



BEECHEN CLIFF

8th May 2020



Message from Headmaster

Dear Parents and Carers

I want to start by thanking so many of you for completing the questionnaire which the school issued last week. The results were collated on Wednesday and the outcomes are published as an attachment to this newsletter.

The results appear to indicate that many of our pupils are throwing themselves into this new way of learning very well, contrasting with the picture which appears to be the case nationally. Your responses have indicated that many parents are working actively alongside their sons and daughters to encourage, support and make sure they seek help where necessary.

The outcomes have helped us as we plan the next level of support to pupils and, to assist this, you can expect 'phone contact from your son's tutor (Year 7-10) next week. A similar form of contact will take place for Year 11 and Sixth Form students over the next fortnight. The aim is to 'touch base' and to see if there is anything specific we can do which will help with the current situation.

I would ask parents to encourage their sons and daughters to show you how Google Classroom works for them in order to feel as involved as possible with the processes which are being used to help educate Beechen Cliff pupils at home. If, as parents or pupils, you are struggling with anything that we can help deal with I would ask you to contact us. If we don't know there is a problem it is difficult for us to help fix it!

I will be encouraging my children to read Mrs Wilmot's piece about helping around the home and developing independence. It might be that, after two decades, this is the light bulb moment...

It is, of course VE Day today and, muted as celebrations might be for this event, it might well be worth reminding ourselves of a period and of a generation which really knew the need to stick together and weather a rather more significant storm.

I wish all pupils and parents the very best for the week ahead.

Mr A Davies
Headmaster

Beechen Cliff Design and Technology Food Newsletter - May 2020

Please find attached to this newsletter May's edition (Number 3) of the BCS Design and Technology Food Newsletter, which has been put together by our food technician Josh. The newsletter contains great recipes, news and thoughts on food!

I have been trying out the recipes myself and with my teaching groups, and during the Easter holidays pupils attending sessions in school especially enjoyed making the pizza dough from our first edition. Look at their tasty results!

Please do take a look at the newsletter and try out some of the recipes at home. We would love to hear how you got on and what you think!



Mrs Lisa Roberts
Food Technology



Theme of the Week

Theme of the week this week is focusing on life skills. Why are life skills so important?

- 1. Household chores help teach life skills.** Laundry, cooking and budgeting are just some of the skills everyone needs when they live independently. These are also things that we don't teach in detail, making learning them at home more important.
- 2. Household skills help you to learn responsibility and self-reliance.** Doing regular chores helps teach responsibility. Tasks that personally affect you, such as cleaning your room or doing your own laundry, can help you become more self-reliant.
- 3. Household skills help teach teamwork.** Members of your family "team" are accountable to each other, and there are consequences when you don't meet each other's expectations. Learning these lessons at home, where mistakes are more easily forgiven, can help you develop strong teamwork skills to use at school or work.
- 4. Household skills help reinforce respect.** It takes moving away from home for most of us to fully appreciate all the hard work our parents did around the house.
- 5. Household skills help build a strong work ethic.** Chores are commonly tied to a reward, later in life this will be your pay from work. Showing that you are able and want to do well is a powerful trait that everyone appreciates. Especially teachers!
- 6. Household skills help improve planning and time management.** Juggling school work, housework and social lives helps you learn to set priorities and manage time, important skills for the working world.
- 7. Household skills give families a chance to bond.** People can often view doing household chores as time consuming and frustrating. During this time, when we are all at home, we can use learning these life skills as a way to spend quality time with our family and learn from each other.

Hopefully this gives students a little something to focus on and a positive way of thinking how their help around the house will be appreciated.

Stay safe,

Mrs A Wilmott
Head of PSHE



Online Safety

Further to the guidance we sent out last week about online safety, please see below a dedicated link for Beechen Cliff parents about how to set up parental controls on different devices. There is also information about various social media platforms e.g. Tik Tok.

<https://parenthub.thekeysupport.com?uuid=161d8423-5d07-4114-8ac7-54c5c9911125>

Mr James Oldham

Deputy Headmaster and Head of Safeguarding

Joseph Needs You!

Calling all budding performers ... the School's production needs you! When the lockdown came into force the school's production



of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor* was only a week away, so the production team have been hard at work rearranging the show for the 21-23 October. But with the show moving to the next academic year it has required a handful of cast changes so we are searching for new cast members to join this great musical.

