



T&L Times

Well Being Edition 3— 15th June 2020

Welcome

With the secondary school pupils in year 10 due to return in greater numbers today and having had our first week of extended numbers in Primary; well being of both staff and pupils continues to gain greater and greater importance as the days go on. We hope that this weeks range of support and resources will support you in maintaining a positive well being. As always we start with our inspirational quote.

“Your mental health is a priority. Your happiness is an essential. Your self care is a necessity”

Unknown

Valuable Viewing

With some of our pupils maybe facing a greater risk of having to deal with Bereavement, Optimus have a very good video that they have put together to support in this area. In this video, recorded at the Independents Schools' Wellbeing conference, Tracey Boseley of Child Bereavement UK shares how schools can provide practical support to pupils who have experienced bereavement, including suicide. Her workshop includes:

- children's understanding of death
- theories of grief and grieving behaviour
- language use around suicide
- what bereaved pupils want from school
- sources of support and information.



To access the video click on the following picture above

Range of Resources

Mental ill health is the single largest cause of disability in the UK

With nearly one in ten children having a mental health disorder

The vision of the Anna Freud Centre is a World where children and families are supported effectively to build on their strengths and to achieve their goals in life

To access the website and range of really great resources then click on the picture below:



Returning Reluctance

With many of our year 10 pupils returning to Rivermead and Triple R this week there may be a number of worries and concerns that they may have. We have a look at a few key questions which they may have.

There is one thing we can guarantee in these inconsistent times; when our young people return to school, they will be full of questions, concerns and complaints they want us to address.

So, what might some of these be and how can we support them by addressing them the best we can?

1. 'Why us?'

If you have staggered starts, with different year groups coming in on different days or times, this is going to be one of the first things they are going to want to ask, especially if friends and family are still at home.

We know that for Year 12 and Year 10 there is a quick answer in terms of exams, but that doesn't mean those groups won't ask. Some may even feel they have been working fine at home and school has become redundant.

The answer is simple: "You and your learning are important, so we want to make sure you have everything you need to make progress and we can't always do that remotely."

Not to mention, of course, reminding them that we are pleased to see them face to face. Sometimes that can get lost among all the media debate about who should or should not be in school.

2. 'We haven't learnt this/you didn't set this!'

Hearing this statement lets you know you are definitely back in the game. It

could be a wet Tuesday afternoon in any classroom across the country, indeed possibly the world.

There will undoubtedly be gaps in learning. We know that even when they are in front of us in the classroom. We have to use all the skills we have to ensure the learning becomes embedded in long-term memory.

In the world of remote and home learning, we know many haven't been able to access all materials and some will have struggled to understand. Then, of course, without chances to review and apply learning regularly, the information may have gone in one ear and out the other.

Start the learning process again by building up from a point you knew they were confident, and learning was embedded. This will build their confidence and allow them to start retrieving those things they think might be gone.

Some may also have fallen out of the habit of thinking hard, so initial complaints of "I don't know" and "We didn't do this" should subside as you gradually reintroduce this process.

The "You didn't set this" is often heard when it comes to homework, too – usually, a quick flash of the online resources means this cry subsides to a mutter. The same approach can be applied here.

3. 'Have the rules changed?'

In the same way students may have forgotten what it means to think hard, they may also have got a bit wobbly on the rules and expectations.

Rules provide a sense of security, so it is unsurprising students will be wondering what these are and if they can rely on them still, especially with so many other things being different. This is another good reason to clarify them at the start.

They may want to test those boundaries and may use this to unconsciously demonstrate that they need some more support. We will all be in very different places emotionally.

Continue to be as firm, fair, consistent and familiar as possible in these unprecedented times.

4. 'Are we safe?'

This is the big question, one that we all perhaps are dreading.

As much as we keep up to date with the official guidance, there has to be a degree of trust in the school teams who have devised the return procedures, and we need to reassure students that those providing this guidance are trying to keep us all as safe as possible.

Remind them of all the things in place to protect them and the reason that lockdown happened was to allow us to try to make them as safe as possible and keep them that way. This may not be an easy question to respond to, especially when we might have our own concerns, but we need to be as clear, honest and reassuring as possible.



