



## Ready - Respectful - Responsible

19 April 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

Welcome to the summer term. Although the weather might be proving seasonally stubborn school routines aren't!

As usual this half-term sees the start of the summer examination session. **It is an intense period of preparation and performance and a stressful time.** This week's parental advice poster offers **some advice for parents/carers that might be useful in negotiating the next few months proactively in terms of managing exam stress.** Managing stress is a skill and there are very few jobs or vocations in life that don't come with an aspect of stress that will need to be managed in some form or other. Exams can seem like a huge undertaking but with a carefully thought out preparation and revision timetable they can be negotiated in a way that optimises performance and uses stress as a positive driver.

We also have **work experience , Focus Week and numerous extracurricular activities planned** during the term and this week sees many John Colet students heading off to **Iceland** (I genuinely overheard a student say in jest at lunch today that 'maybe it will be warmer over there!') and later on in the term Year 8 students will be engaging in a trip to the **Somme**. This will be followed by Focus Week in which students will be engaged in a wealth of activities chosen to enrich their skills and consolidate our community ethos and spirit. This is a unique occasion and a great opportunity to develop skills and knowledge in different contexts.

We will also begin turning our eyes towards the next academic year. The **Year 6 transition** programme will soon be underway as our next John Colet cohort joins our community. This is always such a positive and energetic experience and is a perfect counterbalance to the farewells that will be occurring as our year 11 and year 13 cohorts take steps into the future pursuing new pathways in their lives.

This week assemblies have been focussed on **Earth Day which is officially taking place on April 22.** They highlighted the target of a **60% reduction in the production of all plastics by 2040.** A bold but fully achievable target. Students reflected on what actions they could take themselves - simple, small acts such as avoiding single use plastics or selecting recycled packaging materials - can add up to a major difference in our environment and ultimately the world.

**A PLEA : Please could you ensure that you do not park in or block access to the Wendover Health Centre. IT IS NOT A DROP OFF ZONE and car issues are beginning to impact significantly on the centre's ability to operate effectively at key points in the day.**

Finally, a reminder about the **consultation process regarding the school day.** If you haven't already please give you views and thoughts. The link is below. Many thanks.

Take care - Ian Brierly

**Committed To Excellence**

# REMINDERS & NOTICES

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- **INSET Day** - **26.04.24**
- **Bank Holiday** - **06.05.24**

## CONSULTATION - REMINDER

**We would therefore welcome your thoughts, views and suggestions on the proposals for changes to our school day.** You can express these by clicking on the link below which will take you to a confidential google form. The closing date for the consultation will be 26 April 2024. Views cannot be expressed anonymously, an email will be required.

## [CONSULTATION](#)

## OPPORTUNITIES

**COVER SUPERVISOR REQUIRED** : An excellent opportunity for any person who has just finished education or any who may be considering a future career in education, or for anyone who would like a role which can fit around their family life. If interested please contact Mrs Perry: [cperry@johncolet.co.uk](mailto:cperry@johncolet.co.uk)

**KEY HOLDER REQUIRED** : An excellent opportunity for any person who would like to work part-time. If interested please contact Mrs Perry: [cperry@johncolet.co.uk](mailto:cperry@johncolet.co.uk)

**MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES VOLUNTEERS:** If you speak French or Spanish and would like to support our MFL department please contact Mrs Simpson, our Head of MFL, directly: [isimpson@johncolet.co.uk](mailto:isimpson@johncolet.co.uk).

## SAFEGUARDING SUBSTANCE AWARENESS - SNUS & Contaminated THC Vapes

### SNUS

[Tooled up Snus Article](#)

Here4YOUth, Buckinghamshire commissioned young people drug/alcohol harm reduction service, has prepared some harm reduction information about contaminated vapes.

[Drug Alert - Contaminated Vapes - Cranstoun](#). For all queries please contact the Public Health Team on [phadmin@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:phadmin@buckinghamshire.gov.uk).