No previous experience is necessary and you will not be expected to perform on your own if you would prefer not to, but some of the roles include named parts with solo singing, so there is something for all levels of experience or interest! Lessons are on Fridays 3.30-5.30pm and are continuing with a mix of general and show related material - so even if you aren't able or sure about being in the show and just fancy finding out more or doing something different on a Friday afternoon then why not join the virtual classes?

If you are interested in finding out more then please contact staff@baththeatreschool.com.

Miss G Smith
Beechen Cliff Theatre Group



Coping during Covid-19

This week - Mindfulness

These are trying and uncertain times when negative thoughts can easily take over and cause stress and we stop noticing the world around us. It's also easy to lose touch with the way our bodies are feeling and to end up living 'in our heads' - caught up in our thoughts without stopping to notice how those thoughts are driving our emotions and behaviour. Incorporating mindful practices into your daily routine can help calm anxiety and build healthy coping skills. Here are some tips on making mindfulness work for you and your family.

It doesn't have to be complicated

Being mindful is what it sounds like. Taking time to focus on the present, being intentional and thoughtful about where you are and how you are feeling. Trying to centre your thoughts and be in the moment. Sounds simple, but it takes work, especially now when concerns about what the future holds feel so pressing. Mindfulness isn't complicated and here are some simple activities you can have a go at:

- ◆ **Squeeze Muscles:** Starting at your toes, pick one muscle and squeeze it tight. Count to five. Release, and notice how your body changes. Repeat exercise moving up your body.
- ◆ **Belly Breathing:** Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Slowly breathe in from your stomach (expand like a balloon) and slowly breathe out (deflate).
- ◆ **Mindful Meal:** Pay attention to the smell, taste and look of your food. No multitasking.
- ◆ **Meditation:** Sit in a relaxed, comfortable position. Pick something to focus on, like your breath. When your mind wanders, bring your attention back to your breath.
- ◆ **Blowing Bubbles:** Notice their shapes, textures and colours.
- ◆ **Listening to Music:** Focus on the whole song, or listen specifically to the voice or an instrument.

Make time for mindfulness

At the moment much of the personal time that used to be part of our daily routines – going to school, time alone at home, pursuing leisure interests— is not available. This means it's extra important to be intentional about creating space to recharge.

Deciding to set time aside each day to practice mindful activities is a good starting point. Morning mindfulness can help set the tone for the day. Do deep breathing, meditate, exercise, whatever mindfulness activity works for you. Mindfulness doesn't have to be elaborate: Try mindful eating or mindful drinking with a cup of coffee. Sit there and just be in the moment. That's mindfulness. Taking five minutes to do that before the day begins is even more important now because this is not our typical routine and we're going to feel very out of sorts.



Limit multi-tasking

Right now it can feel like trying to do several things at once is the only way anything will get done. Joanna Stern, a clinical psychologist at the Child Mind Institute, states that multitasking rarely works, and can actually *increase* stress and that multitasking is a myth. Instead, she suggests achievable goals for the day, trying to focus on one thing at a time.

Practice mindfulness as a family

Mindfulness is anything that helps everyone take a moment to slow down, stay present, and come together. Designating time to practice mindful activities as a family will help everyone feel less anxious. It could be a daily family yoga session, or a quiet walk in the woods as a group, taking time to focus on the environment around you. Another good family mindfulness idea is asking everyone to mention one good thing they heard or saw that day over dinner.

Make peace with uncertainty

This current situation is one of extreme uncertainty. We don't know what will happen, how long it will last or what things will be like when it's over. One thing we do know, however, is that worrying about it won't change the outcome. Learning how to tolerate the uncertainty is a huge part of building healthy coping skills for ourselves, which we then model for those around us. Focusing on the present through practising mindfulness helps to avoid your brain spinning out of control with the frightening possibilities.

Here are some useful websites you can try to help you with mindfulness activities:

<https://www.mindful.org/meditation/mindfulness-getting-started/>

With sections on how to be mindful. It has some really good 'how-tos' on mindfulness practice.

www.boysinmind.co.uk (girls mind too)

Films, blogs that have been co-produced by young people, mainly boys and young promoting mental health

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mindfulness/>

A good website which explains how mindfulness can help mental well being. It also has a mood self awareness quiz

<https://www.headspace.com/meditation/sport>

Headspace can teach you how to meditate and live mindfully in just a few minutes a day

Here are some free mindfulness apps:

- Calm
- Headspace: Guided Meditation and Mindfulness
- Smiling Minds
- Take a Chill

Mr K. Mann

Assistant Headmaster

