food orders need to be placed on the Friday before. If your child is not attending school and you are entitled to free school meals you will receive weekly school meal vouchers from Edenred. Any queries please do not hesitate to contact the school office either by email office@stmichaelsmiddle.org or by calling 01202 883433.

Trust Survey Feedback:

You Said: *How about some wellbeing and mental health exercises to go alongside the learning?*

What we're doing: You will be able to see on our school websites our remote learning offer which includes some resources to support mental health and wellbeing. We are now working to include pastoral registration sessions, assemblies and other opportunities into our timetable.

You Said: *We'd like more live lessons / Too many live lessons!*

What we're doing: Ofsted and the department for education said this week that live lessons aren't necessarily the 'gold standard'. However, now we have the technology, we believe they are a great tool to ensure engagement in learning and boost pupil wellbeing. We do recognise that this varies for different age pupils.

You Said: *We're not tech wizards, and there's not enough kit or internet to go around at home*

What we're doing: Across the Trust, 314 Google Chromebooks have been delivered to families since September 2020 and 16 remain in stock to address ad Hoc needs.

Since January 2021 we have ordered a further 139 under the DfE scheme which will be delivered w/c 18th January. These will be distributed according to need identified by Head Teachers.

The Department of Education has also teamed up with a number of major mobile network operators to provide free extra data for families who need it.

Please liaise with your child's school if you are struggling with any of these aspects.

We also have a parent support page here <https://parentsupport.wimborneacademytrust.org/>

You Said: *Please give us more notice when resources are needed for a lesson*

What we're doing: As you know we didn't get much notice about this lockdown so our first week was incredibly rushed. Now that we settle into a new routine we aim to have any resources available in plenty of time. Please continue to answer our surveys and provide feedback so we know we're getting it right.

You Said: *It looks great, but can you let us know how our kids are doing?*

What we're doing: Our normal reporting procedures will continue. Please note that all Wimborne Academy Trust schools have moved away from recording individual feedback on pupils' work, as per national guidance on feedback and this will continue to be the case online too. Staff will be in contact if there is a problem with your child's progress as quickly as possible. There are many different ways we are assessing children across this period which includes our digital platforms and the old-fashioned methods! Most feedback will be given through Google Classroom for most year groups, and Tapestry for reception children.

Additional response from St Michael's:

You Said: *The work is too much / not enough*

What we're doing: We are making it clearer when we set work which elements are critical core learning and which aspects are extensions/optional to help you balance the amount of work being done. The vast majority of respondents indicated work was about right but if your child is finishing quickly please ensure they are reading, completing Tassomai and Hegharty Tasks and if required please also use BBC and Oak Academy resources.

You Said: *There aren't enough break times*

What we're doing: We use a school timetable with pupils in school which includes at 15 minute morning break at 10.40 and 45 minute lunch break from 12.45. With the exception of live lessons and morning and afternoon registration, please feel free to organise time at home around the needs of your child and family commitments. You are not required to stick to our timings for all aspects of the day.

TERM DATES 2020-21

Half Term Holiday

Monday 15th – Friday 19th February

Pupils Return

Monday 22nd February

Last Day of Term

Wednesday 31st March

Additional Staff Training Day

Thursday 1st April

Summer Term 2021

First Day of Term

Monday 19th April

May Day Holiday

Monday 3rd May

Half Term Holiday

Monday 31st May – Friday 4th June

Staff Training Day

Monday 7th June (First and Middle Schools Only)

Pupils Return

Tuesday 8th June (First and Middle Schools Only)

Last Day of Term

Friday 23rd July (Early finish 12.45pm)

Re: Lockdown 3.0 online safety concerns, health and wellbeing

We hope that you and your family are well and staying safe during this period of national lockdown? You will have received details regarding online safety which have been brought to our attention. The guidance in this letter focuses on health and wellbeing and some general reminders to help us all maintain the highest standards possible.