### Social Media Group Chats

At JCS we continue to talk to children about their interactions with each other on social media and encrypted chat apps. We are definitely concerned about some of the language being used and the material being shared as well as chats including unknown members of the wider community therefore, we would urge **all parents to monitor their children's mobile phone use including their involvement in group chat platforms.**



# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators MANAGING EXAM STRESS

At some point in their education, children are almost certain to encounter exam stress, which can cast a shadow over their mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. Mental health charity YoungMinds estimate that a staggering 87% of pupils suffer from exam stress – highlighting the urgent need to minimise its impact on children's health and happiness.

## 1 PRACTISE WORKLOAD WISDOM

The build up to exam season is such a busy and pressurised time in a child's education that it can be difficult for youngsters to avoid feeling overwhelmed. Encourage them to consider whether their current workload is realistic and allows them sufficient time to relax and recharge. Work with them in crafting a revision timetable that's manageable and includes breaks and occasional days off.

## 2 ADVISE CLEARING THE CLUTTER

A disorganised work environment is proven to negatively affect our ability to focus, as well as our emotional state. Encourage children to keep their desk, notes and revision materials tidy – creating a dedicated, well-kept study space to promote maximum focus. Foster their creativity by suggesting they incorporate vibrant colours, mind maps and even quirky drawings into their revision notes.

## 3 MASTER THE MATERIALS TOGETHER

Revision seems far harder when a child is uncertain where to begin or what sources to consult. Support them in confirming revision materials with their various teachers – emphasising the importance of gathering a range of resources to get a more comprehensive understanding of the subject. Feeling more prepared should nurture the child's confidence and help to dispel some of their anxiety.

## 4 RECOMMEND CREATIVE NOTE-TAKING

Writing out notes in full – rather than simply bullet pointing – can be a strong start to a child's revision. Reinforce this idea, encouraging the use of flashcards (featuring shorter versions of previously taken notes) for effective repetition and memorisation. Discuss the power of regularly reviewing notes to help them stay in the child's memory.

## 5 USE VISUAL AIDS AND MNEMONICS

Encourage the use of visual aids like videos and sticky notes to enhance learning. Some children find these resources far more useful than simply reading their notes as written. Explore creating mnemonics for a fun and effective study approach – and it's also worth noting that the strategic use of colours is a proven means of triggering recall during exams.

## 6 GATHER A 'TECH TOOLKIT'

Technology can be a huge advantage in exam prep. Educational YouTube channels and revision websites like BBC Bitesize can be immensely powerful resources for helping children to expand and retain their knowledge. You could also recommend the use of flashcard apps and educational podcasts for revision and reminders when young people are on the go.

## 7 KEEP IT FUN

Revision tends to go far more smoothly if children are having fun in the process. Injecting some humour into their notes, for instance, can make details more memorable – as can relating information to their real-life experiences. Try to encourage a variety of study methods, such as incorporating physical activity (even simply taking a walk) into their revision routine.

## 8 SUGGEST ACTIVE REVISION STRATEGIES

Make sure children are aware of different study techniques. You could emphasise the effectiveness of spaced repetition by reviewing material regularly over time to reinforce learning and improve retention. Discuss the benefits of active recall methods – such as self-testing or explaining a concept aloud – in identifying where their strengths and weaknesses lie.

## 9 ENCOURAGE A POSITIVE MINDSET

It can be easy for children's thoughts to fall into a downward spiral when they're stressed about exams. Try to foster a growth mindset by emphasising the importance of giving it their all rather than aiming for complete perfection. Positive self-talk and the use of affirmations can build confidence and reduce anxiety, while visualising success and setting realistic goals can help them stay motivated and focused.

## 10 HELP THEM TO SEIZE THE DAY

There are lots of things children can do on the day of their exam to reduce stress and increase their focus. Talk them through some helpful exam-day strategies – such as arriving early, reading the instructions and the questions carefully, and pacing themselves during the test. Suggest some relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing or visualisation, to help them manage any nerves before and during the exam.

