

25th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Thank you so much for your support in ensuring that your child is engaging in the learning process, despite these exceptional circumstances. Our evidence and your feedback suggests that students appreciate the structure and routines of following a normal timetable and the vast majority are approaching their work with interest and enthusiasm. We do, however, recognise that remote learning is very different from the school experience and comes with a number of challenges and concerns. Not least of these is the mental health and wellbeing of our young people.

It is clear that students thrive on the interaction, both social and academic, with their peers and its absence can lead to feeling a little isolated and can have a negative impact on their mental health. We also recognise that the extraordinary circumstances of 'lockdown' can place additional strain on family relationships and, in turn, impact negatively on emotional health. It seems timely, therefore, to reassure you that we are just as concerned about supporting your child's mental health and wellbeing as promoting their academic progress.

With schools partially closed and lots of uncertainty, children and young people's mental health has never been more important. Children's Mental Health Week is taking place on 1 - 7 February 2021. This year's theme is [Express Yourself](#). Place2Be has created activities and resources to help children (and adults) to explore the different ways that they can share their thoughts, feelings and ideas. There are lots of resources on the [Children's Mental Health Week website](#) that you can use with your child at home; including activity ideas, tips for parents and carers. We will also focus on this theme during students' LIFE lessons during the week.

To this end, we would urge you to contact us at school should you be concerned in any way about your son or daughter. We understand some of the challenges that they, and you, face and we are here to help. I would also like to remind you of the resources available to support you or your child should it be necessary. More parents than you might imagine have accessed these materials and have found them very useful and supportive.

Kooth offers young people in North Yorkshire free online counselling and support. Young people aged 11 - 18 are able to access free online counselling and emotional wellbeing support through the online service. For more information please go to their [website](#).

Compass BUZZ offers a confidential text messaging service to young people aged 11-18 across North Yorkshire. By texting the service on 07520 631168, a young person will be able to receive confidential advice, support and signposting from a wellbeing worker within one working day via text. For more information please go to their [website](#).

The '[Go To website](#) for **Healthy Minds** in North Yorkshire' which provides a platform for young people, parents/carers and professionals for information about mental health and signposts to supporting services.

I think crucially the message is that we are committed to working in partnership to ensure that your son or daughter excels and flourishes, despite the challenging context we are working in and I know that working together we can achieve that.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S.A. Bell". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

Sarah Bell
Assistant Head/DSL