



MAIDEN ERLEGH

SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mr P. Gibson

MSc (Educational Leadership), BA (Economics)

Silverdale Road, Earley,
Reading, RG6 7HS
0118 926 2467
MESoffice@maidenerleghtrust.org
www.maidenerleghschool.co.uk
@MaidenErleghSch

5 March 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

Mental Health and Wellbeing: Return to School

We are delighted to be able to welcome our school community back together again next week in what has been an extremely challenging period for all. We are very aware our young people have been through a lot from an emotional perspective and their mental health and wellbeing is of great importance to us. Ahead of returning to school, we would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge this and to share with you of some of the support offerings students have available to them.

Firstly, we must recognise that the vast majority of us will have felt some uncertainty and worry over this period – that is completely normal, and is the case for our young people too. Having a few down days, wobbles or experiences of low mood is not something to be overly concerned about. However, we would always encourage being open and honest about feelings. One of the best pieces of advice we can offer is to talk about this with someone trusted – and we are ready to be those listening ears if our young people need them. Secondly, we understand a number of them may have experienced the loss of someone close during this time. Should this be the case and you are concerned about the impact of this on a return to school, please let us know. It is important that students feel supported and understood during this time.

Finally, we are aware there is a lot of information being shared at the moment, but we wanted to highlight the importance looking after wellbeing and mental health. We have collated some of the best resources we are aware of and wanted to ensure you had them at your disposal in case needed. For general wellbeing support, all students have access to Kooth (<https://www.kooth.com/>) – a web-based confidential service offering a safe and secure means of accessing support, designed specifically for young people. Kooth also offers the opportunity to have text-based conversations with a qualified counsellor free of charge if the need arises. Additionally, Every Mind Matters (<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>) has an abundance of NHS-backed resources available via their website and of particular interest is their Mind plan. The plan is easily accessible via 5 short questions and provides tips to improve and maintain good wellbeing and mood. They also have specific Coronavirus response content. Finally, the NHS website itself has some excellent advice and guidance for concerns about stress, anxiety and depression (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>) should this be of relevance too.

Should you have more significant concerns about your child's mental health or wellbeing, please do contact the relevant Head of Year who will be able to discuss this with you further. We have a variety of more bespoke and specific support offerings available to us through internal and external agencies – we would just want to understand a little more about the concerns to ensure support can be offered in a most targeted and meaningful way.

A favourite phrase of ours this year has been 'we may be in the same storm, but we are not all in the same boat' and we believe that could not be more true. While everybody has through their own challenges, it is important for our young people to know they are not on their own – we are here to help, guide and support as we bring #TeamMaidenErlegh back together for the remainder of this academic year.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J Bhadye

Assistant Headteacher - Mathematics and DSL