### Meet Our Expert

Minds Ahead design and deliver the UK's only specialist postgraduate mental health qualifications. Winner of the Social Enterprise UK: 'One to Watch' award, the charity provides training and support to education organisations and local authorities. This guide has been written by Adam Gillett – a learning and development specialist who is also Associate Vice-Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College



## FRIENDSHIPS & FRIENDSHIP TROUBLES

**Friendships and forming peer relationships are critical aspects of children’s social and emotional development.** As parents, we hope that our children surround themselves with a supportive group of friends who will be important allies in their journey through school and beyond. Of course, things aren’t always so simple!

We recommend thinking about family values regarding treatment of others as a good starting point. Our activities on Treating Others Kindly – for both [younger](#) and [older](#) children – can help initiate conversations.

Friendship troubles are an inevitable part of growing up. For primary-aged children, these [reflective questions](#) for parents can help you think through your child’s friendships and consider ways forward. Use our friendship [quiz](#) with your child to help them talk about the qualities of a good friend.

Teens and parents might dip into this [activity](#) to use as a template for working through friendship difficulties in school. You might also explore these quick [tips](#) for helping teens navigate peer pressure.

We’d all love to keep our children sheltered from bullying, but it isn’t always possible. Professor James O’Higgins Norman of Dublin University, Director of the National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre, joined us for this podcast on tackling [bullying](#), while Canadian researchers Professor William Pickett and Professor Wendy Craig shared their findings and advice on [cyberbullying](#).

This [podcast](#) on social connectedness discusses the role that positive relationships play in children’s lives by mitigating the worst effects of cyberbullying. By developing our children’s sense of self in the world, self-esteem and belonging, we can help them develop the resilience required to manage life’s ups and downs. Try using this [resource](#) to encourage personal reflection on one’s assets or use our [belonging journal](#) to help kick-start family conversations on where we feel accepted.

Remember that Tooled Up is here to guide you on all aspects of parenting and family life. Click on our [support](#) button to tell us what you need.



## SAFEGUARDING LEADS & INFORMATION



**Mr Crawford**  
Deputy Headteacher  
DSL



**Be Safe,  
Be Kind**



**Mrs Rowland**  
\*Operational Safeguarding Lead  
DDSL

If parents have any concerns about this practice or, believe that any young person at John Colet School might be at risk, then please do contact one of the members of our Safeguarding Team via

[safeguarding@johncolet.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@johncolet.co.uk)

## LOCAL UPDATES / EVENTS

**AYLESBURY RUGBY WOMEN**

ANY LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE  
AMAZING FACILITIES INCLUDING  
GYM AND PHYSIO  
NC3 MIDLANDS (SOUTH) LEAGUE  
WOMENSRUGBY@AYLESBURYRFC.CO.UK

TRAINING TIMES:  
WEDNESDAY 19:30-21:00  
SUNDAY 12:30-14:00

**ARFC HP22 5RN**

AYLESBURY RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

**WENDOVER SPARROWHAWKS NETBALL TEAM**

Fancy joining us for some netball?

***Everyone Welcome***

- Friendly ladies club with a good mix of age and ability
- Training every Tuesday with experienced coach
- 7.30—9pm at Aylesbury High School
- £5 per week (or save money and block book)
- Lots of coached drills and game play at training

Opportunities to join one of our 3 ladies teams for the upcoming summer league and 24/25 ADNL winter league

- Youth training Tuesdays at 6.15-7.15pm (school years 8-11 welcome)
- Opportunities to join a team for the summer league or just come for training

Email [wendoveryouthnetball@hotmail.com](mailto:wendoveryouthnetball@hotmail.com) for info

Interested? Get in touch...

E: [wendoverladiesnetball@hotmail.com](mailto:wendoverladiesnetball@hotmail.com)  
Insta: @wendoversparrowhawks