Remote Learning – our expectations of pupils

- Check Google Classroom for the tasks and activities set each day
- Be proactive in contacting the subject teacher if additional help or support is needed or they are struggling to meet a deadline
- Complete any tasks or activities to the best of your ability
- Upload any work due via the appropriate Classroom assignment

Live Lessons and our expectations

Live lessons are going well and are popular with both staff and pupils as staff develop their software skills. We are asking students to use their cameras when they register both in the morning and the afternoon so that students interact with others during the lockdown and continue to develop friendships with their peers. It is also very reassuring for us, as teachers, to be able to see students when we speak with them.

During 'live lessons' if your child has a webcam we are encouraging them to have it switched on and for them to actively contribute to the learning taking place.

Managing screen time is important. Attending live lessons is compulsory but we do understand that others set work can be completed at different times in the day. Exercise, baking, reading are all activities we would encourage students to participate in to reduce their screen time.

Further details can be located on the schools website <https://www.stmichaelsmiddle.org/page/?title=Lockdown+%2D+Home+Learning&pid=158>

Safety online

The Year 5 IT curriculum covers online safety. We will be covering this in February but please do reinforce that we only communicate with people we know.

Good Advice on How to Support your Child during the Lockdown

To help you as parents I would encourage you to have a look at the Supporting children wellbeing during COVID-19 lockdown video by Dr Linda from Internet Matters. It's only 2mins! www.internetmatters.org also has some good practical tips and advice for parents about enabling their children to stay safe online.

I would encourage you to follow the NSPCC's advice for keeping kids safe online. Here are their 5 top tips:

- 1) Agree some rules about how they spend their time online
- 2) Set up parental controls on your child's device
- 3) Help them master the basics
- 4) Look out for signs they might need some support
- 5) Find the right time to talk about online safety. There is plenty more great advice on their site www.net-aware.org.uk

Dorset MIND will also support students. The following link is aimed at KS3 students <https://dorsetmindyourhead.co.uk/services/wellbeing-checkin/>

The link below also offers support and advice regarding managing stress, helping with sleep, writing a gratitude journal and much more. We hope you find this helpful?

<file:///C:/Users/ntaylor/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/61QTXQYT/Stay%20at%20home%20advice%20-%20Resources%20for%20mental%20health%20and%20wellbeing.html>

Thanks you for all your support during these challenging times. We look forward to getting all St Michael's students back in school.

Guidance for schools around illness and school absence

We understand that schools are receiving a lot of calls and questions about the health of their pupils.

With children starting to mix together again, it is likely that they are going to get seasonal colds and coughs but not all illnesses mean they must stay off school or self-isolate.

We want to remind you that COVID-19 symptoms are a **high temperature** (hot to touch on the back or chest), a new **continuous** cough (continuous cough is coughing consistently for a while and not just every now and again), a **loss of or change to your taste or smell**.

More detail of the symptoms can be found: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

Please see below of different types of illness and what action should be taken:

COVID-19

What to do if...	Action needed...	Return to school
...my child has COVID-19 symptoms*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not come to school - Contact school to inform us - Self-isolate the whole household - <u>Get a COVID-19 test</u> 	...the test comes back negative
...my child tests positive for COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not come to school - Contact school to inform us - Agree an earliest date for possible return. (Min 10 Days) - Self-isolate the whole household 	<p>... they feel better. They can return after 10 days even if they have a cough or loss of taste/smell. These symptoms can last for several weeks</p> <p>All children who test positive must complete the</p>
...my child tests negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact school to inform us - Discuss when your child can come back (same/next day) 	...the test comes back negative and your child feels well enough to re-

*COVID-19 symptoms are: a high temperature, a new continuous cough (continuous cough is coughing consistently for a while and not just every now and again), a loss of or change to your taste or smell

Vomiting and diarrhoea

If a child has sickness and diarrhoea they should not come to school. Parents/carers should contact the school to inform them of a child's absence and ring the school on each day of illness.

A child can return to school 48 hours after the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea. Check the schools' sickness absence policy for more information.

Colds

If a child is poorly with symptoms of a cold such as a runny nose or sore throat,

- Check temperature and for symptoms of COVID-19
- If no COVID-19 symptoms, come to school if well enough
- If not well enough, ring on each day of illness

The child can come back to school when they feel well enough and are not showing symptoms of COVID-19

For all other advice around schools relating to COVID-19 please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>