Super Support

Are you or are you related to someone in the BAME community? If the answer to either of these questions are yes and you have worries in relation to the Covid-19 crisis especially then the following website may be of help:

<https://www.ubele.org/covid19-supporting-bame-communities>

It is full of support and publications which you might find helpful and support with any worries of concerns that you might currently have.



Amazing Apps

There are a range of amazing apps out there to support your mental well being. We have a look at our top five recommendations. Click the picture of the app to be able to download it.



Smiling Mind

A meditation program developed by psychologists and educators to help bring mindfulness into your life



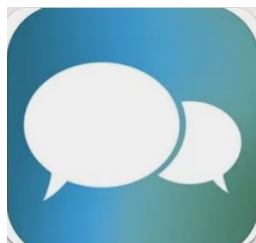
MoodKit

Uses CBT principles to help with low mood and anxiety.



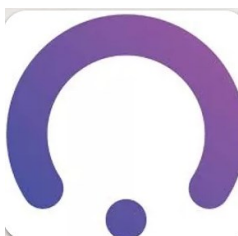
Stop Breathe Think

Check in with how you're feeling, and try short activities tuned to your emotions.



Check In

The Check-in app helps take the fear out of having a conversation with a friend who might be struggling.



Clear Fear

Clear Fear provides you with a range of ways to manage anxiety.

Regular Reminder

As part of the Trust we buy into the **Care First Package**.

How do I use the service? The service is free of charge for you to use and you don't need to ask your manager to use Care first, just call **0800 174319** and you can speak to a professional counsellor or information specialist in confidence. Care first is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and is accessible by phone or online.

Digestible Documents

In our digestible documents this week we look at the issue of members of the BAME community speaking out about Racism in school and the stress this causes.

Teachers from black and ethnic minority (BAME) backgrounds are often "too scared" to complain about racism, and fear that to do so could harm their chances of promotion, according to an award-winning academic and teacher.

Khadija Mohammed, speaking in the latest *Tes Scotland* podcast, draws on her own research interviews with teachers who have expressed fears about the ramifications if they speak out.

She said they are "too scared to articulate...that actually what they're experiencing is racism. And they say, 'I don't want to play the "race card"... because I can kiss all chances of job promotion goodbye.'

"That to me is concerning: when a teacher cannot approach their headteacher and raise a concern."

Tes Scotland asked Ms Mohammed – a senior lecturer at the University of the West of Scotland's School of Education and Social Sciences – about comments in November 2018 from Ken Muir, chief executive of the General Teaching Council for Scotland, who said he was "sickened" by racism in schools and that little progress had been made a quarter of a century.

She said: "I think that there are positive steps, absolutely, I think we're heading in the right direction [but] there's still a lot of work to be done."

Sometimes, small steps such as taking the time to get a child's name correct could make a difference: "It's something so simple, but yet so significant."

But Ms Mohammed said: "From the research that I've conducted, it's very clear that we do have some teachers in our schools in Scotland who perhaps are not actually perhaps taking stock about their own behaviour."

This could affect BAME teachers as well as BAME pupils, who had a feeling of being "othered" in various ways: some teachers spoke of not being invited on staff nights out, or colleagues who suddenly stopped talking when they walked into a room.

Others fielded comments about their accents from colleagues, with one being asked: "Are you sure the young people understand what you say?"

BAME teachers said the comments that troubled

them were often "subtle and covert acts of discrimination", and that it was easier to turn a blind eye. One said they could not "raise issues "because "Khadija, I have a career to think about".

Ms Mohammed also highlighted the vicious circle created by a lack of BAME role models working in schools, which made it less likely that BAME children would see teaching as a potential career.

"Children don't aspire to that role," she said. "Those who are quite astute and savvy can often see the way teachers that they do have in their schools who are BAME can often be subjected to wee racial undertones by – sometimes – fellow colleagues."

It is hugely important to encourage more people from diverse backgrounds into teaching, said Ms Mohammed, as "just the very presence of having a BAME teacher in a classroom can absolutely break down barriers and negative stereotypes that young people might have acquired from the home, from the media".

Ms Mohammed also talks in the *Tes Scotland* podcast about growing up in Glasgow in the 1970s and 1980s, BAME children "playing white", what pupils said to her the day after 9/11, and the unique power that teachers have to make a difference.



To access the podcast then click on the podcast picture below:

