



Guiseley School

How Are You?

Hello to all parents, carers, grandparents, guardians and any other adult who has suddenly found themselves with their young people at home twenty-four hours a day... seven days a week... how are you all doing? Does anyone else find themselves asking “What day is it?” several times a week? Or is that just me? When we entered 2020, none of us could have predicted just quite where we would be this spring. The situation we are currently in is as far away as normal as we can get. We’re into week five of school closures... Staying at home this long is strange, yet vital in the fight against, COVID-19. We can almost forget for a moment why it is we’re doing what we’re doing, but then we remember, and quite often, and very understandably, raises our anxiety levels. This is, however, our **temporary** new reality, this will not last forever. We all must get through this time as best as we can but that doesn’t mean we don’t need support and that certainly doesn’t mean we don’t need to take care of **ourselves** as well as our children.

We are all in very different circumstances and no household is the same, everyone is unique. Some of you are working from home, some are self-employed, some are stay at home parents, some have health issues of their own and some have been made key workers – the people who are keeping this nation ticking. Whatever our circumstances, we now find ourselves also being the one monitoring our children’s education...NO PRESSURE AT ALL RIGHT? So, this is where this weekly letter comes in. My name is Lauren Hayward and I have been the Pastoral Mentor at Guiseley School for over five years. I work with students one to one who are facing emotional difficulties and need some support. It has been an honour to work with so many fantastic young people and they are truly an inspiration to the school and their families. All students from Guiseley will also be getting a weekly letter from myself checking in with them. As a parent of four I will be practicing self-care myself!





Self-Care

This is what I will be shouting from the rooftops about over the coming weeks. Now don't panic, I'm not going to start suggesting that we all go to live in a giant commune and never return to the real world, live off the land and become at one with the world. To be honest that all sounds like a lot of hard work and I currently don't have time to brush my hair let alone take on such a monumental task. I will however be giving you weekly tips and strategies to help you not only cope with stress but give yourself some time to breathe and even relax through these weeks. I will be looking at different areas in our lives such as sleep and relaxation, movement, social connection, coping skills, mood boosters and many more. All of these I will break into bitesize chunks that are simple for you to incorporate into your daily lives. It is more important now than

ever before that you take good care of **yourselves**. Make this as important as your care for others, which you won't be able to do if you're physically and mentally exhausted. I am going to be the bossy one popping up in your inbox every week to check you're all showing yourselves some compassion and kindness in the time you really do need it the most.

I sought my recommendations from around fifteen self-care books. Whoever put my order together in the amazon warehouse must have been seriously concerned about me. I will also be focusing on self-care with your lovely children as well and I hope that they also put some of the techniques into practice. Happier teenagers should surely make for more stress-free homes for yourselves, so hopefully this will be a positive experience all round.



Spotlight on: Financial Hardship

This is the section where I will be focusing on a different issue each week. I was thinking which would be the best first focus and I decided we should start on the very basic human needs; we need to make sure these are being met for everyone out there. It is no secret that COVID-19 is affecting most of us financially to some degree up and down the country. Some more than others and that is why if any of you are struggling to buy essentials for your family, I would like to direct you to the links on our **health and wellbeing** tab on the Guiseley School tab. This contains many different organisation's covering both **Leeds** and **Bradford** postcodes. You do **not** need to struggle on your own. None of us could have predicted this nor the ripple effect it has had on people's lives. Please [click here](#) and see what support you can get as soon as possible There are different sections including Money, food, mental health and domestic violence .

For families self-isolating and struggling to get out food shopping in Bradford, please call Bradford Council Contact Centre on 01274 4311000. They will assess your needs and arrange a delivery of food if you qualify.



For those living in Leeds please visit the [Leeds Food Aid Centre website](#) as they have links to several different resources and also have a link to food services including food banks in your area. Both services have been highlighted to school staff as extremely resourceful services, so please take a look.

Universal Credit is also an essential resource proving something essential for many families during this lockdown due to being unable to work. Visit <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit> find out whether you are eligible and how to apply

You may be aware that if you are accessing Universal Credit, Jobseekers Allowance or Income Related Employment Support Allowance then you will also be able to claim Free School Meals for your children. Free School Meals applications can be found at the following link <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/council-tax-and-benefits/free-school-meals> or you can speak with school via info@guiseley if you require any further information



Light In The Lockdown!

This will be the section for a little bit of sunshine in what can feel like a dark time. I'm sure most of you have been astounded at not only the community spirit we are seeing, but the coming together of the nation.... the world in fact. In this very stressful and uncertain time – seeing acts of human kindness and bravery can really take your breath away.

I would like to highlight **the Thursday evening clap for the NHS and all Keyworkers** at 8p.m. This is also the perfect time to feel connected within your community. I made the mistake of thinking that my village weren't participating as there are so few of us, but I was very wrong, and the noise can be heard for miles! Also, as Parents and Carers, who doesn't want the excuse to shout and bang some saucepans together? it's fantastic stress relief! More importantly, it shows every NHS worker, every key worker who gets up every

day, that we're not forgetting what they're doing just because the weeks are all merging into one. As long as they're fighting to keep us safe, to care for our ill and to put themselves at risk, we will remember regularly what they are doing for us and we will clap and shout and whoop...so they know they are never out of our thoughts.

If any of you would like to give a special shout out to someone who really is going the extra mile to serve their community in this stressful time then please drop an email to info@guiseleyschool.org.uk for the attention of Lauren Hayward and I will try to get in as many as I can.

I look forward to writing to you all next week,
Kindest Regards
Lauren Hayward
(Pastoral Mentor)